



# Northland Conservancy recreation opportunities review

Submissions analysis and decisions

OCTOBER 2004



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

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**This report is the conclusion of the department's public consultation process 'Towards a Better Network of Visitor Facilities', a Recreation Opportunity Review aimed at confirming with the public the mix of visitor facilities needed to provide the recreational opportunities most desired on public conservation land.**

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# Message from the Conservator

The following report details the content of submissions received by Northland Conservancy as part of the recreation opportunity review public consultation period, and reports on other feedback received through public meetings and discussion with stakeholders during this period.

Taking account of the submissions and other information received, decisions have been made by this conservancy. These decisions align with the strategic direction as covered by the Principles to Guide a Core Facility Network and the key Policy and Strategic directions referred to within these, or where there has been identified a preference through submissions to vary from this direction, these cases have been noted.

Chris Jenkins

Conservator

Northland Conservancy

# Executive summary

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Consultation was launched on 30 September 2003 with a press release from the Minister of Conservation. The Northland Conservancy supported the consultation processes with public meetings held in all Areas to outline the proposals to interested parties and key stake holders. Submissions closed 31 January 2004. These submissions have been considered in terms of the departments legislation, strategic plans (such as the Northland CMS), the Principles to Guide a Core Facility Network (details provided as part of the consultation process) and Northland's Conservancy Visitor Strategic Plan for Recreation 2003–2009. Consequently, as a result of submissions, the Conservancy has made some changes to the Northland's proposals, and these are listed in this document.

The document and submissions form were sent to 34 iwi authorities and affiliated Maori organisations in Northland. These included times of the public meetings with the invitation to approach the department for further information. At least two public meetings were attended by iwi representatives. Given the political arena at that point in time, Maori may not have felt that they were consulted. There were four submissions all representing hapu. One supporting a proposal and three opposing two other proposals. Two submissions from hapu appear to be due to miss information. The Areas will engage in further discussion concerning the specific Area's management raised in these submissions.

## SUBMITTER AND SUBMISSIONS

Northland Conservancy received submissions from 91 submitters commenting on 112 proposals. Submitters were made up of 45 groups and 46 individuals. No submitters made direct reference to the Principles to Guide the Core Facility Network (contained in the National Resource Document). Of the 345 points 165 supported the proposals, 48 supported in part, 50 opposed and 63 were neutral (this would indicate new proposed facilities or other issues related to the site e.g. weed control). 19 submissions contained comment that related to regional or national issues, as well as (or instead of) comment on specific proposals

## DECISIONS

The decisions tend to favour proposed retention of some Short Stop Traveller, Day Visitor and a Back Country Adventure sites that were proposed to be removed and the basic maintenance of Back Country Comfort and Adventurer facilities.

The financial commitment with the decisions will be less than the original proposals because two out of three proposed huts are not going to proceed and 3 tracks are not going to be removed.

## GENERAL OVERVIEW

Very little has changed from the original proposals for management. The majority of tracks and associated facilities will be maintained to the relevant standards. There will be a wider range of recreation opportunities in Northland including old and new facilities for disabled access (Tane Mahuta, Ahipara Gumfields and Taumarumaru track), a new opportunity for sea kayaking / tramping accommodation at Deep Water Cove, a wetland track experience at Waitangi and tracks investigating local points of interest at Waitata Point and Soda Springs. Also a potential community development of Kaheka Point as a camping opportunity in the Whangaroa Harbour. Although Northland Conservancy does not have 'wilderness' areas the public process has shown that some areas are seen by Northlanders as a 'wilderness' experience and these areas should be respected as such, for example not putting huts on the Waima Range and the retention of access to the Tutamoe Plateau. Hukatere Track, Kahuwera Pa and the Mangahorehore Route lookout extension (500m) tracks that have a replicated experience elsewhere in the conservancy will cease maintenance.

## KEY DECISIONS

### **Bay of Islands Area**

- Mangahorehore Route will cease maintenance on the lookout extension (500m) as this will not compromise visitor experience to the main route.
- Merumeru Falls Track proposed will not go ahead as the environmental damage of putting in a new track would outweigh the benefits as the falls can be seen from the existing track network.

### **Kaitaia Area**

- The proposed Taumarumaru Track had overwhelming support from local communities.
- The Ahipara gumfields Walk proposal will be barrier free and accessible for the disabled.

### **Kauri Coast**

- The two proposed hut facilities in the Waima Forest were significantly opposed by local communities and people seeking a 'wilderness' experience in Northland. However, there was support for the restoration of Framptons Hut to standard and for overnight opportunities to occur in the Waima Ranges in the form of informal camping.
- Mt Tutamoe Track will now be maintained (not cease maintenance) as it is the only access to the Tutamoe Plateau for hunting and other remote experiences.
- The Hukatere Hall Recreation Reserve will have the Reserve status is being revoked and the land will revert to crown and be subject to the Land Act and managed/disposed of by Lands Information New Zealand.



## **Whangarei Area**

- Bratty's Bush Track will be retained and maintained to a lower standard as it is an import access track for botanists viewing native orchids.
- The community halls on Recreation Reserve and Domain land in are being investigated for vestment in the Whangarei District Council. This will include a process of consultation with iwi and the Reserves Boards.

# 1. Introduction

- Public consultation was undertaken as part of the department's recreation opportunity review 'Towards a Better Network of Visitor Facilities'.
- Consultation was launched on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2003, with a Press Release from the Minister of Conservation, and a press release from this conservancy. Letters were sent to local recreation groups and other key associates inviting them to attend public meetings during October 2003 to learn about the consultation process. Proposal documents and background resource material were provided as publications and on the DOC website to provide the basis for making submissions.
- Information about the submission process and meeting were provided to 34 iwi authorities and affiliated Maori organisations in Northland.
- Meetings were held in the four Areas of the Conservancy to inform public and stimulate discussion/submissions on the Document. Notes were taken to ensure the issues raised were reflected in the submissions made.
- One of the positive outcomes from the consultation is that good relationships are now developing with key associate groups.
- Decisions were made taking into account the following strategic documents;
  - Principles to Guide a Core Facility Network
  - Conservation Management Strategy for Northland Conservancy
  - Hut Standards
  - Track and Outdoor Visitor Structures Standards
  - National Visitor Strategy
  - Northland Conservancy Visitor Strategic Plan 2003-2009

## SUBMISSION ANALYSIS PROCESS

- Submissions were entered into an Analysis Database (which allows for reports on individual proposals and/or submitters for future reference and analysis of demographics).
- Proposals were assessed considering the submissions information and the number of submissions opposing or supporting the proposal. The strategic value of facilities was reviewed as a result of the submissions analysis and decisions drafted.
- Decisions were documented and forwarded to Areas for manager comment and sign-off and subsequent Conservator sign-off to the decisions.
- Those proposals that received no submissions were accepted provided that the original proposal reasons still stood.
- All decisions that differed from original proposals were considered together to establish the effect this may have on the range of Conservancy recreation opportunities.

## WHAT 'DECISIONS' MEANS

These decisions are to provide the public of New Zealand and the associated user groups some surety about the future of the core network of visitor facilities the department manages. The decisions of 'cease maintenance', 'seeking community agreement' and 'removal' will be a priority for resource commitment and work programmes for the department over the next five years. Sites with 'maintain' will be brought to standard and maintained.

Proposed assets confirmed by decisions are to be built in the future when resourcing becomes available. The department's decisions concerning proposed new tracks are that the concept of constructing these tracks is approved subject to an assessment of environmental effects and preparation of a full business case for each. Planning for these tracks will take place over the next few years and the department does not plan to begin construction of any of them for at least three years.

This document maps out the next five years priority work for the department however, there remain some factors that cannot be accurately forecast or guaranteed at this point in time, such as; future construction costs, the durability of existing and new facilities, the effects of changing weather patterns, the environment and changing user group priorities. As a result these decisions are a negotiated outcome rather than conclusions set in stone.

Formal planning processes will continue to provide the mechanism for changing these decisions as needed and ensuring public input (e.g. Conservation Management Review etc), and Conservation Boards will assist the department to manage specific facility provision issues that arise from time to time.

# Section One

## 2. Submitters and submissions

This section provides information on the number of submissions, the nature of submissions and a description of their content

### 2.1 NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS

- 91 submitters provided submissions representing comment on 112 proposals
- Submitters were made up of 45 group submissions and 46 individual submissions
- 0 submissions made direct reference to the Principles to Guide the Core Facility Network (contained in the National Resource Document).
- 19 submissions contained comment that related to regional or national issues, as well as (or instead of) comment on specific proposals.
- 28 where from the Kaitaia Area.
- 19 from the Kauri Coast Area.
- 12 from the Bay of Islands Area.
- 16 from Whangarei Area.
- Only 6 were from Northland general and the rest (9) from around the country with only 1 from overseas.

### 2.2 NATURE OF SUBMISSIONS

Submissions came from three general sectors:

- Communities interests
- General front country visitors
- Experienced and knowledgeable backcountry users.

Submissions were analysed as:

**Support** The submission clearly supported the Public Document's proposals.

**Support in Part** The submission supported the Public Document's proposals on the facilities work but had concerns or issues with related management.

**Neutral** The submission suggested a management proposal which was not mentioned\* in the Public Document or had comments on the departments management of this site not related to recreation facilities (e.g. weed control) which was unrelated to this process.

**Opposed** The submission was clearly opposed to the Public Document's proposals.

\* Suggestions put forward by the public are in this document **for information only**. As these proposals have not been through a public process the suggestions are only for future consideration with the public at a later date. You are welcome to comment on these suggestions with the appropriate Area office but no formal process is being entered into at this time. Your comments will be noted and retained for future reference only.

## 2.3 MAIN PROPOSALS BY ORDER OF TOTAL SUBMISSIONS, BY AREA

SUBMITTERS SITES / FACILITIES	SITE NO.	VISITOR SITES (DOC MANAGEMENT SITES)	PROPOSAL IN THE PUBLIC SUBMISSION DOCUMENT PUBLISHED 2003	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT' IN PART'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'NEUTRAL'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I OPPOSE'	TOTAL
Total				133	48	33	50	283
General Comments on Northland / Department of Conservation								
19								
BAY OF ISLANDS AREA								
Proposed Deep Water Cove Hut	101031	Deep Water Cove Picnic Area	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	11	1	0	0	12
Takapau Track	102003	Waihonga Gorge	Maintain Site - Requires upgrade	5	4	0	0	9
Maungahorehore Routes, Puketi	103010	Maitai Bay Headland Track	Maintain Site	0	6	0	0	6
Forest Pools Campsite	102009	Forest Pools Amenity Area	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	4	0	1	0	5
Russell Township				0	0	5	0	5
Waipapa Track	102010	Waipapa River Track	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	1	0	3	0	4
Omahuta Kauri Sanctuary Walk	102023	Omahuta Kauri Sanctuary Road	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	4	0	0	0	4
Waitata Point Track	100277	Waitata Point	Non-visitor DOC management	3	0	0	0	3
Jacksons Road Bridge	102029	Jacksons Road	Maintain Site - Retain Key Assets	3	0	0	0	3
Nikaupouponu Route Puketi		Not Recorded On DOC's System As Closed For A Number Of Years.	This was not in the public submission document as it has been closed for a number of years	0	0	0	3	3
Opua Kauri Walk	102090	Opua Forest Kauri Walk /Oromahoe Road to Paihia Track	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	3	0	0	0	3

SUBMITTERS SITES / FACILITIES	SITE NO.	VISITOR SITES (DOC MANAGEMENT SITES)	PROPOSAL IN THE PUBLIC SUBMISSION DOCUMENT	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT' IN PART'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'NEUTRAL'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I OPOSE'	TOTAL
Puketi Forest General				3	0	0	0	3
Waihonga Gorge	102003	Waihonga Gorge Kauri Walk/ Takapau Track; Puketi	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	1	2	0	0	3
Waitangi Wetland Walk	102078	Waitangi Wetlands	Proposed	3	0	0	0	3
Whangamumu Whaling Station	101025	Whangamumu Track /Whaling Station	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	0	0	3	0	3
Merumeru Falls Track	191432	Merumeru Falls Track	Proposed	0	0	0	2	2
Flagstaff Hill	101001	Flagstaff Hill	Maintain Site	1	1	0	0	2
Flagstaff Hill surrounding Tracks	101000	Flagstaff Hill Loop Tracks	Maintain Site	0	1	1	0	2
Kaheka Point Campsite	191591	Kaheka Point / St Pauls Rock Tracks	Proposed	2	0	0	0	2
Kaheka Point Track	102041	Kaheka Point / St Pauls Rock Tracks	Maintain by community	1	0	0	1	2
Mahinepua Peninsula Track	102050	Mahinepua Peninsula Track	Maintain	2	0	0	0	2
<b>KAITIARA AREA</b>								
Taumarumaru Coastal Track	103006	Taumarumaru Reserve	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	26	1	3	0	30
Cape Reinga Coastal Walkway General	104005	Includes The 6 Sections Of Cape Reinga Coastal Walkway & Cape Reinga Lighthouse	Maintain Site	6	0	1	0	7
Mangamuka Gorge	103036	Mangamuka Gorge Walkway /Microwave Track	Maintain Site	3	0	0	2	5
Warawara Forest – Golden Stairs	103041	Warawara Track	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	3	0	0	5
Frampton Hut	105007	Waima Forest Tracks	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	1	1	0	4
Hokianga Kai Iwi Coastal Walk – Maunganui Bluff Walk	105003	Waipoua Coastal Track /Kawerua Historic Site	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	1	0	0	3
Maungataniwha Walkway	103036	Mangamuka Walkway / Microwave Track	Maintain	3	0	0	0	3

SUBMITTERS SITES / FACILITIES	SITE NO.	VISITOR SITES (DOC MANAGEMENT SITES)	PROPOSAL IN THE PUBLIC SUBMISSION DOCUMENT	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT' IN PART'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'NEUTRAL'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I OPPOSE'	TOTAL
<b>KAURI COAST AREA</b>								
Proposed Two Huts In Waima Rangers	105059	Pawakatutu - Kawerua Roads	Maintain Site	10	0	0	12	22
Waima Forest Tracks	105007	Waima Forest Tracks	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	4	0	1	15	20
Mount Tuamoe Track	105036	Mt Tuamoe Track	Cease maintenance	0	0	0	7	7
Framptons Hut	105007	Waima Forest Tracks (Framptons Hut)	Maintain	2	1	1	0	4
Hokianga Kai Iwi Coastal Walk including Maunganui Bluff Walk	105003	Hokianga Kai Iwi Coastal Walk including Maunganui Bluff Walk	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	3	0	0	0	3
Tutamoe Track	105035	Tutamoe Track	Maintain Site	3	0	0	0	3
Waoku Coach Road	105010	Waoku Coast Road / Wekaweke Track	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	1	2	0	0	3
Kawerua Hotel	105003	Waipoua Coastal Track/ Kawerua Historic Site	Historic Site	0	0	2	0	2
Tane Mahuta	105013	Tane Mahuta	Maintain Site (carpark to increase size)	2	0	0	0	2
<b>WHANGAREI AREA</b>								
Tangihua Hut	100170	Tangihua Forest - Back Country Adventures	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	9	0	0	11
Bratty's Bush Track	100080	Bratty's Bush Scenic Reserve	Close Site/Remove All Assets	0	0	0	8	8
Peach Cove Hut	100130	Peach Cove, Bream Head Reserve	Upgrade Size/Capacity	2	6	0	0	8
Tangihua Forest Walks	100170	Tangihua Forest - Back Country Adventures	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	1	3	3	0	7
North Russell Forest	101034	North Russell Forest	Maintain Site	4	0	3	0	7

SUBMITTERS SITES / FACILITIES	SITE NO.	VISITOR SITES (DOC MANAGEMENT SITES)	PROPOSAL IN THE PUBLIC SUBMISSION DOCUMENT	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I SUPPORT IN PART'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'NEUTRAL'	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS 'I OPPOSE'	TOTAL
Pukenui Forest Tracks	100141	Pukenui Forest	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	1	3	1	0	5
Peach Cove Track	100130	Peach Cove, Bream Head Scenic Reserve	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	2	0	0	4
Bream Head Track	100131	Bream Head Track, Bream Head Scenic Reserve	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	0	1	0	3
Mimiwhangata Coastal Park General	101051	Mimiwhangata Coastal Park	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	0	1	2	0	3
Smugglers Bay Track	100134	Busby Head Scenic Reserve	Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade	2	0	1	0	3



## 2.4 PROPOSALS THAT DID NOT RECEIVE SUBMISSIONS

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BAY OF ISLANDS AREA	
Kahuwera Pa Track	Cease Maintenance
Link Track between Puketi Amenity Area and Manginangina	This facility has community support prior to the public consultation process. It will be funded and maintained by the Puketi Forest Restoration Trust.
KAITAIA	
Spirits Bay Campsite	Maintain
Tapotupotu Campsite	Was 'Upgrade to higher standard' will now be 'maintain' as this is a serviced camp (the highest standard).
Maitai Bay campsite	Was 'Upgrade to higher standard' will now be 'maintain' as this is a serviced camp (the highest standard).
Rarawa Campsite	Was 'Upgrade to higher standard' will now be 'maintain' as this is a serviced camp (the highest standard).
KAURI COAST AREA	
Ari Te Uru	Proposed
Trounson Kauri Park	Was 'Upgrade to higher standard' will now be 'maintain' as this is a serviced camp (the highest standard).
Waipoua Campground	Was 'Upgrade to higher standard' will now be 'maintain' as this is a serviced camp (the highest standard).
Pakotai Track	Maintain
Hukatere Hall Recreation Reserve	The Reserve status is being revoked and the land will revert to crown and be subject to the Land Act and managed/disposed of by Lands Information New Zealand.
WHANGAREI AREA	
Otamure Campsite	Maintain
Purirui Bay Campsite	Maintain
Uretiti Campsite	Maintain
Waikahoa Campsite	Maintain
Tangihua Lodge Associated Assets	Owned & maintained by Community Group
Investigation of the vestment of the following halls/Domains in the Whangarei District Council is underway. This will include a process of consultation with iwi and the Reserves Boards.	
Hukerenui Domain	Waikiekie Domain Recreation Reserve
Maungakaramea Domain	Waiotira Domain
Oakura Domain	Waipu Centennial Domain
Parakao Domain	Waipu Cove Domain
Ruakaka Central LP Hall Reserve	Whatatiri Domain Recreation Reserve
Springfield Domain	Whareora Hall Recreation Reserve
Taurikura Hall Site	

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## 3. User group meetings

After the launch of the process each Area hosted a public meeting on the proposals. One additional meeting was held at the Maungakaremea Hall with the local rate payers association dealing mainly with the Tangihua Hut proposal.

## 4. Summary of general points from submissions

Nineteen submitters expressed concerned over general issues to Department of Conservation policy and strategy. Eight were opposed to the proposals because there are concerns that DOC is biased towards international not domestic users. There is also concern at excessive spending to upgrade facilities to too high a level. Preference is that DOC keeps to its hut and tracks service standards and does not exceed them. Some people also felt that increase funding should be going to possum and pest control and habitat rehabilitation. One submitter supported the funding of recreation facilities.

### 4.1 GENERAL NORTHLAND SUBMISSIONS

19 submitters expressed issues on the general thrust of Northland and the department's proposals they are;

- Concern over the perceived "flashing up" of facilities beyond public's expectations, security in car parks, perception of DOC spending too much money on the 'front country'.
- Opposing the booking of huts and Northland not using hut tickets,
- The department ignoring the issues raised by the public,
- Concern about the environmental damage from existing maintenance and proposed facility construction,
- Other topics include a lack of facilities or mention of the Motor Homes overnighing in carparks, sea kayaking, disabled users, 4x4 wheel drive (dealt with in the National report), the Te Araroa pathway and the profile of NZ Walkways.
- One submitter was concerned about the poor management of access and facilities in the Te Pahi area.
- 2 hapu opposed the process due to lack of separate consultation.
- 1 submission opposes the loss of backcountry routes in general.

- 3 hapu felt that they are not public and should have been consulted separately as partners and this should have occurred before the public process was undertaken. Northland has made a concerted effort through the Area Mangers to engage iwi and inform where we can. We have had four submissions from iwi and hapu. Though not extensive these submissions were from all over Northland and indicate that iwi were aware of the process.

## 4.2 RESPONSE TO GENERAL CONCERNS

### **Consultation process**

Some concern was expressed that the process of consultation would not result in the department taking account of public submissions, including new proposals the community are promoting. The timeframe for the consultation process was criticised for being too tight and running over the summer holiday period. Information provided through the Proposal Summary documents did not provide sufficient information for some people. Some submitters wanted assurance that there was some way of ensuring consistency in approach across the country.

#### *Response*

The department asked the public of New Zealand to contribute to the process of public consultation accepting the Principles of Consultation found in the DOC Consultation Policy, which requires the department to take account of what submitters have to say. The department decided on a four month period for accepting submissions and publicised the process at the end of September 2003 and throughout October. Guidance has been provided to encourage national consistency, with all submissions considered on their own merit, and the overall strength of submissions on common issues. Regional Office has provided a national overview of the process, including submission analysis and decision making, and direction to conservancies on issues of consistency. An independent team of representatives of key national recreation associate groups were on a reference group that was briefed on the national overview and provided feedback for the department to consider.

### **Protection of the environment**

Submitters expressed concern that DOC's decisions on the future of visitor facilities should not lead to increased adverse effects on rare or endangered species or the ecosystems that sustain them. This concern includes issues such as crowding and litter. There is a desire to know what management options DOC is choosing to manage these issues, and suggestions include concentrating people to well managed locations as well as encouraging a greater spread of people to less used places.

#### *Response*

The department will promote best practice in the development of new facilities or upgrading existing facilities, through the use of an assessment of environmental effects. *Recreation opportunities and associated visitor activities, accommodation, facilities and services, information and interpretation should be compatible with the purposes for which the area is held* (Draft General Policy Conservation Act). There is an inherent conflict in managing for the conservation of natural and

historic values and the provision of visitor access, and experience to date is that this can be achieved with sound management practices and the cooperation of the visiting public. *“Recreation opportunities and associated visitor activities, accommodation, facilities and services, information and interpretation should be compatible with the purposes for which the area is held; be compatible with and managed to protect, and to minimise adverse effects on, natural, cultural and historic values and their intrinsic worth; be managed to protect, and to minimise adverse effects on, the qualities of solitude, remoteness, wilderness, peace and natural quiet, where these qualities are present”* (Draft General Policy Conservation Act). The department will take action to achieve these outcomes. The challenges mentioned are shared by protected area agencies across the globe, and there are no easy answers. There are possible impacts associated with visitor access to conservation areas that need to be managed. The decisions currently being made for visitor facility provision are only one of the factors influencing changing use patterns and impact creation.

### **Facility management costs**

Another key theme from submissions is concern that DOC may not be seeking to provide the most cost effective solution for facilities. Past management with a more limited budget had retained the current facility network, so why should more funding mean less facilities in the future. At the same time there were other submissions that were seeking assurance that DOC would complete any work done to the best practice that was known. DOC is also challenged to consider the importance of all visitor facilities and to take the necessary action to ensure that all the current network can be retained.

#### *Response*

The best use of funds will be considered on a case-by-case basis as decisions are made on construction methods and costs, with advice from engineers and other relevant specialists. Currently costs are determined using model costs based on previous experience and typical design standards. The costs associated with providing huts vary according to the service standard of the hut, and local conditions that will influence design and transport costs. Codes of practice must be followed that have been developed to ensure the safety of the users of the hut and their expectations about the service standards to be provided. Low cost options used in the past (such as deferring maintenance) simply leads to higher management costs at a later date. While cost efficiency is desirable, this does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that only low cost facilities should be provided.

### **Equitable allocation of new funding**

Many submissions suggested that the backcountry adventurers' opportunities are being eroded at the expense of facilities of higher service standards, and that this situation is unacceptable. These arguments range from simply noting that a reduction in facility provision is not fair, through to suggestions that it is not appropriate for DOC to fund the higher cost facilities. A range of recreational opportunities has been interpreted as meaning a range of destinations all at one service standard rather than a range of opportunities for a range of different types of visitors. The interests of disabled people have been supported by a number of submissions, which promote the provision of higher service standards.

### *Response*

More funding will become available and as a result more funding will be allocated to basic backcountry facilities, as well as to the provision of higher service standard front country facilities. The department will aim to meet its objective “*a range of recreational opportunities should be provided in different settings for visitors with different capabilities, skills and interests*” (Draft General Policy Conservation Act). The department recognises a visitor group that prefers tracks and huts with higher service standards, a preference born out by independent research and the numbers of people using these facilities. Many New Zealanders enjoy the higher standard facilities and opportunities for these people will be provided as part of the range of recreation opportunities that DOC manages. There is approximately seven times the length of basic tramping track and route being retained as there is length of track to the easy tramping standard. There are five times as many huts managed to the lower service standards (Standard and Basic huts) as there are managed to the higher service standards (Serviced and Great Walk huts).

### **Tourism**

A major theme coming through many submissions is concern at the effect of increasing numbers of international tourists now seeking backcountry experiences, requiring higher standard tracks and huts and contributing to crowding at more popular locations and creating unacceptable impacts on the environment that would not have occurred with the more stable domestic users. The department is being challenged on its actions given its legislative mandate which requires DOC to ‘foster’ recreation and ‘allow’ for tourism, whereas such a distinction does not appear to be made. Suggestions have been made to seek to charge tourists specifically to fund the provision of facilities that are use predominantly by tourists.

### *Response*

“The department is not convinced that there is a hierarchy between the recreation and tourism aspects of s.6(e) of the Conservation Act.” The management of a range of recreation opportunities, as promoted by the 1996 DOC Visitor Strategy and incorporated into the draft General Policy for the Conservation Act and related Acts, enables the department to manage for the different types of visitor needs associated with New Zealand’s conservation areas. As for tourism, the commercial aspect of this are dealt with under Part IIIB of the Conservation Act. This requires commercial operators to obtain concessions when conducting activities on land administered by the department, which may have specific conditions imposed in particular to ensure protection of natural, cultural and historic values. Tourism contributes to New Zealand’s economic wellbeing and this is recognised through Government funding for visitor facilities and conservation work as a whole. Work is programmed to improve the ability of the department to understand and respond to issues of crowding and impacts, problems which are not created exclusively by one group alone. Many New Zealanders enjoy the higher standard facilities and opportunities that support nature-based tourism and are provided as part of the range of recreation opportunities that DOC manages.

## **Four wheel drive opportunities**

Submitters supporting four-wheel-driving wish to see more opportunities for this activity, noting that they also allow less able people to access areas of parks they would otherwise not get to see, and because of the contribution they can make to search and rescue operations.

### *Response*

4X4 vehicle use is recognised as a popular recreation activity, and many old access roads have been designated for this type of use. Unfortunately, some irresponsible 4X4 drivers have created impacts through thoughtless vehicle use of conservation lands that has led to restrictive policy and a preference by managers for this activity to occur off conservation lands. *Vehicle use and other forms of transport should be compatible with the outcomes sought in different places (Draft General Policy Conservation Act)*, and as such are not always permitted access. There are limited such opportunities in conservation areas, nor is this situation likely to change except for the opportunities that may arise through High Country Tenure Review in the South Island. Roads accessible to 4X4 vehicles may provide important access in situations of search and rescue, but roads are not maintained by the department for these purposes alone.

## **Camping**

Submissions relating to camping were predominantly about access for motor-caravans or more camp grounds. A request for approval to park overnight at day visitor locations which would have a benefit to other visitors by improving security at road ends.

### *Response*

The department prefers that all overnight visitors at vehicle accessible locations to use designated camping areas. There is a good network of camping grounds throughout New Zealand that provide powered sites, and serviced campgrounds on land managed by the department also provide this opportunity. It is not considered a priority for the department to provide more serviced campgrounds, in view of the commercial opportunity that such facilities provide for private businesses. The preferred option for motor-home wastewater disposal is to coordinate with local authorities in providing the required service at locations where the waste can be best managed. Good information about where to find wastewater disposal facilities will also be key to encouraging the right behaviour, a project DOC and the Ministry for the Environment are jointly working on.

## **Te Araroa Trust**

There were a few “a little surprised to see no mention whatsoever of the national trail in the Recreation Opportunities Review....”

### *Response*

The Memorandum of Understanding between the department and Te Araroa Trust provides a commitment that the department will allow for Te Araroa to achieve its shared objective. All Conservators have been advised that the department supports Te Araroa. While the department was aware of much of the alignment for Te Araroa

through information supplied by the Trust, there had not been discussion with the department in many cases to specify proposed new track alignments, and as such were not included as formal proposals. The department expected the Trust, as a community group, to use the consultation process to clarify further the issues of route alignment. These discussions will be ongoing as the concept progresses towards reality. The Te Araroa route in Northland has been proposed to follow existing department maintained tracks.

### **Tracks for disabled users**

Northland has proposed three disabled accessible tracks at Taumarumaru, Ahipara and Tane Mahuta which had strong public support, however opportunities for the disabled requires further investigation.

### **Locking of huts**

There were a number of submissions against future locking of huts in Northland (all bar the Tangihua Hut and Frampton's hut are locked). In balance members of the Whangarei Tramping Club who built and gifted the Peach Cove and Tangihua Huts spoke strongly in favour of locking the huts at a public meeting. Northland's destination huts are locations where people go to stay because of the beach setting. These huts are locked due to the ease of boat access which increases the chances of vandalism and theft. The Tangihua Hut and Frampton Hut which are a traditional bush tramping experience will not be locked in the foreseeable future. The other huts in Northland will continue to be locked and available to users through a booking system at the appropriate Area office.

## **4.3 SUBMISSIONS ON PROPOSALS**

Similar themes came through with the submissions about specific proposals some general points were:

- The holding on to Northlands' remote experience in the Waima Ranges and the Warawara Forest. Manage and maintain these areas with simple facilities like the track networks that already exist, but only 'to standard'.
- Near tourist hot spots like Bay of Islands, the Kauri Coast, Cape Reinga bring walking and tramping experiences to 'standard' so the visitor group they are catering for are satisfied with their experiences.
- There is a strong group of supporters for existing tramping tracks and routes. They want them managed and maintained to their designated standard, not 'flushed up'.
- The submissions raised managers awareness of issues that had not previously been considered.
  - 8 submissions related directly to botanising and track access to sites mainly for native orchid enthusiasts.
  - There is a small but focused contingent of remoteness seekers.

# Section Two

## 5. Process

- Submissions were entered into an Analysis Database which allows for reports on individual proposals and/or submitters for future reference and analysis of demographics.
- Proposals were assessed considering the merit of submissions and the number of submissions opposing or supporting the proposal. The strategic value of facilities was reviewed as a result of the submissions analysis and decisions drafted.
- Decisions were documented and forwarded to Areas for manager comment and sign-off and subsequent Conservator sign-off to the draft decisions.
- Those proposals that received no submissions are accepted provided that the original proposal reasons still stand and no general submission theme arising from further analysis had influence on that decision.
- All decisions that differ from original proposals were considered together to establish the effect this may have on the range of Conservancy recreation opportunities in terms of relevant legislation and ROR process guidelines namely:
  - Consistency with Principles to Guide a Core Facility Network
  - Visitor Strategy
  - CMS/CMP objectives
  - Proposal document Conservancy overview section
  - Northlands 1-5 year Visitor Strategy Plan
  - Ability to comply with Tracks and Outdoor Visitors Structures (SNZ HB 8630:2004) given the main users or potential users of the track.



# 6. Decisions

## 6.1 SUBMISSIONS AND DECISIONS BY AREA AND SITE

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
<b>BAY OF ISLANDS AREA</b>							
Flagstaff Hill Track 101001	2 submissions supporting this important icon site in maintaining facilities to standard or a higher standard. 1 neutral submission focusing on the ecological values of the area and interaction with walking public.	Flagstaff Hill (97405)	Short Walk	Open	Maintain	Maintain	This track has a high number of users and needs to be constructed to be able to withstand the pressure.
Flagstaff Hill Loop Track 101000	2 submissions 1 proposing review of all these tracks for collective upgrade. 1 neutral submission proposing dogs be able to be taken on this track and focusing on the ecological values of the area and interaction with walking public.	Flagstaff Hill Loop Track (97403)	Walking Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	
Forest Pools Campsite 102009	5 submissions, 4 supporting this facility and its upgrading. 1 neutral submission relating to the need of toilet facilities.	Forest Pool Amenity Area Road (99234)	Gravel Road (2WD)	Open	Maintain	Maintain	Requires repair for safety issues. River undercutting has made road too narrow for safe passage.
Jackson's Road Bridge 102029	3 submissions in support of maintaining this forest access.	Jackson's Road (98397)	Gravel Road (2WD)	Open	Maintain	DOC owned Community Maintained	Forestry companies assist with maintenance
Kaheka Point Campsite 191591	2 submissions in support of a camp at Kaheka Point, 1 suggesting weed control as well.	Kaheka Point Campsite (191591)	Camp ground	Proposed	Proposed	Seeking community maintenance	Propose for community maintenance via FNDC take on management of Kaheka Pt, possibly reinstate campground at Kaheka Pt. Requires iwi/hapu consultation.

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Kaheka Point Track	2 submissions. 1 from hapu who feel they have not been consulted and await further liaison before changes in management to the site. 1 supporting stating community involvement is key to the sites weed control.	Kaheka Point Track (97342)	Walking Track	Open	Maintain by Community	Seeking community maintenance	Propose for community maintenance via FNDC take on management of Kaheka Pt, possibly reinstate campground at Kaheka Pt. Requires iwi/hapu consultation.
Mahinepua Peninsula Track	2 submissions, 2 supporting upgrading of peninsula and (1) hapu wanting further korero/involvement in development.	Mahinepua Peninsula Track (97346)	Walking Track	Open	Upgrade to bring to Standard	Maintain	
Maungahorehore Routes, Puketi 102006	6 submissions all support the basic maintenance of the track but they also object to the shortening of the track as they feel it will compromise user experience.	Mangahorehore Lookout Extension Route; Puketi (97233)	Tramping Track	Open	Maintain at Lower Standard	Remove (and not replace)	The Maungahorehore lookout extension route (99233) is rarely use and is a return track, this track will be removed (500m) the rest of the route (97335) will be maintained.
Merumeru Falls Track Road 102011	2 submissions 2 opposing as they feel present tracks provide good opportunities to see the falls without creating a new track.	Meremere Falls Track (191432)		Proposed	Proposed	Declined (remove)	The public submissions process did not support this proposal.
Motuarohia Island Track 101009	2 submissions supporting the upgrading of this track.	Motuarohia Island Track (97406)	Walking Track	Open	Upgrade to bring to Standard	Maintain	The track has safety issues associated with the site e.g. pines need to be removed as they have reached end of their life.
Nikaupouponu Route Puketi	This is a track facility that has been lost through attrition. 3 submission support re-opening and maintaining of this track.						This track was closed approximately 9 years ago. There are other opportunities in the Puketi Forest for this type of experience.
Omahuta Kauri Sanctuary Walk 102020	4 submissions 3 supporting repairs to the road and 1 supporting improvements on the track.	Omahuta Kauri Sanctuary Walk (98396)	Gravel road (2WD)	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Upgrade size/capacity	Road is to be upgraded to allow for safe visitor passage on a narrow and windy road.
Opua Kauri Walk 102090	3 submissions in support of re-opening this facility and maintaining it to standard.	Opua Kauri Walk (99068)	Walking Track	Closed	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	Opua Forest Kauri Walk has been closed for 5 years due to boardwalk being below standard. Oramahoe to Pathia Track needs to be upgraded to standard.

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Proposed Deep Water Cove Hut 101031	12 submissions of which 12 support the proposal of a hut at Deep Water Cove to break the 8 hour tramp making it more available to groups of lesser fitness and for sea kayakers/boats. One group would like the hut provided it is booked like the Cape Brett hut. 1 also suggested the lowering of the concession.	Deep Water Cove Hut (190075)	Serviced Hut	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	The Cape Brett track one of Northland's premium overnight tramping tracks, however 8hr to the Hut is to arduous for many users that have the fitness and expertise to utilise this area. Deep Water Cove is approximately half way to the Cape, making it the ideal site for a new hut facility. The hut capacity will approximately 22 bunks (same as Cape Brett).
Puketi Forest Tracks General 102001	3 submissions all supporting maintenance, 1 calling for a review of tracks in the area to encourage more, 1 asking for all tracks to be reopened and brought to standard. Weed control also called for.					Maintain	There is a commitment to getting the existing track network in the Puketi Forest to standard and maintained.
Russell Township	5 neutral submissions suggesting various walks including 3 areas/walks to be open for dogs.	Loop Track At Matawhi Bay Reserve (Dogs). Okiato To Russell Track (Dogs). Okiato Microwave Tower Track. Russell Tracks To Be Open For Dogs. Hurst Park Track.			Proposals by the submitters not the public document.	Decline at present but kept for consideration if warranted.	The department will not open any tracks in the area surrounding Russell to dogs. The only proposed track that will go ahead is Waitata Point (as listed below).
Takapau Track 102003	9 submissions in support of the reopening of this popular destination Kauri experience, 3 on the condition it remains a tramping track and 1 does not want any bridging of the stream.	Takapau Track (97334)	Easy Tramping Track	Closed	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	This track will be re-opened and maintained to standard. There is a requirement for structures to protect the kauri roots.

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Waihoanga Gorge	3 submissions supporting the maintenance with two requesting basic maintenance.	Waihoanga Gorge Kauri Walk (97333)	Walking Track	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	
Waipapa Track	4 submissions, 1 supporting maintenance of this track, 2 proposing a hut at Camp Creek, 1 proposing a link to the Puketi Forest tracks.	Waipapa Track (97337)	Tramping Track	open	maintain / upgrade	Maintain	The track will be maintained. Camp Creek will not be used for a shelter site as this location floods regularly.
Waitangi Wetland Walk 102078	3 submissions in support of access to wetlands for educational reasons and additional tracks. Concerns were expressed by 2 submissions on the weed problem at the site and 1 submission possible community involvement in eradication.	Waitangi Wetland Walk (190506)	Walking Track	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	To manage existing informal access. This site is closed to the larger population base of the Bay of Islands, and popular tourist destination. This site has many exciting possibilities for a coastal wetland experience for visitor and local people alike.
Waitata Point Track 100277	3 submissions all supporting the proposed track for reasons of lack of local walks in the area.	Waitata Point Track (191491)	Walking Track	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	To give access to historic features of Waitata coastal battery.
Whangamumu Track 101025	3 Submissions, proposing a back to nature camping experience for sea kayaking, 2 without facilities and 1 with.	Public Proposed Facility.	Informal camping			Declined	No camping is allowed at this site.
<b>KAITAIA AREA</b>							
Cape Reinga Coastal Walkway General 104018	7 Submissions supporting the Cape Reinga Coastal walkway network to be maintained to standard. 1 submission neutral proposing a Great walk with all associated facilities.	Tapoututu Campsite to Kapowairua Track (Spirits Bay) & Pandora Road to Kohurunaki Track (97328 / 97329)	Tramping Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Hokianga Kai Iwi Coastal Walk - Maunganui Bluff Walk 104018	3 submissions supporting access of this track and to standard due to public interest and historic values. (Repeated for site 104018)	Far North Road To Tapotupotu /Kapowairua Track Junction (including Kauri Bush Track) & to Tapotupotu Campsite	Tramping Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	
Mangamuka Gorge 103036	5 submissions, 3 support the ongoing maintenance of this tramping track to standard. 2 hapu oppose in general some of DOC policies in relationship to this area.	Mangamuka Gorge Walkway /Microwave Track (97321)	Tramping Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	
Maungataniwha Walkway 103036	3 submissions in support of opening the Microwave section of this track which has been lost through neglect.	Mangamuka Gorge Walkway /Microwave Track (97321)	Tramping Track	Open (microwave section closed)	Maintain	Maintain	
Taumarumaru Coastal Track 103006	30 submissions received on this proposal 26 in strong support of the initiative three neutral and related to things like weed control, toilets for the site. One support in part.	Taumarumaru Coastal Track (191233)	Short Walk (for disabled)	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	This is a community supported disabled track for short coastal walk taking in historical features.
Warawara Forest - Golden Stairs 103041	5 submissions in support of this facility keeping maintenance to the standard. At the moment it requires additional marking.	Warawara Track (97322)	Tramping Track	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	
<b>KAURI COAST AREA</b>							
Frampton Hut 105008	4 submissions in total. 3 submissions all supporting the maintenance of this facility, 1 submission requests to maintain its ambience. 1 submission required more information.	Framptons Hut (23880)	Standard Hut	Open	Upgrade - To Higher Standard	Maintain	Framptons Hut had 3 submissions to support maintenance of this hut.

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Hokianga Kai Iwi Coastal Walk – Maunganui Bluff Walk 105003	3 submissions supporting maintaining this site for public interest and historic values. 2 specifically talk of ensuring the Maunganui Bluff Walk is open and maintained.	Waipoua Coastal Walkway – Kawerua Roadend to Kai Iwi Lakes & Omapere to Kawerua Roadend (97361 / 97360 / 973602)	Tramping Track	Open	Upgrade – To Bring to Standard	Maintain	
Kawerua Hotel 105003	2 neutral submissions proposing that the hotel is upgraded and made available for overnight accommodation.	Kawerua Hotel (22924)	Other Building	Closed	Non-visitor DOC management	Non-visitor DOC management	This hotel is a historic building and will be managed by the department for its conservation but not for public access.
Mount Tutamoe Track 105035	7 submissions all opposing the closure of this track. Concerns are lost of access to the plateau and waterfall available on the track and it is the only track of any length available to Dargaville township. Everyone requests retaining the track to minimum standard.	Mount Tutamoe Track (97375)	Tramping Track	Open	Remove (and not replace)	Maintain	There was strong support (7 submissions) through the public process to retain this track for access to the summit plateau and have a track of longer duration near Dargaville.
Proposed Two Huts In Waima Rangers 105007	22 submissions 10 supporting the proposed huts (4 general support & the rest specific) reasons are increasing use & local development & providing safe use), 12 oppose for environmental reasons, short times between the huts & loss of a backcountry camping/tramping experience & perceived lack of numbers. This needs to be taken in consideration with the Waima Tracks (20 submissions) as the 15 opposed do not want further development of the area as a whole.	Waima Hut (191604)	Serviced Hut	Proposed	Proposed	Declined	This facility was put up in the Public review as an opportunity that will give Northland a unique multi day tramping experience through the kauri forest. This hut would link with Framptons Hut which was newly acquired with a land acquisition. However there was community objection to the facilities.

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Tane Mahuta 105013	2 submissions supporting the upgrading of this facility to include road side facilities & have a management plan.	Tane Mahuta Site	Amenity Area, Toilet, Short Walk	Open	Upgrade to bring to Standard	Upgrade to higher standard	Site needs significant alteration to track surface to harden it for high visitor use and keep visitors off delicate vegetation, amenity area requires upgrade/ increase size capacity to cater for increasing numbers and to enable a disabled short walk.
Tutamoe Track	3 submissions supporting the continued maintenance of this track.	Tutamoe Track (97374)	Walking Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	There is support for the continued maintenance of this site.
Waimea Forest Tracks 105007	20 submissions, 4 submissions support an upgrade of track facilities in the area. 15 oppose the upgrade of facilities but support existing track network and access and 2 against re-routing tracks via Framptons Hut. 1 submission was neutral suggesting vegetation clearance, stock control and pest control. These submissions must be viewed in conjunction with the proposed Waimea Huts submissions especially as the 12 opposed do not want further development of the area and did not necessarily comment on the huts specifically. Also see public proposed tracks for this area.	Six Foot Track (Mountain Road to Mt Hauturu) And Taïta Bridle Track and Proposed Carpark (97363 / 99064 / 191278)	Tramping Track	Open	Six foot track - Upgrade - To Bring to Standard and Taïta Bridle track maintain	Maintain	This track is a Backcountry Adventurer Tramping Track which is a standard the department believes will best represent the user to the area and no over develop the site.
Waoku Coach Road 105010	3 submission support the maintenance of this facility and 2 requests ownership &/or closure of road to vehicles to be resolved due to the historic stone work of the road getting damaged.	Waoku Coach Road Walkway Waimea to Tutamoe. (97365)	Tramping Track	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	This site is to be maintained and the issues of ownership & present vehicle access to be resolved as it is impacting on the historic stone features of this site.
<b>WHANGAREI AREA</b>							
Bratty's Bush Track 100080	8 submissions opposing the closure of this site. Its significance is for botanising and appraisal of rare orchids.	Bratty's Bush Track (97384)	Short Walk Will change to Walking Track as a lower standard.	Open	Remove (and not replace)	Maintain at Lower Standard	This track will be maintained at the lower standard of a walking track due to the low numbers but specialist visitors that use the track (for orchid viewing).

SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Bream Head Track 100131	3 submissions 2 supporting the upgrading of the track and 1 is neutral indicating a proposed facility in this case a toilet at the Urquarts carpark. There may have been confusion relating to tracks so see Peach Cove Track with relation to the network of the area.	Bream Head Track (97389)	Easy Tramping Track	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Upgrade to Higher Standard	Upgrading site to Day visitor to reflect the current user group.
Mimiwhangata Coastal Park General 101051	3 submissions. 1 supporting in part the maintenance but asking for upgrading to a higher standard the tracks in the area. 2 neutral submissions 1 proposing overnight camping (drive in) to be established and 1 suggesting only for self contained motor homes etc for 1-2 nights stay only.					Maintain Site - Requires Upgrade.	With interest in the both the land and marine features of this park forecast usage is to increase.
North Russell Forest 101034	6 submissions. 4 supporting the maintenance of the tramping tracks to standard in this area. 3 neutral as 2 oppose Te Araroa creating a new track at the Papakauri Stream which was not proposed and is not happening (their track is to use the Old Russell Road for this section). 1 submission in support of development of iwi based tourism pick up / drop off opportunities	North Russell Forest Walkway (97422)	Easy Tramping Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	
Peach Cove Hut 100130	7 submissions. 5 submissions oppose the locking and booking of this hut. All 7 support the facility as a whole. 1 submission supporting the replacement of the toilet. 1 submission opposing any development in the area.	Peach Cove Hut (24095)	Serviced Hut	Open	Upgrade - Size/Capacity	Upgrade - Size/Capacity	This hut is in the developing Bream Head Scenic Reserve that is being managed as a mainland island. For this reason the hut will be important in the future to allow people to experience the dawn chorus. This hut is also being investigated for future disabled access with a disabled short walk from the beach. See section 4.2 for locking of huts response.



SUBMISSIONS SITE NAMES	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS	ASSET NAME (ASSET NUMBER)	ASSET TYPE	IF ASSET IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO PUBLIC	ORIGINAL ASSET PROPOSAL	DECISION	DECISION EXPLANATION
Peach Cove Track 100130	4 submissions 2 supporting maintenance/upgrade due to condition of the track. 2 support basic maintenance of track as concerned with further development creating potential environmental damage.	Peach Cove Track (97388)	Easy Tramping Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	This track requires upgrading to standard.
Pukenui Forest Tracks 100141	5 submissions 4 supporting the maintenance of facility (3 of these are concerned with widening or excessive development). 1 neutral wanting DOC's priority to be returning the forest to good health not recreation facilities.	Pukenui Small Loop Track (97391)	Walking Track	Open	Maintain	Maintain	Includes two bridges proposed somewhere on the two tracks.
Smugglers Bay Track 100134	3 submissions 2 in support of the track network and bring the interpretation and facilities to a higher standard. 1 neutral indicating the need for public toilets.	Smugglers Track, Busby Head (97390)	Walking Track	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	This track requires upgrading to standard.
Tangihua Forest Walks 100170	There were 7 submissions 4 in support of maintaining the facilities, 3 that were considered neutral relating to gaining legal access at the western end and the fencing to keep grazing out of the Reserve.	Tracks around the Tangihua Lions Lodge	Tramping Track	Open	Upgrade - To Bring to Standard	Maintain	These tracks require upgrading to standard. The issue of legal access at the western end needs to be examined.
Tangihua Hut 100170	11 submissions on the Hut. There was some concern about the perceived flashing up of this facility DOC is going to maintain it to a 'Standard' facility according to the hut service standards. 11 support the facility, of which 9 oppose the locking and/or booking of the hut, 1 supported locking the hut.	Tangihua Hut (23534)	Standard Hut	Open	Upgrade - To Higher Standard	Maintain	This is one of the few bush tramping hut experiences in Northland. We can expect visitor numbers in this area to increase as people over flow from the more popular tracks, and are looking for a more wilderness experience, however given current use and community feeling this hut will continue to be maintained as a standard hut. See section 4.1 for response to concern over locking of huts.

## 6.2 OTHER SUBMISSIONS ON PROPOSALS

### **Bay of Islands Area**

The following received 2 submissions supporting DOC's continued maintenance proposals:

- Moturua Island Track 101016/97412
- Kororipo Pa Walk 102064/97351

The following received 1 submission supporting DOC's continued maintenance proposals:

- Harrison Reserve Track 101014/97413
- Lane Cove Hut 102045/23518
- Manginangina Kauri Walkway 102007/97333
- Marsden Cross Historic Reserve Walk 102085/97356
- Matauwhi Bay Amenity Area 101007
- Motukawanui Hut (neutral – as more information required) 102053/23514
- Ngaiotonga Kauri Grove Walk 101032/97421
- Urupukapuka / Cable Bay Campsite 100160
- Urupukapuka Island Track 101018

*\* Facilities proposed by the public (i.e. neutral submissions – all are 1 submission unless otherwise stated).*

- Informal camping at Whangamumu Harbour for sea kayakers (3 submissions)
- Shelter or hut at Camp Creek, Waipapa Track (2 submissions).
- Pear Tree bay proposed camp at Whangaroa
- Tracks in the vicinity of the Russell township to be open to dogs
- A loop track to be constructed in Matauwhi Bay Reserve and open for dogs.
- Loop track at Matauwhi Bay Reserve (open for dogs).
- Okiato to Russell track (open for dogs).
- Okiato Microwave Tower Track.
- Russell tracks to be open for dogs.
- Hurst Park track.
- Tracks around Kaikohe either at Lake Omapere or the SDIR Grassland down Cumbers Road
- A Link track from the Puketi Forest tracks from Waipapa Track
- Pear Tree Bay, Ranfurly Bay Scenic Reserve to re-open and maintain – there is no plan to do so (staff submission)

### **Kaitaia Area**

- Ahipara Gumfields proposed walk 190487 received two submissions in support. This track will go ahead over the next five years due to the public support (local community, business and concessions) expressed prior to this process.
- Soda Springs track proposal 104051/99036 received one submission in support. This track has been supported by the public in the past, although not through this process. It is a low priority for the Area but is still a possibility within the five year plan.

## **Kauri Coast Area**

The following received 1 submission supporting DOC's continued maintenance proposals:

- Tokatoka Scenic Reserve Walk 100250/97400
- Four Sisters Track 105017/99066
- Lookout Track, Waipoua Forest 105027/97371
- Te Matua Ngahere 105017/97367
- Trounson Kauri Park 105032/97373
- Waiotemarama Gorge Track 105005/97362
- Waipoua Visitor Centre Road 105038
- Wekaweka Track 105010/99067
- Yakas Kauri Track 105048/97369 & 105019/97368
- Hukatere Scenic Reserve Track is to be removed and not replaced as there is no need for this facility in the community. There was one submission with an offer of community support/maintenance from a group outside of the immediate area.

*\* Facilities proposed by the public (i.e. neutral submissions - all are 1 submission unless otherwise stated).*

- A loop track to be made in the Waima Forest for easy use by trampers (2 submissions).
- A link track to be made between Waima Forest, Hokianga Harbour and Kai-Iwi Lakes - a possible 'Coast to Coast experience' (2 submissions).
- Kawerua Hotel be upgraded and made available for public accommodation (2 submissions).
- Waipoua Visitor Centre - road an issue move Visitor Centre to Tane Mahuta. The Visitor Centre Road is being upgraded in the next 12 months due to the safety issues with the present road.

## **Whangarei Area**

- Mt Manaia received 2 submissions in support of upgrading the site.

The following received 1 submission supporting DOC's continued maintenance proposals:

- Brynderwyn Walkway 100210/97396
- Kauri Bushmen's Memorial Walk 100230/97398
- Mangawhai Cliff Walkway 100200/97395
- Otito Walk 100050/97381
- Ruapekapeka Pa Track (upgrade currently underway) 101048
- Tanighua Forest - Kauri Dam Walk 100178/99213
- Whananaki Coastal Walkway 100040
- Waikaraka Walk Way (with an offer of community support) 100100/97386
- Waipu Caves Walkway 100180/97394
- Whangaruru Bland Bay Lookout Track
- Whangaruru Ocean Beach Loop 101044
- One submission was received in regards to the Waipu Cove Reserve Camp. This facility is managed by the Reserve Board under agreement therefore it is not managed by the department - any issues should be address by this Board.

*\* Facilities proposed by the public (i.e. neutral submissions - all are 1 submission unless otherwise stated).*

- Drive-in camping opportunity at Mimiwhangata (this submission requested DOC look for further camping opportunities due to the reduction in the number of commercial opportunities.
- Ability for NZ Motor Caravan Association to stay 1-2 nights are Mimiwhangata Farm.

\* Suggestions put forward by the public are in this document **for information only**. As these proposals have not been through a public process the suggestions are only for future consideration with the public at a later date. You are welcome to comment on these suggestions with the appropriate Area office but no formal process is being entered into at this time. Your comments will be noted and retained for future reference only.

## 7. Summary of decisions

The financial commitment of the decisions will be less than the original proposals because two out of three proposed huts are not going to proceed and two tracks are not going to be removed.

Very little has changed from the original proposals for management. The majority of tracks and associated facilities will be maintained to the relevant standards.

### KEY DECISIONS

#### **Bay of Islands Area**

- Mangahorehore Route will cease maintenance on the lookout extension (500m) as this will not compromise visitor experience to the main route.
- Merumeru Falls Track proposed will not go ahead as the environmental damage of putting in a new track would outweigh the benefits as the Falls can be seen from the existing track network.

#### **Kaitaia Area**

- The proposed Taumarumaru Track had overwhelming support from local communities.
- The Ahipara gumfields Walk proposal will be barrier free and accessible for the disabled.

#### **Kauri Coast Area**

- The two proposed hut facilities in the Waima Forest were strongly opposed by local communities and people seeking a 'wilderness' experience in Northland. However, there was support for the restoration of Framptons Hut to standard and for overnight opportunities to occur in the Waima Ranges in the form of informal camping.
- Mt Tutamoe Track will now be maintained (not cease maintenance) as it is the only access to the Tutamoe Plateau for hunting and other remote experiences.
- The Hukatere Hall Recreation Reserve in the Kauri Coast Area will have the Reserve status is being revoked and the land will revert to crown and be subject to the Land Act and managed/disposed of by Lands Information New Zealand.

#### **Whangarei Area**

- Bratty's Bush Track, in the Whangarei Area, will be retained and maintained to a lower standard as it is an import access track for botanists viewing native orchids.
- The community halls on Recreation Reserve and Domain land in the Whangarei Area are being investigated for vestment in the Whangarei District Council. This will include a process of consultation with iwi and the Reserves Boards.

## 8. Overview of decisions in terms of a range of recreation opportunities

There will be a wider range of recreation opportunities in Northland including old and new facilities for disabled access (Tane Mahuta, Ahipara Gumfields and Taumarumaru track), a new opportunity for sea kayaking / tramping accommodation at Deep Water Cove, a wetland track experience at Waitangi and tracks investigating local points of interest at Waitata Point and Soda Springs. Also a potential community development of Kaheka Point as a camping opportunity in the Whangaroa Harbour. Although Northland Conservancy does not have 'wilderness' areas the public process has shown that some areas are seen by Northlanders as a 'wilderness' experience and these areas should be respected as such, for example not putting huts on the Waima Range and the retention of access to the Tutamoe Plateau. Hukatere Track, Kahuwera Pa and the Mangahorehore Route lookout extension (500m) tracks that have a replicated experience elsewhere in the conservancy will cease maintenance.



# Appendix 1

## WHAT THE DECISIONS MEAN

Decisions for facilities in the Conservancy have been made by DOC as an outcome of this process of consultation. The options for future management are grouped under 13 broad headings.

### **Maintain**

The facility will continue to be maintained, to the appropriate standard, providing recreation opportunities the same as, or similar to, those currently available. If it is a building or a structure it will be replaced with a similar facility at the end of its useful life. DOC will bring the asset up to the required standard if it is not currently to the required standard.

### **Proposed (new)**

A new facility will be developed in a place where there has not previously been one.

### **Replace**

A new facility will be built replacing an existing facility that will soon reach the end of its useful life.

### **Upgrade to higher standard**

The facility requires upgrading to a higher standard or to a larger size to meet the needs of the main visitor and/or mitigate against visitor impacts.

### **Maintain to lower standard**

The facility will be maintained to a lower standard than has previously been the case. Often this will mean continuing to manage to a lower standard because the original standard intended for the facility was too high and never achieved.

### **Remove**

Remove the facility (if a structure, sign, hut or building). If a hut, remove by the end of 2006. If a track, remove markers, plant out track entrances and leave the track to revert to a natural state, or assist this process if necessary.

### **Minimal maintenance**

Used for huts and other buildings. The building will be inspected by DOC on a regular cycle. Inspectors will travel with basic tools and equipment and some minor maintenance (that can be done during the regular inspections) will be undertaken. When the building is no longer weatherproof or becomes dangerous or unsanitary,



it will be removed, unless there is a community group willing and able to bring it up to standard and maintained to standard (see Seeking Community Maintenance)

### **Cease maintenance**

For tracks, markers will be left until they naturally disappear, but the track will be left to revert to a natural state. Roads are closed to motor vehicles. Carparks, amenity areas and campsites are left to revert to a natural state and any associated buildings or signs will be removed. Signs will be placed at track entrances stating that the track is no longer maintained.

### **Close site/remove all assets**

Remove all assets (structures, signs, huts, track markers etc), plant out track entrances and leave the site to revert to a natural state. Closed sites will be removed from all visitor information. Where necessary the site or part of it will be rehabilitated.

### **Own by DOC but maintain by community**

The facility is one DOC believes should be retained. It is one that could realistically be maintained by a club, community group or local authority. The facility may already be maintained by the community. A management agreement should be established if one is not already in place. The funding assumption is that DOC will not cover maintenance costs, but will fund inspections and replacement.

### **Owned and maintained by the community**

The Department currently has a formal agreement in place with a club, community group or local authority to maintain the asset. If, in the future, that agreement falls over, the future of that asset will be determined following consultation with the community.

### **Seeking community maintenance**

The asset currently has no formal agreement in place and is not one that DOC believes it should maintain at all. The facility should only be retained long term if the community agrees to take it on. It is one that realistically could be maintained by a club, community group or local authority. DOC will discuss ongoing maintenance and replacement of the facility with such groups and should establish a management agreement for that maintenance

### **Non-visitor DOC management**

For facilities receiving very little or no visitor use, the facility will be managed by the department for other purposes, such as to accommodate pest control staff or to access a biodiversity conservation area. The facilities will not normally be available for visitor use.