

# **In-Confidence**

# Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 07 June 2021

Data	1	,
Date:	/	/

Seen by Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

**Acting Minister of Conservation** 

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

### 1.1 Jobs for Nature

### Summary

# Current State (as at 1 June):

- We have sent you a list of proposed recommended projects to fund in the next upcoming approval round (Briefing 21-B-0389). Subject to your feedback, projects over \$1 million will be submitted to the Reference Group on 8 June for endorsement and then to SLU Ministers for approval. Projects under \$1 million will proceed into approval-in-principle stage following receipt of your feedback, and will be noted to SLU Ministers on 1 July.
- DOC's Chief Science Advisor provided you with advice recommending support of two JFN projects (Briefing 21-B-0365). A further briefing (21-B-0419) will be sent to your office the week beginning 07 June seeking your formal approval for these projects.
- As at 28 May, there are 114 funding agreements in negotiation, including recently approved projects within the JFN Community and Private Landowner Fund. We are working to have these funding agreements signed/executed by 30 June 2021, for projects to enter project delivery.
- You asked for the final response rate for the new monthly reporting (April 2021). This lifted from 30% to 83% following the new style of survey engagement and simplification of questions.
- We are currently testing different systems for refreshing our quarterly reporting system, including a survey format that pulls partner responses into a backend MS Excel format for easy analysis.
- The JFN Secretariat has produced a monthly DOC-view dashboard representing DOC's programme within the wider objectives of the crossagency programme.

# Updates - Workstreams and projects Nga Awa

This fund is now fully allocated.

### Prevention of North Island Indigenous Forest Collapse

- A project manager and two support roles are currently being recruited for the Kaimai-Mamaku restoration project. The project manager will move into detailed work on the operational plan for the project.
- The Raukumara project is now moving from development into engagement and co-design is underway on the future arrangements for governance/ accountability and project management.

### Relationship Scan

Ministry for the Environment

# Tute Litvironment

### Ministry of Social Development

 We are working with MSD to ensure that Delivery Partners are aware of the benefits of working with MSD to support jobseekers into employment and provide them with the skills to increase their resilience and employability.



# 1.2 RMA Advocacy

Weston Lea Limited & Director-General of Conservation v Hamilton City Council Environment Court Appeal (Amberfield)

- The Director-General has been involved in Environment Court proceedings relating to a subdivision proposal by Weston Lea Limited in south-west Hamilton (Amberfield). DOC's primary concern is potential effects of the subdivision on Nationally Critical long-tailed bats.
- Following an interim decision that supported the Director-General's appeal
  and further disagreement on conditions sought by the applicant that do not
  implement the decision, a judicial telephone conference was convened to
  discuss steps on how to progress this matter further.
- A hearing will be held on 16 17 June to determine if an application from Weston Lea to file further evidence is appropriate and, if time permits, to finalise condition wording.



# 1.3 Health, Safety & Wellbeing

 This week we are updating you on the COVID-19 pandemic response, and briefly outline one of our key HSW system initiatives, namely Critical Risk management. Future updates will brief you on other key elements of our HSW system and approach.

# COVID-19

- DOC has developed a comprehensive support and guidance material to enable staff to manage all aspects of the response as we understand it to date. This includes scenarios such as opening and closing visitor facilities, responding to staff illness and testing requirements, and general enquires from the public.
- The current focus is on supporting the vaccination roll-out process. We are following Public Service Commission and Ministry of Health guidance and are developing guidance to managers and staff regarding:
  - How DOC will support the roll-out of vaccinations to staff at site

- How we will manage the employment status of 'frontline' and other staff under different vaccination-status/employment scenarios
- Promotion of the benefits of vaccination to staff

### Managing Critical (Fatal) Risk

- DOC has around 3000 permanent staff, 800 temporary staff in summer, 15,000 volunteers. and hires many thousands of contractors annually (e.g. builders, electricians etc)
- We are an operational department and staff, contractors, and volunteers are regularly exposed to Critical Risk across a variety of working scenarios. A Critical Risk is a risk that could result in fatality or very serious injury.
- Unfortunately, several DOC staff have been killed at work over the years, most recently two staff in a helicopter accident near Wanaka in October 2018
- A comprehensive Critical Risk Management programme was initiated approximately five years ago to develop risk controls to protect staff, contractors, and volunteers from Critical Risk, using risk assessment tools such as Bow Tie.
- DOC has identified eight key Critical Risks in our work, the top three being on-road driving, working with helicopters, and working at heights. Specific controls have been developed for each risk and have been deployed into the safe working systems.
- Each of the key Critical Risks are owned by a Deputy Director-General (DDG), and annual 'deep dives' into each risk are conducted by the relevant DDG.
- Trends in Critical Risk are tracked currently through a 'lag' indicator being Potentially Fatal Incidents (PFI). As an example, over the last 12 months there have been 8 PFIs relating to Chainsaw Use, and 17 PFIs relating to Working with Helicopters.
- Recent Critical Risk management initiatives include:
  - Introduction of a Stop for Safety system, empowering all staff to stop work operations if they feel conditions are unsafe
  - An on-site verification programme is being deployed that assesses the presence and effectiveness of these risk controls on-the-job.

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# 2 Updates







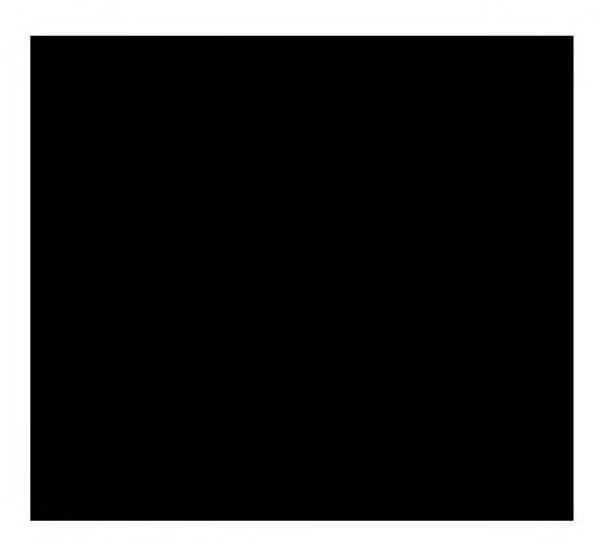


# 2.4 Intergovernmental Science – Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service and the upcoming 8th Plenary

- The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an independent intergovernmental body established to strengthen the science-policy interface for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term well-being, and sustainable development.
- IPBES currently has 137 member States. Many NGOs, organizations, conventions, and civil society groupings also participate in the formal IPBES process as observers, with several thousand individual stakeholders contributing to and benefiting from its work.
- New Zealand has been an active member of IPBES since 2012 with DOC as the lead agency. Over the years several New Zealand's scientific experts have been selected to participate in components of the work programme and various assessments.
- Over the last five years, IPBES has built a knowledge base, comprising eight assessments, which together have analysed more than 35,000 scientific publications including indigenous and local knowledge. These assessments are being used to inform the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in the broader context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The eighth plenary of IPBES (IPBES 8) will be held online between 14-24
   June 2021, with two officials from DOC representing New Zealand's interest.
- There are two significant scoping documents to be agreed at the Plenary.
   These are:
  - the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health in the context of climate change (nexus assessment).
  - the thematic assessment of the underlying cause of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (transformative change assessment).

- New Zealand fully supports the approval of both scoping documents and we have actively engaged in premeeting discussions on their scope.
- The other key areas are the platform's budget discussions, with a particular focus on fiscal restraint and ensuring that the cost of future assessments reflects a hybrid approach of virtual and face to face meetings – a result of the COVID-19 operating environment.
- New Zealand will also highlight the need for increased financial investment in systems and processes that enable more effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities.





# 2.6 Gender Pay Gap Update

- Following the release of Te Kawa Mataaho's updated guidance and information workshops, Te Papa Atawhai has begun work on its 2021 Gender Pay Gap Action Plan.
- At the workshops, the Gender Pay Gap Taskforce identified Te Papa Atawhai's previous action plan as a good example and able to be used as a resource by other agencies. As in previous years, a joint DOC-PSA working group will be convened to deliver this piece of work. The deadline for completing DOC's Gender Pay Gap Action Plan is 31 August 2021.

- While Te Papa Atawhai's Gender Pay Gap is low, the focus of this year's plan will again be on completing detailed analysis to track and identify any trends regarding gender pay gaps.
- This year's plan will also incorporate the work underway to understand pay gaps for Māori staff as well as a wider focus on Ethnic Pay Gaps, particularly as they relate to women. Initial analysis indicates that Ethnic Pay Gaps at Te Papa Atawhai appear to be low compared to the wider Public Service, however we are keen to understand what this looks like across the organisation.
- The Action Plan will also continue to monitor and track initiatives which have been established as part of the previous years' actions plans, including a strong focus on women in leadership.

Contact:			

# 3 Director-General Engagements

June

10 June Predator Free Summit, Te Papa

12 June NZ Deerstalkers Association National Conference, Queenstown

14 June Predator Free Golf Clubs Summit, Auckland

21 June DOC and Corrections Joint Leadership Teams Strategy Session,

Rimutaka Prison

July

Use Matariki Stakeholder luncheon, DOC Wellington
 Use July
 Matariki Stakeholder luncheon, DOC Wellington
 Fulton Hogan partnership signing event, Christchurch

20-21 July SLT Retreat, Pounui Homestead

**August** 

04-05 August Environmental Defence Society Conference, Christchurch Town

Hall

19-20 August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat, Brackenridge

Martinborough

19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington

September

04-12 September Conservation Week Events, TBC

# 4 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

### 4.1 2021 Sustainable Business Awards

- The Sustainable Business Network (SBN) have hosted the Sustainable Business Awards annually for the last 19 years to recognise and celebrate success in sustainability.
- An invitation for the 2021 event will be sent to your office in due course from SBN to present the Restoring Nature Award on the awards night (25 November 2021, location TBC by SBN), which is sponsored by DOC.
- DOC is in its fourth year of sponsoring the Restoring Nature Award to support the Department's Business Partnerships Strategy and Vision that "Every business restores our nature".
- This award will be presented to a business taking a leadership role in restoring New Zealand's nature and supports the objective of mainstreaming restoration as a key pillar of business sustainability.
- More information about the event logistics and finalists will be communicated to you as it becomes available.

Contact:	

### 4.2 Jobs for Nature

- Funding announcements (in the form of media releases) for the Lower Rangitata and Upper Rangitata projects are now with your office ready for distribution, noting we will check in with these projects following the Canterbury flooding event this week.
- The Taranaki and Northland regions particularly have indicated a cluster of projects that will be ready for announcement in the coming month. Work to finalise these projects and work with iwi and local stakeholders is underway.

Contact:	

# **Appendices**

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

- 1. Events table (regular item)
- 2. Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
- 3. Forthcoming items (regular item)4. Jobs for Nature Dashboard



# **In-Confidence**

# Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 14 June 2021

Date:	/ /

Seen by Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

**Acting Minister of Conservation** 

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

### 1.1 Jobs for Nature

# Current State (as at 8 June):

- Recommended projects (briefing 21-B-0389 refers) were presented and endorsed at the Reference Group meeting on 8 June.
- Projects under \$1M (within 21-B-0389) will be progressed through to a decision for approval-in-principle and noted to SLU Ministers on 1 July.
- A briefing (21-B-0428) was delivered to your office on 9 June seeking your approval for two projects relevant to the conditions set at the 10 May SLU Minister meeting.
- There are currently 61 projects in delivery and 112 projects in funding agreement negotiations. Our focus through June remains on contracting these projects into delivery.
- Successful and unsuccessful applicants for the JFN Community Fund and JFN Private Landowner Biodiversity Fund have been notified formally. We have received eight requests to date for further information on the reason for a declined application.
- Recent regional assurance visits include the West Coast and Queenstown to view and progress projects including;



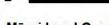
Predator Free South Westland projects:

- Tucker Beach restoration and
- Queenstown Workforce Hub projects
- This provided a good opportunity to meet with Regional Directors, staff and project delivery partners involved.
- We are now testing the quarterly reporting in survey format, including both financial
  and non-financial measures. The survey format will allow us to pre-populate
  milestone fields for reporting, enabling easier engagement by partners. User testing
  will occur with several partners over the next two weeks, with a new format to be
  rolled out mid-July. Quarterly reporting remains a key step in our assurance process.
- The JFN Secretariat has produced a monthly DOC-view dashboard representing DOC's programme within the wider objectives of the cross-agency programme.
   These dashboards have been produced for each agency involved in the programme and will be refined over the coming months.

# Updates - Workstreams and projects

### Community & Landowner Funds

- These projects (all under \$1M) were noted to the Reference Group on 8 June and will be noted to SLU Ministers at the upcoming meeting.
- The Funds Team are working through negotiating funding agreements with partners and the appointment of regional delivery managers.



### Māori Land Grant

We are proceeding with the proposed approach as agreed with your office.

### Relationship Scan



# 1.2 RMA Advocacy

No items this week

# 1.3 Health, Safety & Wellbeing

 This week's update covers the COVID-19 pandemic response, and briefly outlines another of our key HSW system initiatives, namely Helicopter Safety (part of our Critical Risk management programme).

### COVID-19

- No change in status over the last week. The focus remains on supporting the vaccination roll-out and developing guidance to managers and staff regarding:
  - Supporting the roll-out of vaccinations to staff, potentially at DOC sites
  - Managing the employment activities of unvaccinated staff and vaccinated staff under different vaccination-status/employment scenarios
  - Promotion of the benefits of vaccination to staff

# Managing Helicopter Safety

- Helicopters are an integral and necessary part of DOC's working model and there are many outputs that would be unachievable without their use, e.g. managing Great Walk systems.
- Working with helicopters has its own set of risks and is our second-highest rated Critical Risk (after on-road driving)
- Over the years, DOC staff, contractors and volunteers have been involved in serious helicopter incidents, some fatal. In October 2018 we lost two staff in a helicopter crash near Wānaka
- DOC hires approximately 95 helicopter companies each year (out of a national total of 103 companies), and is the largest single hirer of helicopters in the country.
- Over the last five years, in conjunction with the Civil Aviation Authority and the helicopter industry, we have worked on a comprehensive series of systems and controls to manage the risk related to working with helicopters. Examples include:
  - A joint DOC/Fire & Emergency NZ "Operating Service Standard" which requires
    operators hired by DOC or FENZ to meet various standards specific to our work
    e.g. flying in mountainous terrain at high altitude. This standard includes
    mandatory in-cockpit video recording and a comprehensive audit programme.
  - A new set of Standard Operating Procedures for specialist activities such as Aerial Hunting and helicopter-based seed collection
  - An in-house phone app 'Helicopter Boarding Pass' containing a risk control checklist that staff must complete before boarding a helicopter.
  - A new staff capability/training regime to significantly increase staff competence to work with helicopters.
- A major focus is on ensuring staff and operators are aware of, and are implementing, the risk controls that have been developed, across the large number of sites and situations where helicopters are hired.

Contact:

# 2.1 Eastern South Island- Canterbury Flooding Event 30-31 May 2021

- The recent adverse weather event impacted on our facilities and assets (both recreation and biodiversity).
- The impacts occurred primarily on the foothills and plains of the North Canterbury, Mahaanui/Christchurch, and Raukapuka/Geraldine Districts.
- No DOC offices, workshops or housing were impacted.
- We have set up a recovery plan and response structure based on a Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) model, incorporating lessons learned from the much larger Fiordland flooding event of February 2020.
- Staff began checks of DOC's visitor infrastructure across the region as soon as water levels receded.
- Public safety is our highest priority. Facilities have been closed where storm damage
  has caused a safety risk, and the website is being kept up to date to ensure the public
  are aware of any closures or safety alerts.
- We expect predator trap networks from some of the large biodiversity programmes (such as the Rangitata River) will be washed away, and we know that access to some sites has also been compromised. We are also expecting damage to boundary fences, however a full assessment of impact will take some time to complete.
- Information on damage is being collated to obtain an overall assessment of the cost of recovery. This information will be available to us after 18 June and used to prioritise and plan for the restoration of damaged assets and infrastructure.

Contact:



# 2.3 Short Mitigation of Commercial Fisheries Bycatch

- The Conservation Services Programme (CSP) is administered by DOC and is our primary mechanism to understand and address fishing related threats to protected species.
- CSP consists of fishery observers, as well as a suite of research and engagement projects aimed to understand and address the adverse effects of commercial fishing

- on protected marine species. Part of the costs of these "conservation services", as defined within the Fisheries Act 1996, are recovered from commercial quota holders.
- Discussions to date on potential work for 2021-22 have involved Fisheries New Zealand and a range of stakeholders, including fishing industry, Te Ohu Kai Moana, environmental group representatives, and independent researchers.
- This year Fisheries New Zealand has increased the daily rate for fisheries observers, resulting in a net increase in the proposed CSP for 2021/22 (see table below).
- You and the Director-General have a role to agree the Conservation Services and are scheduled to be briefed (week commencing 21 June) on potential items to include in the draft CSP for 2021/22.
- Following your decision, the Conservation Services are confirmed to Fisheries New Zealand to undertake the cost recovery process.

		2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Observers	Industry	\$2,443,951	\$1,441,281	\$1,217,040
	Crown	\$0	\$0	\$0
Interaction studies	Industry	\$284,566	\$196,362	\$310,848
	Crown	\$0	\$0	\$0
Population studies	Industry	\$274,047	\$246,854	\$424,384
	Crown	\$340,483	\$340,516	\$347,224
Mitigation studies	Industry	\$442,904	\$471,268	\$286,598
	Crown	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	Industry	\$3,445,468	\$2,355,765	\$2,238,870
	Crown	\$340,483	\$340,516	\$347,224
TOTAL		\$3,785,951	\$2,696,281	\$2,586,094

Contact:

# 2.4 Assessment of takahē sensitivity to a future stoat control tool

- This item follows on from an update to you on 31 May regarding a Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, MWLR, trial involving ten takahē at the Burwood Takahē Centre, to assess the birds' susceptibility to para-aminopropiophenone (PAPP)
- DOC has engaged MWLR through DOC's Predator Free Tools 2 Market Programme.
- The purpose of this trial is to help us understand what risk PAPP might pose to native species if exposed to meat baits in the field.
- As of 3 June, four rounds of treatment had taken place involving eight takahē. Four
  of the birds received low doses of PAPP and the remaining four were used as
  controls. The four birds treated with PAPP have not shown any physical effects of the
  toxin. The final dose rate is determined after the 48-hour results of the fourth pair.
  The final pair of birds started treatment on Saturday 5 June.
- In the unlikely event of an adverse reaction from media channels, the PF2050 Tools to Market programme and the Recovery Team have prepared messaging for reporting on the trials and the potential conservation benefit for wild takahē populations.
- The Takahē Recovery Group has consulted with Ngāi Tahu, and with major sponsor Fulton Hogan.
- The final report from MWLR on the takahē trial is expected to be finalised in early July.

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Contact:	

# 2.5 Pest control and climate change mitigation

 DOC has several research initiatives investigating the relationship between pest control and climate change mitigation, both in terms of reducing the carbon emission cost of pest control and enhancing carbon sequestration in native ecosystems through pest control of introduced browsing herbivores.

# Reducing the carbon emissions of operational pest control delivery:

- DOC is working to reduce carbon emissions and this year has started measuring emissions via the Toitu Envirocare 'CarbonReduce' emission verification programme.
- This programme will provide us with an emission profile, of which an emissions reduction plan in line government targets can established. We will report its first year of emission reductions for the FY 2020/21.
- In some situations, the ecological benefits of a pest control programme outweigh the
  operational carbon associated to the delivery of that pest control programme. In these
  cases, the pest control programme emissions will need to be offset by reducing
  emissions in other parts of the Department.
- To ensure emissions are continuing to reduce in line with annual reduction targets, we are working with external entities to develop technologies that could reduce the emissions associated with operational pest control programmes.

# Protecting native carbon stores and improving seguestration through pest control:

- Pest control in native forest and other ecosystems has the potential to increase carbon sequestration and could contribute significantly to New Zealand's climate change mitigation targets.
- DOC is working with the University of Canterbury to pilot LIDAR remote sensing technology that could improve accuracy of measuring carbon sequestration rates in mature native forests.
- If successful, the aim is to use this technology to measure the additional storage of carbon in mature forests because of pest control.

### 2.7 Eastern South Island – Te Manahuna ki Uta

Contact:

- DOC has a key role in Te Manahuna Ki Uta/ Destination Mackenzie, a long-term destination management process led by Mackenzie District Council.
- The goal of the project is to create a vibrant, dynamic, and sustainable future for visitors and the community.
- The broad geographic scope is the Mackenzie Council District, which includes Aoraki/ Mount Cook, and the upper Waitaki Basin.
- The partners working together in this project are Mackenzie District Council (MDC), Te Rünanga o Arowhenua, Te Rünanga o Waihao, Te Rünanga o Moeraki, MBIE, DOC, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) and the Mackenzie Development Group (MDG).

- A video will be released online as part of the public launch in June to encourage engagement by as wide a range of people as possible.
- To date work has focused on development of vision and principles, and wananga to explore mana whenua values and aspirations. Analysis is underway to understand the pressures and drivers across different parts of the system.
- · We will provide a memo with more detail by the end of June.

Contact:



# 3 Director-General Engagements

June

14 June Predator Free Golf Clubs Summit
 17-18 June NZ Conservation Authority
 18 June Marutuahu Collective Motu

21 June DOC and Corrections Joint Leadership Teams Strategy Session

July

05 JulyMatariki Stakeholder luncheon, DOC Wellington08 JulyFulton Hogan partnership signing event, Christchurch

20-21 July SLT Retreat, Pounui Homestead

August

04-05 August Environmental Defence Society Conference, Christchurch Town

Hall

19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington

19-20 August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat, Brackenridge

Martinborough

September

04-12 September Conservation Week Events, TBC

# 4 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

### 4.1 Conservation Week 2021

- Conservation Week is DOC's annual public engagement campaign and has been running in various forms for 52 years.
- The theme for this year is "Take a moment for nature" and will run from 4-12 September. Campaign creative will use both te reo Māori and English.
- Conservation Week 2021 has three key objectives:
  - o Capture new audiences into nature and DOC's work
  - Celebrate the success of existing conservation communities and thank people for their effort
  - Create the sense of a movement building through a critical mass of regional activities and partner/third party involvement
- The Minister of Conservation usually attends and speaks at one or more Conservation Week stakeholder event. Please advise if you are interested in attending and we can provide further detail:
  - o Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland (Monday 6 September) location TBD
  - Ōtautahi/Christchurch (Wednesday 8 September) Rāpaki Marae, Te Rāpaki-o-Te Rakiwhakaputa
  - Te Whanganui-a-Tara/Wellington (Thursday 9 September) location TBD
- The Loder Cup will be presented at one of these events, you have the option to present to the winner.
- The campaign is asking New Zealanders to take a moment for nature to demonstrate
  the link between wellbeing and nature, showing that simple acts for nature can be
  beneficial to both themselves and nature.
- DOC leads the delivery of Conservation Week and is supported by national, regional, and community partners.
- Activity in the Week includes stakeholder events, regional community events, and awareness raising across several channels (out-of-home advertising, radio, digital and email marketing, DOC-owned channels, partner-owned channels).
- The purpose of the stakeholder events is for DOC to bring together and acknowledge local conservation communities, inviting representatives from iwi, whānau and hapū, community groups, local and central government, and business.
- Smaller stakeholder and community events will also take place across the country.
   We can provide a list of these events to your office should you wish to attend any of these.
- Further information on Conservation Week can be provided if required.

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Contact:			
Contact.			

# 4.2 Jobs for Nature

- We have provided your office with a schedule for Jobs for Nature Funding Announcements. Media releases for projects are with your office ready for distribution.
- Where possible we are combining announcements at a regional level and working with local staff on details for possible events. As projects are approved, they are added to this schedule.

Contact:	

# 5 Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

- 1. Events table (regular item)
- 2. Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
- 3. Forthcoming items (regular item)



# In Confidence

# Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 21 June 2021

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Seen by Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

**Acting Minister of Conservation** 

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

### 1.1 Jobs for Nature

# Current State (as at 15 June):

- Notification letters have been sent to all applicants for projects under \$1 million that were recommended for decline. Regional Directors were given a week to personally contact unsuccessful applicants by phone prior to letters being sent.
- Notification letters for projects over \$1 million that are recommended for decline will be sent after these are noted to SLU Ministers on 1 July.
- There are currently 173 projects approved, with 70 of these in delivery and 103
  projects in funding agreement negotiations. Our focus remains on contracting
  these projects into delivery through the month of June.
- The Chief Advisor and Investment/Assurance Team Lead will visit Tauranga and Rotorua for a regional assurance visit for 18 June, with planned meetings with regional staff, delivery partners including hapū and iwi. These visits provide good insights and a chance for regional staff and partners to share risks and opportunities associated with their projects.
- User testing for the quarterly reporting survey format is scheduled for the week commencing 21 June. The survey format will include both financial and nonfinancial measures, and internal testing has shown that it is more user-friendly than the previous format.
- We are meeting with the JFN Secretariat to input DOC's perspective on the future view for programme reporting.
- Briefing 21-B-0446 has been provided to you in preparation for your upcoming Estimates hearing at the Environment Select Committee on 24 June.
- We are currently undertaking work to ensure the Unit's structure is fit-for-purpose as we move into the implementation phase of the programme.

# Updates - Workstreams and projects

### Community and Landowner Fund

No further update

### Māori Land Grant

 Your office provided feedback on the proposed approach. We are continuing to revise based on this feedback.



# Relationship Scan

# Ministry for Environment

A meeting of the Reference Group with SLU Ministers has been scheduled for 01
July regarding the future role of the Group.



# 1.2 RMA Advocacy Update

### Watercare Waikato River Take Application

- On 26 March 2021, the Director-General submitted on Watercare Services Limited's application for Waikato River water take and discharge, to supplement Auckland's water supply. The submission considered that the application did not adequately assess or appropriately address all potential environmental effects.
- We have had several meetings with Watercare Services, and they have addressed several of our concerns through their additional evidence. The Director-General will not produce or present any additional technical or planning evidence for the hearing as we do not have any further data to contribute to decision-making. Our submission will not be withdrawn and our right to appeal is reserved.

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# 1.3 Health, Safety & Wellbeing

 This week we update the COVID-19 pandemic response, and briefly outline another of our key HSW system initiatives, namely Driving Safety (part of our Critical Risk management programme).

### COVID-19

- No change in status over the last week
- The current focus remains on supporting the vaccination roll-out process and developing guidance to managers and staff.

### Managing Driving Safety

- On-road driving is DOC's highest-rated Critical (Fatal) Risk. DOC. Vehicles are an essential part of DOC's operating model and we currently have a fleet of around 700 owned or leased vehicles.
- Based on a comprehensive risk assessment and risk control development process, in 2019, DOC, in partnership with the Public Service Association (PSA), launched a series of initiatives to improve driver behaviour and vehicle safety:
  - Introduction of an on-line driver coaching/testing system mandatory for all DOC drivers
  - Fitting and monitoring of GPS units in all DOC-owned vehicles (approx. 500 vehicles)
  - Procurement practices that target maximum safety-rated vehicles (now including electric vehicles)
- Data from a recent 'benefits realisation' analysis, looking at data before and after the introduction of these initiatives (period = two years), is shown in the table below:

Reduction in high-risk potential DOC driver behaviour incidents	-52%
Percent of km where DOC driver was over speed limit	-75%
Total overspeed events	-84%
Incidents caused by poor vehicle maintenance	-33%
Number of serious injuries	-100%

 We continue to work with the PSA to refine the policy settings and information to staff to ensure these gains are sustainable.

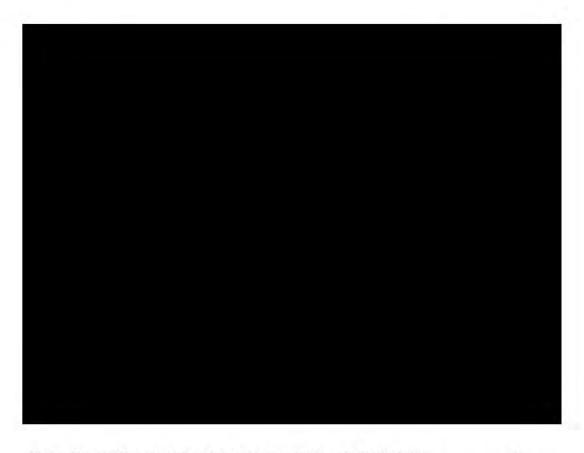
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# 2 Updates

# 2.1 Western South Island: Barrytown JV Ltd – mineral sand mining application, Barrytown

- Barrytown JV Ltd has applied to the Grey District Council and the West Coast Regional Council for resource consent to mine mineral sand, process material, and take and discharge ground and surface water, on private land (the coastal Barrytown Flats).
- The site is adjacent to Canoe Creek Conservation Area, and to the coast and coastal lagoons/wetlands.
- The application was not publicly notified. DOC, along with adjoining neighbours, Fish and Game, and iwi, have been considered as affected parties and were asked to give consent for the proposal under the provisions of Section 95 of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- We have not given consent for the proposal and have instead recommended that the application be declined.
- We are concerned that the application relies on Management Plans to mitigate adverse effects of the proposed mining activity (which have not been provided for assessment), and does not contain:
  - sufficient controls to avoid effects on adjoining land, which is habitat for the threatened Westland Black Petrel,
  - sufficient information to assess the effects of the proposed stream diversion on freshwater species and habitat.
- The site is in pasture and will be rehabilitated to the same. There has been considerable local interest in this mining application. There is a history of sand mining applications on the Barrytown Flats that have been opposed by residents.





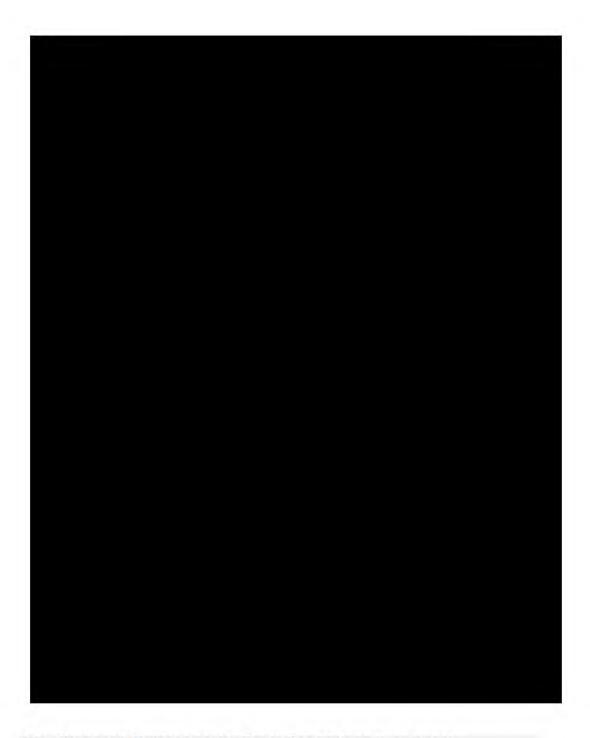




# 2.5 Update on Electric Vehicle Rollout

- DOC's Kāpiti office will receive three new Kona BEVs on 18 June. This is the first site and will be testing the communications and training that has been developed.
   The Kāpiti pilot will be refined and provide the basis for rollouts to other sites.
- While we knew that some infrastructure upgrades were required to accommodate EV charging stations, the extent of the necessary upgrades were underestimated.
- Some of our locations have aged infrastructure which require mains upgrades or load management systems to ensure we can future proof our sites for charging advancements, without impact on daily power consumption and location operations. Mains upgrades require us to work with lines companies, councils and our electricity provider, which is not a fast process.
- Supply chain disruptions for items such as copper and EV chargers have further impacted the timing. Chargers have now landed in NZ but there are also constraints to the availably of electricians with the necessary experience to scope the work
- This means that we will not be able to roll out the full 30 Kona EVs as committed by 30 June 2021. EECA is aware of the delays and understand the challenges. Current planning has us deploying 10 Konas in June, 10 in July and 10 in August. These plans remain subject to the charging infrastructure being ready at our sites before vehicles are deployed.
- We have two other sites ready and landlord approved for their charging installations, 32 sites with surveys booked or underway and three sites with surveys to be booked.
- Once the chargers start to rollout, we will see the vehicle roll out pick up. There
  is a lead time of two months on any additional EVs, so we will be looking to
  forward order our next batch of 30 to keep the rollout moving.
- The advantage of taking the time to get this right for Te Papa Atawhai, is that we
  will have learnt the lessons required for other Government agencies to convert to
  EVs. We will be able, in some cases, to share the infrastructure we develop with
  both Government Agencies and our partners.

Contact:			
Contact.			



# 2.7 Proposed Extinct Species Trade Regulations (moa bone)

- In considering a draft ministerial response to correspondence (CORM-281) from the New Zealand Speleological Society, you raised questions about our work to create new regulations to control trade in extinct species (moa bone). Specifically, you asked:
  - o Why is this process taking so long?
  - o Why a second engagement process?
  - When will the work be finished?
- The proposal to make regulations to control trade in extinct species such as moa
  was an initiative of NZ museum curators concerned about damage to natural and
  archaeological sites from people illegally taking bone from sites to sell for profit.
- Initial engagement with tangata whenua was undertaken from July to September 2020 as the first part of a regulation design process. Public consultation was undertaken at the same time.

- Before 25 June DOC will undertake the second part of the design development work by providing participating tangata whenua with the summary of submissions, and proposed methods of incorporating Treaty requirements into the proposed regulations. Those tangata whenua will be invited to contribute to the final proposal and recommendations.
- This second-phase engagement is expected to take two months, with final recommendations provided to you a further month later.
- Ngāi Tahu have expressed opposition to the proposal stating they want a different approach to addressing any issue.

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# 2.8 Wainuiomata Fenced Sanctuary Proposal

- Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) are considering a proposal to have a fenced sanctuary on a site in their water catchment area.
- GWRC would like DOC to build the fence, while GWRC would continue their
  predator management within the fenced zone. GWRC will lead the establishment
  of a governance structure if the proposal progresses. Taranaki Whānui ki te
  Upoko o te Ika (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust Board (PNBST)) have
  completed a cultural impact study and are positive about the concept of a fenced
  sanctuary.

	sanctuary.	and are positive about the concept of a fence
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Co	ntact:	

# 3 Director-General Engagements

June

21 June DOC and Corrections Joint Leadership Teams Strategy Session,

Rimutaka Prison

22 June Governor-General Reflects on International Dimensions of her

Role, Government Buildings Lecture Theatre

July

02 July Queenstown Winter Festival, Skyline Queenstown
05 July Matariki Stakeholder luncheon, DOC Wellington
06 July Matariki celebration with Spark, National Library

Wellington

08 July Fulton Hogan partnership signing event, Christchurch

20-21 July SLT Retreat, Pounui Homestead

August

04 August Senior Leaders Hui, Wellington

04-05 August Environmental Defence Society Conference, Christchurch Town

Hall

19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington

19-20August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat, Brackenridge

Martinborough

21-22 August Conservation Board Chairs hui, Wellington

September

04-12 September Conservation Week Events, TBC

16 September Te hāpai hāpori | Spirit of Service Awards, Te Papa

# 4 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

# 4.1 Jobs for Nature

- •
- We are preparing two national announcements, one each for the Private Land and Community contestable funds, for release following the noting of projects at the next SLU Minister's meeting in July.
- We have provided a proposal for an event in Northland in early July at which the Prime Minister could announce several projects. The planning is being led by the Regional Director for the Northern North Island.

Contact:

# 5 Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

- 1. Events table (regular item)
- 2. Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
- 3. Forthcoming items (regular item)



# **In-Confidence**

# Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 28 June 2021

Date:	//
24.5.	, ,

Seen by Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall

**Acting Minister of Conservation** 

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

# 1.1 Jobs for Nature

# Current state (as at 22 June)

- As at 22 June, there were 1114 Employment Starts realised for DOC's JFN programme. They describe the total number of people who have started work across all employment types (full-time, part-time, and casual) for the length of the programme. This equates to 250 FTE realised (based on a definition of 1FTE = 1560hours worked).
- There were some data duplication errors in the information we provided to you last week. Please see this week's dashboard for updated Job information.
- Of 173 approved projects, 73 are now in execution/delivery, with 100 projects in the process of negotiating funding agreements, including 45 Community Fund and Private Landowner Fund projects.
- Approval in Principle letters have been sent to all applicants, except for the two
  projects [21-B-0419 refers]. We have now received your approval of
  these projects, and Approval in Principle letters will be sent shortly.
- has been rescoped from the original application of \$1 million down to \$500,000 following discussion with DOC regional staff. The original project was recommended to you for approval and endorsed by you on 3 June [21-B-0389 refers]. This project will be included for noting in SLU Minister meeting papers for 1 July.
- The large project (AL14.6 Tairawhiti Turanga Kaimahi mo te Taiao; \$10.96M; 132 FTE) was contracted on 18 June, with the Chief Advisor visiting the recipient on 22 June as part of a Tairawhiti regional assurance visit.
- The Chief Advisor and Investment/Assurance Team Lead visited Tauranga and Rotorua on 18 June to meet with DOC regional staff, iwi, and delivery partners involved in the Kaimai-Mamaku restoration project, and meet with stakeholders in Rotorua. This visit was an opportunity to set context for delivery of the projects and provided good insights on pressure points across the whole Jobs for Nature system.



# Updates - Workstreams and projects

### Community and Landowner Fund

 The Funds Team is working through negotiating funding agreements with partners and the appointment of regional delivery managers.

# Prevention of North Island Indigenous Forest Collapse

- Both business cases have now been approved by the Director- General and funding has been released to operations.
- A project manager and two support roles are currently being recruited for the Kaimai-Mamaku restoration project. The project manager will move into detailed work on the project's operational plan.
- The Raukumara project is moving from development into engagement and codesign is under way on future arrangements for governance/ accountability and project management.

# 1.2 RMA Advocacy

No items this week

# 1.3 Health, Safety & Wellbeing

This week we update the COVID-19 pandemic response, and briefly outline another of our key HSW system initiatives, namely Boat Safety (part of our Critical Risk management programme).

### Covid-19

- We responded to the Rakiura/Stewart Island 'weak positive' test event on 17
  June. Local DOC staff and management followed Ministry of Health guidance
  and complied with the testing regime. At the time only two visitors were in DOC
  huts so no action was required for them.
- Communications and guidance to people leaders and staff regarding supporting
  the vaccination roll-out process is being further developed based on the Public
  Service Commission's guidelines and as government advice is updated. All
  DOC's Group 1 staff have been vaccinated so the focus now is on Group 3 and
  4 staff.

### Managing boat safety

- DOC owns 76 boats, distributed throughout most of the country. They are an
  essential part of local conservation work and range from small dinghies to the
  Southern Winds, our largest vessel, at 22m, based in Fiordland.
- All our boats with motors are classified as 'commercial vessels' under maritime law. The controls that apply to DOC boats and personnel in boats are almost entirely a product of the Maritime NZ regulatory regime applying to commercial vessel operation. DOC holds a Maritime Transport Operators Certificate and our boats and skippers and crew operate subject to a Maritime Transport Operating Plan (MTOP).
- In the last five years there have been 109 reported incidents related to DOC powered vessels, the majority of these (95) occurring in vessel less than 12m in length.
- Seventy percent of those reports were of unsafe acts or near misses, highlighting a good reporting culture.
- While there was only one serious harm outcome (a Noise Induced Hearing Loss),
   15 incidents had serious potential.
- The boat critical risk is generally well managed with appropriate controls and control verification and audit. We see relatively few incidents relating to boating compared to some other critical risks. The risk management framework we have in place is robust and fit-for-purpose.

Contact:	

# **Updates** 2







# 2.4 Assessment of takahē sensitivity to a future stoat control tool

- This item follows from an update to you on 10 June regarding a male takahē that
  was taken to Dunedin Wildlife Hospital for further assessment after it reacted
  strongly to a dose of para-aminopropiophenone (PAPP) administered on 6 June,
  as part of a trial assessing the species' susceptibility to PAPP.
- The takahē showed a strong reaction to a 33mg/dose with lowered haemoglobin and a significant amount of methaemoglobin. Blood tests were used to monitor him closely throughout the first 24 hrs and in the following days. Although his clinical signs were moderate, as a precaution, he was provided supplemental oxygen and was treated on-site by the supervising wildlife veterinarian with the PAPP antidote (Methylene blue) 12 hours after his treatment.
- The bird was taken to Dunedin Wildlife Hospital where he received a full health check followed by a blood transfusion. The bird has been kept at the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital for monitoring and his blood values have improved. At the time of writing, his scheduled release back to the captive facility was 24 June.
- The purpose of this research is to assess takahē susceptibility to paraaminopropiophenone (PAPP). The results from this trial will help us understand what risk PAPP might pose to native species if exposed to meat baits in the field.
- DOC has engaged Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research (MWLR) through our Predator Free Tools 2 Market Programme.
- The results from the takahē will allow MWLR to improve the non-lethal approach
  to reduce the risk even further. MWLR is now able to predict the type of response
  shown in takahē and is working on adaptive responses and adjustments to its
  methods.
- The final report from MWLR on the takahē trial is scheduled to be complete by 23 July.

Contact:		

# 2.5 Proposed national expansion of Wasp Wipeout programme

- DOC is working with Stuff.co.nz and others to expand the Wasp Wipeout programme over a further five years, to 2026.
- The scope of our work with Stuff is limited to the Wasp Wipeout programme and does not constitute a direct partnership.
- Launched in 2016, Wasp Wipeout has become a national brand through Stuff's digital and print media, resulting in over 20,000 hectares of effective wasp control through 500km of bait lines and 10,000 bait stations, annually.
- To date, Wasp Wipeout delivers 90% of wasp control on Public Conservation Land and 10% on council-administered land. The programme is likely to have contributed to further awareness of wasp control on private land.
- Having recently reviewed the programme, and in discussions with Stuff, Kotahitanga mo te Taiao Alliance (a collaboration of eight iwi, all councils and DOC in the Top of the South Island) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), we agree that the next five years offers the potential for Wasp Wipeout to expand nationally, and to accelerate implementation of the approved bio control agents within the Top the South to achieve landscape scale wasp control as the start of a NZ-wide programme. It is possible that new control tools could also become available during this timeframe.
- We will work with Stuff, TNC and others to raise the necessary funds for this proposed national expansion of the Wasp Wipeout programme.



# 2.6 Game Animal Council quarterly report for Q3 2020/21

- The Game Animal Council New Zealand (GAC) provided its quarterly report for Q3 2020-21 on 20 May.
- The GAC is working with DOC on a range of issues by:
  - providing a submission on the Draft Tahr Control Operational Plan 2021-22 and the research and monitoring plan
  - o advising on timing of the tahr survey to avoid the roar period
  - maintaining communication on the Te Ara Ki Mua The Path Ahead; Deer in Aotearoa - New Zealand.
- The GAC has also:
  - developed, socialised, published, and promoted the Game Animal Management Principles and developed the Game Animal Management App Development Guide as part of its aim to implement a hunter education strategy
  - made submissions on the Crown Pastoral Land Reform Bill (currently being considered by the Environment Committee) and the Kawarau/Remarkables Conservation Areas reclassification.
- The GAC has received the 2021-22 Letter of Expectations and is progressing development of the 2021-22 Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE). We expect that you will receive their draft SPE in late June and will provide you with a briefing at that point.
- The GAC last met on 11 June and discussed its workplan and budget for 2021-22. It will be seeking feedback from you on its three-part funding strategy. We will provide a covering briefing when this is sent through to you.
- We continue to work with the GAC on progressing measurable performance targets.

Contact:
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# 2.7 New Zealand's International Reporting to the World Heritage Convention

- New Zealand is a Party to the World Heritage Convention. The Convention obliges us to report on our three World Heritage Areas (Te Wahipounamu, Tongariro National Park, and the Subantarctic Islands) and on the management of natural and cultural heritage generally.
- New Zealand is due to submit its six-yearly Periodic Report on implementation of the Convention by 30 June as part of the Asia /Pacific reporting cycle.
- The Periodic Reporting process involves a national overview report and a site report for each of our three World Heritage areas.
- DOC is the formal Administrative Authority for the World Heritage Convention in New Zealand and will submit the Report under its own authority.
- UNESCO makes the reports publicly available on its website and uses them as the basis for the development of regional action plans.
- The World Heritage Committee generally considers extractive industries within the boundaries of a World Heritage Site to be incompatible with World Heritage status.
- The Periodic Report notes New Zealand's comprehensive suite of legislation for the identification and protection of heritage, and acknowledges that:
  - while the majority of land classifications within World Heritage Areas restrict/prohibit mineral related activity (except certain minimum impact activities), some land classifications are subject to mineral permit applications under the Crown Minerals Act 1991
  - where land classifications within a World Heritage Area are subject to mineral permit applications, the effects of the application on World Heritage conservation values are considered through the land access application process.
- Reference to extractive use in World Heritage areas could risk criticism from stakeholders and inquiry from the World Heritage Centre (Secretariat within UNESCO). Although this risk is considered low, a media plan will be prepared as a contingency.

Contact:
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# 2.8 Evidence for ENV re petition to ban bottom trawling on seamounts and seamount-like features.

- In November 2020, a petition was presented to Parliament calling on the House
  of Representatives to pass legislation to ban bottom trawl fishing on seamounts
  and similar deep-sea features and to stop the issuing of permits for bottom
  trawling in international waters.
- DOC and MPI/Fisheries New Zealand have both been asked for written evidence by the Environment Select Committee, to support their consideration of the petition. Agencies have developed the evidence jointly to assist with their consideration of the petition and will submit this to the Committee on 29 June. You will receive a copy of the submission for your information.
- We are happy to brief you further should you wish.

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Contact:			

# 3 Director-General Engagements

July

02 July Queenstown Winter Festival, Skyline Queenstown 05 July Matariki Stakeholder luncheon, DOC Wellington

05 July Approach to Budget Priorities (MPI,MfE,DOC) with Minister

Parker, Parliament

06 July Matariki celebration with Spark, National Library

Wellington

08 July Fulton Hogan partnership signing event, Christchurch

09 July 70th Anniversary closure of Waiuta (Whenua Tohunga

Landmarks), Waiuta, Hokitika

20-21 July SLT Retreat, Pounui Homestead

August

04 August Senior Leaders Hui, Wellington

04-05 August Environmental Defence Society Conference, Christchurch Town

Hall

19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington

19-20August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat, Brackenridge

Martinborough

21-22 August Conservation Board Chairs hui, Wellington

September

07 SeptemberConservation Week Stakeholder function, Auckland08 SeptemberConservation Week Stakeholder function, Christchurch09 SeptemberConservation Week Stakeholder function, Wellington16 SeptemberTe hāpai hāpori | Spirit of Service Awards, Te Papa

# 4 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

No items this week

# 5 Appendices

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- 3. Forthcoming items (regular item)
- 4. Jobs for Nature dashboard