

26. Uses of Areas Managed by the Department

Explanation

People use areas managed by the Department for private purposes, or for commercial purposes as a place to conduct a trade or business. Some areas are used by organisations for public purposes not associated with the conservation of natural or historic resources.

The Conservation Act 1987 and the Reserves Act 1977 provide for people to use areas managed by the Department in a manner compatible with the protection of natural and historic resources and enjoyment by other people (with the exception of recreation reserves, where recreation is the primary purpose).

The Department divides uses into two broad categories: (a) recreation and tourism, and (b) other commercial, private and public uses.

Recreation and tourism concessions are separately discussed in Section 26.1, as the Conservation Act enables the Department to foster recreation on areas it manages and to allow their use for tourism where this is compatible with natural and historic values.

The CMS establishes the framework within which recreation, tourist and other uses of the areas managed by the Department will be considered and managed.

26.1 RECREATION AND TOURISM CONCESSIONS

Explanation

Through the provision of facilities and services, recreation and tourism concessions can help the Department to offer a wider range of opportunities for outdoor recreation.

The recreation opportunities will be complementary to those provided directly by the Department. By allowing a concession, the Department can concentrate on providing services and facilities it is best able to provide, e.g., tracks and bridges, and let the private sector provide some where it is better resourced to do so, e.g., transport and guiding services.

The Department's Concessions Policy (October 1994) covers recreation or tourism concessions granted under the National Parks, Reserves and Conservation Acts. It deals with planning for concessions, requirements for concession applications and conditions required in concession agreements. The CMS in each Conservancy identifies opportunities for concessions and the type of facilities and services which are suitable. Appropriate concessions are those which provide, where there is a demand, for recreation and tourism opportunities compatible with the protection or preservation of the natural, cultural and historic resources and the legislative requirements for the land.

Table 14:
Recreation and Tourism Concession Opportunities

| KEY SITES or AREAS | Sale of Goods | Equipment Hire | Camp-ground | Other Accomm. | Other Facilities Developmt. | Guiding* (Foot) | Guiding (Non-pedestrian) | Helicopter Landing** | Outdoor Education | Special Events*** | Sporting Events**** |
|--|--|----------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| COLONIAL KNOB SR | X | X | X | X | X | E | X | X | P | M | M |
| HEMI MATENGA SR | X | X | X | X | X | P | X | X | P | M | X |
| PARAPARAUMU SR | M | X | M | X | M | P | X | X | P | M | M |
| PAPAITONGA SR | X | X | X | X | X | P | X | X | P | M | X |
| KAITAWA SR | X | X | X | X | X | P | X | X | P | M | M |
| WAIKANAE ESTUARY SCI R | X | X | X | X | X | M | X | X | P | X | X |
| KAPITI ISLAND NR | M | X | X | X | M | P | P* | X | P | X | X |
| MANA ISLAND SCI R | M | X | X | X | M | P | P* | X | P | X | X |
| SOMES ISLAND | M | M | X | M | M | P | P* | X | P | M | M |
| MAKARA WALKWAY | X | X | X | X | X | E | X | X | P | M | M |
| TURAKIRAE HEAD SCI R | X | X | X | X | X | E | X | X | P | X | M |
| PUTANGIRUA SR | X | X | D | X | X | M | X | X | P | M | X |
| LAKE WAIRARAPA | M | P | M | M | M | P | P | X | P | M | P |
| NATIONAL WILDLIFE | D | M | M | M | M | M | X | X | P | M | X |
| CASTLEPOINT SR | X | X | X | X | X | M | X | X | P | M | M |
| TARARUA FOREST PARK | M* | M | D | M | M | E | P | E | P | P | E |
| Otaki Forks | D | M | D | M | M | P | M | X | P | M | E |
| Waiohine Gorge | M | M | D | M | M | E | M | X | E | M | P |
| Holdsworth | D | M | D | M | M | E | X | X | E | M | E |
| RIMUTAKA FOREST PARK | M* | P | D | D | P | E | P | E | P | P | E |
| Catchpool Valley | D | P | D | M | P | E | M | X | P | P | E |
| Rimutaka Incline Track | M | M | M | X | X | E | P | X | P | M | E |
| Orongorongo Valley | X | X | M | D | M | E | M | P | P | M | E |
| AORANGI FOREST PARK | M* | M | M | D | M | P | M | P | P | M | P |
| This is a guide to the types of concessions that will be considered for these key areas. All concession applications for these areas and all other applications will be considered under the Draft Concessions Policy. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| X | Prohibited – no concession will be granted for these uses and activities on conservation lands. | | | | | | | | | | |
| M | May be permitted – will be assessed on their individual merits and in the context of other uses of the area. | | | | | | | | | | |
| P | Permitted activity – may be actively pursued by the Department. Individual applications will be considered on their merit. | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | Existing concession(s). Others may be permitted, and will be assessed on individual merits and in context of other uses of the area. | | | | | | | | | | |
| D | Currently operated by the Department, but is considered to be a service which could be provided by a concessionaire. | | | | | | | | | | |
| * | Concession over land or NZ Walkway administered by the Department. | | | | | | | | | | |
| ** | Transport of recreational hunters only. Other recreational uses by permit only. Refer Section 20, p. ???: Commercial and Recreational Hunting, and Section 27.4, p. ???: Helicopters. | | | | | | | | | | |
| *** | A business activity which is of short duration on areas managed by the Department, is open to the public or group membership, and which because of the scale or nature of the activity, or because an entry fee or sponsorship is involved, or for some other reason, requires the permission of the Department. | | | | | | | | | | |
| **** | A business activity which has the above factors and an element of competition. | | | | | | | | | | |
| M* | May be permitted at roadends only – will be assessed on their individual merits and in the context of other uses of the area. | | | | | | | | | | |
| P* | Permitted for boat transport only to and from the island. | | | | | | | | | | |
| NA | Not Applicable. | | | | | | | | | | |

The policy directs the Department to ensure that the public and conservation boards have adequate opportunities to comment on concession applications, especially those which:

- Involve substantial permanent facilities;
- Will have an impact on the region or local community;
- Are large scale operations and operate daily or frequently for most of the year or season.

While there are no express statutory provisions for the granting of concessions in marine reserves, the Department may control commercial activities and/or concessions in marine reserves by relying on the management provisions of the Marine Reserves Act 1971.

[refer Section 10.2, p 126]

The Department will exercise the concessions policy in a manner that gives effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. A market-related concession fee will be charged for concessions and the Department will recover costs associated with processing concession applications.

Concession applications must be accompanied by an environmental assessment of impact on natural, historic and cultural resources. Concessions are issued subject to conditions to protect natural and historic resources and the safety of clients and are monitored to ensure these conditions are met.

Wellington Conservancy

The broad range of recreation and tourism concessions in areas managed by the Department nationally have not previously been provided in the Conservancy. This is partly due to the region's "city" tourism marketing focus and because the countryside is very accessible to local residents. The situation is now changing as demand for more and varied opportunities increases. Several concessions now provide transport, guiding and outdoor education services and sports events.

Management Issues

Nature Tourism

There is increasing interest and demand for nature tourism and guided activities associated with the natural features of the Conservancy. The Department recognises the special opportunities available for the public to visit important wildlife sites in the Conservancy and the role recreation and tourism concessions can play in providing opportunities for visitors to appreciate the wildlife and other conservation values of those areas.

Marine mammal permits are issued for guided recreation and tourism activities such as whale watching or swimming with seals and dolphins.

[refer Section 14.3, p 149]

Concessions may provide important advocacy and public awareness opportunities for increasing public understanding and appreciation of natural and historic resources and their management. Assistance may be provided to concessionaires on interpretation and staff training.

Sports Events

Multi- and single-sport events have grown in popularity from the early days of the trampers' marathon in Rimutaka Forest Park. There are eight annual sporting events on areas managed by the Department, with up to 1500 competitors in the most popular. Interest in these events is expected to grow.

[refer Section 27.4, p 246].

Helicopters

Helicopters are used extensively on lands administered by the Department for a wide range of work: animal control operations, venison recovery, fire control, facilities servicing (DoC, WRC, Telecom and Transpower), search and rescue and recreation transport.

Helicopters provide rapid access to the backcountry where walking is the only other mode of transport.

At present 90% of the helicopter flying in Tararua Forest Park is associated with animal control/venison recovery (150-200 hrs per year), facilities servicing (the Department and the Wellington Regional Council) (70 hours per year), and search and rescue (20 hours per year). This flying occurs throughout the park and is restricted to mostly fine weather days. The balance of approximately 30 hours flying per year is carrying recreational visitors, mostly hunters during March and April, and amounts to approximately 100 flights per year in the park.

Due to the associated impacts of helicopters [*refer Section 27.4.1 Helicopters, p 250*], their use for recreational purposes will be restricted in the Remote zone to the transport of hunters only. Commercial use of the other designated landing sites will be considered on a case by case basis [*refer Implementation 4 p 250*].

Objectives

- 1 Provision of a range of high quality visitor services through the granting of concessions compatible with the protection of natural and historic resources and the recreation experience of other visitors.

Implementation

- 1 Allow appropriate commercial recreation and tourism activities and special events in areas managed by the Department consistent with protecting natural and historic resources and maintenance of a range of recreation opportunities. Table 14 (p 216) is a guide to the types of concessions appropriate to protect the natural and historic resources and the facilities that are appropriate for the key sites listed.
- 2 Consider applications for commercial recreation and tourism activities and special events in accordance with Department's Concessions Policy (October 1994) and the provisions of the Act under which the land is held and the purposes for which it is held.
- 3 Monitor existing and any future concessionaires to ensure licence conditions are met and that use associated with these activities is consistent with protection of natural and historic resources, and the recreational experience of other visitors [*refer Section 27.4, p 246*].
- 4 Investigate and where appropriate offer concessions for providing facilities and services which the Department provides but which may be better provided by a concessionaire.
- 5 Investigate all reports of unauthorised commercial activities on land administered by the Department and take appropriate action to provide a concession or prohibit the activity.
- 6 Allow helicopter operators holding a concession granted by the Department, to transport recreational hunters only, to the Remote zones in Tararua Forest Park and Back Country zone eastern Rimutaka Forest Park illustrated on the ROS Map (facing p 240) and described in Appendix 4.
- 7 Allow, subject to permit application and Section 27.4 (Helicopters – Implementations 3 & 4), helicopters to land at the designated landing sites.

- 8 Advise and seek comment, as required by the Concessions Policy, from the Conservation Board on major, minor and trial concession applications made in Wellington Conservancy.
- 9 Consider other applications for key areas, or applications for other areas as they arise, in accordance with the Concessions Policy, the relevant legislation and the provisions of CMS.
- 10 Ensure in the conditions of each concession that the concessionaire provides conservation information appropriate to the services provided. This could include information that:
 - i) reflects the work of the Department;
 - ii) enhances visitors' appreciation of natural and historic resources by providing interpretation, for example;
 - iii) describes appropriate behaviour of clients.
- 11 Liaise with tourism development agencies and other recreation providers about concession opportunities.

26.2 OTHER LEASES, LICENCES AND CONCESSIONS

Explanation

The Department may grant leases, licences and easements for commercial users of resources in areas it manages as well as for recreation and tourism concessions. The aim is to ensure that use is compatible with the protection of natural and historic resources, with recreational use, the relevant legislation and that the use of any renewable resource is sustainable.

The holders of all leases, licences and concessions are charged a fee. The Department also seeks to recover from the applicant the cost of processing all applications (section 14 of Conservation Act).

This section of the CMS also deals with the assessment of applications lodged under the Crown Minerals Act 1991 for access to lands for the purposes of exploration and/or mining easements for public utilities, provision for military use of areas managed by the Department, and exotic forestry on land administered by the Department.

There are often public awareness issues relating to the issuing of leases, licences and concessions which may require the general public and affected parties to be consulted and informed about what is being planned or allowed. The Conservancy will undertake public awareness activities to inform the public.

26.2.1 Grazing

Explanation

Grazing of domestic stock can be useful as a management tool to reduce exotic plant growth, but uncontrolled or inappropriate grazing can destroy or degrade natural, historic or archaeological values. The Department's approach is to carefully consider the potential impacts of grazing in every application for a grazing licence, authorise only those with acceptable impact and limit impact by special conditions attached to each licence.

Grazing is licensed under the Conservation Act and Reserves Act. These Acts establish which classes of land may have grazing licences issued over them, the length of licences, and procedures for public notification of the intentions to issue a grazing licence.

In 1991 the Department prepared national guidelines for grazing.

**Wellington
Conservancy**

Grazing licences have been issued in 20 areas administered by the Department; most are on the fringes of the Tararua, Rimutaka and Aorangi Forest Parks and around Lake Wairarapa.

The fringes of the forest parks had been farmed for many years before coming into Crown ownership. Many of these fringe areas are not fenced from neighbouring property and are infiltrated by domestic stock. The fencing of these legal boundaries is often impracticable and of low priority, and a managed grazing regime is often the best management solution.

Around Lake Wairarapa, grazing by adjacent farmers is managed in order to reduce the growth of fescue grass to enhance the breeding habitat of the wetland for wading birds. The Department will continue to support the selective grazing of the land around the wetlands and will pursue grazing options which offer the most benefits to wildlife.

**Management
Issues***When Is Grazing Appropriate?*

Grazing can damage natural and historic resources and inhibit regeneration of indigenous vegetation. Whether to allow grazing and under what conditions must be evaluated for each area. The Department believes that grazing should benefit conservation of natural and historic resources and recreation. Grazing is a useful management tool on sites where historic or geological features need to be kept clear of vegetation, where bird or other fauna habitat can be enhanced, or to retain open space for recreational users. In areas where vegetation regeneration is or could occur grazing is an interim management tool to reduce fire risks or weeds and will be phased out as regeneration occurs. [refer Section 5.2, p 29; Section 6.6, p 66]

Length of Grazing Licences/Leases

Licences may be issued for up to 60 years under sections 14 and 53 of the Conservation Act 1987, where grazing is supported by the CMS or a CMP, and leases for up to 33 years for recreation reserves under the Reserves Act 1977. Except for nature reserves, all other reserves under the Reserves Act can be licensed for grazing for up to 5 years. The Department favours a maximum licence term of ten years for Conservation Act licences requiring a reasonable financial input by a grazier and a 5 year term for all others. Rents are reviewed every 3 years on Conservation Act licences and Reserves Act recreation reserve leases. All licences and leases carry a condition allowing the licence or lease to be terminated should the land be required for other purposes by the Department or if graziers' use of land is in breach of conservation safeguards built into the licence document. All licences and leases are required to comply with the existing CMP or CMS.

Objectives

- 1 Grant new grazing rights and re-issue existing rights, only if grazing is beneficial to the conservation of natural and historic resources of an area, or maintains a cultural landscape, or where it is required for other specific management purposes.

Implementation

- 1 Grazing applications will be considered and any licence or lease granted will be in accordance with "Grazing Guidelines" issued by the Department in 1991 and any subsequent amendments, the provisions of any current CMP or CMS, and any relevant legislation.
- 2 All grazing will be licensed. Licences and leases will be issued with conditions to protect the integrity of the conservation values of the area concerned.

- 3 Licences for grazing may be issued for terms of up to 10 years for Conservation Act licences and Reserves Act recreation reserve leases, but without exclusive rights of occupation being granted to the licence or lease holder. All other licences will have a maximum term of 5 years.
- 4 Licensed or leased areas will be inspected annually to assess whether conditions are being complied with and the effect of grazing on natural and historic resources.
- 5 Grazing licences or leases will be terminated in whole or part, as provided by the licence or lease, if the land is required for a conservation or recreation development purpose by the Department.
- 6 If natural and historic resources or recreation uses are found to be adversely affected by grazing, licences or leases will be terminated or re-negotiated with terms and conditions designed to protect values.
- 7 A market rent will be charged for all grazing licences, unless a lower rent will derive a net conservation benefit.
- 8 Grazing will not be permitted where public use or access through the land will be adversely affected.

26.2.2 Private Baches

Explanation

Buildings and structures have been erected on land administered by the Department to provide private accommodation. The buildings are baches, maimai with sleeping facilities, or huts.

The Department believes that public land should not be used for private accommodation. Existing private accommodation will be phased out. New private baches will not be permitted.

Where baches have cultural or historic values, adding to their surroundings but not compromising natural resources or public use, the Department will accept their existence for the lifetime of the tenants.

A draft policy "Private Baches on Land Administered by the Department of Conservation" 1991, has been developed. It provides guidance to conservancies but, as it has not been approved, the CMS will provide the statutory basis for the policy on private baches in the Conservancy.

Wellington Conservancy

Private baches are located in Rimutaka Forest Park, Orongorongo Valley and Corner Creek, on conservation areas at Ocean Beach, South Wairarapa, Lake Wairarapa and a scenic reserve at Te Kopi.

The owners of baches in Orongorongo Valley have been issued licences for their personal lifetime or for a term of 60 years, whichever is earliest. Any licence running for 60 years would expire in 2050. Licences are non-transferable and contain conditions to protect the environment, and ensure buildings are maintained to a reasonable standard and not extended.

At Corner Creek, in Rimutaka Forest Park, 12 baches have been granted life-time licences or till 2019, whichever is the earliest. The length of licence is shorter as the area is the only suitable place for a camping ground at the south eastern entrance to the park and is an important entry point to it. The Department will continue to seek to license or remove 7 unlicensed baches depending on their effect on the environment (including visitors).

Until 1991 most of the Ocean Beach baches were on legal road. The road has been re-aligned and 23 baches are now unlicensed buildings on conservation land, and 6 remain on unformed legal road.

At Lake Wairarapa and Te Kopi, baches are as yet unlicensed.

Management Issues

Phasing Out Baches

Bach owners think they should be able to continue to enjoy the recreational opportunities their baches offer to them, their families and friends, and they consider that the effect of the baches and their use on the environment and the recreational experiences of others are minimal.

The Department believes that the effects of baches are not minor, especially in areas where there are concentrations of baches, such as in Orongorongo Valley, at Corner Creek and Ocean Beach, and where they occur in remote areas. Private baches do have an adverse effect on public use of back country areas. The baches are not considered to have sufficient cultural or historic merit to justify their long-term retention.

The process established for phasing out of baches needs to take account of the effects on the environment and other visitors and any historical rights granted to bach owners. The effects of baches in Orongorongo Valley has been mitigated by conditions attached to their licences, based on site visits and evaluation by the Department.

Where baches are unlicensed, the Department will assess their effects before setting a timetable for their removal and appropriate licences. Some baches may need to be removed in the short term due to their effects or because of other management needs for the land concerned.

Land held under the Conservation Act and Reserves Act is for the benefit of all citizens, and private use without public benefit is not acceptable, even if environmental effects are minor.

Objectives

- 1 Phase out existing private accommodation on land managed by the Department.
- 2 Prevent the construction of any new private baches.

Implementation

- 1 Phase out the occupation of sites in the Orongorongo Valley, Rimutaka Forest Park by 2050. Monitor the non-transferable life-time licences and their conditions.
- 2 Phase out the occupation of baches at Corner Creek, (Rimutaka Forest Park) by 2019, by issuing and monitoring non-transferable life-time licences.
- 3 Seek the transfer to the Department of the remaining area of unformed legal road at Ocean Beach, South Wairarapa, containing baches.
- 4 Considering the acquisition of the licensee's interest in a bach before the expiry of the licence where the bach is located in an area of high public use or an area is needed for other management purposes.
- 5 Expedite removal of baches at Corner Creek by considering providing existing bach owners with the right to transfer to a licensed bach at Ocean Beach, if one becomes available.
- 6 Evaluate the effect of baches on natural and historic resources and

recreational opportunities and set a time limit and licencing arrangement for removal of existing baches on conservation areas at Ocean Beach, at Lake Wairarapa and the scenic reserve at Te Kopi.

- 7 Where natural and historic resources or public recreation opportunities are adversely affected and the bach is out of context with the surrounding environment and management objectives, remove the bach as soon as possible in negotiation with the bach owner.
- 8 All bach owners will be charged a market rental for a licence to occupy land administered by the Department.

26.2.3 Easements

Explanation

The most common form of easements the Department deals with relate to access and to the right to convey water, sewerage, telephone and transmission lines over areas managed by the Department.

Easements may be granted where:

- The legal right sought cannot be located on private land.
- Natural and historic resources are not adversely affected.
- Existing public use is not significantly restricted.

Applications for easements under the Conservation Act require public notification. Notification under the Reserves Act is not required if the work is of a minor nature and will have no adverse impact on the land.

Electricity transmission lines which existed before 1 January 1988 are covered by the Electricity Act 1992. Under this Act all existing works can remain lawfully installed on and traversing land not owned by Trans Power. The Act also provides for Trans Power to enter the land to inspect, maintain and operate the lines.

Objectives

- 1 Granting of easements only where the proposal will not significantly affect landforms, landscapes or natural and historic resources and recreational opportunities and where sites are not available off an area managed by the Department.

Implementation

- 1 Assess easement applications for their impact on landforms, landscapes and other natural and historic resources and recreation opportunities; applications may be refused if they have significant adverse effects. Applicants will need to demonstrate no viable alternative site or location exists off land administered by the Department. An EIA may be required by the Department.
- 2 Easement conditions will protect natural and historic resources and public use of the area.
- 3 Compensation and, where appropriate, rental will reflect fair market price, except that non-commercial communication facilities may have market rent discounted.
- 4 All actual and reasonable costs associated with the processing of an easement application will be borne by the applicant.
- 5 Public use of the sites will not be restricted any more than is essential for safety and security.

- 6 Access for the purpose of constructing and maintaining new facilities will be restricted to foot and helicopter, unless road access already exists or it can be demonstrated that new road access will not have an adverse effect on natural or historic resources and will improve public access.
- 7 No new licence or permit will confer exclusive occupation of a site.
- 8 Any power lines constructed are to be located to cause minimum impact and be buried or laid on the ground surface, unless physical or technical difficulties make this impractical. Any overhead lines must, as far as practicable, be kept screened from roads, be clear of views and photographic points, and be kept off skylines.

26.2.4 Military Use

Explanation

Under the Military Manoeuvres Act 1915 the Governor-General may proclaim lands, including areas managed by the Department, to be available for military manoeuvres. Any other intended defence activity, however, requires the approval of the Department.

The Department and the New Zealand Defence Force are parties to a Defence Training Agreement (signed on 8 March 1990) which provides for military training to be carried out on State Areas as defined in the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977, provided certain conditions are met. Departmental approval to carry out military exercises is issued subject to conditions to protect natural and historic resources, and visitors.

In return the NZ Defence Force may make available fire fighting assistance to the Department. Further assistance for various projects including track construction and maintenance, and transport of Departmental personnel to remote conservation areas by road, air and sea is also often provided.

Military training within the Conservancy may also involve Royal New Zealand Air Force aircraft participating in low-level flying in air space above the Conservancy. Low-level flying in air space is generally undertaken in accordance with the Civil Aviation New Zealand Aeronautical Information Publications (NZAIP) which recognise notified wildlife sanctuaries and nature reserves as restricted air space. Prior consent must be obtained from the controlling authority if flying is proposed within restricted air space.

Management

Managing Military Exercises

The size and remoteness of some areas managed by the Department makes them attractive for defence training and search and rescue exercises. Military exercises must be carefully managed. This is achieved through the 1990 Defence Training Agreement. The Department receives a number of requests for the use of areas it administers in Tararua, Rimutaka and Aorangi Forest Parks for these purposes. While the effects of small-scale military exercises may be no different from those of recreational activities, large-scale exercises have the potential to conflict with recreation and impact on natural and historic resources. Approvals are, therefore, issued subject to conditions to protect natural and historic resources. Conditions imposed can relate to preventing the firing of live ammunition, excavation of the surface, cutting vegetation and the use of off-road vehicles.

Objectives

- 1 Military use of lands administered by the Department to be undertaken in accordance with the 1990 Defence Training Agreement.

Implementation

- 1 Work co-operatively with the NZ Defence Force to manage the effects, if any, of military exercises.
- 2 Consider requests for military use of areas administered by the Department on their merits in accordance with criteria in the Defence Training Agreement.
- 3 Conditions of use may be applied to protect natural and historic resources and visitors.
- 4 Where areas administered by the Department are subject to a proclamation under the Military Maneuvres Act 1915, the Department will liaise with the NZ Defence Force Headquarters to seek protection of natural and historic resources.

26.2.5 Prospecting, Exploration and Mining

Explanation

Mining is controlled by the Crown Minerals Act 1991 and the Resource Management Act 1991. The Crown Minerals Act requires permits to be obtained from the Ministry of Commerce for the prospecting, exploration or mining of any Crown-owned minerals. Resource consent under the Resource Management Act may also be required for prospecting, exploration or mining.

Except where land has been closed to mining by an Order in Council, areas managed by the Department are open for mining. No exploration or mining activities are being undertaken on areas in the Conservancy and there is little history of mining. No areas have been closed to mining.

If a company or individual seeks an exploration or mining licence, application must first be made for an access arrangement with the landowner. In the case of areas managed by the Department, an applicant must seek consent for access from the Minister of Conservation. Section 59 of the Crown Minerals Act sets out information to be provided by an applicant to assist the Minister to determine effects of an application. Section 61 of the Act states that the Minister shall have regard to the objectives of the relevant legislation under which land is held, the purpose of the land's status, any management strategies and plans, and safeguards against potential adverse effects of the proposed mining activity. Compensation can be payable to the landowner.

The effects of mining activities would generally be inappropriate in high-use areas and areas of high scenic, scientific, natural or cultural value. Effects created by prospecting and exploration and some mining may be acceptable, however, if impacts can be avoided, or mitigated to acceptable environmental levels.

**Wellington
Conservancy**

In the Conservancy, the main mining activities are quarrying of metal and lime, and sand and gravel extraction from river beds. These activities can have impacts on natural and historic resources and recreation opportunities, in particular landscape values of areas in which they occur and on water quality and fish habitats. At present there is no mining activity on areas managed by the Department.

Objectives

- 1 Ensure that any prospecting, exploration or mining activity on areas managed by the Department is carried out in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on natural or historic resources, to a standard acceptable to the Department.

- 2 Assess any proposed mining activity, to enable any potential adverse effects to be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Implementation

- 1 All applications will be considered on their merits. However, new roads and tracks, and vehicle use of otherwise closed roads, should not be allowed for prospecting or low impact exploration activities.
- 2 Applicants for access arrangements must supply the Department with the appropriate requirements of section 59 of the Crown Minerals Act. They should also demonstrate that the ensuing impact of mining and associated infrastructures will be minimal and that the land and water habitat values and recreational and historic values of the area will not be compromised. (For example, mining by hand methods, or by use of small suction dredges outside fish spawning and major recreational use times may be acceptable.) The following matters are relevant to, but do not limit consideration of an application:
 - Whether restoration proposed is adequate and achievable.
 - Whether there is adequate financial protection by way of an insurance or bond to ensure compliance with conditions and remedial action.
 - Whether compensation offered (if any) will ensure that there is not a net loss of conservation values.
- 3 In addition to any conditions contained in any access arrangements for prospecting, exploration and mining, the Department will advocate for appropriate conditions on any related resource consent.
- 4 Ensure compensation is obtained under the Crown Minerals Act.
- 5 Advocate for the protection from mining and quarrying of sites beyond areas managed by the Department where the effects would adversely impact on natural, historic, cultural or landscape values, or where there is potential for adverse off-site impacts.
- 6 Endeavour to ensure that appropriate performance standards for mining and quarrying are incorporated into policies and plans developed by local authorities, and that they will monitor resource consent applications involving mining and quarrying.

26.2.6 Exotic Forestry

Explanation

The Department manages areas of exotic forest. This forest, of varying ages and species, was established by parent departments on land allocated to the Department of Conservation in 1987. It comprises trees planted as plantations, for soil and water protection, and for amenity purposes. Section 30 of the Conservation Act requires the taking of any plant from land held under that Act to be subject to a CMS. Under the Reserves Act, exotic species are required to be removed from nature and scientific reserves, are allowed in scenic reserves only when they contribute to scenic interest or beauty and are allowed in all other reserve classifications.

Wellington Conservancy

There are 452 ha of pine plantation within the three forest parks (250 ha at Rimutaka Forest Park; 29 ha at Aorangi Forest Park; 172 ha at Tararua Forest Park). In addition approximately 10 ha in total can be found within a number of Scenic Reserves (e.g., Carter, Colonial Knob). Most of the older stands have received silvicultural tending, particularly on lower slopes where tree form and soil quality is better.

In Aorangi Forest Park there are 166 ha of protection plantings, mostly eucalyptus species, planted in the late 1970s. These stands were generally not tended, and their prime purpose was for soil and water conservation.

In addition, there are scattered holdings of amenity species such as douglas fir, redwood and cedar within the forest parks.

Pines and other exotics contribute to the landscape character of some areas. In the Catchpool and lower Waiohine Valley systems, pines and other exotic trees contribute significantly to landscape and amenity values of these forest areas. In addition they serve as sites for recreation (mountain bike riding, horse trekking, walking etc) and for commercial concessionaire activities (orienteering, physical skills programmes).

In many locations in the Conservancy, pines and other species were planted on gorse or manuka hill country for soil and water conservation (e.g., Aorangi Forest Park), and for noxious weed control (e.g., Catchpool, Kaipatangata). Although these policies may not be relevant today, many of the features that have developed (such as a vigorous understorey of indigenous species and habitat for wildlife) can be retained and enhanced by careful management techniques.

Management Issues

Exotic Trees in Natural Areas

Exotic trees may detract from the natural character of areas managed for indigenous species, though they are not automatically bad. The Department will assess the impacts and values of exotic species and either remove them or manage them, as appropriate, to protect and enhance the natural resources in areas it manages and in accordance with any reserves classification under the Reserves Act 1977. Exotics will not be replanted and will be phased out as plantations are harvested.

Management of Production Forestry

Options for management include retaining the trees and the land, selling the trees now or at maturity but retaining the land, or disposing of both trees and the land. The Department will assess each area, following a cost-benefit process, to determine its values for conservation.

Pine plantations contribute a greater financial return if tended at the right time. Since the Department may not be able to set aside funds for plantation management, alternative management options, including private interests such as joint ventures, cutting rights, agreements and exchanges, will be considered.

As harvesting may be an eventual outcome, this activity is authorised by this CMS.

Restoration

Harvesting of exotic forest can leave the land in an unattractive and ecologically damaged state and regeneration of indigenous forest can be slow. The Department will use harvesting techniques that minimise damage, especially where a healthy understorey of indigenous species has developed.

On dry or weed infested sites, a ground cover of exotic species such as tree lucerne may be provided to protect newly established indigenous seedlings.

The exotic plantations in the forest parks were planted before the wide acceptance of the need for riparian strips along waterways. When logging areas, the Department will ensure that the methods used minimise any adverse effects on in-stream values, e.g., by the use of silt traps and by keeping machinery out of the wet areas of waterways.

Objectives

- 1 Manage production forests which have important amenity, soil and water, and other values, in a manner that protects those values.
- 2 Phase out production forestry on areas managed by the Department which are not important for their amenity values or water and soil conservation.
- 3 Restore indigenous vegetation after harvesting of exotic plantations.

Implementation

- 1 Assess the range of values applying to production forests based on the following criteria: historic or cultural value, amenity value, impact on the landscape, soil and water value, economic worth, management/tending costs, restoration costs, and classification of the area.
- 2 Assess each production forest area using the above criteria, and categorise each into “disposal” or “manage” classes.
- 3 Implement management programmes for areas of production forests to be retained and managed, so that conservation and amenity values are optimised.
- 4 A logging plan will be prepared for each harvesting operation and will explain the harvesting methods to be used, how in-stream values would be protected and the restoration of the site after logging. All proposals will be assessed for their effect on landscape, environmental and amenity values.
- 5 Undertake site restoration of harvested areas.
- 6 On any production forest where both land and trees are assessed for disposal, follow the procedures outlined in Section 22, p 195.

26.2.7 Telecommunication Facilities**Explanation**

The hilltops of mountain areas within the Tararua, Rimutaka and Aorangi Forest Parks managed by the Department are important to the telecommunications industry. Many of the hilltops of interest to the industry around Wellington region are administered as reserves. Public utility hilltop facilities often result in the modification of natural or historic areas. The Department recognises the public benefits the facility may bring but must weigh these against the natural and historic resources of areas and the landscape, in which the hilltop is often a dominant element. Co-siting of new facilities with existing ones is sought whenever feasible, rather than installations at new locations. A national agreement exists between Broadcast Communications Ltd (BCL) and the Department for all BCL communication facilities sites on lands administered by the Department. A similar agreement is being negotiated with Telecom (NZ) Limited and others may be negotiated with other telecommunication companies.

The Department also has telecommunication sites on land it administers and there may be a need for future sites for departmental use in the future.

Telecommunication facilities are provided for by way of licence, permit or easement.

- Objectives**
- 1 Telecommunication facilities on areas managed by the Department do not significantly affect landforms, landscapes and natural and historic resources, recreation opportunities and public access.
- Implementation**
- 1 New telecommunication facilities on unmodified sites **may** be approved only where the applicant can demonstrate that no viable alternative site or series of sites exists off areas managed by the Department, that no opportunity exists for co-siting with an existing facility, and that natural and historic resources and recreational opportunities are not adversely affected.
 - 2 Any applications to site a telecommunication facility on areas managed by the Department will require an environmental impact report, including consideration of alternative sites or routes.
 - 3 Subject to other statutory provisions, any approved facility or site will be subject to a resource rental set by the Department. Rentals will reflect fair market price, except that non-commercial communication facilities may have market rent discounted.
 - 4 Advocate for co-siting of telecommunication facilities and for siting in locations that will not have a significant impact on landforms or landscapes.
 - 5 All costs associated with the processing of an application will be borne by the applicant.
 - 6 Public use of sites will not be restricted any more than is essential for safety and security.
 - 7 Access for constructing and maintaining new facilities will be restricted to foot and helicopter, unless road access already exists or it can be demonstrated new road access will not have an adverse effect on natural or historic resources and will improve public access.
 - 8 No new licence or permit will confer an exclusive occupation of a site.
 - 9 Consideration will be given to the effect that facilities may have on the Department's telecommunications networks.

26.2.8 Other Uses

Explanation

Other uses of areas managed by the Department in the Conservancy include filming for commercials, documentaries and films.

There has been no interest in locating beehives on any area to date. Any applications would be considered in accordance with the Department's "Guidelines for Beehive Concessions".

Power generation sites have been investigated on Otaki, Waiohine and Waingawa Rivers, and the existing Mangahao hydro-electric development is adjacent to Tararua Forest Park. The Department believes that the Conservation Act does not provide for or permit the release of land for power generation, especially hydro sites.

Objectives

- 1 Provide for land and other resources administered by the Department to be used by concessionaires, lease holders, or permit holders in a manner which is compatible with the purposes for which the land or resources are held.
- 2 Ensure uses allowed by a lease or licence do not adversely affect natural or historic resources or recreation opportunities.

Implementation

- 1 Assess and process all concession and use applications in accordance with policies, guidelines and procedures issued by the Department.
- 2 Set resource rents at levels which reflect the current market value as appropriate and which cover administrative costs.
- 3 Make monitoring of impacts of a concession a requirement of any concession agreement.