

Department of Conservation
Conservation House
18 Manner Street
Wellington 6011
doc.govt.nz

Ref: OIAD-5239

13 June 2025

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 15 May 2025 and clarified via email on 19 May 2025, in which you asked for:

I would like to see a copy of the annual operational plan that sits under the community agreement, if possible please.

I understand that there are more than one as the tahr foundation have been doing work for a few years, is that right?

Would it be possible to all the past operational plans, at least as long as there has been a CA in place?

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA).

As you are aware from Tahr Plan Implementation Liaison Group (TPILG) meetings in recent years, the Community Agreement referred to between the New Zealand Tahr Foundation Inc and the Department of Conservation has enabled hunters from the New Zealand Tahr Foundation to deliver focused management hunts within areas of South Westland.

The original agreement commenced in February 2022 and a new agreement commenced in February 2025. During this time, three operational plans have been submitted enabling work under the community agreements. Four hunts (two in the Makaawhio/Jacobs River, one in the Mahitahi River and one in the Troyte River) were also approved outside an annual operational plan in late 2024 while the most recent Community Agreement and corresponding (2025/26) operational plan was in development.

The bulk of the hunting undertaken under these plans has been in the Makaawhio and Mahitahi River valleys in Management Unit 6 (MU6; Landsborough); more recently, other sites have been added, including the Clarke/Paringa and Otoko catchments in MU6, and the Troyte River in Management Unit 4A (Westland Tai Poutini National Park).

In total, to date, 1,361 tahr, primarily mature breeding females, have been controlled by Tahr Foundation hunters under these agreements; 1,263 of those were from MU6. This control is a substantial addition (over 25%) to DOC-led control operations in South Westland. DOC official control and the direction of Aerial Assisted Trophy Hunting 'offsets' have controlled 3,660 and 946 tahr respectively in MU6 and adjoining 'inside feral range' locations across this time period.

Recreational hunters have controlled a further 1,436 tahr through the 2022-2024 tahr ballots within MU6 (the 2025 ballot is currently underway). The four control approaches are planned and applied in an integrated and complementary fashion across South Westland, increasing the overall control resource available.

Please find attached copies of the annual operational plans under the Community Agreements, as requested.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1		New Zealand Tahr Foundation Annual Operational Plan 2022/23	Released in part
2		New Zealand Tahr Foundation Annual Operational Plan 2023/24	Released in part
3		New Zealand Tahr Foundation Annual Operational Plan 2025/26	Released in part

As the agreements contain personal details of people who are not DOC employees, it was considered appropriate to treat your request formally and consider it under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA).

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld where it contains personal information, under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA. In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA 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 OIA.

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

[Redacted signature block]

Nāku noa, nā



Ben Reddiex
Director National Programmes
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai