



3 October 2025

Whakatipu-wai-Māori
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Ref: OIAD-5662

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 7 September 2025, regarding your July 2024 Official Information Act (OIA) request, logged as OIAD-4241. You have asked for the following:

"1. Could you please send me a copy of the OIA response you mention below? I can't find it on the website. Also how is DOC monitoring the impact of the exploration activities within the conservation covenant? Hopefully the OIA response answers this? The extent of track damage occurring is significant.

The Department carries out monitoring within the Bendigo Conservation Covenant, however this is unrelated to activities undertaken by Santana Minerals (or MGL). Although not directly in scope of your current request, you may be interested to view the response to another OIA request regarding monitoring of the conservation covenant. This should become available on our website before the end of August here:
<https://apc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doc.govt.nz%2Fnews%2Foia-responses%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cafleming%40doc.govt.nz%7Cd6a8e790f9ef4fbc519508dded914f85%7Cf0cbb24fa2f6498fb5366eb9a13a357c%7C0%7C0%7C638927930766298200%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMmllsIkFOljoitWTFpbCIsIlldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ECh%2Fc4OpWgPOJJ%2BCecRlaGbra94NYGUllvGYqkNiVwU%3D&reserved=0>

2. What is the status of Santana Minerals / Matakanui Gold's consents on public conservation land - as mentioned below?"

MGL have applied for two Minimum Impact Activities (MIA) applications for gold and other mineral prospecting (note this is exploratory work) within the Ardour Conservation Area, Bendigo Conservation Area, and Bendigo Historic Reserve. The Department is yet to make a decision on these applications."

We have considered your request under the OIA.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1.a. *Could you please send me a copy of the OIA response you mention below?*

As per the email sent on 19 September 2025, the OIA response referred to is OIAD-4228 and can be found on DOC's website at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/oia-responses/2024/>.



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

1.b. *Also how is DOC monitoring the impact of the exploration activities within the conservation covenant?*

DOC undertakes regular monitoring of conservation covenant areas. The most recent monitoring of the Bendigo Conservation Covenant was undertaken on 13 February 2025. The report and photographs associated with this activity, and a comparison document with photos taken during previous monitoring activities are attached.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	13 Feb 2025	Bendigo covenant monitoring file note - February 2025	Released in full.
Note 2nd attachment was shared through onedrive link - not accessible to general public			
3.	13 Feb 2025	Bendigo photo comparisons	Released in full.

Ecologists are also scheduled to visit the site in the near future when the spring annuals are expected to be present.

2. *What is the status of Santana Minerals / Matakanui Gold's consents on public conservation land - as mentioned below?*

The two Minimum Impact Applications (MIAs) lodged by Matakanuui Gold Limited were approved on 23 August 2024.

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.

Nāku noa, nā



Aaron Fleming MZNM
Regional Operations Director, Southern South Island
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai