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Media Release - For Immediate Release

Project Tongariro, also known as the Tongariro Natural History Society, was pleased to present Emma Phillips and Moniqua Nelson-Tunely, both Massey University students, with grants for their ongoing studies in Tongariro National Park at the Conservation Awards evening held in Turangi last week.

For nearly 20 years, the Society has awarded annual grants to young Scientists undertaking research in Tongariro National Park and to date has distributed close to \$35,000 to this worthwhile cause.

Karen Williams, President of Project Tongariro, noted the grants have encouraged and assisted an impressive array of scientific research projects over the years including the study of plant and animal pests, native species, visitor use impacts, geology and the study of Ruapehu's vanishing glaciers. "Project Tongariro is aware that many past recipients of our awards have gone on to distinguished careers in the field of science and conservation".

The 2010 grants were awarded to Moniqua Nelson-Tunely and Emma Phillips. Moni is a MSc Conservation Biology student whose Masters project involves the study of local populations of the Small-scaled Skink while Emma's work will focus on forecasting the probability and consequences of the failure of the eastern rim of Mt Ruapehu's Crater Lake.

The grants are funded from the Tongariro Natural History Society's Memorial Fund – an endowment fund set up as a living legacy to Lands & Survey staff who died in a helicopter crash in the Park in 1982. Applications are open to any student for the study of fauna, flora, geology, volcanology, weather and natural or human history of Tongariro National Park.

For more information about these annual grants – www.tongariro.org.nz

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