



Our ref: **HAB 34 & PLA 14**

Your ref:

Date: 15 June, 1999

To: Graeme La Cock, Dave Jane

From: Colin Ogle

Subject: **Oaonui Coastal Restoration Report**

This looks like a typical "soil conservator's approach" to a perceived problem of sand movement. I can't believe that it bears DoC as the named author on the cover and title page, unless you read the small print at the foot of the title page and see that it was TRC who compiled the report. This report is not going to create a good image for DoC among its "green supporters".

So what are the problems that I see with the report?

- What is the actual issue of sand movement at present? The report appears to contain no data on the extent or rates of dune movement, nor even anecdotal accounts that a problem exists. The 3 years of aerial photos are included, at different scales, without any interpretation e.g., do they show dune drift?
If sand is moving on to productive farmland, then why is this? Our experience elsewhere is that accelerated sand movement is the result of factors like grazing livestock (is this area of dunes fenced from stock?); off-road vehicles or other inappropriate recreational uses of the dunes. The report #4.5 acknowledges that these factors apply here, but offer only a hint of solutions. Any dune restoration needs to *start* with these factors, before worrying about planting etc.
- There's no acknowledgement of the fact that this area was identified in the Egmont PNAP survey as an RAP, in which Maggie Bayfield stated "This is the only significant remaining area of coastal sand dunes [in Egmont ER]." The coastal restoration report should:
 - a) acknowledge that there is an RAP status over the area
 - b) state whether the values identified during PNAP survey still exist
 - c) (if the values still exist) then state how the "restoration" plan may impact on those values (re-contouring dunes with a bull-dozer, or planting marram &/or pines, or "dumping of waste material" would seem incompatible).
- There's no data on natural values – no plant list, only a very coarse-scale veg. map, and inaccurate fauna information (what's a "spotted dotterel"?). If these breeding dotterels were, as I suspect, NZ dotterels, this one of NZ's threatened endemic species which last summer was reported breeding in Taranaki for the first time. What impacts will the proposed reveg. programme have on its habitat?

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There's pine plantings specified for 1999 (p.8, S 5.1.1) so before TRC make a pre-emptive strike DoC needs some urgent answers to important questions and to make its stand regarding the conservation of natural values at Oaonui Beach. Presumably this falls with New Plymouth Area Office's jurisdiction.

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for Conservator