

OPEN

MINUTE ITEM

ATTACHMENTS

Ordinary meeting of the Environment Committee

Tuesday 21 April 2020
Commencing at 1.00p.m. - Hearing of Submissions to Dog Control
Policy and Bylaw Review
via Audio-Visual (Zoom)

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Item 5.2: Tabled documents: Attachment 1

3.00pm – Ferry van Mansum – Submission 21483

It is great to see that local knowledge will play a part in the decision making process regarding the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw 2013. Often blanket rules like these are set out without that.

I just want to make some remarks about the Boulderbank at the end of Boulderbank Drive.

First of all there is the law that one is not allowed to disturb local wildlife and this basically covers what this is all about.

Birds will flee when people or dogs are within a certain range which is different for each species. However since there is no food on the top of the Boulderbank there are hardly any birds. Even if a dog wants to chase birds they have to run on those boulders which is impossible. Dog owners don't want to see their vet more often than necessary and will stop their dog from running.

The cyclones Fehi and Gita have dumped such a layer of rocks on the top of the bank that the walking tracks have disappeared and this prevents that many people walk there. One can see slightly more people during weekends and holidays but usually I walk there just by myself. And my dog of course.

The nesting season for the ground nesting birds is short and a warning like you can see in the Glenn during penguin nesting time is more effective and understandable. So people stick to that. There are no breeding colonies in this part of the Boulderbank.

Last but not least, good dog owners are responsible people, pay dog registration, mainly for those who don't, and are often interested in nature. We love to visit our favourite walk regularly and look for the kingfishers, pied stilts, terns, seagulls, godwits and on some lucky day we even might see dolphins, seals or gannets. All the while the dog is sniffing around, not on the leash but under control.

Leave a small part of the Boulderbank for these people.

A2372966

Item 5.2: Tabled documents: Attachment 2

Hilary Burbidge and Ross Whitlock – Submission 21689

We have walked along the Maitai /Tantragee Walkway most days for over 12 years. No matter what time of day or day of the week the area is being enjoyed by a wide range of people walking and biking with their dogs. It is a healthy, low cost and thoroughly enjoyable activity that costs the council little. It is the only area near Nelson city, that is easily accessible where dogs can be safely off leash (away from roads), uncrowded in a more rural environment and can be exercised for several kms. There are no endangered ground birds, no special plants and often no stock. The freedom of this recreational amenity to rate payers and visitors you propose to sacrifice due to "low cost maintenance of grazing" Why not surprise us dog owners by instead of introducing restrictions upon restriction you actually embrace us and make this area "a dog off leash area" by stopping stock grazing. The maintenance cost of some mowing and brush cutting could be easily offset by the cost of badly needed improved fencing (stock often wander), the supply of fresh clean water (often scant apart from winter and an animal welfare issue) and avoidance of pollution of waterways by faecal run-off during heavy rain. This area could become a real gem for Nelson (akin to Rough Island) instead of poor grazing land at best. It does not have to be manicured parkland, semi wilderness is great and welcomed by most. As an aside although you mention it is difficult to get any one to graze the area due to dogs being off leash, I note that stock seem to be rarely checked and when moved on there are always several sheep and even adult cows left behind - presumably unintentionally and often distressed at being separated from the remainder of the flock/herd. I have never in over 12 years seen any dog harm stock

NZ has space - the Codgers/Tantragee/Groom Creek Road and Maitai walkway provides near Nelson town access to a longer and more rural walkway for the simple activity of exercising their dogs -why continually restrict fit people and their dogs when this so easily could be a treasured feature of Nelson.

A2371714

Helen Black – Submission 21694

Thank you for listening to this oral presentation and I hope you have read my written submission.

Dog ownership play a big part in the lives of many people and families. In 2018 the pet industry were worth \$1.8b*.

Since the last dog bylaw were adopted dog ownership has increased steadily. The Dog control activity report between 2013- 2019 does not show any great negative changes despite the increase in dogs which reflect that most dog owners must be 'good dog owners'. Housing developments in Nelson has changed with much smaller gardens which means an increased need for public areas for dog walking. This proposal is mostly about the increase of on-leash and prohibited areas. Many dog owners cannot give their dogs sufficient exercise and stimuli during on-leash walks.

During the last decade safe areas that used to be available for people to exercise their dogs have decreased or become less pleasurable to use. Walkways have become shared paths with cyclists, the hills around Codgers, Andrews field, the new BMX park at the end of Branford Park, the Maitai/Brook loop are shared but taken over by bikers, the back beach by kite surfers, the extension of Founders railway going through green areas, most swimming holes along the Maitai are dog prohibited part of the year, soccer activities on the Maitai cricket ground took over the cricket off season that dog owners had negotiated with the council as an off-leash area and now all the grazed areas surrounding Nelson are proposed to become on-leash just to name a few of these losses of safe areas for dog owners. I can't help but make the comparison between bikers and dog owners. The latter heavily regulated and mostly self-funded whilst the council has no interest to regulate or enforce the former and they are given substantial yearly financial support (\$1m last year).

What makes a Good versus Bad dog owner? For example, many people use sport fields to let their dogs be off-leash as a place where children and dogs play together when there are no matches or training. Years ago I saw a councillor play with his children on the Victory Square sports field incl their off-leash dog. The family and dog had a lot of fun. It was an on-leash area so this councillor broke the bylaw. There were no other people around, they were not affecting anyone else. There's not many green areas around for families with dogs in this area. Bylaws that either doesn't make sense, aren't practical or are too prohibitive won't be followed and good people will become bad dog owners.

Suggestions:

- Fence off play grounds to allow families to bring their dogs to neighbourhood parks or sports fields not in use and let dogs be off-leash.
- Dog walkers need more areas to choose from, to spread the 'load' which would "minimise danger, distress, and nuisance to the community generally". Leash aggression is a very real occurrence when dogs are force to meet other dogs on narrow footpaths or tracks.
- With the loss of safe off-leash areas the council need to find other ways to manage currently grazed land around Nelson urban areas. See my suggestions in my written submission.

A2371733

- Good Dog Owners: If the council viewed dog owners as good dog owners, there would be no need for on-leash or prohibited areas. I have not heard that there's an outrage against dogs so this must be a council driven proposal. It highlights the council's view that there are not enough good dog owners hence these proposed prohibited bylaws. So when a biker/cyclist offends against a pedestrian on a footpath, shared path/track, do you limit all cyclists to on-road cycling only, or ban bikers from tracks'?

Unfortunate incidents are part of life and rather than a fear-based new dog policy and bylaw, I would like to see an inclusive approach. The wellbeing of dogs owners and dogs depend of quality areas to walk in. Please respect dog ownership by not penalise dog owners.

Thank you for listening

Hilary Burbidge and Ross Whitlock – Submission 21689

We have walked along the Maitai /Tantragee Walkway most days for over 12 years. No matter what time of day or day of the week the area is being enjoyed by a wide range of people walking and biking with their dogs. It is a healthy, low cost and thoroughly enjoyable activity that costs the council little. It is the only area near Nelson city, that is easily accessible where dogs can be safely off leash (away from roads), uncrowded in a more rural environment and can be exercised for several kms. There are no endangered ground birds, no special plants and often no stock. The freedom of this recreational amenity to rate payers and visitors you propose to sacrifice due to "low cost maintenance of grazing" Why not surprise us dog owners by instead of introducing restrictions upon restriction you actually embrace us and make this area "a dog off leash area" by stopping stock grazing. The maintenance cost of some mowing and brush cutting could be easily offset by the cost of badly needed improved fencing (stock often wander), the supply of fresh clean water (often scant apart from winter and an animal welfare issue) and avoidance of pollution of waterways by faecal run-off during heavy rain. This area could become a real gem for Nelson (akin to Rough Island) instead of poor grazing land at best. It does not have to be manicured parkland, semi wilderness is great and welcomed by most. As an aside although you mention it is difficult to get any one to graze the area due to dogs being off leash, I note that stock seem to be rarely checked and when moved on there are always several sheep and even adult cows left behind - presumably unintentionally and often distressed at being separated from the remainder of the flock/herd. I have never in over 12 years seen any dog harm stock NZ has space - the Codgers/Tantragee/Groom Creek Road and Maitai walkway provides near Nelson town access to a longer and more rural walkway for the simple activity of exercising their dogs -why continually restrict fit people and their dogs when this so easily could be a treasured feature of Nelson.

A2371714

Adrian Abraham – Submission 22738

Short Statement on Proposed Dog Control Policy and Bylaw – Adrian Abraham

I regret that I am unable to present in person, and trust that this statement will suffice. While I think the original written submission covers most of the salient issues, there are a few additional comments I would like to make. In part these result from having gone to the trouble of reading every single submission that was made.

Grazing Areas

We are currently under Covid-19 alert level 4 lockdown. One thing this lockdown has done is to underline the importance of locally available areas for walking and exercise. Sir Stanley Whitehead Park has been an invaluable resource. The wide open spaces where you can wander over the grazing land or follow the sheep trails have made for easy physical distancing. The dog could be off lead the whole time, whether or not wandering amongst the grazing sheep. The only time the dog needed to be on lead was when approaching people or other dogs in order to guarantee physical distancing (the dogs do not quite understand why we need to be so anti-social these days). I saw a number of people practising the same discipline as me – dog on lead near people and other dogs, off-lead when only sheep nearby. I would welcome any councillor who would like to accompany me on a walk to experience this valuable resource (once the lockdown rules permit).

The Grampians Reserve also provided excellent opportunities with easy physical distancing but this became off-limits when the government clarified the rules that even driving to a local area was not permitted. This just left me with Titoki Reserve (a nice walk but very small) and the local streets which were totally inadequate for exercise and difficult for social distancing due to the large number of people about.

In summary, these reserves are valuable community resources, admittedly highlighted by the current crisis but still valuable in normal times. Leave them available for people and their dogs to use responsibly.

Enforcement

I re-iterate my point that we need stricter enforcement where irresponsible dog owners actions (or lack thereof) cause harm or nuisance or have the realistic potential to do so. This is necessary to protect the rights of the majority, the responsible dog owners.

Good Dog Owner

Well it seems I have finally been granted good dog owner status (having owned the dog since 2018) but it doesn't alter my opinion that the GDO policy (in its current form) is both cumbersome and expensive to administer. While there is very widespread support for retaining the GDO scheme, it need not be in its current form. What is wanted is recognition that irresponsible dog owners should pay a higher share of the costs of dog control than responsible owners – i.e. a semblance of "user pays". This would be pretty easy to achieve and at a low administrative cost with a properly designed scheme. I would be happy to work with councillors and provide my expertise on a no fee basis if wanted.

A2371943

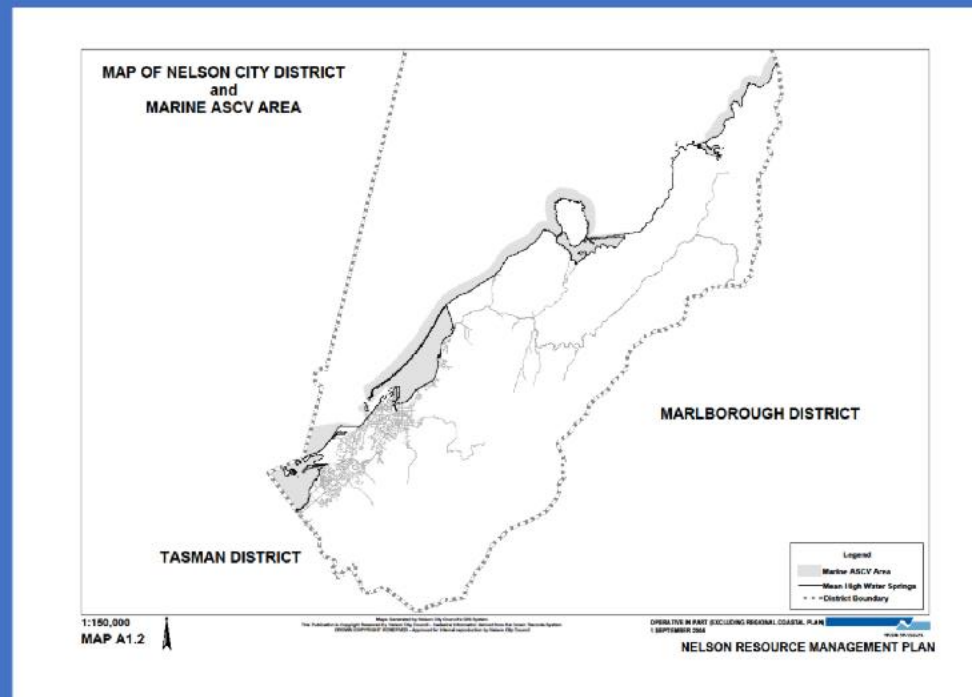
Nelson City Council Dog Control Policy and Bylaw

David S. Melville

Ornithological Society of New Zealand/Birds New Zealand



Nelson has important coastal biodiversity including avifauna



SHOREBIRDS OF FAREWELL SPIT, GOLDEN BAY AND TASMAN BAY



Rob Schuckard and David S. Melville

August 2013



The Ornithological Society
of New Zealand (Inc.)
<http://www.onsnz.org.nz>



COASTAL BIRDS OF THE TASMAN/NELSON REGION

A review of current information



Rob Schuckard and David S. Melville

February 2019



Birds New Zealand

Report prepared for Tasman District Council and Nelson City Council



Threatened – Nationally Critical

- Black-billed Gull



Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable

- Banded Dotterel



At Risk - Declining

- Banded Rail
- South Island Pied Oystercatcher
- Bar-tailed Godwit
- Red-billed Gull
- White-fronted Tern
- Fernbird



At Risk - Recovering

- Variable Oystercatcher
- Pied Shag



Sand Island



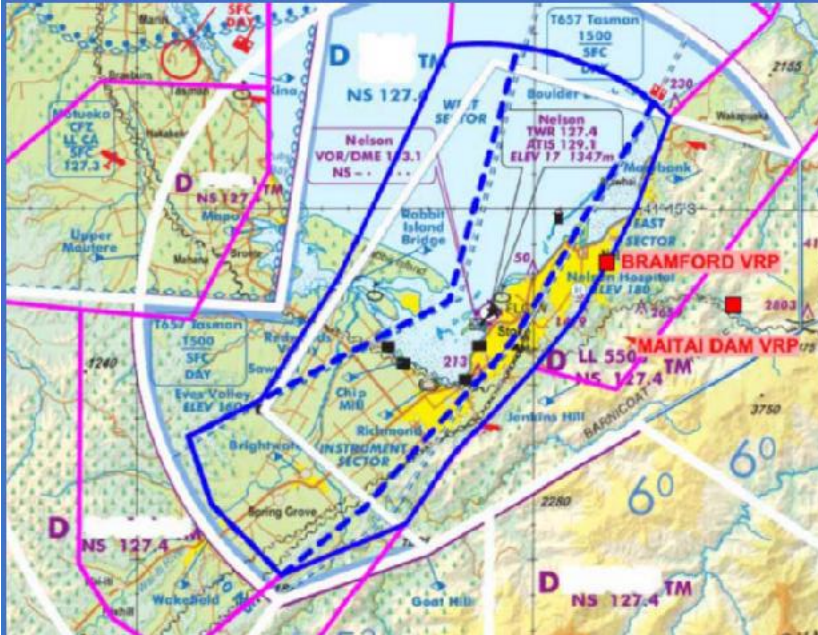
Sand Island

- Nesting
 - Black-billed Gull
 - Red-billed Gull
 - Variable Oystercatcher
 - White-fronted Tern



Sand Island

- High tide roost
- Safeguarding Nelson Airport



Sand Island

- Maintain 'dog prohibited' status



Boulder Bank



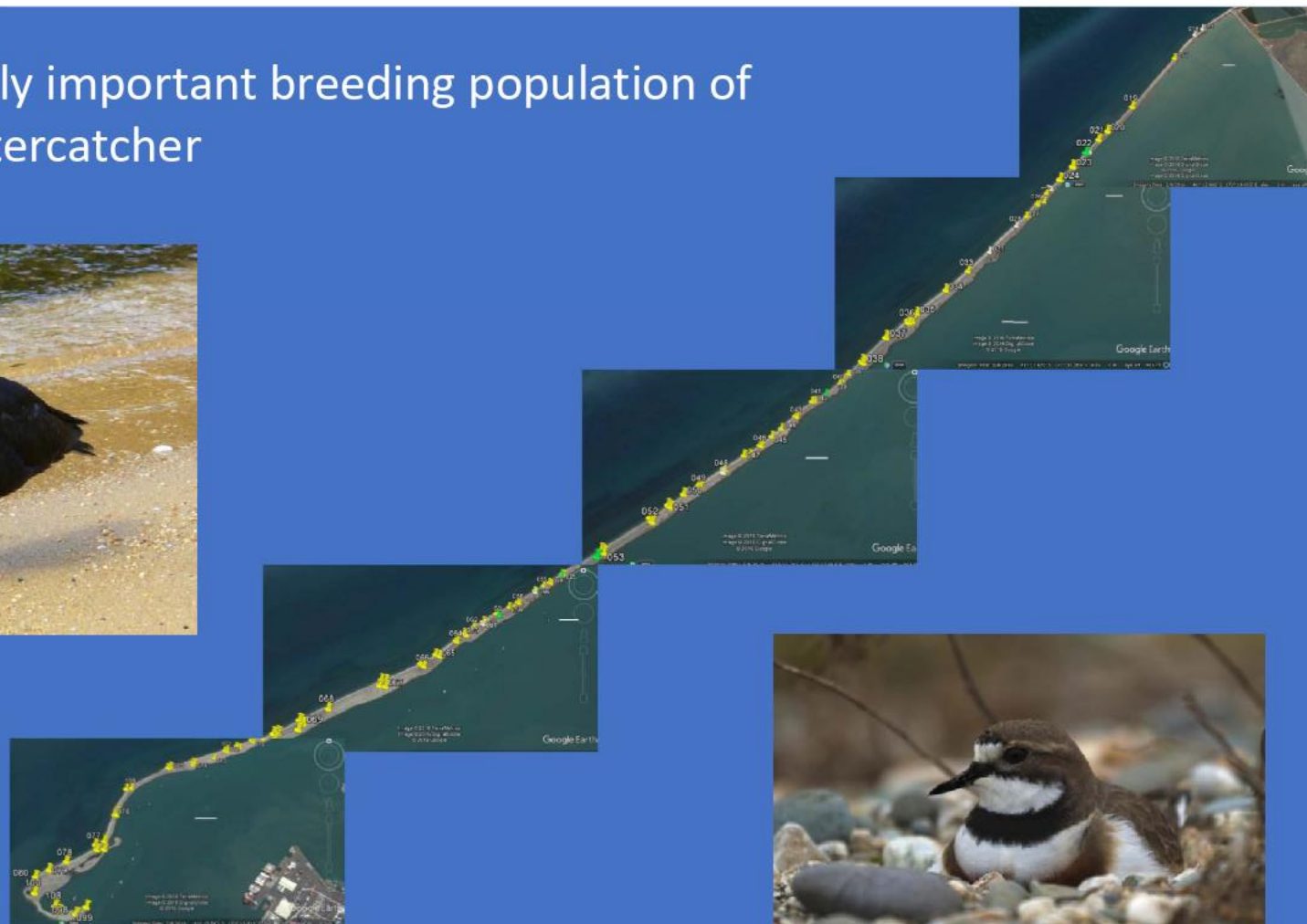
Results of Nelson Nature, Environmental Monitoring – Coastal Habitats Shorebird Survey - October 2016 to January 2017.

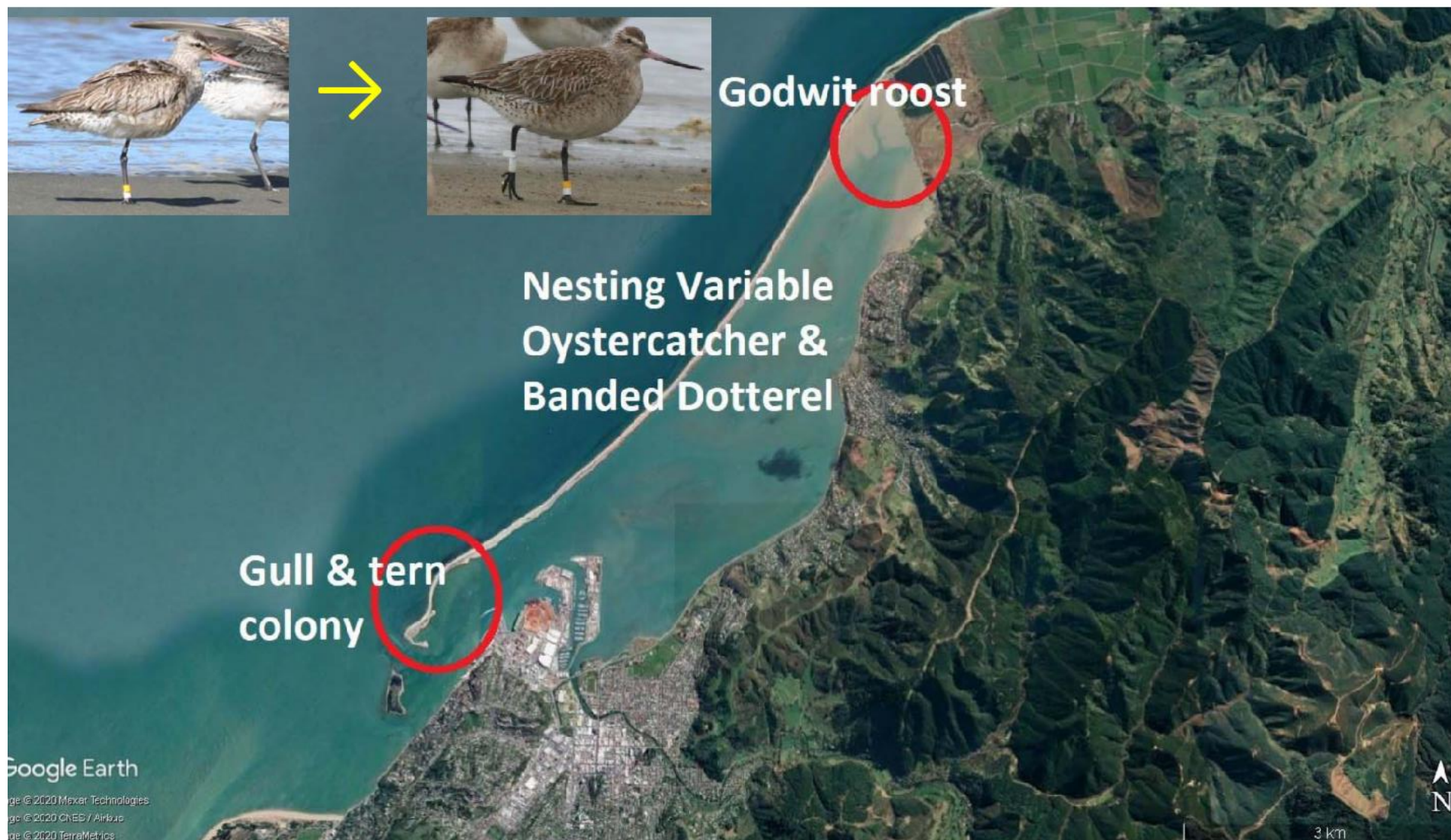


Variable oystercatcher on the Nelson Boulder Bank, December 2016.

Ron Moorhouse

Internationally important breeding population of Variable Oystercatcher





Boulder Bank

- Maintain 'dog on leash' along Boulder Bank
- Extend period of 'no dog' from 'October to February' to '**from 15 August** to February' to southern half of Boulder Bank [protect 'Nationally Vulnerable' Banded Dotterel]



Delaware Bay/ Paremata Flats



Dogs are known to predate rails and crakes

REVIEW ARTICLE

Impacts of introduced mammalian predators on indigenous birds of freshwater wetlands in New Zealand

New Zealand Journal of Ecology (2015) 39(1): 19-33

Colin F. J. O'Donnell^{1*}, B. Kay Clapperton² and Joanne M. Monks³

Large banded rail population discovered in Delaware Bay

11:22, Nov 19 2015



NELSON CITY COUNCIL

Delaware Bay/Paremata Flats

- Expansion of dog prohibited areas will enhance habitat for Banded Rail and Fernbird [both 'At Risk – Declining']



Thank you

