

**Minutes of the sixty-eighth meeting of the Auckland Conservation Board held on 26 February 2004 in the Boardroom, Warkworth Area Office, Baxter Street, Warkworth commencing at 9.40am.**

**Present:** Paddy Stafford-Bush, Anne Fenn, Laly Haddon, Jenny Kirk, Alan La Roche, Kathy Walsh, Denise Yates, Margaret Kawharu

**In Attendance:** Warwick Murray (Community Relations Manager),  
Rebecca Rush (Community Relations Officer-Board Support)

**Visitors:** Kathryn Galvin (Rodney Times), Anne Northey, Bernard Merwood and Dave Leggoe (Grey Bach Group), Geoff Green (Kawau Island Maritime Park Charitable Trust), Stephenae Rowley (option4), Dave Pattermore, Ken Catt and Jan Riddick (Forest and Bird), Brett Rathe

Laly Haddon offered a karakia.

## **1. Apologies/Welcome/Introductions**

Paddy welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular visitors. Apologies were recorded from Cath Tizard, Tony Holman, and Mel Galbraith.

**Resolved** that the apologies be accepted.  
Stafford-Bush/La Roche

## **2. Public Forum**

Brett Rathe addressed the Board, expressing his interest in Kawau Island. He said he was concerned that the pine trees around Mansion House were a danger to the public and he would like to see them felled. He felt the public needed to get involved with the management of Kawau. Paddy agreed that community partnerships were needed on the island. She also said the removal of the pines was flagged in the CMS.

Rolien reported that a contractor, Wood Metrix, had been brought in to assess the pines. They are currently drawing up a plan for the removal of the trees, with the felling scheduled to commence in 2005. She said the tree felling is on the agenda as the Department is aware of the safety issues. The Department will take on board the idea of public involvement. They are looking at establishing 'Friends of Mansion House' after the success of the historic carnival held at Mansion House last year.

Geoff Green from the Kawau Island Maritime Park Charitable Trust (KIMCT) spoke next. He said that felling the pines would need to be followed by replanting and a reforestation plan, which his group would like to be involved in. Because of the timeframe he feels a nursery needs to be established and a labour force put in place now. Warwick agreed that there is more to think about than just felling the trees. He said that the re-growth would have to be managed. This would have to be tied in with the wallaby and possum eradication in order to have effective regeneration. There is a definite opportunity for the community to be involved in this process.

Board members asked about the pest eradication programme and what the process of establishing a nursery was. Rolien said that the original eradication

programme was being lead by a Kawau community group called the NZ Pohutukawa Trust with the support of the ARC and the Department and focused on eradicating wallaby. This eradication programme has now been widened to include all pests (wallaby, possums and rats) and will be called a restoration programme. There has been consultation with the Kawau community and it is hopeful that these pests will be eradicated by 2006. She added that there were two established nurseries nearby (on Motuora Island and at Tawharanui) which would be viable options to use for a regeneration project on Kawau Island.

Paddy stressed that the Department was at a formative stage in their planning. If this planning was done right a lot of change could happen in a short space of time. The key is to make sure the planning is balanced between the Department and the community.

Geoff said the KIMCT was working with Kawau Trust but what they needed from the Department was the ground work in place. This would make it a lot easier to work together with other groups. Paddy commented that the process that needed to be followed involved legislation and was tied in with the Recreation Facilities Review.

Dave Legge from the Grey Bach Group (GBG) gave a brief history of Schultz's Cottage. Historically the bach was rented out to the public and they would like to see this continue. The GBG doesn't want to see the bach closed or demolished. He believes the bach can be rented at a profit for families to enjoy. He feels strongly about the fact that the bach can not be rented out (as has been the case for the last two summers) until a decision is made on the Sunny Bay site.

Anne Northey added that the profit generated from the bach could be recycled into maintenance and protection for the bach by volunteer groups. The group has both the trades people and administrative assistance to maintain the bach for families and people interested in conservation.

Board members questioned why the bach wasn't able to be rented out. Warwick replied that because rental accommodation was not part of the Department's core conservation business money couldn't justifiably be spent on the bach so maintenance has been deferred. He went on to say that a number of groups have shown an interest in taking over the management of the bach. The final decision is tied in with the Recreation Facilities Review. The Department is comfortable for a community group to take over the management of the bach if they can show they have the capacity to do so.

Dave commented that the Grey Bach has a history of being let whereas the other two baches in Sunny Bay haven't. Anne Northey said although she accepts that letting out a bach is not the Department's core conservation business, she feels that we should conserve what we've got and she doesn't want to see the bach demolished.

Stephanae Rainey read a letter from option4. They said they have been addressing the Board for nine months and feel they haven't had any feedback. They are disturbed that the survey being undertaken by Head Office to find out people's views on marine protection does not include a national representative fishing organisation. Stephanae brought up a list of questions option4 would like answered by the Department. **Action**

**RESOLVED** that the letter be received.

**STAFFORD-BUSH/KIRK**

Stephanie then brought up the subject of the late George Mason. She read out an email from his daughter Ann Mason. Anne Mason feels strongly that her father was misquoted by Rob McCallum in the December Board meeting and would like an apology. It was decided that the email be received and directed to Rob and there should be no further discussion on the matter. **Action**

**RESOLVED** that the email be received.

**HADDON/STAFFORD-BUSH**

Paddy then welcomed Ken Catt, Jan Riddick and Dave Pattermore from Forest and Bird. She also noted apologies from Jan Hanbury of the Hauturu Supporter's Trust, reading a fax from her. The Trust thanked the Department for their support in their kiore eradication application and the well-organised changeover currently taking place between the old and new rangers on Hauturu Island.

Dave Pattermore spoke regarding Forest and Bird's views on the satellite tagging of Hector's dolphins. He felt it was important to make Forest and Bird's views known to the Board. Forest and Bird believes that because the dolphins are such an at risk population they shouldn't be used for an invasive technique trial where alternative survey techniques exist.

Warwick responded by saying that the Department agrees that Maui's dolphins are critically endangered but feels something must be done to protect them. The Department believes it is critical to get better information on these dolphins, which is the reason they are proceeding with the trial. It has been approved to start in two or three days in Bank's Peninsula by the Southern Regional General Manager, although it was commissioned by the Auckland Conservancy. The Department is not prepared to do the trial on Maui's dolphins as they are more critically endangered than Hector's dolphins, but they do want to trial satellite tagging in NZ conditions. Satellite tagging has been successful overseas and although there are risks, the Department is confident that everything has been done to minimise these. Tagging animals with transmitter devices has been carried out successfully in NZ for years, for example on seals and kakapo. The Department acknowledges the concerns of Forest and Bird and is confident these can be worked through.

Paddy commented that this issue was always going to be contentious but sometimes a bold step needs to be taken. The questions that need to be asked are whether the right processes are in place and that the process is robust. Board members questioned whether the trial would continue if it is found that the tagging harms the dolphins and if there was a robust measuring process. Warwick assured the Board that the measuring process was robust and that all information is available to the public.

Ken said he has been involved with Hector's dolphins for 15 years. While he appreciates that you can't protect an animal if you don't know enough about it he thinks we have to be extremely cautious. If a dolphin is killed in the trial there is likely to be a public outcry. He stated that in the USA one out of 25 dolphins were killed from the tagging procedure. Warwick argued that there has never been a death from satellite tagging. He said the biggest risk in the process is the capture of the dolphins.

Dave said that the permit for the trial was granted on Monday but ethics approval was given last year. He wanted to know if this was a process error. He

understands the need of an intervention procedure to protect endangered species but wondered whether the benefits of satellite tagging were outweighed by the risks.

Laly commented that it is difficult to define how long public consultation should last and who should be consulted. There comes a point where you just have to forward on.

Paddy thanked everybody for coming and closed the public forum.

Paddy also noted an addition to the agenda. Under General Business items she would like to raise the issue of the CMS SOP review.

## 5. Major Items

### 5.1 Sunny Bay

Warwick outlined that under an infrastructure review it was decided that the structures at Sunny Bay were no longer required by the Department. Proposals for the site were invited and considered by the Department. A preliminary view was taken that the site was suitable for an outdoor education facility. A decision was then put on hold until the outcome of the Recreation Facilities Review. Submissions have closed and are now being analysed and a decision on the most appropriate use for the site will be made soon. The land will need to be reclassified if an outdoor education facility is decided on. This will take time as it has to be publicly notified. After the land is reclassified the Department will invite the preferred group to submit a concession application.

Questions raised by Board members included:

- Whether the GBG were interested in all the structures at Sunny Bay. It was confirmed they are only interested in the Grey Bach and that a decision was likely to be made by 31 March.
- Whether the Board had an input into the decision regarding the GBG. Warwick said the Board could comment on this in their Recreation Facilities submission.
- Why the bach couldn't be used while a decision was being made. Warwick said that the Department would have to organise its use as a concession was needed for a group to do it.
- Who was currently responsible for the maintenance of the Grey Bach. It was confirmed that the Department had taken all chattels out of the Grey bach and was responsible for its upkeep.

Paddy reiterated that a decision about the most appropriate use of Sunny Bay would be made by 31 March. She also suggested that the Board make a site visit to Sunny Bay. **Flag**

She then thanked all the groups involved in Sunny Bay for coming to the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that 1) the report be received and 2) progress be endorsed.

**STAFFORD-BUSH/FENN**

## 3. Review and Confirmation of Minutes

### 3.1 Minutes of the meeting of 11 December 2003

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

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of 11 December 2003 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

**KAWHARU/FENN**

## **4. Reports**

### 4.1 Auckland Conservator's Report

Items discussed included:

- Motuihe Trust Warwick outlined a brief history of the Trust's recent issues saying that there had been some debate over the Trust's internal direction for Motuihe Island. The Trust has recently commissioned John Hawley to draw up a restoration plan for the island which is expected to be finished by the end of March.
- Okura track upgrade Questions were raised about iwi consultation and whether a karakia should have been done before supplies for the track upgrade were dropped. It was confirmed that the track was being rerouted so it was no longer on private land.
- CCET It was brought up that the Trust were looking for a new conservation project.

**RESOLVED** that the report be accepted.

**HADDON/KAWHARU**

### 4.2 Chairperson's Report

Paddy brought up Kerry Howe's article on the Hauraki Gulf Islands and the following response, thanking Jenny for her comments to the editor and congratulating DOC on their response.

Paddy noted the NZCA's actions on 4-wheel drive vehicles, saying the Board should keep sending letters to NZCA as it helps trigger successful actions.

## **5. Major Items (cont)**

### 5.2 Hauraki Gulf Islands – the relationship between DOC and the Trusts

Warwick spoke to this, saying he understands the Board has had recurring concerns about this issue. He detailed how the Department currently works with Trusts, using both the concessions process and MOUs. Under an MOU a Trust is expected to prepare a restoration plan. They are also required to set out their vision, connect this vision to the CMS, set out their goals and show how they are going to achieve them. This process fits with DOC's philosophy of getting the community involved.

The Board can contribute to this process through the CMS. The CMS is up for review so in the next 12-18 months the Board will be heavily involved in this process. The Board will need to have a good look at the relevant sites and address the question of how they see these sites in 10 years time. It is critical to be clear of the outcome wanted and how to achieve this outcome.

The intention of the CMS versus the intention of community groups was discussed by the Board. It was asked why DOC lets groups apply for concessions when their plans don't fit in with the CMS. Warwick responded by saying that anyone can apply for a concession and for the application to progress to the next stage it must fit "broadly" with the CMS.

A comment was made that it is hard to be too prescriptive in the CMS as this would not allow for any discussion. It is better to accept a proposal to see the intentions of a group. The Board then has an opportunity to raise all issues when asked to give advice on a triggered concession. Nothing would be achieved by "locking conservation up". The broad line principal is whether a concession enhanced conservation values and protected conservation land for the future.

Warwick reinforced the importance of getting the next CMS right in terms of setting the goals, agreeing that from past experience prescriptive plans are difficult to work with. The CMS needs to become more outcome orientated, avoiding being prescriptive but clearly stating the environmental character and the experience the Department wants people to have at a particular site.

Other questions asked by the Board included:

- How the Department makes a decision when more than one group has applied for a concession application for the same site. Warwick said the Department's objective was to provide for community involvement, and decisions were based on this.
- Whether DOC could be taking an "umbrella role" with the Trusts to make restoration more efficient. Warwick reiterated that the Department cannot dictate what the Trusts do as they are following the objective of "conservation with communities".
- If the Department could give the Board a set of criteria detailing who was responsible for what in a relationship between DOC and a Trust.
- How the Trusts feel when their concession applications are turned down. It was noted by the Board that an application must be costly in both time and money. Warwick said it was made clear to the Trusts from the outset that certain standards were expected to be met in order to obtain a concession.

Paddy complimented the Concessions Review Project. She feels the Department has taken a positive step and the outcome will be a faster and more successful system which will also address iwi concerns.

Warwick thanked the Board for raising their concerns and promised these concerns would be addressed in a report attached to an agenda item in the April Board meeting.

### 5.3 Endorsement of General Policy Conservation Act and National Parks Act submissions

**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

**FENN/KIRK**

### 5.4 Update on Great Barrier Island and other marine reserve proposals

Warwick informed the Board that the analysis of the submissions had been done. More work is needed to get clarity to see how some people, for example Ngati

Rehua, are going to be effected by the proposal. When the work is completed the Department will be able to make a judgement as to whether they will modify the process and do another round of consultation, or publicly notify the proposal. The feeling at present is that people have made their views clear and there is enough information to proceed with a formal application, which could happen in 4-5 months and would proceed under the Marine Reserves Act.

Warwick then talked about the related issue of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Protection Strategy, saying it was still progressing. A report has been completed and circulated internally for feedback. It has also gone out to other regional organisations to try and get their involvement.

The Science and Research Unit in Wellington are looking at the public's attitude to marine reserves in Wellington. They want to get a GBI focus group together to get a picture of people's understanding of marine reserves.

The Department has had no updates on the Tiritiri Matangi marine reserve proposal.

### 5.5 Recreation Opportunities Review

The draft submission was discussed page by page and the points raised were:

- Point 6. Mt Auckland should be changed to its Maori name, Atua Nui.
- Point 8. 'Miranda-Pokeno road' should be changed to Kaiaua Rd, and a comment added about the motorway extension north in relation to how well patronised the tracks are.
- What the purpose of the submission was. Warwick explained that the submission was asking where people want their recreation facilities to be in 10 year's time.
- That permanent public access should always be a given.
- The management of the Papakanui area was discussed and it was asked if it was appropriate to mention this in the Recreation Facilities Review. As there are no plans to build a structure there Warwick said it should not be included in the Board's submission although he acknowledged that there is an issue with how the Department manages the use of this area, especially related to unexploded ordinance, 4-wheel drive vehicles and nesting birds. Paddy asked if it would be appropriate to write to Rob McCallum regarding Papakanui as some Board members feel strongly that the Department should act on this issue. Warwick said that a decision was made discourage public access to this area due to the unexploded ordinance that remains there. There have been ongoing discussions between the Department and Defence about this area and that biggest problem was that Defence would not take any responsibility about controlling the access to Papakanui. **Bring up**
- Laly suggested that the tangata whenua make a submission on this issue.

#### **Action**

**RESOLVED** that a submission be made.

**KAWHARU/HADDON**

- Point 10. Home Bay Wharf to be added.

Warwick added that the Board submission was very useful feedback for the Department. Submissions for the Recreation Facilities Review have closed and

currently a report is being prepared to go to the Regional General Manager. Before this report goes to the RGM it will come back to the Board.

**RESOLVED** that the submission be received.

**YATES/WALSH**

## 6. Statutory Actions

### 6.1 Resource Consent Applications by the Department of Conservation

The Department was alerted that there may be a leaking pipe near the toilets at Motuihe and that the directional signs to the campsite are confusing. **Flag**

### 6.2 Concessions Schedules

Items discussed included:

- Whether MOEIC and MRT were in competition for the Home Bay site. Warwick stated that they were but that their concession applications were likely to be processed independently; MRT application being considered first as it was the first to be received.
- Jenny to be put on the Concession's subcommittee. **Action**
- A question was asked about the progress of Barry Keon's application as it was visited six months ago. Warwick said it could be in the iwi consultation stage.
- More information for the Board on the Landcare Research concession. **Action**
- The issue of how long a grazing concession should be was raised and whether it was consistent with the CMS.
- Iwi consultation at the Mairatahi Landing Reserve was discussed.
- The Board are interested in the progress of the Rangitoto Island application as they have given comment on this application. **Action**
- It was decided it is time to review the concessions triggers. **Action**
- It was asked whether Helicopter landings at Tiritiri Matangi were for tourism and if they were consistent with the CMS. Warwick replied that they were in line with Department policy.

### 6.3 Triggered Concessions

There was no discussion.

## 7. Subcommittee Reports

### Maori Members

Margaret reported that the whale kaupapa was presented to Rolien, Rau and Dave Wilson from the Warkworth Area Office at the Rewhiti Marae on 2 February. The Department will give feedback in the next few weeks. **Bring up**

An article on Okahu Bay from the Auckland Herald was brought up. Margaret felt it was relevant to the Board because the land is in the Auckland Conservancy and it is a good example of a successful relationship between the Crown and Iwi. Parallels can be drawn with the Department's relationship with community groups in the Hauraki Gulf.

Paddy thanked Margaret and asked for a copy of the Management plan to be made for the Board's library. **Action**

Margaret queried whether the Department would take any action on what the Biomarine group are proposing to do in the Kaipara Harbour with their marine farming application through the ARC. Warwick responded that the Department had an advocacy role in this process, and also has a role in the final consent authority on restricted coastal activity. Warwick will come back to the Board after a meeting on Monday. **Action**

#### Planning/Concessions

Questions raised about the Concessions Review:

- The Board had previously asked if the notes in the Concessions schedule could include more information about iwi involvement. Maori members were asked to look carefully at the processes for iwi involvement in the final Concessions Review.
- Monitoring and how it would be funded was discussed. Warwick said the money would have to be found.

Paddy complimented the Department on their efforts and asked for the Board to get their final comments in as soon as possible. **Action**

#### Marine

Mau's dolphins were covered in the Public Forum.

### **8. Minutes – NZCA and neighbouring Conservation Boards**

There was no discussion.

### **9. Liaison/Representation**

Kathy reported that she had been liaising with a landowner near Clevedon Coast who wants to subdivide his section but is having trouble with the council. It was suggested by other Board members that the landowner refer his concerns to the Minister of Conservation.

### **10. Correspondence**

There was no discussion.

### **11. Other Business**

The CMS SOP review was discussed. A comment needs to be made by the Board before 12 March. **Action**

A site visit for Kawau Island was decided for Thursday 11 March.

### **12. Date and venue for the next ordinary meeting**

Thursday 29 and Friday 30 April on Great Barrier Island.

The meeting closed at 2.30.

**Confirmed as a true and correct record at the meeting of 4 May 2004**

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**Paddy Stafford-Bush**