

Minutes of the seventy-first meeting of the Auckland Conservation Board held on 24 June 2004 in the Boardroom, Auckland Conservancy Office, Karangahape Road, Auckland commencing at 9.30am.

Present: Paddy Stafford-Bush (Chairperson), Anne Fenn, Jenny Kirk, Alan La Roche, Cath Tizard, Tony Holman, Kathy Walsh, Laly Haddon, Mel Galbraith, Margaret Kawharu, Denise Yates

In Attendance: Rob McCallum (Conservator), Warwick Murray (Community Relations Manager), Rebecca Rush (Community Relations Officer-Board Support), Rolien Elliot (Warkworth Area Manager), Bill Trusewich (Community Relations Manager, Auckland Area Office)

Visitors: Brett Rathe, David Chandler (New Zealand Conservation Authority), Sam Denny (Tamaki Reserve Protection Trust), John Laurence and Michael Wood (Motuihe Restoration Society), Geoff Green (Kawau Island Maritime Park Charitable Trust), Jim Holdaway, Kath Coombes (Auckland Regional Council), Dave Allen and Stephanie Hill (Ministry of Fisheries)

Laly Haddon offered a karakia.

1. Apologies/Welcome/Introductions

Paddy welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular visitors. Apologies were recorded from Steven Ching.

RESOLVED that the apologies be accepted.

STAFFORD-BUSH/HADDON

2. Public Forum

Brett Rathe spoke first about the proposed Great Barrier Island marine reserve. He voiced his viewpoint that the marine reserve proposal lacked public support and that the Department were still proceeding with the proposal. He believes the public are genuinely interested in conserving the marine resources in the Hauraki Gulf but want to be more fully consulted.

Paddy responded by saying a discussion would be held on the matter during agenda item 7.1.

Geoff Green, coordinator for Kawau Island Maritime Park Charitable Trust spoke next regarding Sunny Bay. KIMPCT had been interacting with DOC, Kawau Island Residents and Ratepayers Association and Outdoor Pursuits Centre for 20 months, with the last seven months spent waiting for a legal decision on reclassification. He questioned the delay in a decision on the Sunny Bay site and asked for an update so KIMPCT could have some future direction.

Paddy responded by saying the issue would be discussed during agenda item 14.

Jim Holdaway brought to the Board's attention North Shore City's variation to their District Plan which could affect the landscape around the Long Bay Regional Park. The Board have previously made a submission on this issue. Jim stressed the importance of

preserving the grass backdrop to the Long Bay Regional Park. If the variation goes through this backdrop could disappear due to subdivision development.

Paddy thanked Jim for bringing the issue to the Board's attention. The Board would make a submission with Denise, Mel and Jenny volunteering to put it together. **Action**

Points raised by Board members included;

- Why the council was bringing in the variation. Jim responded by saying there had been a change in the zoning of the area.
- Tony said although NSC was trying to protect the most sensitive parts of the Park, such as streams and riparian rights, they had not expanded the Park as was their original intention. He reminded the Board there was also a marine reserve at Long Bay so it was worth looking at the issue from both land and sea.

RESOLVED that 1) the Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society document be received and 2) a submission on the North Shore City District Plan – Proposed Variation 66 be prepared and to be ratified at the August meeting.

STAFFORD-BUSH/GALBRAITH

6. Major Items

6.2. Fort Takapuna Management Plan

Warwick explained that the Department currently administers the Historic Reserve and the adjoining Recreation Reserve at Fort Takapuna. A proposal for North Shore City to take over the management of the Recreation Reserve has been accepted, with the Department retaining management of the Historic Reserve. Some minor boundary changes will need to be made to accommodate the position of the historic buildings on the site. Once these boundary changes have been decided on a Memorandum of Understanding will be drawn up.

Board members raised concerns including;

- Separate management planning for each reserve. Warwick stressed that although there would be two management plans it was hugely important that the reserves be managed as one.
- The timeline for review of the CMS. Warwick said the CMS review was between 12-18 months away, after the General Policy was finalised. He added that NSC was planning to undertake management planning for the Recreation Reserve, but as he was unsure of their timeline. If it was ahead of the CMS review, NSC would have to address issues in the CMS which the Department would need to foreshadow.

Rob reminded the Board that when the CMS was written the Defence Force managed Fort Takapuna. Warwick added that the intention was for DOC and NSC to work together with management planning, even though they would be working under two different legal processes.

Sam Denny addressed the Board explaining the background to the Tamaki Reserve Protection Trust. The Trust was set up in 1997 and when the land became a reserve in 2000 they put forward a ten step plan. At this stage they have not yet completed the first step because the management of the Recreation reserve has not yet been taken over by NSC. The Trust would like to be part of the management process with DOC and NSC. She suggested a steering group be formed including representatives from the Department, NSC, the Trust and iwi.

Rob said that both the Department and NSC would like to see the reserve open for the coming summer and suggested the Board form a temporary subcommittee to liaise with the Department, NSC and the Trust. **Action** Jenny, Anne and Paddy will form the Fort Takapuna subcommittee with Jenny convening.

RESOLVED that 1) the report be received, 2) progress be endorsed and 3) the Fort Takapuna subcommittee be formed and 3) that a subcommittee be formed comprising Jenny Kirk, Anne Fenn and Paddy Stafford-Bush, with Jenny Kirk as convener.

STAFFORD-BUSH/KIRK

14. Other Business

Sunny Bay

Warwick reminded the Board of the issue at Sunny Bay; what to do with the site now that the Department no longer required it. Sunny Bay was fast-tracked as part of the Recreation Opportunities Review with the timeline initially stating a decision would be made by the end of March 2004. A report was produced at the end of March. A further report regarding the reclassification of the reserve was in preparation stages in April when serious legal issues were raised. The Department's lawyers held the view that there had been insufficient process to reclassify the land.

Board members questioned;

- Why there was a difficulty reclassifying the site. Warwick replied that in the hierarchy of reserves it was easy to move up but not down. Currently, Sunny Bay is classified as a Historic Reserve. A reclassification to a Recreation Reserve would move it down the hierarchy. To reclassify the site it must be determined whether the historic values of the site have gone. Following this the Minister of Conservation must decide whether it is in the public interest to reclassify. It is critical that the Minister has the best legal advice, which is why there has been a delay in the process.
- Whether there was room for an outdoor education camp at the site. Rob replied that the planning in the concession application had fully satisfied the Department.

The matter of the Grey Bach was raised. Rob explained that a letter had been written to the Group advising of the standard the Grey Bach would need to be kept at and encouraging them to have an assessment made by a builder and building inspector and then report back to the Department.

7. Standing Items

7.1. Great Barrier Island Marine Reserve Proposal

Warwick told the Board the Department had decided to proceed with the notification of the Great Barrier Island marine reserve, with notification proposed for mid-July. The Department based its decision on the fact that the eight different habitats identified in the proposed area are very representative of the biodiversity in the Hauraki Gulf. Secondly, with the location of and the relative remoteness from Auckland they have a good case for the proposal which would not adversely affect many people. Warwick stressed the importance of the words "adversely affected", reminding the Board it was not a numbers game. The Minister will also consider who is "adversely affected" to determine whether the proposal should go ahead.

A few changes have been made to the original proposal. Whangapoua estuary will not be included in the reserve as it is used by the local community. Other management systems are being looked at for this area. Both the northern and southern boundaries will be shifted slightly so in-line marking can be used.

Warwick explained that, once notified, there will be a two month period to give people an opportunity to make a submission and if necessary to flag how the proposal would affect them.

Rob commented on the Boat Count Survey which was conducted during the Christmas period and again at Easter. He said the results showed a spike in use over Christmas due to the excellent weather, with numbers being down again at Easter. Overall the survey showed that the proposed area is not a high use one.

Laly stated support of marine reserves in principle but not this one in particular as the Seabed and Foreshore legislation is yet to be finalised.

RESOLVED that 1) the report be received and 2) that the Auckland Conservation Board make a submission to the Great Barrier Island marine reserve once the proposal is notified.

STAFFORD-BUSH/HOLMAN

Laly Haddon and Margaret Kawharu requested that their dissenting vote be recorded on the principal that the Seabed and Foreshore Legislation has yet to be finalised.

6. Major Items (cont)

6.3. Mangroves

Kath Coombes from the Auckland Regional Council said they were currently testing guidelines produced by NIWA on community monitoring of mangroves at Bayswater and Puhurihuri Inlet. The Bayswater community was concerned with mangroves encroaching on shell banks whereas mangroves were making it more difficult for recreation boating in the Puhurihuri Inlet. Kath said it was an easy project for the community, involving twice yearly measuring of mangroves and noting habitat change and sedimentation. The aim of the long term monitoring was to get scientific validity to the study of mangroves as currently most evidence is anecdotal.

A Mangrove Steering Group has been set up with representatives from the Regional Council, the Department, Landcare Groups, and Universities, last meeting in November 2003. The ultimate aim of the Group is to better understand why mangroves are spreading.

7. Standing Items (cont)

7.2. Biodiversity of Great Barrier Island

Barbara Breen, Community Relations Officer – Education, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation informing the Board about the eight different habitats identified in the proposed Great Barrier Island marine reserve.

Questions from Board members;

- Whether INMARC and MEC were internal or external marine classification systems. Barbara explained that INMARC was a Department system and MEC was set up by NIWA.

6. Major Items (cont)

6.1. Motuihe Restoration Plan

John Laurence (Chairman) and Michael Wood (Secretary) from the Motuihe Restoration Trust presented the Motuihe Restoration Plan to the Board. John stated that the vision of the Trust involved three aspects; education about conservation on Motuihe Island and

the wider Auckland area, community participation and, because of the nature of the island and its popularity with boaties, recreation

Michael detailed the history of the Trust, saying it was established in 2000. The Trust commissioned John Hawley, a landscape architect, to draw up a plan for the island after consultation with the Department, Trustees and the community. Once the Board has commented on the plan and the Trust has sought community input, the Plan will be signed off by the Department. Following this, a Memorandum of Understanding will then be drawn up.

Issues raised by Board members included;

- Where seed for replanting was sourced. John said seed was collected from Motuihe and Waiheke Islands.
- How volunteers were generated. John replied that the Trust had never needed to advertise for volunteers. Volunteers generally contacted the Trust after media coverage such as the article in the Herald earlier this year. The Trust also hosted corporate team building days.
- The future of cattle grazing. There is still a concession for cattle grazing on the island. The Trust would eventually like to see cattle gone from the island but acknowledge grazing is needed until at least 50% of the island is planted.
- Whether history is being recorded. Michael responded saying the Trust was in contact with people regarding the history of the island.
- Visitor's centre. Michael stated it is important as it would provide shelter and information and could be a place where refreshments are offered.
- Whether any research had been done on shore platforms. Bill responded by saying the restoration plan did not focus on marine issues.

Bill Trusewich, Community Relations Manager from Auckland Area spoke to the Board outlining the key features of the plan. The first was the new recreational opportunities that would be provided, for example, the network of walking tracks that would be developed. Another key feature was the potential for the community to be involved. Strong potential is seen for the involvement of tangata whenua in the development of historic areas, and because of the islands accessibility to Auckland, boating clubs are also likely to be involved.

Bill went on to say that the Department is currently looking at the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park as a whole and is hoping to establish a relationship between a group of like-minded Trusts, trying to get best practice established, and for them to work jointly on issues such as funding.

Paddy commented that she was impressed with the calibre of the Motuihe Restoration Plan. Warwick also complimented the Trust on their vision and direction.

RESOLVED that 1) the Motuihe Restoration Plan be received and 2) feedback will be provided to the Motuihe Restoration Trust.

STAFFORD-BUSH/HOLMAN

14. Other Business (cont)

Wharepapa Land Exchange

Warwick outlined that this issue had been around for a number of years. In 2001 a Mr Ross approached the Department seeking to have land exchanged for a nearby island. The land had been gifted to the Department by Mr Harold Monk in 1943 for the purpose of retaining sand, but since the New Zealand Forest Service planted pines on

what we now know as the Woodhill forest, sand movement has stabilised and the reserve is no longer required for sand retention purposes.

The reserve has been drained and grazed since it was gifted and today the land has no conservation value to the Department. There is a small area of wetland within the reserve which, as suggested by Mr Ross, will be fenced off, either protected by a covenant or retained as a reserve and named the Harold Monk Memorial Reserve to remember the original gift by Harold Monk. Auckland Regional Council and Rodney District Council have signalled their support to DOC for this area of wetland to be covenanted or protected.

The island being offered is small and covered in native vegetation. Because of the whakapapa links it is of high significance to Ngati Whatua. The Department believes the cultural heritage factors would make it an outstanding pre-european Historic Reserve, of which there are few protected examples in the Auckland Conservancy. If the exchange doesn't occur Mr Ross will put the island up for sale.

Under the Reserves Act, when conservation land is being sold or disposed of it is offered back to the original owner. However, in the instance of land exchanges there is no requirement to offer the land back. In good faith the Department wished to locate any direct descendants and discuss the proposal with them and found that Mr Monk died leaving no direct descendants. There has been substantial consultation with distant relatives in the Monk family who believe the land should be returned to the family or retained in public ownership. The Department has also consulted with adjacent landowners, iwi and the local community and has come to the conclusion that the conservation benefits of the land exchange going ahead outweigh any local issues raised.

Maori members voiced concerns that iwi were not well-informed of the proposal and that this may have caused some confusion. They feel the main issue is not about tangata whenua, and whakapapa issues need not cloud a straight land swap. However, the Department was advised that Ngati Whatua will need to be consulted with again once the land exchange has taken place.

Board members asked about the presence of pests on the island and were told there were no significant pest issues.

The Board expressed the view about the value of islands from an ecological point of view, adding that having archaeological sites on the island only made it more valuable. The Board was supportive of the land exchange in terms of conservation values but felt there was a need to go back to iwi to make the Department's position clear. The Board proposes to write a letter to the Conservator outlining the discussion held on the issue.

Action

3. Review and Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of 3 & 4 May 2004

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of 3 & 4 May 2004 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

GALBRAITH/LA ROCHE

6. Major Items (cont)

6.6. Eels

Dave Allen from the Ministry of Fisheries presented the Board with background on long and short-finned eels in New Zealand. Dave pointed out that the differences in life-span and preferred habitat of long and short-finned eels meant they were managed differently. As both eels spawn just once in their life, management of this species is a different issue from the management of fish spawning annually. As well as the introduction of eels into the Quota Management System, management options included making sure eels have adequate escapement, closing some catchment areas and introducing a code of practice amongst eel fishers to encourage them not to fish migratory eels.

Eels were introduced to the QMS in the South and Chatham Islands last year and will be introduced in the North Island on 1 October this year. The Ministry will be conducting further intensive monitoring of eels and hopes to see some improvement in eel stocks in the next five years.

Questions raised by Board members included;

- Where eels were placed on the food chain. Dave explained that the only predator adult eels encountered in NZ were people. Elvers are eaten by trout and catfish.
- How far eels swim up rivers. Dave said long-finned eels will swim as far as they can while short-finned prefer the muddy waters not far upstream.
- Whether five years was a realistic timeframe to see an improvement in eel stocks. Dave answered that the numbers may not be greater after five years but they were hoping to see an improvement in the size of eels.
- Whether eels were being farmed by aquaculture. Dave said this method was phased out in the 1990s because of problems with disease and finances.
- Whether there was a problem of bi-catch with eels. Dave stated that all eels caught had to be counted against the annual catch entitlement. They can be released if they are likely to survive.
- Whether the Ministry was liaising with other governments over eels. Dave replied that currently they were focussing solely on eels in NZ but that it would logically follow that they would get in touch with Australian and Pacific Island agencies.

5. Matters Arising

5.2. New Zealand Conservation Authority

David Chandler reported that the two main issues concerning the NZCA at present are General Policy – National Parks and Conservation Act and the NZCA's Strategic Priorities.

Other matters currently concerning the NZCA are; four-wheel-drive vehicles, eels, the CMS SOP, the Concessions Review and walkways. David suggested the Board discuss with the Conservator the issue of defining walkways which are on private land. (Action)

4. Reports

4.1. Conservator's Report

Items discussed included;

- Motuora Island. It was confirmed no new pests had been found on Motuora Island.
- Hector's Dolphin Tagging Trial. The implication of the finding that Hector's dolphins were travelling outside the marine sanctuary was questioned. Rob replied that the preliminary report stated the dolphins travel further out to sea and range

further up and down the coast than was previously thought, and that this would have implications for the fishing industry.

- Hauturu. The release of tuatara was discussed, with Rob saying the Department always waited two years after the completion of a poison drop before releasing any wildlife.
- Exchange of Shore Reserve East Recreation Reserve. The quality of the land exchanged was questioned. Rob said the Department had acquired a seven to nine metre strip of land for a walkway through mangroves. The land the ARC now have is highly modified and of no conservation value.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted.

STAFFORD-BUSH/HOLMAN

4.2. Chairperson's Report

Paddy spoke about the Conservation Board Chairperson's Conference held in May, touching on the key issues raised. These issues will be incorporated into the Auckland Conservation Board strategy which will be circulated to all Board members. **Action**

4.3. Hauraki Gulf Forum

Laly outlined the history of the Forum, saying it was set up in 2000 with members from local and regional authorities and the government (DOC, Ministry of Maori Affairs, Ministry of Fisheries). He said the Forum was a good way of sharing information but that there had been some criticism about the lack of achievement by the group. However, two reports are due out soon; a report on the state of the Hauraki Gulf and a review of the Forum over the last four years.

Paddy suggested that there was an opportunity for Board members to attend the Hauraki Gulf Forum's meetings, with the next meeting being held on 22 September. **Action**

5. Matters Arising (cont)

5.1. Four-Wheel-Drive Vehicles

Rebecca gave an update on the Four Wheel Drive Working Group, saying the Group was currently not very active.

Issues raised by Board members included;

- Policing. Rob said currently regional and district councils and the Department were involved in the policing of four-wheel-drive vehicles. The difficulty is that there is currently no consistency between the agencies. However, it is anticipated that the new General Policy will address this.
- NZCA. The NZCA were congratulated on their letter to the Advertising Standards Authority which resulted in the ASA drafting a new code for the advertising of off-road vehicles.

It was suggested the Board write to the relevant agencies to reactivate this issue. **Action**

RESOLVED that 1) the report be received and 2) a letter be written to the relevant agencies regarding the Four Wheel Drive Working Group.

STAFFORD-BUSH/HOLMAN

6. Major Items (cont)

6.4. Home Bay

Warwick gave an update on the status of the concession applications from Motutapu Restoration Trust and Motutapu Outdoor Education Camp for the Home Bay site. Both

groups were asked by the Department to put their applications on hold during which time an economic analysis of how a new outdoor education facility could affect the existing outdoor education camp at Administration Bay could be undertaken. MRT have responded and are prepared to put their proposal on hold. MOEC has yet to give the Department a final response.

Rob commented on the Board's difficult position, as the current CMS protects MOEC's existing outdoor education camp. The Department feels there is an overlap in the objectives of both Trusts, and would like to get them working together to achieve a positive outcome for Home Bay.

8. Statutory Actions

8.1. Resource Consent Applications by the Department of Conservation

There were no new resource consent applications by the Department.

8.2. Concession Schedules

There was no discussion.

8.3. Triggered Concession Applications

There were no new triggered concession applications.

9. Subcommittee Reports

There was no discussion.

10. Board Business

10.1. Annual Report

Rebecca reminded the Board of the need for the Annual Report to be completed by the August meeting. It is currently being drafted up and will be circulated before the August meeting.

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

There was no discussion.

12. Correspondence

There was no discussion.

13. Liaison/Representation

Waitakere City Council

Denise brought up the Council's project to get permanent protection for the Waitakere Ranges. She raised concerns that the project was slowing down and questioned whether the Board could get involved. **Flag**

Geothermal Activity in the Marine Environment

The Department was asked if it had any involvement in this issue. Warwick replied that the Department had had preliminary approaches from exploratory companies.

Marine farming

A newly established Marine Farming Forum is to be set up by Environment Waikato, expected to meet every six months.

6. Major Items (cont)

6.5. CMS Monitoring

It was suggested the CMS subcommittee meet to discuss the report and schedules, and come back to the Department with any questions. **Action** A meeting of the CMS subcommittee is scheduled for 2pm on Tuesday 10 August at the Auckland Conservancy Office.

RESOLVED that 1) the report be accepted and 2) the CMS subcommittee meet to discuss the schedules.

STAFFORD-BUSH/KIRK

15. Date and Venue of the Next Ordinary Meeting

Thursday 26 August at the Auckland Area Office, Devonport.

The meeting closed at 3.15.