



It's Happening: Updates from the Hump Ridge Great Walk Project

Keeping you up-to-date with the news and latest information from the team developing the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track to Great Walk status.

Kia ora!

Welcome to the latest project newsletter. Keeping in touch with you about our work is important to us. We will keep sharing how we are doing - the wins, the interesting stories and any constraints or delays we encounter.

Project Progress, Tasks and Timeframes

The 61 km track has been divided into nine sections (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J and O) for this project. This will allow the construction contracting teams to undertake the track upgrade work concurrently and also focus on the section(s) most in need of repair. Our project webpage contains a map that shows the sections of track that we are referencing.

All our newsletters and community presentations can be viewed on our project webpage at any time. Type www.doc.govt.nz into your browser, then search on *Hump Ridge Project* (see link on last page). We know there is always been interest in how the project is tracking. Some recent achievements and project intentions are listed below.

March-April 2023

- Project news published in local community news magazines - Western Wanderer & Te Anau Trader
- Project webpage updated.
- Track Section A Upgrade work completed - Track Burn Entrance to Flat Creek Junction (2.8kms) - by John Henderson Construction, (JHC). Trampers encounter Section A during their first, and last, day of hiking
- Track Section B upgrade started - from Flat Creek to Okaka Junction - by JHC. The team started at Okaka Junction and are heading down track towards Water Bridge Shelter, to get much of the alpine section of work done prior to winter.
- Track Section C upgrade continues - Okaka Junction to National Park Boundary - by WestReef Services (WRS). The Alpine section is mostly completed. The team are now below Luncheon Rock, starting to head well below the bush line for the rest of their winter work.



Photo 1: Track Section C: Getting going in the mud in early February



Photo 2: Track Section C: What mud? The new boardwalk & steps finished by late February 2023

Looking Ahead

May - June - July 2023

- Continuation of the upgrade works across the track
- Other project work streams (refer to back page)
- Anticipated start of Rarakau Car Park construction works (July)

Photo 3: Track Section C: Before - find the track! January 2023



Photo 4: Track Section C: After ☺ February 2023



Conservation heritage plan for Port Craig Schoolhouse & settlement.

The aim of the Hump Ridge Track becoming a Great Walk is for it to be a world-class visitor experience that reflects the significant cultural and heritage values of the area and inspires an increase in conservation advocacy.

Fig 1: (Fig 2-8) Beach Area at Port Craig, 1921, (DOC, n-d, c)



Figure 2-8. Beach area at Port Craig, 1921 (Department of Conservation, n.d.-c).

In this newsletter, we put the spotlight on a significant aspect of the area's forestry heritage and history - Port Craig schoolhouse and Settlement Area.

The project's business case captured the requirement of detailed assessment of the protection of the heritage and cultural values for the track and environs, including a conservation heritage plan for Port Craig.

Heritage listing & records.

The Port Craig Sawmill and Settlement Site is listed on the HNZPT List as a Historic Place Category 1. (number 9234). Category 1 status is given to places of 'special or outstanding historical or cultural significance or value'.

The Port Craig settlement complex is also recorded as an archaeological site (C46/25) in the New Zealand Archaeological Association site recording scheme known as Archsite.

Find out more <https://www.heritage.org.nz> - search on 9234.

What is, and why have, a Conservation report?

Conservation reports are an important necessity for any historical or heritage work as it tells us how best to treat, protect, look after, and maintain an historic structure, building or site. The reports are used as a guiding reference document as they relate the nature, complexity, and problems of a site, while providing structure and framework to the conservation planning.

Basically, by integrating a number of disciplines, conservation plans explain why a place is significant, what that significance is and how that significance can be retained in the future.

A library of useful resources

The history of Port Craig has been well documented in previous reports and publications, with the following getting special mention in the conservation report:

- Jackie Breen's "Archaeological Site Survey of Port Craig";
- Jill Hamel's "Sawmills & Goldfield in the Longwoods";
- Chris Cochran's "Port Craig Mill, School, and Settlement Site, Waitutu State Forest, Conservation Plan" (1992);
- Warren Bird's 2003 publication *Viaducts against the sky - the story of Port Craig*;
- Alistair McMechan's "Timber Town: A history of Port Craig";
- The seminal recollections of Daniel Reese, one of the founders of Port Craig, in his memoir "Was It All Cricket?";

Fig 2: (Fig 2-21) School pupils and teacher Mr Kelly outside the old Port Craig Schoolhouse, no date. (Bird, 1998)



Figure 2-21. School pupils and teacher Mr Kelly outside the old Port Craig Schoolhouse, no date (Bird, 1998).

Late last year, DOC received for comment a draft conservation plan, prepared by consultants, that detailed the conservation, future use and development of the Port Craig Schoolhouse and Settlement area. The two figures (1 & 2) shown here are shared from the report. This report is still under review and should be finalised soon.

We are keen for people to be involved with looking after Port Craig area so, if you are out and about, whether staying overnight or passing through, and you notice any problems or damage, please let the Trust or DOC know (details, photos, dates, GPS etc) so we can arrange for possible repair.

What to look for?

- blocked gutters and downpipes.
- broken water services or leaking taps.
- damaged or defective light fittings or switches.
- storm damage to grounds or fabric.
- vandalism or break and enter damage to windows and doors.
- broken or defective locks and latches, replacement of keys or lock cylinders.

Hump Ridge Great Walk Project

A collaboration between Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track Charitable Trust, Te Rūnanga o Ōraka Aparima and Department of Conservation. Southland, New Zealand

Update: 25 May 2023

Project Team Contact: humpridgeGWP@doc.govt.nz

All photos are Credit: DOC unless otherwise noted.

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Other project work keeping us busy:

- Negotiating legal easements with landowners to secure public access.
- The development of the waharoa (gateway) for the track entrance at Rarakau carpark.
- The tendering process for the construction work for the Rarakau Car Park upgrade
- Detailed development and procurement process for the interpretation and story-telling package.
- Communication and engagement activities with partners and project stakeholders, media, journalists, and interested members of the public.

Winter 2023: Track upgrade & Safety.

After a very busy summer walking season, the Trust's track operations have now closed for the winter. Their personnel have shut down their lodges and removed the services (gas, water etc) from their facilities. Their office in Tuatapere remains open during winter and their team can be contacted via their webpage (listed below).

The two project contractors will have their teams continuing their scheduled track upgrades throughout the winter period, as weather, resources, and supply chains permit. The contractors remain responsible for managing the worksite, including visitor safety and access through sections of track under construction.

Track users & visitors are asked to obey all signage and instructions and expect minor delays from time to time. Information will be also shared by the Hump Ridge Track Operations and DOC websites.

Photo 5: Track Section C: Taken March 2023 – looking north back up Okaka Ridge, above Luncheon Rock. Note the old track is to the right (around that tussock) and the realigned, new track going off to the left 😊



Great Walk season bookings etc.

The opening of the booking system for the 2023/24 Great Walks season occurred on 20 April with the Milford Track as the first cab-off-the-rank. As you would have seen from the media coverage, the booking system was affected by technology issues, which then unfortunately continued to impact the rest of the planned booking opening dates for the other 9 Great Walk Tracks. We will find out on 31 May as to when DOC's booking system will re-open for the upcoming summer walking season.

The operation and the management of the Hump Ridge, as a Great Walk, by the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track Charitable Trust, will be different to the other 10 DOC-managed Great Walks.

The project team is still working with the Trust on what that might look like, and everything will be captured in a Brand License Agreement. We will share more about this when we can.

People can continue to book, at any time, via the Trust's booking system for their 2023/24 (or beyond) summer walking season.

Want to know more?

To know more or to book the **Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track for next season** - contact the Track Operations Office directly via www.humpridgetrack.co.nz

Project Webpage: Stay informed via www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/hump-ridge-great-walk-project

Project Email: Get in touch to ask questions or to be added to the newsletter distribution list:
HumpRidgeGWP@doc.govt.nz

Media enquiries: please contact media@doc.govt.nz

He rau ringa, e oti ai

With many hands, the job will be finished

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