



**Date:** 16 January 2024

**To:** s9(2)(g)(ii)

**CC:** s9(2)(g)(ii), s9(2)(g)(ii)

**From:** s9(2)(g)(ii) and s9(2)(g)(ii)

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**Subject:** Rakiura Forest Health Report

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## Summary

DOC is obliged to report to the Conservation Board about the state of Rakiura forests. The Rakiura CMS/National Park Management Plan 2011-2021 set a 10-year milestone report detailing the forest health of Stewart Island/Rakiura. The Department undertook to write a report from current deer population and forest health monitoring data and share that with the Board and other stakeholders by the end of the 2022/23 financial year. (<https://doccm.doc.govt.nz/cwxv4/wcc/faces/wccdoc?dDocName=DOC-7150450>). Handover of this task was delayed, but is now with the Design and Evaluation team in M&E.

An earlier report was made in 2010:

<https://doccm.doc.govt.nz/cwxv4/wcc/faces/wccdoc?dDocName=DOC-2754533>.

There has been no park-scale systematic monitoring of Rakiura forests since 2010. There has been some monitoring from Tier 1, which is the national-scale terrestrial monitoring programme DOC began in 2011. This means we cannot write a report of the same depth as in 2010. Instead, we will:

1. write a short document summarising forest and mammalian herbivore data from Tier 1 monitoring sites on Rakiura. This will resemble the National Park report produced in 2021. It will not include a great deal of local context, discussion, or interpretation.
2. contract Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research to do a stocktake of Rakiura's long-term forest monitoring networks (including vegetation, birds and mammalian herbivores) and recommend which networks to maintain and remeasure for park level reporting.

## Discussion with Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research

DOC BHV and MWLCR staff s9(2)(g)(ii)

and s9(2)(g)(ii) met 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023, to discuss options for reporting on Rakiura forest health. It was noted:

- that the last report of the state of vegetation in Rakiura was Duncan et al (2010).
- that the only systematic data collection DOC has done since then is Tier 1.
- that Tier 1 is not an adequate alternative to maintaining long-term 20x20 plot and other forest monitoring (e.g. 5 minute bird count station) networks.

- that it would be preferable to remeasure all or some of the catchment / park scale networks on Rakiura and then write an appropriate report.
- that Te Uru Rākau is looking to select native forest sites with long-term 20x20 plot networks for carbon storage research, and Rakiura fits their proposed selection criteria.
- that it would be ideal for future Park monitoring to incorporate social dimensions. Full evaluation of the impact of deer on Rakiura will require consideration of the recreational and economic as well as the biological.

### **Time frame for delivery of 2 reports**

- February 2024: short report using national scale monitoring data from 2012 to 2022.
- June 2024: Manaaki Whenua stocktake report and recommendations for park-scale forest monitoring.