

Conservation IVL Investment Plan for 2025/26

The objectives of the IVL are to:

- Increase visitor numbers to maximise the economic contribution tourism makes to New Zealand
- Enhance the visitor experience, managing the impact on the conservation estate and retaining public consent to allow for continuous growth
- Demonstrate robust value for money and alignment with overall Government priorities.

Conservation investments deliver against these objectives in the following ways:

- As New Zealand’s environment is a major drawcard for international visitors, preserving and enhancing our world class conservation lands maintains this drawcard and helps to ensure visitors’ expectations of New Zealand are met.
- Showcasing the benefits of IVL investments helps to maintain the social license for tourism by highlighting the contribution that international tourists are making to conservation.
- Investing in our most popular visitor sites improves the visitor experience, which helps to encourage more visitors while managing their impacts on the environment.
- Improving biodiversity and heritage across the country creates more potential destinations for visitors to enjoy, dispersing the benefits of tourism outside the main tourist centres.

Programme and description	Project and description	25/26	26/27	27/28	Alignment with conservation and visitor criteria	Alignment with value for money
Exceptional visitor experiences at our popular places This includes better experience management, ensuring we are adequately maintaining our toilets, carparks, bridges and shelters, and providing modern and adequate amenities.	Managing visitor pressures Managing visitor sites under pressure from growing visitor numbers requires focussed investment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased resourcing to manage visitors at peak times. Improving levels of service in visitor centres in National Parks and additional rangers over the busy season/s to be more visible to visitors. Investment to support work on front country facilities, parking and visitor flows, managing waste and undertaking compliance (e.g. concessions checked, campsite fees paid, drone use permitted etc.).• Destination management: focused management of complex visitor issues across DOC’s most highly visited and high value sites (e.g. <i>Milford Sound Piopiotahi, Aoraki / Mt Cook, Franz Josef, Tongariro National Park, Waipoua Forest</i>).<ul style="list-style-type: none">o <i>Milford Sound Piopiotahi</i> – begin implementation of experience improvements along the corridor. \$2.5m of further IVL funding would be required in year 3 and beyond to complete the proposed \$8.5M package of improvements.o <i>Aoraki / Mt Cook</i> – Development of a management plan and begin implementation of the plan. Further funding would be required in year 3 and beyond to fully implement the plan.• High volume key sites: Projects to provide fit-for-purpose visitor experiences at high volume sites (e.g. <i>Goat Island, Rangitoto, Matiu/Somes Island, Cathedral Cove, Blue Pools</i>).<ul style="list-style-type: none">o <i>Matiu/Somes Island</i> visitor experience plan to improve management of site following the wharf replacement.	\$4.3	\$7.1	\$2.2	Increased infrastructure capacity to attract and support visitors Investing in our growing visitor sites encourages more visitors by improving the visitor experience, while managing their impacts on the environment. Investment will enhance the visitor experience and better manage the impact of visitors at peak times.	Investment focusses on improvements to some of our highest profile sites, creating fit-for-purpose and practical solutions to issues with increased visitation.
	Managing core visitor products Funding for improvements to achieve and maintain minimum service levels for DOC-led visitor experiences (e.g. Great Walks, Short Walks, Day Hikes, Overnight tramps, scenic spaces, campsites and biking) and for experiences DOC has a key role in delivering with others (e.g. Great Rides, Te Araroa Trail, Tohu Whenua). <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investment in Great Walks to ensure walks remain up to standard (funding for years 1 and 2 only).• Investment to lift the standard of 326 campsites. Includes additional resources to manage campsites effectively (funding for years 1 and 2 only).• Roll-out of Tohu Whenua tourist sites. Delivers multiple sites across eight regions over three years.	\$3.2	\$3.7	\$1.5	Increased infrastructure capacity to attract and support visitors Will enhance regional dispersal of visitors outside the main tourist centres and help provide high quality, year-round and varied experiences.	Investment focusses on DOC’s core visitor destinations and experiences, like Great Walks and campsites, ensuring we are meeting standards and expectations. Investment will also focus on experiences with partners, maximising investment opportunities.
TOTAL COST FOR VISITOR PROJECTS		\$7.5	\$10.8	\$3.7	\$22M	

<p>Restoring unique wildlife and supporting thriving landscapes in National Parks and priority visitor sites</p> <p>This will improve the experience visitors have in national parks and popular places with increased bird, mammal and plant life, achieved through increased control of possums, rats, stoats, weeds and goats.</p>	<p>Restoring unique wildlife in national parks, islands and popular sites through:</p> <p>Growing populations of iconic bird species in National Parks and popular visitor sites through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding predator control (aerial 1080) in national parks for possums, rats and stoats. • Goat management to reduce impacts on areas with endangered / threatened species and with forest damage that is visible to visitors <p><i>Includes work in five national parks (Abel Tasman, Whanganui National Park, Kahurangi National Park, Paparoa National Park, Westland Tai Poutini National Park), Kaimai Forest Park and iconic landscapes of Central Otago and Marlborough.</i></p> <p>Increasing populations of threatened species in national parks, islands and popular visitor sites through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery of priority, highly threatened species including kea, hectors and maui dolphins, marine mammals, Fiordland crested penguin • Increasing marine biodiversity protection for key marine diving sites <p><i>Includes work in Poor Knights, Cape Rodney-Okakari Point (Goat Island), Te Whanganui-o-Hei (Cathedral Cove), Fiordland marine reserves, Hen and Chickens, Rangitoto, Tiritiri Matangi, Motutapu, Kapiti, Anchor, Ulva, Coromandel (Mercury Group), Marlborough Sounds, Fiordland, Westland, Aoraki, Aspiring National Park, Arthurs Pass National Parks, South West World Heritage Area.</i></p>	5.05	7.7	9.8	<p>Preserve and enhance a world class conservation estate</p> <p>Improves condition of most popular and famous areas, forests are thriving, protecting high priority and iconic threatened species in places where visitors are most likely to see and interact with them.</p> <p>Enhances biodiversity on islands where with high visitor numbers and where habitats and species are highly sensitive to visitors.</p>	<p>DOC's National Predator Control Programme is well established, with successful results for threatened species protection</p> <p>Elimination of isolated populations of goats will no longer require ongoing management. Other investment will ensure previous investment is not wasted.</p> <p>Management of islands is one of the best and most cost-effective methods of protecting ecosystems and species.</p> <p>Investment over a 3-year period will allow DOC to bring predator numbers down and threatened species numbers up to a point they can be managed as part of ranger BAU work.</p>
	<p>Supporting thriving landscapes in our National Parks and at popular visitor sides through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing wilding conifers from iconic landscapes to significantly reduce the spread of this expensive pest weed. Expands on existing MPI-led programme. • Managing significant weed issues at iconic sites that reduce suitability of places to home iconic threatened species (e.g. kaki and braided river birds). Includes investment in development of the Smart Weed Alert Tool to support early detection and reduce future costs. <p><i>Includes work in Rakiura National Park, Mackenzie Basin, Central Otago, Kaikoura, Clarence, St James Aoraki National Park, Tasman Braided River, and in Northland: Mt Manaia, Bream head, North Cape, Te Pahi,</i></p>	5.63	2.3	2.52	<p>Preserve and enhance a world class conservation estate</p> <p>Enhance the condition of our famous and popular landscapes, ensuring natural habitats thrive as well as plants and animals. Visitors find it easier to experience pristine natural environments.</p>	<p>Builds on existing wilding conifer control work (MPI-led) so gains are not lost.</p> <p>Increase in funding will enable elimination of priority weed populations to stop them spreading further and requiring more intensive management in the future. It will also fund some priority ongoing control.</p>
	TOTAL COST OF BIODIVERSITY PROJECTS	\$10.2M	\$9.9 M	\$12.9M	\$33M	
TOTAL		COST OF TOTAL PROGRAMME OVER 3 YEARS			\$55M	