

Community – Kea Project Plan

Motueka, Golden Bay

Funded by: Department of Conservation Community Fund (DOC Community Fund)

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Aim

The aim of the Community – Kea Project Plan is to i) facilitate long-term community kea conservation initiatives and ii) to change the way we think, act and live with kea in our communities. This will be actioned through development of collaborative Community – Kea Project Plans across the South Island. Each community plan will address concerns specific to the local community and threats to the resident kea population.

Project Background

This initial project plan outline has been developed as a result of discussions with communities during the Kea Conservation Trust's (KCT) Winter Advocacy Tour - 20 July – 3 August 2015. The tour was funded by Dulux and supported by Department of Conservation (DOC). The tour theme, "Building a future with kea", aimed to promote a new MOU between communities and kea. This initiative is in line with the new Strategic Plan for Kea Conservation (refer attached document), objective 3: to i) increase positive perceptions of kea and reduce conflict and ii) facilitate formation of community led kea conservation initiatives.

Local Community – Kea Project Plans will be activated by two Community Engagement Coordinator's (CEC's) based in the following areas:

1) Upper half of the South Island: Northern region (Nelson/ Motueka/ Kahurangi), Central North (Nelson Lakes/ Murchison/Arthur's Pass/Christchurch/Mt Hutt) and upper West Coast (Greymouth and Hokitika). There is also the potential to include Kaikoura at a later date (the eastern most population of kea).

2) Lower half of the South Island: Lower West Coast (Franz/Fox Glaciers and Haast), Central South (Mt Cook, Wanaka/Mt Aspiring and the Routeburn/Dart/ Queenstown areas) and Fiordland (Te Anau/ Milford/Murchison mountains).

Each project plan, will be developed in detail over the next two years and will involve creation of an active volunteer network and facilitation of funding streams (external and internal). The plans will take into account eight threats, actual and potential, to the wild kea population which have been identified by kea researchers.

- 1) Predation by introduced mammals
- 2) Lead in kea habitat (e.g. flashings and lead-head nails, tyre weights, lead shot)
- 3) Poorly-deployed pest control devices (e.g. poison baits and traps laid for pest control and aerial 1080 operations)
- 4) Avian diseases

- 5) Climate change (e.g. changes in predator abundance, food availability and habitat quality)
- 6) Accidents with human objects (e.g. motor vehicles, snow groomers, rubbish bins, electricity sub-stations)
- 7) Destruction/removal of nuisance individuals (permitted or illegal)
- 8) Illicit trade in wildlife

Threat focus and mitigation will be area and resource dependant and take into account community interests, expertise and support.

Motueka

Motueka is a small town lying close to the mouth of the Motueka River on the Western shore of Tasman Bay (northern South Island of New Zealand). It is about 50km from Nelson. To the west of Motueka, the land rises steeply to the Arthur and Pikiruna Ranges (Kahurangi National Park). To the south, the Moutere Hills rise gently. The wider Motueka region has a population of around 13,500.

Motueka is close to beaches such as Marahau and Kaiteriteri, making it very popular with holiday makers – with caravan parks and camping grounds providing accommodation. It is also one of the nearest towns to Abel Tasman and Kahurangi National Parks, and therefore has become the base for many tourism ventures in the parks and other recreational areas. Cavers and rock –climbers are also



Figure 1. Approximate location of area relating to this plan

attracted to the area with extensive limestone cave systems in the area. Sea kayaking and tramping also attracts many thousands of visitors each year. Visitors through the Motueka i-site are up to 100,000 annually (Nelson i-site, 2016)

Motueka is accessed by two highways. SH60 heads in from Richmond, where it is joined by SH6. The Motueka Valley Highway connects at SH60 in Motueka and joins SH6 at Tapawera. Motueka is also the gateway to Golden bay (by continuing on SH60).

Golden Bay

Golden Bay is located at the northwest end of the South Island. It is protected in the north by Farewell Spit. The Aorere and Takaka Rivers flow into the bay from the south.

The west and northern regions of the bay are largely

unpopulated. Along the southern coast are the small towns of Takaka and Collingwood (population of Golden Bay approximately 3,600). The Abel Tasman National Park is along this coast. Separation Point, the natural boundary between Tasman and Golden Bays, is located within the park. The basal part of the spit connects to Kahurangi National Park.

The area is popular with tourists. Visitor numbers to the region swell over summer, with up to 35,000 visitors recorded annually (Nelson i-site, 2016).

Motueka and Golden Bay Conservation Efforts

There are a number of conservation efforts occurring in the Motueka and Golden Bay region. Abel Tasman and Kahurangi National Parks receive the lion’s share of these conservation efforts.

Friends of Flora (FOF) is a group of dedicated individuals concentrating their efforts around the Flora Stream and the Salisbury EMU areas of Kahurangi National Park. Their main focus has been on whio and great spotted kiwi (GSK). The pest control undertaken by FOF will be protecting other native species including kea.

Project Janszoon is a privately funded trust working with DOC, the Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust and Iwi to restore the ecology of Abel Tasman National Park. While pest control is not actively aimed at protecting kea, it will be supporting the local kea population. Little is currently known about the kea population within Abel Tasman.

In 2006 and 2011, the Wangapeka block in Kahurangi National Park received protection with TB Free undertaking aerial 1080 drops. In 2009, the eastern Mt Arthur Range was the recipient of TB Free control, and in 2006, the Lesley Karamea Bend. In 2014/2015 DOCs ‘Battle for our Birds’ pest control programme was again implemented on a larger scale in Abel Tasman and Kahurangi National Parks. This was a pest control operation (aerial 1080) in response to an exceptionally heavy beech seed fall event – mast. DOC treated more than 600,000 hectares nationally in the Battle for the Birds programme in 2014/2015, and monitored 48 kea through the aerial 1080 operations. Four of the 48 kea died from 1080 poisoning (Department of Conservation, 2015). Continued monitoring and research is necessary to better understand and direct kea conservation.

Table 1. Location of conservation work carried out by conservation groups in Motueka and Golden Bay.

Group	Location	Activity	Trap #s	Focal species
DOC	Kahurangi and Abel Tasman National Parks	Predator control		whio
Project Janszoon	Abel Tasman National Park	Predator control, revegetation, translocations, education		Kakariki and kaka
Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust	Abel Tasman National Park	Predator control		Native birds
Friends of Flora	Kahurangi National Park (Flora and Salisbury)	Predator control		Whio and GSK
Project Rameka	Rameka Valley, Golden Bay	Predator control and restoration		Restoration
Parapara Valley Environmental	Parapara Valley	Rat and Stoat trapping		Birds

Group				
Bird Recovery Golden Bay	Golden Bay	Care for injured birds found in Golden Bay	0	Birds
OSNZ	Henderson Basin	Stoat trapping for nest protection		Rock wren
Friends of Cobb	Cobb Valley	Stoat trapping		
University of Otago	Kahurangi National Park	Blood collection for DNA analysis	0	kea
KCT	Kahurangi (Baton and Kiwi Saddle); Motueka, Nelson and surrounds	Summer surveys/catch trips (2009-present), Nest monitoring (2009-present). Conflict Resolution programme (2014- present)	300 (proposed)	Kea

Figure 2. Location of current kea nests and survey sites Kiwi Saddle, Kahurangi National Park, 2015 (Mosen 2015)

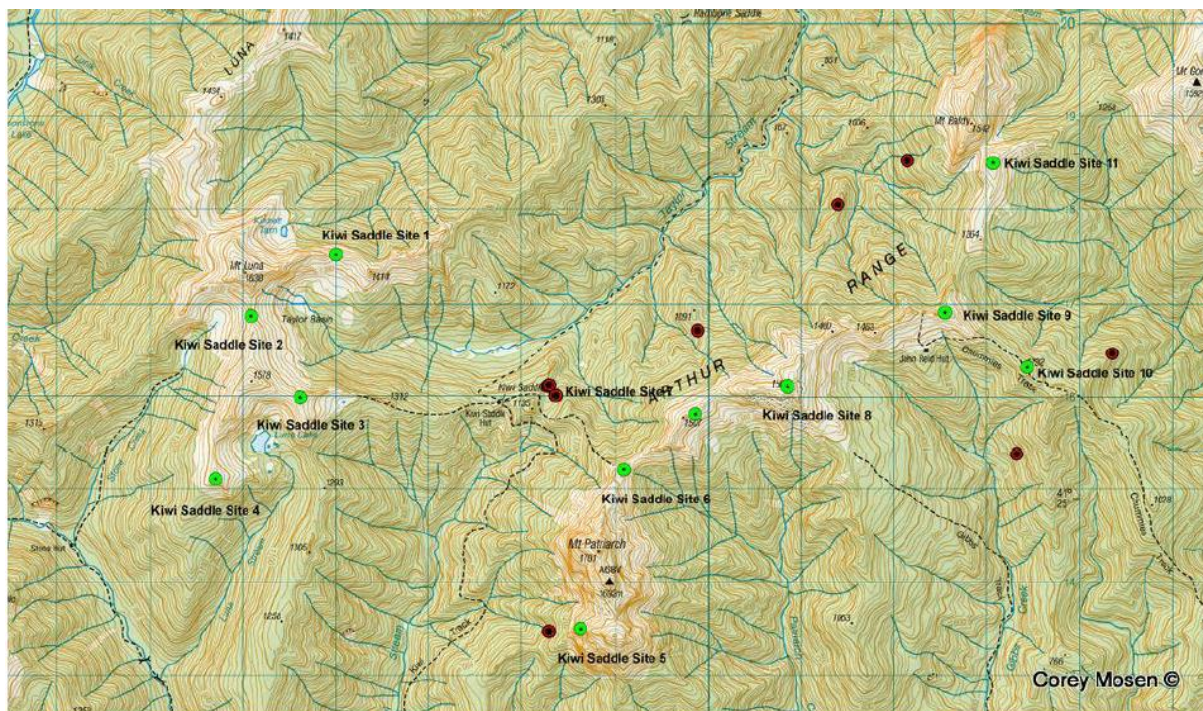
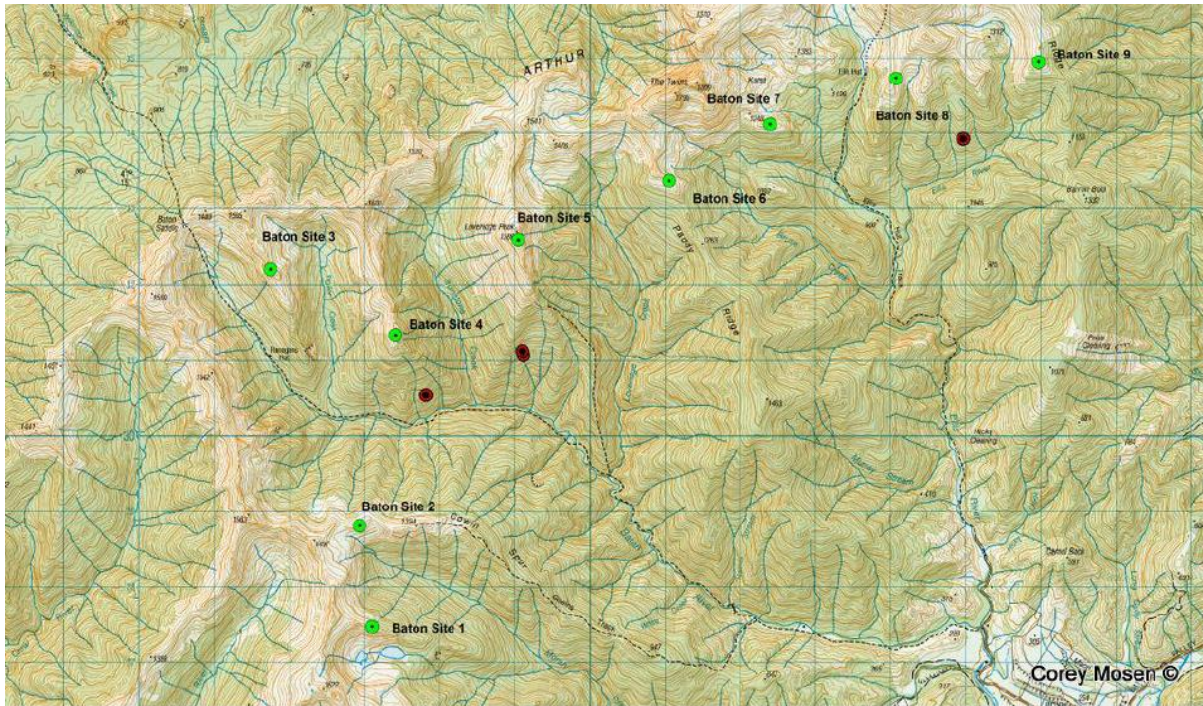


Figure 3. Location of current kea nests and survey sites Baton, Kahurangi National Park, 2015 (Mosen 2015)



Motueka, Golden Bay Kea

Kea research in the Motueka / Golden Bay region does not have the long history of other areas (i.e. Nelson Lakes and Arthurs Pass). Kea nest monitoring (Figure 2 and Figure 3) and summer survey work was first undertaken in the back country of Kahurangi National Park in 2009 and continues to present day.

In 2014/2015, 13 females were monitored in Kahurangi National Park. They were recorded visiting nest cavities, and one female was seen to have laid eggs. However, the presence of rats appears to have stopped any other attempts at laying. No chicks were produced by these monitored females (Orr-Walker, 2015). In comparison, in 2015/2016 (post predator control as part of 'Battle for our Birds') eight females were monitored in the same area. Three females fledged chicks (J Kemp pers comm. 2016). The birds in these surveys are important as they are more isolated and may have less human interaction than those in other areas (such as Arthurs Pass, Rainbow Ski Field etc.).

In contrast to the back country birds, the Motueka and Golden Bay region is potentially a high risk site for some kea as they come into direct contact with humans and their property. Kea have been injured or killed as a result of vehicle incidents, illegal shooting, lead poisoning, electrocution, and ingestion of foreign materials, interaction with pest control devices/poisons and at forestry harvesting sites.

As a response to the high number of human-kea interactions (conflict) in the Motueka Region (particularly Kaiteriteri, Marahau, Riwaka, Takaka Hill and forestry areas), a local Kea Conflict Co-ordinators' position was created by the Kea Conservation Trust in 2014. Since then, over 20 kea conflict/interactions have been reported for the Nelson-Tasman region involving up to 148 birds. 17

of these reports involved site visits to provide practical support and advice. The Kea Conservation Trust has created on-line kea proofing and conflict reporting pages as part of their website.

Project Plan Focal Areas

Discussions with the community and researchers over the years as well as recent meetings through the Winter Advocacy tour, talks with Department of Conservation and via kea-conflict 'call-outs' has highlighted the following areas locals wish to get involved with regarding kea conservation:

- i) Reduction of local threats (pest control, nest protection, removal of lead from buildings)
- ii) Kea advocacy
- iii) Kea conflict resolution and support
- iv) Development of kea protocol for the South Island forestry sector working in kea-country
- v) Care of injured kea

These focal areas may be added to in the future.

i) Reduction of local threats

Pest Control – Support and expand local pest control efforts to support kea

Aims: a) Look to increase the volunteer pool to support the current predator control initiatives in the area.

Method: Development of a sustainable volunteer programme (with associated advocacy programme) to support local pest control efforts. The CEC will work with local communities and interested stakeholders (e.g. Friends of Flora, Project Janszoon, Birdsong Trust, Iwi etc) to develop this list and help coordinate with conservation groups as required. Due to the environment volunteers will be required to work within, this programme will require careful assessment and coordination of volunteers, and development of robust training and health & safety plans.

Funding: DOC Community Fund for Community Engagement Co-ordinator (KCT).

b) Investigate extending the trapping programme up behind Richmond to protect kea.

Method: Trapping proposals to be investigated and if deemed necessary, drafted for this area.

Funding: Funding will be required for purchase of traps and set-up. Potential cost to install trap lines. Servicing of potential trap circuit (cost will vary depending on volunteer input).

There will also be a requirement to budget for trap line maintenance at least every three years.

Funding: DOC Community Fund for Community Engagement Co-ordinator (KCT) and Dulux as part of the nest monitoring programme).

Removal of Lead

Aims: Support local residents in the removal of lead from buildings within Motueka and Golden Bay

Method: This project will look to

- a) identify the status and presence of lead within the area
- b) to support local initiatives in removing all lead from local buildings and huts in conservation areas in and around Kahurangi and Abel Tasman National Parks and the wider area
- c) to provide alternative materials (tech screws and flashings) to replace the lead removed

d) to support safe disposal of old lead.

Funding: Initial development of the local area project (including identifying who has information on locations of buildings with lead, potential local volunteers (individuals and groups)) to be undertaken with DOC Community Fund monies. Funding partners for alternative non-toxic materials and technical support to be secured (this is currently being investigated as part of a South Island wide project).

ii) Kea advocacy/education

Aims: To increase the public awareness of the endangered status and threats to kea, and reduce the incidence of inappropriate behaviour and conflict.

Method: Main education points to cover

- a) kea are endangered and fully protected,
- b) no feeding of kea,
- c) conflict resolution and
- d) call to action. This will be achieved through the following methods:

- Supply of kea education resources to the Department of Conservation and local schools
- Development and delivery of interactive kea talks by kea personnel (targeting school and tourist groups)
- Promotion of kea sightings reporting (via website or phone app)
- Promotion of kea proofing database and conflicts programme

Funding: This project will be funded through the DOC Community Fund - Community – Kea Project Plan.

iii) Kea conflict resolution and support

Aims: To provide support and advice for those in conflict with kea.

Method: Ensure Kea Conservation Trust personnel are available for immediate support and advice for those having conflict issues with kea, including the updating of the kea proofing database (as per the Community Conflict Resolution Program).

Funding: This project will be funded through the Community Conflict Resolution Programme (KCT) funded by Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens and DOC CCPF.

iv) Development of kea protocol for South Island forestry sector operating in kea-country

Aims: To develop kea protocol in forestry.

Method: This project will create an education pamphlet for forestry staff and crew who work in areas where kea may be present. Currently many forestry crews in the Riwaka, Motueka Valley and

Golden Bay areas are visited by kea. At times, kea can cause conflict by interfering with, and damaging logging equipment. This pamphlet would look to include information on kea ecology (such as nesting, dispersal, behaviours, threats etc...) and ways to kea-proof logging equipment.

Funding: This project will be funded through the DOC Community Fund - Community – Kea Project Plan and written in consultation with Forestry Companies.

v) Care of Injured Kea

Aims: To support and develop initiatives in the care for injured kea.

Method: Ensure a support network and contacts are current and understood by relevant stakeholders. At this time a number of groups have stepped up to support any injured kea in the area. This list will be maintained and kept current with the KCT and DOC. Currently these include:

- Bird Recovery Golden Bay - for initial support and advice for injured kea in Golden Bay: Marian Milne 035257410.
- A local Motueka vet (contacted through the Department of Conservation, Motueka), for the initial assessment of injured kea.
- Natureland Zoo in Nelson (021449639) –for initial care of injured kea within the Tasman area.

In addition to the above, a fund is to be set up to take donations to support volunteer efforts to access medical care for injured kea. This will be driven by the KCT and be used for the following purposes:

- Reimbursement of travel costs (petrol) on production of receipt/s;
- Purchase of any equipment (carry cages etc), expendables (food and hydration) to support holding and transport of kea (any proposed purchases must be cleared first to ensure there are sufficient funds available);
- Development of veterinary register (list of local vets able to provide initial and long-term medical support for kea);
- Process for transporting kea to specialist veterinary facilities (Massey University (Palmerston Nth), the Nest (Wellington Zoo)), Vet Ent (Queenstown) or the South Island Wildlife Hospital (ChCh));
- Develop local SOP with community stakeholders for dealing with injured kea

Funding: potentially through crowd sourced funding (as per the Arthurs Pass initiative). A funding plan to be set up to assist this.

Development of Injured kea SOP will be supported through the DOC CCPF Strategic plan funds and DOC Community Fund - Community - Kea Project Plan.

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