

9 April 2025

Taupō Office
37 Motutaiko Street
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Taupō, 3351
doc.govt.nz
Ref: OIAD-4987

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 07 March 2025. We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

On 31 March 2025 we extended the timeframe to respond to your request to 22 April 2025 due to the large quantity of information sought. On 1 April 2025 you asked if we could provide the information by 14 April 2025, and we informed you we would do our best to meet this new deadline.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *Under the OIA 1982, please can I have a copy of all documents and advice relating to the recent amendment to the Tongariro National Park Management Plan:*
 - *15 The Department should establish and implement a monitoring programme for the tracks identified in policy 3 and report to the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board annually on the following:*
 - a) numbers of visitors on the approved tracks and their experiences;*
 - b) absence or presence of mountain bike activity off or beyond the approved tracks;*
 - c) impacts on the track surface due to mountain bike activity;*
 - d) any enforcement incidents and their outcomes;*
 - e) nature and level of conflict between walkers and mountain bikers, including feedback from visitors; and*
 - f) impacts on native fauna and flora due to user activity.*
 - *16 Where monitoring indicates that environmental or social effects, including cumulative effects, of mountain biking on the tracks identified in policy 3 are unacceptable, the Department should:*
 - a) cease consideration to develop any tracks yet to be developed;*
 - b) use review conditions on mountain biking concessions or management agreements to change conditions of use; and/or*
 - c) implement controls on independent mountain bike use, user flow or other methods to manage impacts.**The Department will seek the advice of the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board prior to making a determination in respect of the above matters.*

For the purpose of clarification, the tracks identified in Policy 3 within the original Tongariro National Park Management Plan are:

- Mt Tihia
- Hapuawhenua Rail Viaduct
- Old Coach Rd

The partial review in 2018 allowed for the development and operation of shared use for the following tracks:

- Waitonga Falls – Blyth Track
- Old Coach Road Loop
- Maungaturuturu Link Track

At this time the Mt Tihia track and Waitonga Falls – Blyth Track remain walking tracks only. The Maungaturuturu Link Track is under construction and as yet not complete. The Old Coach Road Loop track has not been constructed and there are currently no plans or concessions in place to construct this. Therefore, no monitoring has occurred on any of these tracks in relation to mountain biking at this time.

Monitoring has taken place on the Ohakune Old Coach Road Track, which incorporates the Hapuawhenua Rail Viaduct.

Phase One of Te Ara Mangawhero trail linking Ohakune Mountain Road with the Ohakune Old Coach Road Track was officially opened in February 2025, therefore effect monitoring has not occurred at this time. Please note, that as your request is in relation to monitoring the effects of mountain biking on the environment, we have not included any monitoring that may have been undertaken during the construction of Phase 1 of this project as we deem this to be out of scope.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed in the attached Schedule of Documents, (Items 2, 3, and 4).

2. *Further to this, please can I have all information, communication and correspondence between the Department of Conservation and UNESCO or UNESCO's delegated authority regarding Phase Two of Te Ara Mangawhero and any information that has resulted from consultation with UNESCO regarding the proposed route of Te Ara Mangawhero in the Tongariro National Park dual World Heritage Area.*

The one in scope document is provided and listed in the attached schedule of documents (Item 1). Although this letter mentions future correspondence with UNESCO, we have been unable to find any other information, communication or correspondence regarding Phase Two of Te Ara Mangawhero or resulting from consultation regarding Te Ara Mangawhero.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- personal contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people,

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act and determined there are no public interests that outweigh the grounds for withholding.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and attached documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Damian Coutts', written over a horizontal line.

Damian Coutts
Director Operations
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1.	22 December 2016	Letter to UNESCO re Tongariro National Park Management Plan Review	Released in part.
2.	April 2018	Summary of monitoring of the Ohakune Old Coach Road shared walking and cycle track – Tongariro District	Released in part.
3.	11 November 2019	Heritage Inspection Report	Released in part.
4.	July 2021	Ohakune Old Coach Road Heritage Maintenance	Released in part.