

DOC update to WDC

-Conservation Board, Jobs for Nature, and Kapitia skinks

30 September 2021



New Zealand Government

West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board

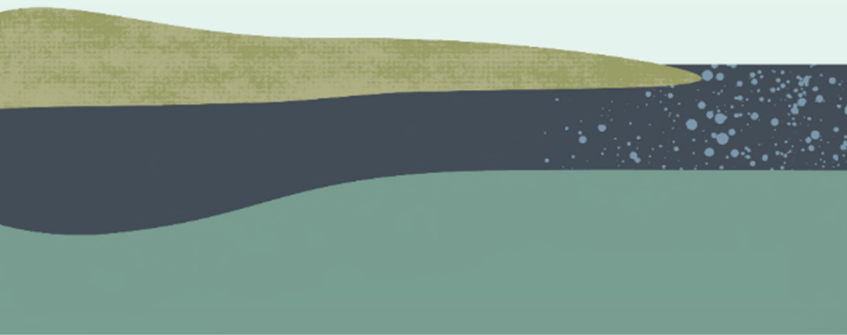
Purpose and structure

- Conservation Boards are independent statutory bodies established by the Conservation Act.
- Members are appointed by the Minister of Conservation.
- Boards provide for interaction between the public and the Department of Conservation at a regional level.
- They contribute a local voice and perspective to the management of conservation areas, providing a forum for community views and feeding information back to communities on DOCs work in each board area.

West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board

Purpose and structure

- A Board's primary role is to advise DOC and the NZ Conservation Authority on conservation matters in its jurisdiction.
- A board's focus is on:
 - Policy issues.
 - Strategic direction and planning.
 - Participating in the development and implementation of Conservation Management Strategies (CMS) and National Park Management Plans (NPMPs).
 - Not day-to-day management nor operational work.



West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board

Purpose and structure

- Normally 11 members.
- Four new members but 3 vacancies. Minister will make a decision on the 3 replacements in the next month. New members are normally called for December-January.
- The Chair Mike Legge has significant experience and skills in the role from previous two terms as Board chair and is well connected to the community and regional leadership particularly in the Buller and Grey districts.
- CMS review initiated late 2021.

Arahura Strategic waterways restoration project

Integrated approach

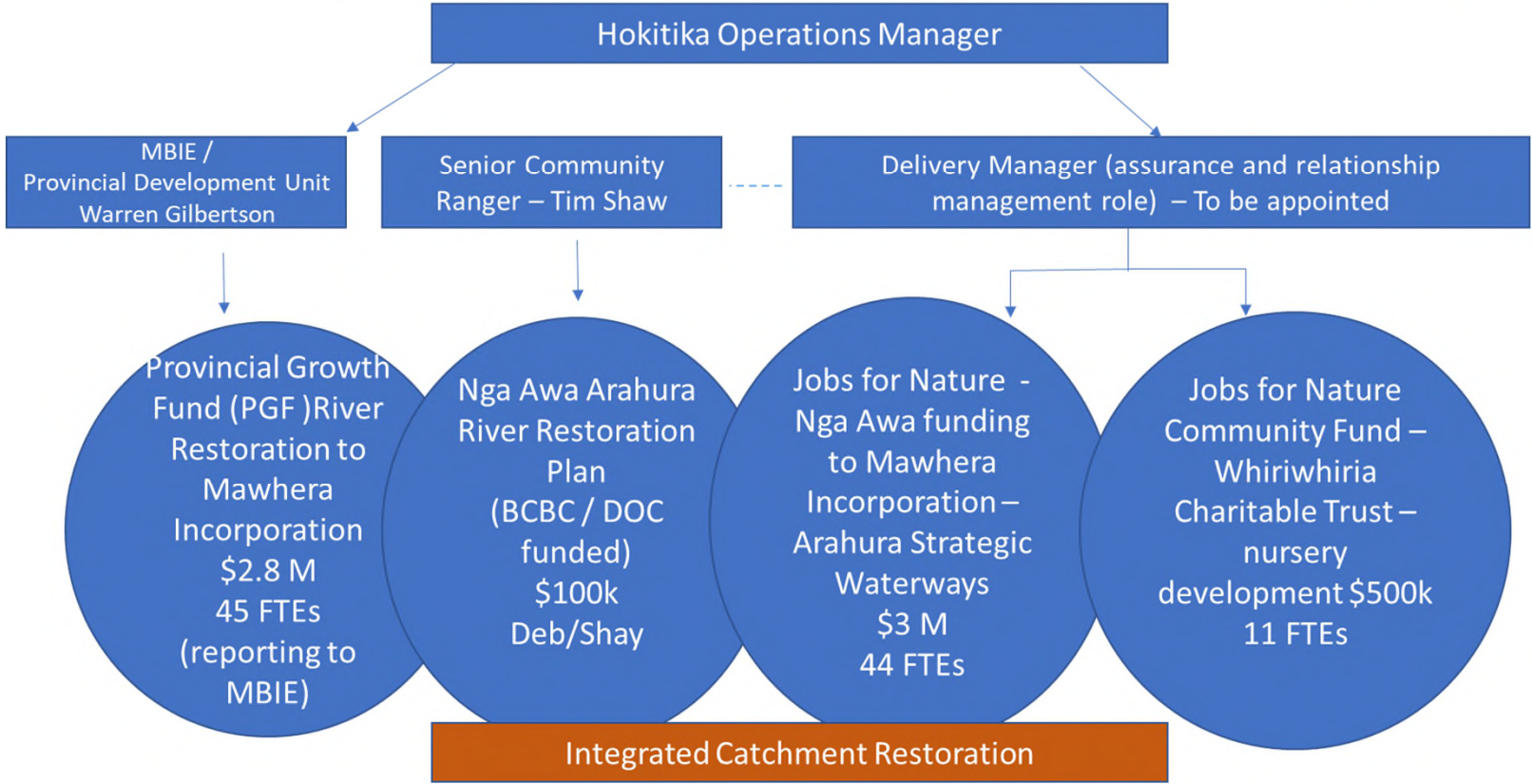
- Sustainable health for the Arahura River and community.
- Mountains to sea Catchment protection.
- Nga Awa led by DOC.
- PGF led by Mawhera.



Arahura Strategic waterways restoration project

Integrated approach

Arahura Catchment Restoration Project Structure



Arahura Strategic waterways restoration project

Jobs for Nature

- \$3M, 11 people for 4 years.
- Fencing.
- Alternative stock water sources.
- Planting.
- Training: horticulture, fencing.
- 8 landowners – 25% contribution in kind: plants, alternative water sourcing.
- Nursery - Whiriwhiria Trust leasing space from Southside Nursery \$500,000, 3 jobs over 2 years.



Sustainable Whitebait Project

Jobs for Nature

- Led by WCRC.
- 2yr, \$1.4 Million project.
- 13 jobs over 2 years.
- Increase whitebait stocks by creating and enhancing whitebait habitat from Kohaihai to Jacksons Bay.
- Weed control, fencing, channel creation and identifying barriers to movement of fish between spawning sites and adult habitat.
- Weeding and fencing in the lower tidal reaches of 25 rivers between.
- Fish passage surveys will be undertaken across the West Coast.



Sustainable Whitebait Project

Wadeson Island

- \$500k
- 3 jobs over 2 years.
- Led by WDC, delivery by CVNZ + contractors.
- Project has been underway in various forms as a collaboration between DOC, WDC, CVNZ and Westland Dairy since 2003.
- Provision of adult whitebait habitat close to known spawning areas.
- 18 hectares, partially administered by WDC as a Recreation Reserve and partly as Stewardship Area by DOC.
- 10 hectares weed control, 6000 riparian trees planted and 3km channel creation for new habitat.
- Importance of area as greenspace means that increasing amenity values will be important part of plan.

Predator Free South Westland

Overview

- 5 year project to eliminate possums, rats and stoats from 100,000 ha.
- \$46M
- Taonga species can thrive.
- No need for future large-scale aerial pest control.
- Main bovine TB vector removed.
- Enhance South Westland experience and brand.
- Based on ZIP success over 12,000 ha in the Perth.



Predator Free South Westland

Governance and Delivery

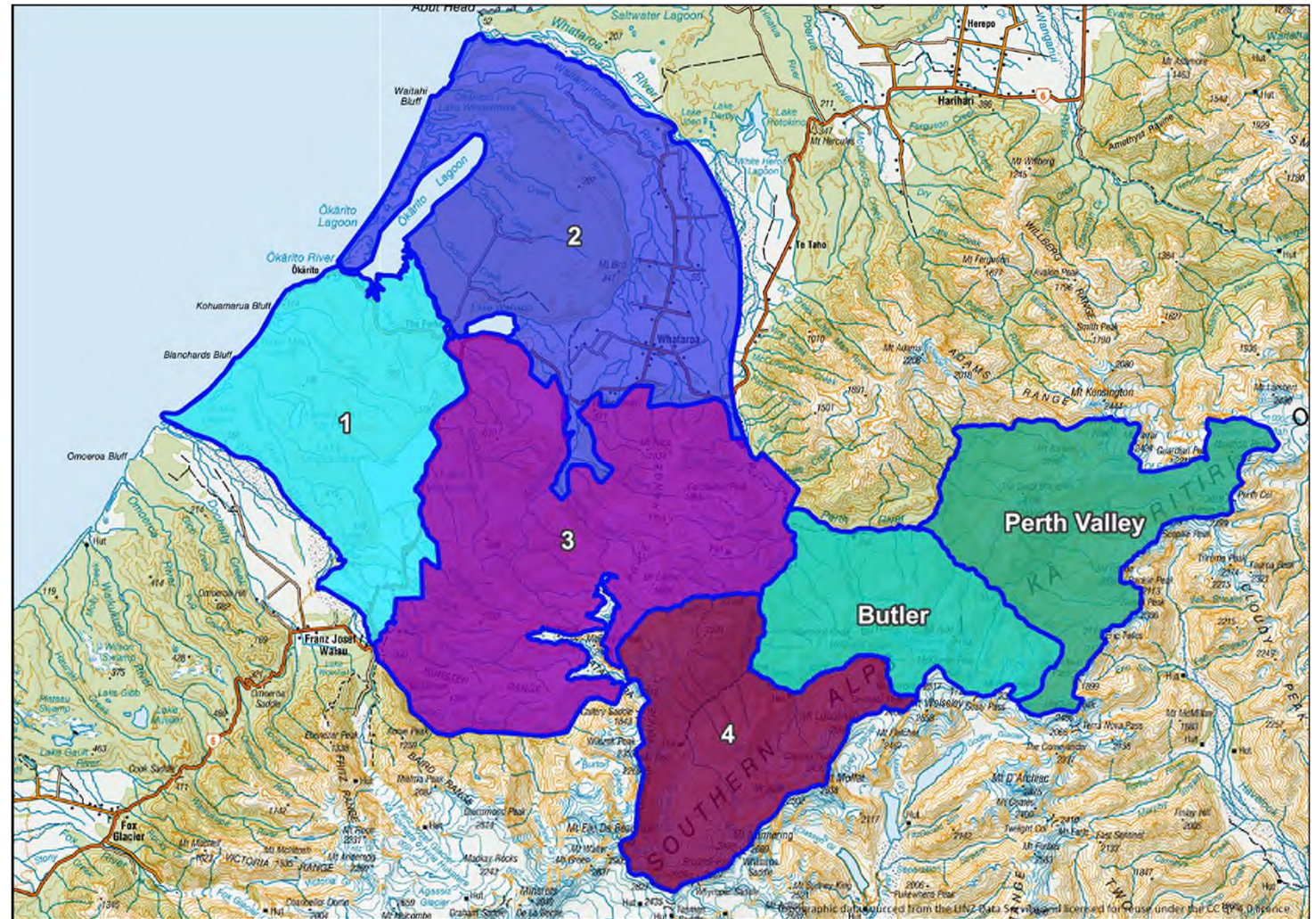
- Predator Free South Westland Ltd charitable company.
- Independent Chair – Katie Milne.
- Te Rūnanga of Makaawhio – Kara Edwards.
- Kotahitanga ki te Uru - Michael Meehan.
- NEXT Foundation – Devon McLean.
- ZIP: 23 jobs based in Franz, Ōkārito and Whatroa.
- J4N: 15 jobs - ground control on private land.



Predator Free South Westland

Area

- High natural value.
- Natural barriers to reinvasion.
- Engaged and willing community.



Sustaining the South Westland Community Project

Jobs for Nature

- Conservation work delivered through local businesses.
- \$3.7M over 3 years.
- Staff remain available to operate businesses.
- 146 people engaged since 1 July 2020.
- 35,402 hours completed.
- 42 business partners are registered. 114 employees currently being retained in employment.
- 83 people have completed formal training.
- Mahaki ki Taiao, a Te Runanga o Makaawhio partnership with DOC South Westland, for three mana whenua to undertake conservation tasks.



Sustaining the South Westland Community Project

Jobs for Nature

- Track upgrade work.
- Track and amenity maintenance.
- Hut maintenance including lead removal.
- Weed Surveys and Control.
- Species Surveys including whio, bats, lizards.
- Track cutting – Okarito Kiwi Sanctuary.
- Kiwi/Kea Support – Across a range of support tasks.
- Nursery Work – Okarito Nursery.
- Pest Control – Trap building.
- Lightweight timber carpentry – hut long drops, meat safes.
- Inter-regional DOC projects – e.g. camera trap monitoring, short and long tailed bat counts, West Coast Penguin Trust, Northland Kiwi Call count data improvement.

Weed Free Te Tai Poutini

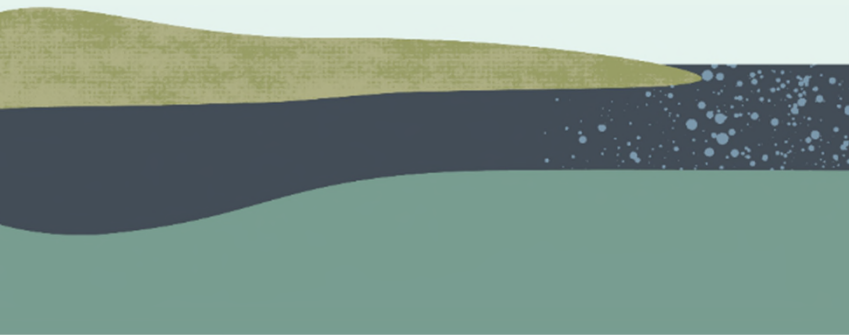
Jobs for Nature

- Lead DWC.
- Technical advice from DOC/WCRC/Iwi.
- 2yr, \$3.3 Million project.
- 21 jobs over 2 years.
- Focus to reduce or eliminate weed threats to natural ecosystems throughout Westland.
- Project contracted to MBC environmental solutions.
- MBC West Coast based, significant experience in local weed control and large complex projects.

Weed Free Te Tai Poutini

Locations

- Key sites: Te Waipounamu South-West NZ World Heritage Area, the western side of Arthurs Pass National Park, Westland Tai Poutini and Mt Aspiring National Parks.
- Include both private and public land.
- Include Maori land as requested by Te Runanga o Makaawhio and Ngati Waewae.
- Areas of high ecological value threatened by weed invasion e.g. Cotoneaster invading lowland podocarp/hardwood forest.



Weed Free Te Tai Poutini

Key weeds

1. Pampas - serious invasive weed still fairly contained. Displaces native plants in coastal, wetland and riverbed. Does not form a long term seed bank. Elimination/progressive containment.
2. Giant rhubarb (*Gunnera*), hardy prehistoric plant that outshades native plants with its giant leaves. Produces thousands of small orange fruit and is hard to kill. Elimination/progressive containment.
3. Gorse and scotch broom. Prevent these species spreading into alpine shrub/tussock/herbfields.
4. Banana passionfruit smothers native trees/shrubs it is growing on. Elimination/progressive containment.
5. Shade tolerant tree weeds spread by birds e.g. holly, sycamore, rowan, flowering cherry, barberry, cotoneaster.

Weed Free Te Tai Poutini

The work

- Surveillance – map infestations.
- Significant knock down priority weed infestations.
- Eradicate weeds from valuable ecosystems or by catchment.
- Prevent weeds in early stage of invasion from taking hold in Westland.
- A focus on mine sites and forestry - disturbed sites with large machinery - weed hotspots.



Kapitia Skinks

Oligosoma salmo

- One known population of approximately 300, occupying less than 1ha coastal strip at Chesterfield, Nationally Critical.
- Monitored by DOC since 2015: results show a high turnover of adult.
- Predation including from mice is thought to be significant threat.
- Cyclone Fehi depleted their habitat by 40%, many skinks were displaced or killed during the cyclone.
- 50 skinks relocated to Auckland Zoo.

Kapitia Skinks

Oligosoma salmo



Kapitia Skinks

Oligosoma salmo

- 2020 1.3 ha land purchased, now Kapitia Scientific Reserve.
- 1 ha, 1.8m high predator proof fence around the DOC reserve and adjacent road reserve.
- Pest operation is currently running to kill any rodents remaining inside the fence.
- Auckland Zoo skinks release late 2021 November/December this year.
- PhD student monitoring this summer.
- Objective: to prevent the extinction of the Kapitia skink in the wild.
- Opportunity for DOC/WDC joint opening event.

Kapitia Skinks

Oligosoma salmo

