

## Guided Day Walks on Public Conservation Land

The Department of Conservation (DOC) manages 15,000km of walking tracks on Public Conservation Land (PCL). Commercial operators require a concession from DOC to guide their customers on these walking tracks.

A **guided day walk** is defined as:

- A commercial operation in which the operator receives financial gain or reward for offering their services.
- Walking only (that is, the concession does not include other guided activities that also require a concession, for example hunting, fishing, rock climbing or mountain biking).
- The entirety of the walk is on an established track or tracks, which are built, owned, and maintained by DOC.
- The duration of the walk is under 8 hours, and
- No sleeping arrangements are required (that is, no overnight or multi-day walks).

Those granted a concession to undertake guided day walks are also authorised to transport their clients on formed roads on PCL, and park in formed carparks on PCL.

Recreational users do not require a concession from DOC to use walking tracks.

## Legal / statutory basis

DOC is responsible for accepting and processing concession applications.

A concession can only be granted if the concession activity is consistent with Part 3B of the Conservation Act 1987 ('Part 3B'). When assessing a concession application DOC must consider:

- the purpose of the Act
- the purpose for which the conservation land is managed
- the relevant statutory planning documents, and
- any adverse effects of the activity, and whether there are reasonable methods to manage these effects.

DOC must also give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

## Guided day walks policy

The Policy formalises how DOC will manage concessions for the activity of guiding day walking.

Under the Policy, DOC has assessed the activity of guiding day walking against the Part 3B of the Conservation Act 1987. DOC walking tracks now fall into one of two categories:

### Conforming Tracks

- Guided day walking on these tracks is consistent with the Conservation Act 1987. A concession should be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### Non-Conforming Tracks

- Guided day walking on these tracks may be consistent with the Conservation Act 1987. Further information is required to assess the activity, and whether a concession should be granted.

The type of walking track you want to guide on will influence the type of concession application you make, as well as processing fees and processing times:

### Conforming Tracks Application

- You want to undertake guided day walks on conforming tracks that are listed on DOC's [Conforming Tracks schedule](#)<sup>1</sup>; and

<sup>1</sup> [www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/guided-walking-conforming/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/guided-walking-conforming/)

- You will comply with any special conditions set by DOC for operating on these tracks. This can include seasonal access restrictions, or limits on the maximum number of clients that can be guided per day.

### Non-Conforming Tracks

- You want to undertake guided day walks on non-conforming tracks; **or**
- You want to undertake guided day walks on conforming tracks per DOC's [Conforming Tracks schedule](#)<sup>2</sup> **but** you want to operate outside any special conditions set by DOC for operating on these tracks, such as seasonal access restrictions, or limits on the maximum number of clients that can be guided per day.

For more information on the application process see DOC's Guided Day Walks [Conforming Tracks schedule](#)<sup>3</sup>.

## Other guiding applications

Visit DOC's [Land-based guided activities](#)<sup>4</sup> if you want to apply to:

- Undertake guided walking on non-conforming tracks
- Undertake other guided activities like horse trekking, biking, canyoning, rock climbing.

## Relation to DOC outcomes

DOC's work is guided by our strategy, which outlines [our purpose and outcomes](#).

This position is aligned with the DOC outcomes of 'Improved performance of the conservation regulatory system'.

## Review

This position statement will be reviewed within 1 year of implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/guided-walking-conforming/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/guided-walking-conforming/)

<sup>3</sup> [www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/guided-walking-conforming/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/guided-walking-conforming/)

<sup>4</sup> [www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/land-based-guided-activities/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/land-based-guided-activities/)