



16th September 2008

Recommendation for Simon Ngawhika

Tena koe

I am writing this letter in support of Simon Ngawhika to attend the *Bioneers 2008* conference in San Francisco over October 16-20 2008. More information can be found at <http://www.bioneers.org/program>

Simon was employed in the Kahui Kura Taiao team which I oversee at the Department of Conservation as a Summer Intern over December 2007-February 2008. The contributions he has made to the evaluation of our iwi consultation policies, species recovery, our work on Maori-based ecological restoration and his enthusiasm towards his work was very much appreciated. In particular, I was impressed by his contribution at our annual hui, where he presented and held the attention of colleagues much older than himself. His experience on the ground, combined with his positions within policy development role, makes him uniquely positioned to gain valuable perspective from this event.

Simon is extremely passionate about effecting positive change for Maori. The *Bioneers 2008* event will host speakers and participants from a number of indigenous communities and organisations who, like us, are asserting their responsibilities to safeguard life-sustaining resources and the connectedness of social, cultural, economic and environmental issues. The knowledge Simon stands to gain from interaction with this progressive forum will further advance his ability to make quality contributions to all aspects of his work and voluntary activities.

This conference is an excellent opportunity for a rangatahi to connect with other networks and organisations, listen and then bring that knowledge back to Aotearoa to share widely for the benefit of Maori whanau, hapu, iwi, communities and organisations. His experience to date and his enormous potential to make greater contributions in the future means I wholeheartedly recommend that Simon Ngawhika be that rangatahi, and I encourage you to support his participation in the *Bioneers 2008* conference.

Naku noa,

Tata Lawton
Tumuaki, Kahui Kura Taiao
Department of Conservation