

## **Submission Results: Mimiwhangata Marine Reserve Proposal & Community Discussion Document.**

### **Northland Conservancy, Department of Conservation 14 December, 2004**

#### **1. Background**

On 12 July 2004 the Department of Conservation, Northland Conservancy (the Department) released a document entitled "*Marine Reserve Proposal Mimiwhangata: Community Discussion Document*". This proposal document identified the area of interest for a marine reserve, outlined the history of the area, the ecological values, and issues of management. Accompanying the document was a questionnaire in which the Department stated: "*Mimiwhangata, Have Your Say*". *We want your feedback on the idea of a marine reserve at Mimiwhangata*". The closing date for receipt of questionnaires and submissions was 12 October 2004.

#### **2. Introduction**

The information received was entered into a database by a departmental staff member. It was checked again independently by another staff member and corrections made to ensure consistency of coding and interpretation of responses.

The analysis of submissions is presented in the tables below and represents in summary what was received.

Following the tables there is a summary of the comments received with regard to what effects the proposed reserve may have, whether those effects were favourable or unfavourable, and other comments made by respondents. This includes a list of points and alternative suggestions for protection made by some of the respondents.

#### **3. The Results**

The Department received 1109 submissions and most of these (854) were returned on the questionnaire provided. Four (4) different signed standardised submissions were sent in by 83 respondents. Some of these had individual comments on them. The remaining 172 submissions were received either as a questionnaire form with a letter or additional pages attached, a letter, an e-mail, or a more substantial submission of several pages.

There is a relatively high level of questions within the questionnaire where no response was provided (identified by the 'not stated' figures in the tables below). Also it is not always clear what the response is or there is a contradiction in the responses given. Any responses that were contradictory in nature or were unrelated to the questions were not included in the submission analysis.

In general, respondents who wrote letters did not follow the format of the questionnaire or answer the questions asked. Therefore there are some gaps in some of the information obtained for some of the questions.

<b>Location of respondents</b>	
Local <sup>1</sup>	172
Whangarei <sup>2</sup>	374
Other Northland Region <sup>3</sup>	120
Auckland Region <sup>4</sup>	288
Other North Island	73
South Island	24
Overseas	3
Not stated	55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 1

<b>Frequency of use of coastal or marine areas at Mimiwhangata</b>	
<5X per year	335
>5X per year	310
Not visited	119
Not stated	273
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 2

<b>Activities involved in within the proposal area</b>	
Boating	387
Swimming	461
Recreational fishing	357
Commercial fishing	10
Diving	250
Snorkelling	385
Walking	427
Education or study	105
Other	see Appendix 1

Table 3

Note that respondents often ticked more than one activity box in the questionnaire, so the total number of activities does not equal the total number of submissions received

<sup>1</sup> 'Local' respondents were those from coastal areas close to Mimiwhangata between Ngunguru in the south, northwards to Parekura Bay/Rawhiti in the Bay of Islands; and inland to Hikurangi.

<sup>2</sup> 'Whangarei' is the Whangarei postal area (as per the address provided by the respondent).

<sup>3</sup> 'Other Northland region' is all the rest of Northland not part of 'Whangarei' or 'Local'.

<sup>4</sup> 'Auckland Region' is the Auckland local authority regional area.

<b>Would you be affected by creation of a Marine Reserve at Mimiwhangata</b>	
Affected	495
Not affected	319
Not stated	295
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 4

<b>Is that affect likely to be favourable or unfavourable?</b>	
Favourable affect	569
Unfavourable affect	215
Not clear	8
Not stated	317
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 5

<b>Boundary options</b>	
Option 1	37
Option 2	297
Alternative suggested (see below)	146
Either option 1 or option 2	47
Neither	160
Not specifically stated	422
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 6

It was not specifically asked which boundary option was preferred however many responses clearly indicated a preference or suggested alternative boundaries.

Option 2 was identified as the preferred boundary option. Numerous suggestions for alternative boundaries were given, (see Appendix 2). These included keeping the existing marine park with current regulations, or as a marine reserve.

Expanded areas were proposed, to the west, to the south and to the 12 mile limit. The inclusion of Paparahi Point in a marine reserve was suggested by 15 respondents. Reduced boundaries were suggested, usually larger in extent than the existing park, but smaller than option 1. Suggestions were also received for a combination of marine park and a marine reserve.

<b>Overall view of proposal</b>	
Opposition	329
Qualified opposition*	3
Support	707
Qualified support*	56
Not clear	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 7

*\*Whether the view expressed by the submitter is recorded as a qualified objection or a qualified support is, in some cases, a matter of opinion and was also arrived at having read the comments in their entirety. The important point is that the view is a qualified one, i.e. neither outright objection nor total support.*

<b>Location vis-à-vis support/objection</b>						
	<b>Overall view of proposal</b>					
<b>Location</b>	Not clear	Opposition	Qualified Opposition	Qualified Support	Support	<b>TOTAL</b>
Local	1	83	1	14	73	<b>172</b>
Whangarei	6	115	2	16	235	<b>374</b>
Other Northland Region	5	22		4	89	<b>120</b>
Auckland Region	1	67		19	201	<b>288</b>
Other North Island	1	23		1	48	<b>73</b>
South Island		2			22	<b>24</b>
Overseas					3	<b>3</b>
Not stated		17		2	36	<b>55</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>1109</b>

Table 8

<b>Use vis-à-vis support/objection</b>									
	<b>Activity</b>								
<b>Support or Opposition</b>	Boating	Swimming	Rec fishing	Commercial fishing	Diving	Snorkeling	Walking	Education or Study	Other
Not clear	4	4	5	1	3	2	1	1	
Opposition	159	124	164	7	102	120	84	19	27
Qualified Opposition	2	1	2	1	1	2			
Qualified Support	29	32	42		25	27	33	5	15
Support	193	300	144	1	119	234	309	80	99
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>141</b>

Table 9

#### 4 Open – ended questions

The rest of the questionnaire asked the following open-ended questions:

1. What effect would a marine reserve at Mimiwhangata have on you?
2. How would that effect change with option 1, option 2 or an alternative boundary?
3. We would appreciate any additional comments you may have on the Mimiwhangata marine reserve proposal

The following are representative of 'themes' that emerged in the reading of the responses. They are not intended as a complete list of the responses received.

##### 4.1 What effect would the marine reserve at Mimiwhangata have on you?

There was a range of effects identified by respondents. These were both unfavourable and favourable. Unfavourable effects were primarily associated with recreational fishing but not always. Favourable effects covered a range of marine reserve benefits.

*Some of the unfavourable effects and alternative suggestions to a marine reserve raised by those who oppose the proposal outright or with qualifications*

- Stop us collecting crayfish and casual fishing.
- Either of the proposed new boundaries will severely limit recreational fishing in safe sheltered situations relatively close to shore.
- As I have a 12ft aluminium dinghy, I would be restricted as others to a confined area with the result of over-fishing.
- Impinge on my and my family's rights as New Zealanders. This is too large an area for this part of the coast.
- Ban all fishing in the main part of the spawning period (1 month). Ban Charter and commercial fishing all year round within 12 mile limit. Net size and ban pair commercial fishing. By catch is doing the damage.
- Would take away another safe recreational area. Would mean I couldn't fish or dive spots I've used for the last 20 years.
- There is already a protection area around here which is working. Give it time.
- Limit my ability to earn a living from commercial fishing. It would also limit safe anchorage and limit my fishing in a west or south westerly wind with Poor Knights and proposed Great Barrier Reserve

*Some of the favourable effects raised by those who support the proposal outright or with qualifications*

- A Marine Reserve is overdue and necessary for research, education, biodiversity maintenance...
- It would complete the long sought inter-relationship between the coastal Park and a Marine Park.
- Protection of a complex combination of reef systems and habitats will benefit the local community for ecotourism, recovery of the fishing resource and enjoyment of their local marine habitat.
- A Marine Reserve with a no take rule is easy for people to understand, manage, enforce and monitor.
- I support a network of marine reserves.
- Being an avid tramper I would like to see the area retained in its natural beauty.
- Hopefully would increase fish stocks inside and outside of the reserve and improve depleted stocks up and down the coast to the benefit of recreational fishers.
- Would improve diving and variety of sea life. Excellent study area for students. We don't have an area like this close to Northland Schools. We visit Leigh, but we could have this here.
- Marine reserves provide safe breeding areas for all marine life.
- It would encourage me to take visitors to the area to see the amazing marine life instead of just telling people "it used to be good".
- Increased tourism.
- I would rest assured that my grandchildren and their children would be able to see real fish in their real environment for years to come.

**4.2 How would that effect change with option 1, option 2 or an alternative boundary?**

Submitters responded as to which boundary option they preferred (see Table 6 - Boundary options). There was a wide range of alternative boundaries also suggested (see Appendix 2).

#### **4.3 We would appreciate any additional comments you may have on the Mimiwhangata marine reserve proposal**

Additional comments tended to summarise what the submitter had commented on in the rest of the questionnaire, but not always. Examples of additional comments include:

- Remove traditional fishing grounds from our use.
- The Trust is representative of several Hapu both along the coastline and inland i.e. Tapeka Point in the north and Aotea in the South. There is strong opposition to the proposal in both the structure of management and extent of the area proposed. There are many issues that have not been fully discussed at marae level to say the least.
- Document doesn't clearly explain what is involved in traditional management of the local Iwi of parts of the seabed outside the proposed Marine Reserve area.
- The problem is inadequate policing by Ministry of Fisheries.
- Stop coating the surrounding lands in poisonous chemicals and artificial fertilisers; protect the waterways flowing from the land into the sea;
- Public access to the beach with car parking similar to foreshore fencing as on Whananaki South Beach
- The road down to Mimiwhangata would need to be improved as it was very scary in a bus with school children. Access from the Pareparea end should not be promoted, unless the people from Pareparea want this.
- Reserve needs to be clearly identified and marked more so for boaties as distance etc hard to calculate from offshore.
- How will DOC manage increased visitor numbers by both land and sea?

## 5. Distribution and consultation process on the proposal for a Marine Reserve at Mimiwhangata

The production and release of a Community Discussion Document setting out the area of interest for a marine reserve, and seeking comments on that proposal is not specifically required under the Marine Reserves Act 1971 (the Act). However, the Act states that public interest is an important consideration and information on any potential impacts associated with a marine reserve proposal needs to be gathered.

Therefore the Discussion Document and submissions received were for the purpose of consulting with the community and gathering information. This information being to assist in the evaluation of the proposal and, if a decision is made to proceed with a formal application, incorporate appropriate information from the submissions received into that application

On this basis the Department released the document entitled "*Marine Reserve Proposal Mimiwhangata: Community Discussion Document*" and the insert questionnaire entitled "*Mimiwhangata Have Your Say*" (the combined proposal document and questionnaire are hereinafter called the Discussion Document) Approximately 4,200 Discussion Documents were distributed to approximately 270 organisations, groups, clubs and businesses, approximately 1650 individuals made up from lists of interested parties such as: absentee landowners at Oakura, Teal Bay and Whananaki, persons on the Rural Delivery (RD) routes and Postal Delivery Centres (PDC's) along the Whananaki and Hikurangi coasts, and Mimiwhangata campers and persons staying at the Mimiwhangata accommodation. Letters informing people of where they could access the Discussion Document were also sent to all persons on the RD route and PDC along the Tutukaka coast.

Both prior to and during the 3 month period for commenting on the Discussion Document, the Department has been in consultation with the Tangata whenua seeking their guidance and input. Tangata whenua have and continue to participate in the communities consideration of a marine reserve proposal.

The Department also:

- Established the Mimiwhangata Call Centre and e-mail for the purposes of providing access to the Discussion Document, providing interested parties with the opportunity to speak with a departmental staff member and for submissions to be received.
- Continued dialogue with tangata whenua at a hapu, whanau and Iwi level.
- Held a media/press conference in Whangarei including widespread distribution of associated media release and Mimiwhangata information pack.
- Posted the Discussion Document and questionnaire on the Department of Conservation website. In addition Forest and Bird and the World Wild Fund posted hyper links to the Discussion Document on their respective websites
- Distributed the Discussion Document to several community distribution points in Whangarei and the Mimiwhangata Coast.

- Various presentations were given to interested groups and persons within the Whangarei and Northland region. This included Tangata whenua, the Northland Regional Council, Whangarei District Council, Russell Environmental Expo, the Northland Conservation Board and a local dive club.
- Held 7 Community meetings at Oakura, Whananaki, Whangarei, Matapouri, Ngunguru, Russell and Paihia.
- In addition articles and advertisements appeared in a number of newspapers, radio stations, and magazines including the NZ Herald, Northern Advocate, the Oakura Pothole, Tutukaka Focus, Russell Lights, KCC FM, Newstalk ZB, NZ Fishing News, NZ Dive Log and Forest and Bird magazine. An article was also screened on the Maori Television (insert date).

see footnote <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> A petition headed "*Petition Against the Proposal of changes (by D.O.C. – Dept. of Conservation) to the Marine Reserve and Area at Mimiwhangata*" and the results of a survey conducted by Wilkinsons Sports in Whangarei were presented to the Minister of Conservation by Phil Heatly MP and John Carter MP. There were 663 signatures opposed to the proposal in the petition and a total of 83 respondents to the survey (18 for, 65 against). The petition and the survey are acknowledged but could not be included in this analysis of submissions received.

Appendix 1 **Other activities respondents were involved in within the proposal area:**

- Art, painting, drawing scenery & sketching
- Beach activities
- Beach coming, tidal pools& rock-pooling
- Bicycle riding
- Bird watching
- Boating
- Boogie boarding & manta boarding
- Camping
- Camping & kayaking
- Canoeing
- Collecting shellfish including tuatua & mussels
- Cruising & fishing up & down the coast
- Customary take
- DOC open day
- Enjoying the natural environment & grooving at scenery
- Fencing
- Filming
- Holidays in DOC cottages
- Hunting with DOC workers
- Kaimoana collection
- Kayaking
- Labour
- Landscape & underwater photography
- Marine research & Orca research
- Over-nighting & sheltering in foul weather at safe anchorage
- Pest control
- Picnics
- Pig hunting
- Planting trees
- Playing in sand
- Recreation with children on beaches
- Relaxing & retreat
- Rugby
- Sailing & yachting
- Sightseeing
- Skiing
- Spear-fishing
- Surfing
- Teaching grandchildren about seashore
- Tikanga kaitiakitanga & tino rangatiratanga
- Tramping
- Water sports
- Weed control
- Working

## Appendix 2 Alternative Boundary Ideas

Number of submissions	Brief Description of Alternative Boundary ideas
1	800m from land like at Poor Knights Islands
65	Keep existing marine park & boundaries as is
1	Existing park boundary with no fishing & no commercial fishing or nets within option 2 area
1	Existing marine park but W area around Paparahi Point excluded
1	Out in open ocean not in sheltered waters
5	Expanded version of Option 2
3	Extend to Poor Knights Islands
1	Option 1 with area west of Rimarikis excluded
1	Modified option 2: Straight line from Mimiwhangata trig – C – E – G
1	Modified option 2: A – A1 – C – D1 – G
1	Option 2 with some fishing allowed within existing park area
1	Check original for red area
1	Also reserves at Elizabeth Reef, Tauwhara Bay & Moureeses Bay.
2	Shift reserve to Bay of Islands
2	Option 1 reduced by about 30%
1	Option 1 reduced by approx 40%
1	Much reduced option 1 forming a square from Waikahoa Bay pa point around to Okupe Island/Te Rearea pa
1	Rimarikis – D then south to undefined point
1	Not as far out as is proposed. Not specific.
1	Option 2 but extended in S from F – southern park boundary
1	Option 2 expanded on West & South boundaries
1	Marine park area (& rules) expanded to undefined extent
1	Much reduced option 1 skewed
1	Reserve should include Paparahi Point
2	Option 2 plus Paparahi Point area
2	Existing park boundary excluding Paparahi Point.
1	Not so far out to sea
1	Shift northern boundary of Option 1 or 2 south close to Rimarikis & extend reserve to Moureeses Bay or Otamure Bay.
1	Go elsewhere & keep park, or line NW from Mimiwhangata Bay to Rimariki. North of line is marine park, S of line is marine reserve, or develop Accord as in Fiordland.
1	Option 1 or 2 boundaries as marine park
2	Larger marine park no specified boundary
1	Whangaruru harbour

Number of submissions	Brief Description of Alternative
2	Reduced option 2 orientation from W side of Rimarikis out to sea
1	Alternative but not specified
1	Modify in relation to Marine National Park proposal & after new Marine Reserves legislation
1	Marine park boundary NW by about 1km
1	Existing marine park or Accord like Fiordland
5	Existing park boundary as a reserve
1	Close option areas to commercial fishing & west of a line from home Point to Marine park boundary also closed to commercial fishing.
1	Option 2 extended to 12 mile limit
1	Option 1 out to 12 mile limit
1	Option 2 with S boundary E – G (removes kink in line)
1	Propose three reserves, one on go & other 2 rotationally fished every 2 years. Boundaries not specified.
1	Much smaller area but not specified
1	Coastal management plan required from Cape Brett to Mimiwhangata
1	Similar to 434 but extends to A – B
1	Remove S third of option 2 & include Paparahi Point.
2	Marine park for option 2 area
1	Not specified, use prominent landmarks, not NS, EW lines
1	Reduced option 2 on S boundary but not clear
1	Existing boundary of park extended W to include all of Helena Bay