

Minutes of the seventy-second meeting of the Auckland Conservation Board held on 26 August 2004 in the Old Barracks Building, Auckland Area Office, North Head, Devonport commencing at 1.00pm.

Present:

Paddy Stafford-Bush (Chairperson), Steven Ching, Anne Fenn, Jenny Kirk, Alan La Roche, Cath Tizard, Kathy Walsh, Laly Haddon, Mel Galbraith, Denise Yates

In Attendance:

Warwick Murray (Community Relations Manager), Rebecca Rush (Community Relations Officer-Board Support), Rolien Elliot (Warkworth Area Manager), Beau Fraser (Auckland Area Manager)

Visitors:

Peter and David Chamberlain (Ponui Island farmers), Dianne McLeod (South Kaipara Landcare), Caroline Robinson (Cabal), Carla Wilson (Science and Research Unit, DOC)

Laly Haddon offered a karakia.

1. Apologies/Welcome/Introductions

Paddy welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular visitors. Apologies were recorded from Tony Holman, Margaret Kawharu and Rob McCallum.

RESOLVED that the apologies be accepted.

STAFFORD-BUSH/LA ROCHE

2. Public Forum

Dianne McLeod spoke first regarding concerns about the triggered concession application for kayaking trips on Lake Ototoa. She said that for the last four years South Kaipara Landcare (SKL) had been running projects to help protect the lake, such as removing pests, planting and fencing. A sustainable management plan had also been prepared for Lake Ototoa. She said endangered dab chicks are a major issue as when other lakes dry up Ototoa supports half the dab chick population. Dianne said SKL supported the Department in maintaining a low-key approach and had concerns that a commercial operation on the lake will increase the demand for other services such as toilets, picnic areas and rubbish removal, and this may impact on the quality of the lake.

Paddy reminded the Board that they had looked at Lake Ototoa through the Recreation Opportunities Review process.

Questions raised by Board members included;

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- Who the report was funded by. The funding came from the Auckland Regional Council.
- Whether dogs were a problem. Dogs were prohibited in the area but as there are no wardens and no DOC presence in the area, dogs are a problem.
- Walkways. Dianne said South Kaipara Landcare supports the formalisation of a walkway to the water's edge as currently there is a myriad of walkways for people to access the water.

Warwick outlined that in the concession application process advice was currently being sought from technical staff about the potential impacts of this application. At this stage a decision has not been made as to whether the concession application would be publicly notified. If notified there would be an opportunity to make formal comment. However, as Dianne had brought their concerns to the Board and Department's attention, she could expect to be contacted about the issue. **Action**

David Chamberlain, a farmer from Ponui Island, brought his concerns about large scale marine farming applications in the Firth of Thames to the Board. He concerns included;

- The adverse visual impact these marine farms would have on the Firth of Thames.
- The effect they would have on recreational boaties who use the area in regard to marine farms limiting where they can boat and therefore being hazardous to their safety.
- Pollution and effluent from marine farms affecting other marine life.
- The lack of research and information about the long term effects of marine farming, for example when fish breed, the areas they breed in and the percentage of space used.
- Whether there would be a potential impact on wading and migratory birds reliant on the food chain.
- Where marine farming fits into the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park.

Warwick outlined the Aquaculture Reform process, saying the Auckland Regional Council had identified aquaculture management areas around the Hauraki Gulf and was now looking at the Firth of Thames. When the moratorium comes off in December they will be processing claims that were made pre-moratorium. The Department and the Board had an advocacy and advisory role in this process and had not been involved in the pre-formal stage. However, they will be involved when the decision is notified.

3. Review and Confirmation of Minutes

3.1. Minutes of the Meeting of 24 June

The unconfirmed minutes were included in the agenda. These were reviewed page by page.

RESOLVED that the minutes of 24 June 2004 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

KIRK/LA ROCHE

4. Reports

4.1. Conservator's Report

Items discussed included;

- **Rangitoto baches.** Rangitoto bach owners have recently received letters telling them to vacate the baches. Rangitoto Island Bach Community Association has retained a QC to fight the Department, but Ministers of Conservation since 1954 have been consistent in the view that there is to be no private exclusive occupation on Crown land. Some baches will be retained and preserved. These may be let out for casual accommodation or used by organisations like Ferg's Kayaks or a writer's guild.
- **Goat Island toilets.** The Department is developing a MOU with Rodney District Council over the responsibilities/maintenance of the toilets.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted.

STAFFORD-BUSH/GALBRAITH

6. Major Items

6.5. Rangitoto Wharf

Caroline Robinson explained that she had been chosen from three artists to work in a partnership with engineers to design a new wharf for Rangitoto Island. The Department had identified the need for a new wharf at Rangitoto and contacted Creative New Zealand to involve artists in the project. This project is currently in the conceptual stage with Caroline continuing to talk to bach owners, iwi and others associated with the island in order to design something that reflects the island. This was well illustrated by a slide show and model presentation.

Board members questioned the timeframe and specifications of the new wharf. Caroline said the deadline for completion was 2006. The wharf would be made of cast concrete but some rock cladding would probably be used. Its finished length would be approximately 90 metres.

Paddy thanked Caroline for attending the meeting, saying that Board members recognised the contribution art can make to conservation.

6.4. Kawau Island Restoration Plan

A video on the wallaby repatriation was shown. Rolien Elliot explained the repatriation of wallabies back to Australia was one of

the key steps in the eradication of wallabies from Kawau in terms of meeting our obligations under the convention for international biodiversity. Two of the species of wallaby on Kawau are endangered in Australia, the tammar and brush tail rock wallaby. The video would be a useful public relations tool in discussions with the community relating to wallaby eradication and island restoration. Rolien outlined that a full restoration plan was being considered/prepared for Kawau Island which would incorporate wallaby eradication and other pest species. The Department is preparing a logging plan which will see the removal of pines on the historic reserve.

Questions raised by Board members included;

- Whether 2007 was a realistic time frame for the removal of wallabies. Auckland Regional Council has set the timeframe in their Regional Pest Management Strategy. The Pohutukawa Trust (lead organisation) has the support of the major landowners on the island for the removal of wallabies. Further consultation with a number of landowners of small blocks at South Cove and maybe other areas would be necessary if total support were to be gained. Further public consultation would be required to gauge support for a full restoration plan.
- Whether historic sites will be kept clear of trees. Historic Places Trust and archaeologists would provide advice to ensure historic sites are best protected during logging operations and restoration.
- Whether the repatriation of the wallabies was finished. Yes, however there may be opportunities to send back individual animals if local landowners would rather see them repatriated then killed. Such operations would require an exemption by ARC under the Auckland Regional Pest Management strategy.

RESOLVED that 1) the report be received, 2) the restoration plan and objectives be endorsed and 3) further consultation with the community and other agencies be undertaken.

STAFFORD-BUSH/KIRK

6.2. Auckland Area Issues

Beau gave an update on issues Auckland Area is currently dealing with. Issues discussed included;

- **Feral Deer.** There is concern that the Woodhill herd may spread into the Waitakere Ranges if there is a drought. Carter Holt Harvey has engaged the Woodhill Fallow Deer committee to manage a recreational herd.
- **Pest Fish.** Koi are now well outside the containment area in Auckland. Farmers are anxious about the spread of these fish as waters turn turbid.
- **Fort Takapuna.** Auckland Area has met with North Shore City Council about the removal of buildings at Fort Takapuna. NSCC wants to adopt the material developed by Boffa Miskell

through community consultation for the Department. A time line for the briefing of the Board, NSCC and the Tamaki Reserves Protection Trust is currently being worked out.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

STAFFORD-BUSH/GALBRAITH

6.1. Conservation Board Research

Carla Wilson from the Department's Science and Research Unit gave a brief outline of the Conservation Board Research she is undertaking. She explained that she was doing a case study of five boards around the country looking into Board's roles and objectives with a view to how boards can be improved. The research will be available mid-2005 and will come to the Board for comment before it is made public.

4. Reports (cont)

4.2. Chairperson's Report

NZCA Visit. Paddy said the visit was a good chance for the Board to meet the NZCA as a group. She added that it also gave the Board a chance to refocus on priority issues, identifying these as the CMS, marine and the RMA. Warwick stated that it is important for the Board to agree on a key focus and outcomes and then get actively involved in process. A meeting to discuss this was decided for Wednesday 1 September at 11.00am.

Northern Gateway Project. The site visit to the area of the new motorway was excellent and both the scale of the project and environmental protection is impressive.

6. Major Items (cont)

6.6. Northern Gateway Project

Warwick gave a brief history of the Department and Board's involvement with Transit over the Northern Gateway (formerly ALPURT) project, explaining that Transit, the Department and the Board had entered into a Heads of Agreement in 1996 in order to protect environmental features adjacent to the proposed motorway extension. Since the Heads of Agreement was signed the new Land Transport Management Act has come into effect which places more consideration on environmental, cultural and social issues.

The Northern Gateway Alliance, project managers for the motorway extension, has set up a consultation programme with the Department and the Board and a representative will come to the October Board meeting to brief the Board. They will also come to the Board and Department to seek variances to the Heads of Agreement since their plans have changed.

Discussion included;

- The ownership of the land. Warwick explained that Transit has purchased the land they need for the motorway with the exception of one property which they are still trying to acquire. An area of land called RAP 21 runs from behind Orewa to Waiwera and has excellent fern bird and freshwater habitats. RAP 21 has long been identified as needing protection and as part of the severance areas will be handed back to the Department.
- That a letter of appreciation be written to Transit. **Action**

RESOLVED that 1) the report be received and 2) a letter be written to Transit expressing appreciation of them taking much stronger action to conserve the environment.

TIZARD/GALBRITH

5. Matters Arising

5.1. Home Bay

Motutapu Island Restoration Trust (MIRT) has indicated they will not put their concession application on hold while management planning is undertaken for Motutapu Island. The Department has indicated to the Trust that their application does not comply with the current CMS and such applications are declined. Both MIRT and Motutapu Outdoor Education Trust have been sent a copy of the proposed planning process, and this will also come to the Board for comment.

Action

5.2. Sunny Bay

A decision has not yet been made on whether the site will be reclassified. The legal team in Head Office are still assessing whether a reclassification of the site can be made. The Historic Places Trust will be commissioned to do a separate report assessing the historic values of the site. Verbal updates are being provided to all concerned groups. The Board suggested a letter be written to concerned groups explaining where the process was at. **Action**

5.3. Kaikoura Island

The Department is managing the transfer of the island on behalf of the Nature Heritage Trust. Costing has been done for deer eradication on the island.

6. Major Items (cont)

6.3. CMS Implementation Monitoring – Key Area 24: Miranda

It was questioned why the Miranda Naturalists' Trust visitors' book was used by the Department to measure visitor satisfaction. Warwick explained that the Department had no resources to carry out a visitor survey of the area, adding that comments from the visitors' book gave the Department a reasonable idea of visitor satisfaction.

RESOLVED that 1) the new key performance indicators and monitoring methods be adopted and 2) the report be received.

STAFFORD-BUSH/KIRK

7. Standing Items

7.1. Great Barrier Island Marine Reserve Proposal

Warwick told the Board that the Department had proceeded with a formal application. So far the Department has received about 80 submissions, 70% of which support the proposal. The Mabey family of Great Barrier and the Rope family of Rakitu have been identified as being significantly affected by the proposal and mechanisms to allow them to continue to fish adjacent to their property have been proposed.

Laly raised concerns Ngati Wai have about marine reserves. The Great Barrier Island marine reserve will be the fourth to be established within Ngati Wai territory. Ngati Wai went to court in regard to customary rights in the Poor Knights marine reserve and the court found iwi did have customary rights in that area. Laly stressed that Ngati Wai were not unsupportive of marine reserves, but trying to find a way Maori could support them.

He went on to say that DOC has a responsibility under the Conservation Act to give effect to Maori recognition. Ngati Wai have acted responsibly and carefully in exercising their customary right in the Poor Knights area and should be trusted to do the same in other areas. Ngati Wai will be submitting to that effect on both the Mimiwhangata and Great Barrier Island marine reserve applications.

Warwick said the Department were working to recognise the customary rights of Ngati Rehua in the Great Barrier area. At the time the proposal was notified, Ngati Rehua had not come to Department with any specific request but if they can demonstrate there are places within the proposed area where they practice their customary rights then allowances can be made. Warwick added that it was critical to identify what a customary right is so mechanisms can be put in place.

9. Subcommittee Reports

9.2. Marine

The draft submission to the Great Barrier Island marine reserve proposal was discussed and the following alterations and additions decided;

- That 6 be reworded to support the achievement of biodiversity targets as shown in scientific reports.
- That 7 be deleted.
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- That a new point be added signalling Board support for the structure of the management committee as stated on pages 31 and 32 in the application document.
- That a new point be added supporting the review of the reserve status after 25 years.
- That a new point be added to recognise and define the customary rights of Ngati Wai and Ngati Rehua, as per item 7.1. **Action**

RESOLVED that the Great Barrier Island submission be endorsed once alterations and additions are made.

STAFFORD-BUSH/GALBRAITH

8. Statutory Actions

8.1. Resource Consents Applications by the Department of Conservation

There were no new resource consent applications by the Department.

8.2. Concession Schedules

There was no discussion.

RESOLVED that the report and schedules be received.

STAFFORD-BUSH/GALBRAITH

8.3. Triggered Concessions

There was no discussion.

RESOLVED that 1) the report be received and 2) advice be provided to the Conservator.

STAFFORD-BUSH/TIZARD

9. Subcommittee Reports (cont)

9.1. Planning/Concessions

RESOLVED that the Long Bay Structure Plan submission be endorsed.

KIRK/LA ROCHE

9.3. CMS

RESOLVED that the changes to the key performance indicators and monitoring methods be accepted.

KIRK/LA ROCHE

10. Board Business

RESOLVED that the 2003/4 annual report be accepted.

KIRK/LA ROCHE

11. Minutes – New Zealand Conservation Authority and Neighbouring Conservation Boards

There was no discussion.

12. Liaison/Representation

Kathy said she had attended the Hauraki Maori Trust Board meeting and Alan attended the launch of Conservation Week.

13. Correspondence

There was no discussion.

14. Other Business

Paddy formally thanked Mel, Laly, Margaret and Anne for their time and contribution to the Auckland Conservation Board. Mel was recognised for his knowledge of ecology and understanding of plants; Laly for his grounding on iwi issues; Anne for her role as an advocate for the people; and Margaret for her understanding of iwi issues in relation to conservation.

Warwick echoed Paddy's praise for the departing Board members and recorded his thanks on behalf of the Department.

15. Date and Venue for the Next Ordinary Meeting

Thursday 28 October at the Warkworth Area Office, Warkworth.

The meeting closed at 5.40