



# Wellington 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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# 1. A note from the Conservator

The Department's Recreation Opportunity Review (ROR) Towards a Better Network of Visitor Facilities involved the people who recreate on public conservation land in discussion about the make-up of local and national recreation facility networks. This report details the submissions received by Wellington Conservancy, as part of the ROR, and comments on feedback received through public meetings and discussion with stakeholders.

Taking account of the submissions and other information received, decisions have been made by the conservancy. The decisions align with the policy and strategic direction as expressed in the Principles to Guide a Core Facility Network, and the key Policy and Strategic directions referred to within these.

Planning for the management of recreation facilities has a long tradition in the conservancy. The Tararua Forest Park Management Plan, produced in 1954, was the first in a series of plans which included ideas for a recreation facility network. The Wellington Conservancy's 'Conservation Management Strategy' (CMS), which built on previous planning processes, was produced in 1996 after a lengthy period of public consultation. The CMS was used as guiding document for developing facility management proposals for the ROR process.

Members of clubs have long had a close and productive relationship with the Crown agencies managing the forest parks. Clubs established and maintain many of the huts and have been involved in maintaining tracks and facilities, especially in the Tararua Forest Park. I look forward to maintaining that a relationship through the Tararua Aorangi Huts Committee (TAHC).

This process has been challenging and exciting for the conservancy. I have greatly appreciated the high quality of the input received from the wider recreational community. The decisions made, I believe, give fair recognition to the input received. I feel that the conservancy now has a network of facilities that we can afford to manage in the long term. I am confident this will secure a range of recreation opportunities which will enable each and every one of us discover and pursue our own unique recreational experience.

These changes will not happen overnight. We are planning to develop and upgrade facilities over a 10 year period to align with the increase in funding.

**tiakina, hakinakinatia, whakauru**

protect\enjoy\be involved

Allan Ross

**Conservator**

## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

The diversity of conservancy landscape; the Rimutaka and Tararua Ranges, rising to altitudes of between 1400 and 1500 metres, the flat plains of Horowhenua and Wairarapa, and a long, largely accessible, coastline provide the backdrop for a wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities.

The Tararua Forest Park, with its rugged mountain range and long river gorges, is renowned for the challenges of climate and terrain. Nevertheless, the park's proximity to large urban populations has secured it a tradition of exploration, hunting, tramping and botanising. The Aorangi Forest Park has long been popular for hunting and is classified by the Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) as a Recreational Hunting Area. The Rimutaka Forest Park has a unique place in the culture of Wellingtonians' providing easy access to day walks, tramps, picnicking, and the opportunity just to be out and about in the outdoors. The park also contains over 50 private baches and a number of DOC-administered, booked accommodation baches.

Matiu/Somes Island, steeped in early Maori and European history, and Mana Island are both the focus of major ecological restoration projects. Kapiti Island Nature Reserve is the conservancy jewel, where public demand for visits regularly exceeds the maximum permitted level of 50 per day. Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve, Hemi Matenga Memorial Park Scenic Reserve, Colonial Knob and Carter Scenic Reserve are among other areas near urban centres where people can enjoy outdoor recreational pursuits including short walks, day walks and picnics.

In May 2002, the Government committed \$349 million over 10 years to ensure that the current range of recreation opportunities could be sustained on public conservation land; Wellington Conservancy was included in this funding package.

Funding ensured that the range of opportunities available in the conservancy would remain. However, it was acknowledged that rationalisation of the supporting facilities was required in order to refine a local facility network which was affordable in the long term especially if some new facilities were needed to fill gaps in the existing network.

In October 2003 we asked you to work with the conservancy in helping to decide what that core facility network should be. We put forward a number of ideas and sought your comment through the Recreation Opportunity Review (ROR) process.

Whilst public meetings were held throughout the conservancy, written submissions proved to be the most popular method of providing input into the ROR process. We received submissions from 103 groups and individuals. They provided us with 693 comments on facility proposals, general ideas and issues, or new proposals/ideas. The largest number of submission related to backcountry huts.

The main message was that submitters wanted to see the conservancy maintain an effective back country and remote network of huts and tracks to ensure access and opportunity for recreation. Taking on board this message, a number of proposals for huts and track have been changed to make sure that they will be there in the longer

term, and a few new back country facilities, suggested by the public, have been included in the network. The overall impact is an increase in the number of back country facilities in the forest parks that will be maintained.

The majority back county huts in the conservancy will be retained. Only two huts, Mt Dagg Hut and Oriwa Hut (Biv), are to be removed. The number of huts to be maintained, and replaced (core huts) has increased from 39 to 42. The huts to be included in the core are Arete Forks, which was proposed to be on 'minimal maintenance' and Neill Forks which was a 'maintain by community' hut. Nichols Hut was proposed to be 'moved to another location' but it will remain in its current location as a core hut as will Maungahuka Hut. These huts received strength and depth of support for management change during the public consultation process. Many of the core huts are club huts and they will continue to be administered in partnership with clubs.

The ROR process proposed a reduction in track length in the conservancy by 36.8 km; this has reduced to 19 km with approximately 760 km of foot track to be maintained.

The Department is committed to providing a range of recreation opportunities for all New Zealanders. The Department's Draft General Policy (Conservation Act) states that a range of recreational opportunities should be provided in different settings for visitors with different capabilities, skills and interests. We had this principle foremost in our minds when thinking about what the submission were telling us, who was being represented in the submissions, and how we could sustain a variety of opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors.

There will be an increase in the quality of opportunities available for day visitors. A number of proposals were made for track upgrades on sites used more by people who may have less outdoor experience, or who simply want a short day walk to refresh and rejuvenate. The proposals for upgrades on walking track's closer to urban centres, or forest park road ends were supported by submitters with the proviso that the walks retained their natural character. The new facilities proposed for the north end of Kapiti Island were also supported by submitters.

A number of submitters suggested new facilities. At the outset of this exercise we knew that we were not seeking to greatly expand the current network of facilities and that the focus would be on consolidating what was already there plus a few additional facilities to enhance the network. Two new facilities, put forward by submitters, will be added to the core network. A new hut is to be built in the Ohau River catchment. The previous South Ohau hut was removed due to land subsidence. A new track from Dorset Ridge to Nichols Hut via Park Forks results from a change in management proposals for the Dorset Ridge Hut and Nichols Hut.

A number of the decisions proposed in this document are contrary to the management approaches set out in the CMS for each facility. These proposals will be worked through with the Wellington Conservation Board which will consider their status in light of the upcoming review of the CMS.



## 2.2 AREA OVERVIEWS

The following section provides a general overview of what will be happening within the conservancy's recreation areas.

### **Tararua Forest Park**

The Tararua Forest Park will continue to be managed for a variety of back country users with different capabilities, skills and interests. The forest park has a number of high use public road ends including Otaki Forks, Holdsworth and Waiohine. Facilities at, and close to, road ends will be built and maintained to a high standard to accommodate high use, to provide a safe experience for less skilled users, and to mitigate against adverse environmental impact associated with high use.

The opportunities at Otaki Road end will be enhanced through the addition of a walk to the Sheridan Hauler site and, for those with more outdoor recreation experience, a tramp up Rae Ridge on to the alpine tops of the Southern Crossing. At Holdsworth, the bridge on the Donnelly Loop walk will be upgraded to allow for wheelchair access up the valley. The Gentle Annie 'walking track' will be worked on to fix erosion damage and, at Kaitoke road end, the Smith Creek–Dobson track will receive much needed work to enhance the access into the Tauherenikau Valley.

A number of areas within the forest park will continue to be managed for visitors with limited backcountry experience. They include a number of low altitude valley and well-developed tracks from easily accessible road ends. The major valley systems of the lower Waiohine, Waiotauru, Tauherenikau and Atiwhakatu will continue to be managed for visitors with limited backcountry experience.

More infrastructure than originally proposed will be fully maintained by DOC, to support the backcountry users with the experience and skills to travel further into the more remote areas of the forest park.

Submitters pointed out the challenges associated with the open tops of the Tararuas arising from a combination of difficult terrain and climate, the impact of these on the increased travel time between huts, and importance of escape routes. As a result, Arete Forks Hut and Neill Forks Hut have been incorporated into the core network and Nichols Hut will remain on its current site, also as a core hut. A new hut is proposed for South Ohau. Dorset Ridge Hut and North Ohau Hut may be retained in the longer term as approaches have been made from community groups to manage these facilities.

A number of huts have been confirmed as not essential to the network, including Sayers, Blue Range, Cattle Ridge, and North Mangahao huts. These huts are currently 'non core', as defined in the TAHC hut strategy, and are maintained by clubs.

Two huts and one shelter in the Tararua Forest Park will be removed. Oriwa Hut (Biv) will be removed; in an effort to ensure some areas of the park remain remote we have endeavoured to keep the Oriwa Ridge 'facility-free'. There was no objection to the removal of Mt Dagg Hut, which is a roadend hut susceptible to vandalism. Edwards Shelter on the Waiopehu Ridge will also be removed; however, management steps will be taken to address the issue of adequate water supply on this popular track to Waiopehu Hut.

We had proposed, in the longer term, to manage the area in the northeastern Tararua

with very few or no facilities. This was challenged through submissions. Given the level and standard of existing infrastructure, including tracks, and the importance submitters placed on a network in this area as a unique opportunity—and to retain access to the tops of the northeast—the proposals for tracks in the area were reviewed and infrastructure will be retained.

### **Aorangi Forest Park**

The Aorangi Forest Park will continue to be managed as a moderate use area for experienced back country users. The main track through the park will be maintained as a “tramping track”, not as a “route” as proposed by the Department. Submitters pointed out that due to the rapid growth of vegetation it would be difficult to manage as a “route”. Submitters considered that a “tramping track”, which would be more regularly maintained, would be the best option.

Averills Hut reached its retirement date in 2003 and no upgrade work has been undertaken on the hut. Wairarapa Area will work with the Department’s engineer to assess and review the retirement dates. Ngapotiki Lodge retains a ‘seeking community maintenance’ status. All other huts in the park will be maintained.

The Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC) will continue to manage the Te Kopi/Waikuku Road providing club members, and occasionally the public, with a unique and challenging 4x4 opportunity.

### **Rimutaka Forest Park**

The Catchpool and Orongorongo valleys, with their close proximity to Wellington and long tradition of use, will continue to be managed as high use sites providing experiences for park users with little or limited back country experience. The Orongorongo Valley contains a number of booked accommodation baches which will be retained to provide Wellingtonians with a unique experience.

In the eastern Rimutaka, which tend to be used by people with more experience, a number of changes have been made to the proposals. Battery Stream Hut, proposed to be removed, now has a ‘seeking community maintenance’ status. A group has expressed an interest in keeping the hut. All relevant submitters were unanimously opposed to the proposal to cease maintenance on the Mukamuka Saddle track, saying it provided a distinct and unique opportunity associated with Mt Matthews, the highest peak in the park. The track will now continue to be maintained.

### **Islands**

The greatest level of change will be at Kapiti Island where a new opportunity will be opened up for the public to visit the north end of the island. A small shelter, toilet and ‘walking track’ will be developed to allow the public to appreciate its natural features and abundant bird life. In addition a short section of ‘walking track’ will be developed at Rangatira to create more options for people who may not want to climb the more challenging Wilkinson or Trig Tracks.

### **Other (walkways etc)**

Walking tracks within the conservancy, such as Mangaone at Waikanae and Colonial Knob at Porirua, will be brought up to their existing ‘walking track’ standard. Care

will be taken to ensure that these areas retain their essential bush character. A new 'walking track' and carpark will be developed at Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve to enhance opportunities to access this area.

## 3. Introduction

To get people involved in the consultation six public meetings were held throughout the conservancy. Information presented at the meetings provided an overview of the proposals for the conservancy as a whole. Meetings were publicly advertised in the Dominion Post, and invitations were forwarded through the following methods:

- Approximately 300 groups or individuals received invitations to attend the meetings, including groups from a new database containing non-traditional back country users;
- *Footnotes*, the conservancy newsletter, were distributed to individuals and groups in the week before the first public meetings. Each copy of *Footnotes* contained an invitation to attend the public meetings;
- Email invitations were sent to a number of colleges in the region, and members of a previous facility consultation group containing representatives of outdoor clubs and groups; and
- Information was given to Tararua Aorangi Huts Committee representatives—to pass on to their clubs.
- A number of articles were published in *The Dominion Post* and local newspapers.

Individuals and groups also contributed to the process through the written submission process. A Conservancy Discussion Document was made available to the public; this document contained information on sites where a change from the status quo was proposed. The Wellington Conservancy proposal document was available in hard copy, upon request, and on line.

### 3.1 IWI CONSULTATION

After consultation with the Conservancy Kaupapa Atawhai Manager letters containing invitations to attend a public meeting, an offer of a meeting directly with the Conservator, and information on the proposals were sent to a list of iwi contacts.

Whilst no formal feedback was received from the groups, informal discussion took place at a local level. For example the discussion over the development of facilities at the north end of Kapiti Island is ongoing with Ati Awa and Raukawa. The Wairarapa Area Office is involved in ongoing discussion with Rangitaane o Wairarapa and Ngati Kahungunu over the possible developments at Pukaha/Mt Bruce.

### 3.2 PROCESS OF SUBMISSION CONSIDERATION

The closing date for submissions was 31 January 2004. The following table outlines the conservancy process for analysis of submission after the closing date.

The conservancy analysis team consisted of the Recreation Planner, the Community Relations Manager, an Area Manager and a Programme Manager Visitor Assets.

DATE	ACTION	WHO
February/March	Comments from submitters entered into conservancy Recreation Opportunity Analysis database. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submissions were categorised according to whether they were in support of the proposals or whether they were against it.</li> <li>• Submissions were analysed for general points in relation to the proposals or to other issues, locally regionally or nationally.</li> </ul>	Recreation Planner
24 March	Comments from submitters collated into reports and sent to relevant Areas for 'Area comment'.	Recreation Planner
24 March - 31 March	Area comment, where received, were entered into the database.	Recreation Planner
31 March to 7 April	Comments from submitters and Areas was combined and sent to members of the Conservancy Analysis Team for consideration.	Recreation Planner
7 April	Analysis Team met to consider submissions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals were ranked. Those that received the most submissions are analysed in detail, considering in particular the strength and depth of the submissions.</li> <li>• Those proposals that received a minor number of submissions were also analysed to determine the weight of submissions.</li> <li>• For all proposals that received many opposing submissions, these submissions are considered for merit. Possible decisions were considered in view of submissions with merit and in view of strategic objectives for that location, for example CMS.</li> <li>• Proposals with a mix of opposing and supporting submissions had their submissions checked for merit, and the strategic intent behind the proposal was checked for consistency with submission points.</li> </ul>	Analysis Team.
13 April	Preliminary comments and decision on some proposals entered into database and reports send to Analysis Team.	Recreation Planner
16 April	Analysis Team met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process as detailed above.</li> </ul>	Analysis Team.
19 April	Decisions entered into database and the report was circulated via email to Analysis Team.	Recreation Planner
23 April	Peer Review of submitters' comments and support/do not support assessments.	CRM - Conservancy
25 April - 12 May	Ongoing dialogue with Analysis Team with regard to content and decisions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All decisions were considered together to establish the effect this may have on the range of Conservancy recreation opportunities.</li> </ul>	
30 April	Meeting with Senior Technical Support Officer and Wanganui Conservancy to compare and consider the analysis process and outcomes.  Analysis Team Sign Off	
14 May	Conservator Sign Off on interim decisions	Conservator
September 2004	RGM Sign Off with a few amendments to the Proposal document	RGM

### 3.3 WHAT DECISIONS NOW MEAN

The Department is making these decisions in order to provide the public of New Zealand and associated user groups with some surety about the future core facility network of visitor facilities, to support their recreation into the foreseeable future. These decisions will guide resource commitment and work programmes.

There remain some factors that cannot be accurately forecast or guaranteed at this point, such as; future construction costs, durability of existing and new facilities, effects of changing weather patterns, and changing user group priorities. As a result these decisions are a negotiated outcome rather than conclusions set in stone.

Formal planning processes, such as the review of the CMS, will continue to provide the mechanism for change of these decisions as needed. Conservation Boards will assist the Department to manage specific facility provision issues that will arise from time to time.

## Section One

# 4. Submitters and submissions

Comments were received on all proposals contained within the Wellington Conservancy proposal summary. The range of level of comment on submission from individuals ranged from 1 to 79.

### 4.1 NUMBER OF SUBMITTERS

103 submitters provided a total of 693 comments on facility proposals, general ideas and issues, or new ideas and suggest new facilities; 584 comments were received on facilities proposals, 58 contained overview comments and 51 contained new ideas or new facility proposals.

- Of the 584 facility comments, the majority related to facilities located in Back Country Adventure (BCA) visitor sites,
- The conservancy received comment from 103 submitters. The majority of submitters were from the Wellington Conservancy area, with comments also made from submitters from Auckland, Christchurch, and Taupo.
- Of the 103 submitters around 10% were female.
- Input was received from 81 individuals and 22 groups including tramping, hunting and environmental groups.

#### 4.2 MAIN PROPOSALS COMMENTED ON, BY ORDER OF TOTAL SUBMISSIONS

ASSET NAME	SUBMISSIONS	SUPPORT LEVEL
Nichols Hut	25	(20 against/5 for)
Dorset Ridge Hut	25	(19 against/6 for)
Neill Forks Hut	18	(17 against/1 for)
Maungahuka Hut	18	(11 against/7 for)
Arete Forks Hut	16	(13 against/3 for)
Proposed Rae Ridge Track	15	(5 against/10 for)
North Ohau Hut	15	(9 against/6 for)
Cattle Ridge Hut	15	(14 against/1 for)
Oriwa Hut (Biv)	15	(11 against/4 for)
Atiwhakatu Hut	13	(3 against/10 for)
Snowy Hut	13	(5 against/8 for)
Waiopehu Track	12	(2 against/10 for)
Waitewaewae Track	12	(1 against/11 for)
Dracophyllum Hut	12	(5 against/7 for)
Blue Range Hut	11	(8 against/3 for)
Penn Creek to Table Top Track	11	(5 against/6 for)
Roaring Stag to Cattle Ridge Track	10	(7 against/3 for)
Penn Creek Track	9	(3 against/6 for)
Roaring Stag Lodge	9	(2 against/ 7for)
Mangaone Walkway	8	(1 against/7 for)
Sheridan Creek Bridge	8	(1 against/7 for)
Totara Creek/Lower Waiohine Tracks	8	(1 against/7 for)

## 4.3 PROPOSALS THAT RECEIVED THE MOST SUBMISSIONS AND SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS BY LOCATION

### TARARUA FOREST PARK

	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS
8570 Nichols Hut	Move to Another Location	Submitters feel that a hut in this location is of high strategic importance. The hut is located on through routes via the Main Range and a Middle Crossing which involved ascent/descent via Park Forks. A number of submitters also supported the retention of the hut based on the need for shelter on the exposed Main Range. Submitters noted that travel over alpine tops sections can be hazardous.
9109 Dorset Ridge Hut	Remove (and not replace)	Recreational hunters in particular have expressed an interest in securing the future of this hut which they feel is located in a prime hunting spot in the Tararua. The feeling is that the hut provides a unique experience which differs from the more popular Tarn Ridge Hut. Submitters also believe that the hut is important for shelter and safety reasons.
9606 Neill Forks Hut	Maintain by Community	Submissions suggest that the hut is essential due to the role it plays providing valley shelter at the end of a well used and important escape 'route' to the SE off the alpine tops from Maungahuka. The upgrade of the Tararua Peaks ladder has made Maungahuka Hut more accessible from the east. A number of submitters also noted the huts' importance at the intersection of a numbers of traditional routes in the heart of the forest park.
8590 Maungahuka Hut	Replace bigger size	Submissions are supportive of replacement of the hut in its current location based on the strategic importance of the site. The site is important in relation to Nichols and Andersons, on the Main Range, and from the East, via the Tararua Peaks. Submitters also suggested that careful consideration be given to the size of the hut due to concern over the environmental and social impact of increasing numbers on more remote, challenging routes. As a consequence the decision is to propose a 10 bunk hut in the present location. There was strong opposition to moving the hut to Pakihore Ridge.
9106 Arete Forks Hut	Minimal Maintenance	Submitters have commented that 'low use' should not be a primary reason for proposing 'minimal maintenance' on huts. They submit that whilst Arete Forks may be low in use it is a recognised escape route from a variety of routes including off the tops of the Northern Crossing. Submitters also pointed out that the hut is part of a circuit that can be done from Mitre Flats/Tarn Ridge along open tops to Cow Creek.
191729 Proposed Rae Ridge Track	Proposed	Submitters request that the Rae Ridge section should not be highly modified and that the essential bush character of Rae Ridge should be retained. It will enhance the opportunity for day and short overnight tramps in the Otaki area but may put pressure on existing accommodation. Submitters express concern about the environmental impact of such a track and the visitor safety risk of inexperienced trampers having easy access to open tops.
7849 North Ohau Hut	Remove (and not replace)	The submission process highlighted that hunters, in particular, would like to retain this hut as it allows access to good hunting in the Ohau catchment.
9146 Cattle Ridge Hut	Maintain by Community	Submitters commented that Cattle Ridge provided a different experience from that gained at Roaring Stag; it useful as a safety shelter on the tops. Good hut for introducing intermediate level trampers to the tops. It provides access to routes in the NE Tararuas.
7262 Oriwa Hut (Biv)	Remove (and not replace)	Submitters comment that Oriwa Hut (Biv) offers a different experience to Waiopahu Hut. Oriwa Hut (Biv) is one of a declining number of Forest Service bivs, and as such ought to be seen as part of historic backcountry heritage. The ambience is distinctive and authentic. Serves as a haven in bad weather for ventures into east Waitewaewae and Upper Otaki catchments as well as Makaretu Stream. It provides good shelter on the arduous Oriwa Ridge.
8859 Atiwhakatu Hut	Replace bigger size	Feedback from submitters is supportive of the proposal. However, they comment that further discussion is needed to determine the exact location and size of a new hut.
191735 Snowy Hut	Proposed	Submitters comment that this opens up a great 3 day circuit opportunity, partly untracked, using Tregear Ridge to get up to Kime Hut. Would provide an easy to moderate loop walk available from Otaki Forks, and the relatively easy country of the Waioatauru catchment would provide suitable opportunities.

	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS
96712 Waiopēhu Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed.
96818 Waitewaewae Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed.
8827 Dracophyllum Hut	Minimal Maintenance	The Nichols and Dracophyllum proposals were interlinked. Comments on Dracophyllum generally highlight the importance of retaining Nichols which adds to the strength of proposals for Nichols becoming a core hut. Submitters also felt that Dracophyllum itself offers shelter, being located in the bush, and good hunting opportunities.
9110 Blue Range Hut	Maintain by Community	Submitters comment that the hut provides accessible and varied tramping for younger and older tramping groups within the Tararua. It is useful for a Friday late night as part of the Bannister Crossing or a trip into the Upper Waingawa, or a number of other trips that cannot be completed if you have to start from a road end on Saturday morning, or camp late at night in an awkward site.
96754 Penn Creek to Table Top	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were keen to ensure that the track is only upgraded to 'tramping track' standard. Some called into question the value of the track, however, given that Penn Creek Hut has a 'maintain' proposal, and that access to the hut via Penn Creek track will be discouraged, this track will be upgraded.
96838 Roaring Stag to Cattle Ridge	Maintain at a lower standard	Submissions in general challenged the idea of the reducing the standard and level of facilities in the Ruamahanga and highlighted its recreational importance. Some also challenged the assumption that experienced back country users do not want facilities.
96765 Penn Creek Track - Stone Wall to Penn Creek	Cease to Maintain	A submitter expressed the opinion that Penn Creek Track offers some of the best opportunities for hunting, trout fishing, and the most scenic tramping Otaki Forks Area. They wanted the track re-instated or an alternative line for the track found within the Otaki Gorge, perhaps on the other river bank.
9148 Roaring Stag Lodge	Replace bigger size	Submitters generally highlighted Ruamahanga as an important recreational location in the North Eastern Tararua.
191731 Sheridan Creek Bridge	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive of the proposal. One submitter objected on the basis that money was being spent on unnecessary bridges and that the Sheridan Creek/Waiotauru area is generally useable.
96697 Totara Creek/Lower Waiöhine Tks	Proposed	Submitters comment that the section between Walls Whare and Totara Flats should be the focus of development to begin with. Other comments suggest that tracks are heavily used due to popularity of high occupancy Totara Flats hut. The section from Gentle Annie to Totara Creek is extensively rutted and muddy environmental damage is getting worse as more users walk off track to keep feet dry etc. Similarly the lower Waiöhine Tks sections are very muddy and will only get worse if people walk wider to avoid mud.

#### AORANGI FOREST PARK

	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS
96804 Aorangi Crossing	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters have pointed out that the vegetation type and rapid growth rate means that regular cutting and clearing of this track is required to allow it to remain navigable.
96825 Bull Hill Track	Cease to Maintain	Submitters comment that this should be a core network track due to the uniqueness of the opportunity it provides.
9357 Ngapotiki Hut	Maintain by Community	Three of the submissions make a case for the hut to be in the core network. NZDA Wairarapa, the hut custodian, comments that the hut provides a unique opportunity in the area.



RIMUTAKA FORESTS PARK

	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS
96721 Mukamuka Stream to South Saddle	Cease to Maintain	Submitters were unanimously opposed to this proposal. Suggesting that the track provides a distinct and unique opportunity associated with Mt Matthews the highest peak in the Rimutaka.
9394 Battery Stream Hut	Remove (and not replace)	Submitters felt that the biv should be retained. The feeling is that this hut has some life left in it and it provides a different type of experience from the huts in the main Orongorongo Valley.
96827 Waiorongomai Track	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters comment that this should be a core track on the basis that it provides the only short walk into the eastern Rimutaka Range, outside the Rimutaka Incline. Waiorongomai Hut provides an easily accessible overnight experience, something not found elsewhere in the eastern Rimutaka, suitable for easy for intermediate trampers. The track is not well marked at the start now, and needs better signage.

ISLANDS

	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS
96709 Wilkinson and Trig Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were generally supportive. There was one objection on the basis that the track is already of a high quality.
191376 Rangatira Low Level Walk	Proposed	Submitters were in support of this proposal. One submitter noted the need to raise the track above sea level of allow for elevated views of the flats.
191724 North End Track	Proposed	Submitters were in support of this proposal. There was also the suggestion the option to develop a track at the north end would take the pressure off the Trig Track at Rangatira Point.

OTHER (WALKWAYS ETC)

SUBSECTION	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS
96769 86770 Mangaone Walkway	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters generally supported the proposal to manage this as a 'walking track', there was also a suggestion that toilet facilities be provided. Two submitters commented that steam crossing/bridges should be upgraded throughout the walkway. One submitter, who opposed the upgrade, felt that any change to the current track would be a downgrade.
192463 Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve Walk	Proposed	Submitters fully supported this proposal. A welcome proposal. A 'walking track' will be developed. DOC has received comment from local environmental group KEA. They may wish to be involved in the planning of the track.
96710 Colonial Knob Walkway	Upgrade to bring to standard	Fully supported by submitters. Submitters also commented on the need to ensure the track is not over-engineered and that it retains its bush character.
96921 Parata Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed. Submitters request that the essential bush character of the track is retained.
96922 Te Au Route	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed. Submitters request that the essential bush character of the track is retained.
192464 Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve - Carpark	Proposed	Submitters comment that this is a welcome proposal. DOC has received comment from local environmental group KEA who may wish to become involved in the planning of the track.

#### 4.4 PROPOSALS THAT DID NOT RECEIVE SUBMISSIONS

All proposals put forward by the Conservancy received submissions either supporting or opposing them.

## 5. Public and user group meetings

In order to get people involved in the consultation process six public meetings were held throughout the conservancy. Information presented at the meetings provided an overview of the proposals for the conservancy as a whole. Meetings were focussed on ensuring people had sufficient information on which to make a contribution to the ROR process.

The conservancy received one request for an additional meeting with a tramping club to follow up on their submission. The Recreation Planner and one member of the conservancy analysis team met with the club and went through their submission with them.

Communication was kept open through the Tararua Aorangi Huts Committee (TAHC) which was kept updated on the process and given opportunity to comment. TAHC associates felt that contribution to the process should come from the tramping clubs themselves. This was achieved. Many of the clubs represented on the TAHC contributed to the process either through a club submission or through submission from individuals within the club.

A meeting was held, in the Wairarapa Area, with hut wardens and trainee hut wardens to get their feedback on the proposals. In addition Areas were involved in ongoing dialogue with local clubs in clarifying and elaborating on the details of proposals. The concerns expressed by this group generally reflected the concern expressed by the majority of submitters and attendees at the public meetings. This focused on the need to retain a quality back country network, a range of opportunities and to ensure that the tracking system did not become too developed through over management.

## 6. Summary of points from submissions

This section is divided into two parts. The first contains a short summary and comments on the submissions received for huts, tracks, structures, and roads, and details some new proposals presented by the public. The next section lists general comments made by the submitters. The intention of these two sections is to give a flavour of what the main issues were.

### 6.1 COMMENTS - HUTS, TRACKS, STRUCTURES ETC

#### **Backcountry huts**

All huts presented in the Wellington Conservancy proposal summary were commented on.

A number of submitters commented on the need to consider the impact of the conditions experienced on the Tararua tops, namely the combination of challenging terrain and frequent adverse weather conditions. The current hut principle relating to huts in this area, which is generally considered remote, is that huts should be 4 - 6 hours apart. The general feeling was that this was too far and that hut should be closer. These factors were included in comments regarding the need for adequate coverage/spacing of huts on exposed tops; Dorset Ridge, Nichols and Maungahuka, and for adequate escape routes from the tops; Neill Forks and Arete Forks.

Submitters also commented on the need to retain a range of facilities suitable for different experience levels. For example it was felt that Cattle Ridge Hut should be retained because, despite being only a couple of hours from Roaring Stag, the experience provided by going to and staying in Cattle Ridge Hut is unique. Oriwa and Dorset Ridge huts were also considered unique and, like others in the Tararua range, important for shelter.

Submitters called for the retention of Nichols Hut and Maungahuka on their current sites, and the inclusion of Neill Forks, Dorset Ridge, Arete Forks, Oriwa and Cattle Ridge huts as core network huts fully funded by the Department. Submitters were also keen to see some of the other 'maintain by community' huts (Blue Range, Ngapotiki, and Sayers) brought into the core network as they felt they provided unique opportunities. Submitters were also concerned that the 'maintain by community' proposal for huts was not sustainable in the long term.

There was strong support for a new replacement hut in the Ohau River catchment. Submitters felt that a new hut would generally enhance the recreational opportunity and visitor safety in the valley.

#### **Tracks**

The highest level of comment was received on tracks located in visitor sites where the predominant user group is BCA (more experienced trampers). This is generally reflective of the overall distribution of tracks within the conservancy.

There was general support for the 'upgrade' work proposed on tracks with the proviso that they should not be overly engineered to the extent that they would lose their essential bush character. This request permeates through many of the submissions including those on 'tramping tracks' such as Waitewaewae and Waiiopehu, and 'walking tracks' including the Mangaone Walkway and the Gentle Annie.

A number of submitters were opposed to 'downgrade' of tracks. This discussion applied to the tracks in the NE Tararua proposed for downgrade and for some in the Rimutaka Range.

It was proposed to cease to maintain a number of tracks. This proposal was supported for only one of five tracks; Penn Creek. There was opposition to the closure of Mukamuka Steam Track. Submitters pointed out that the track provided a distinct and unique opportunity associated Mt Matthews, the highest peak in the Rimutaka. Submitters want the access issue associated with Cloustonville/Renata track resolved and identified similar access issues with Bull Hill track; these have been taken into consideration in making the decisions.

### **Structures**

The structures most frequently commented on were bridges. Submitters generally supported proposed bridge building. Totara Creek Bridge generated a fairly high level of discussion. During the consultation process it became apparent that bridging the creeks in the lower half of the Waiohine valley should be a priority. The feeling is that people should be encouraged to use the Lower Waiohine tracks as the most commonly used exit from Totara Flats Hut rather than via the Totara Creek track.

### **Amenity areas and roads**

There were 19 comments on Amenity Areas and Roads. Most were supportive of the proposals presented; however the 'maintain by community' proposal for Waiotauru Road was contested on the basis that it was an important access to the Tararua from the Kapiti Coast which DOC should manage. This is the section of road between the Akatarawa Road and Renata Saddle. Submitters were concerned that if the current custodian, Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee, withdrew from their agreement to maintain the section between Akatarawa Road and Renata Saddle, the road would close. There was also concern that the road was not being managed to a high enough standard.

### **New assets**

Many submitters presented ideas for new facilities and improvements. The majority of proposals or ideas had support from only one submitter.

Submitters have highlighted that there is a gap in the core network in the Ohau catchment. The previous hut at South Ohau, which was removed due to subsidence, was a core hut and would have been maintained. Most of the 18 requests for facilities in the Ohau catchment were for a new hut.

There were a number of calls for additional tracks in the Tararuas. The one most favoured (by three submitters) new development was for the re-establishment of the track via Park Forks in the interior of the park.

There were two requests for the conservancy to pursue easements over private land at Makara and Paraparaumu. The Makara option is currently being worked on by the Poneke Area Office. Kapiti Area has secured access to the Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve via the Nikau Valley residential development.

There was comment on the need for new signage, better public information and more log books. One submitter proposed building simple, low cost, small 4 - 6 bunk huts. These requests have been passed on to the Areas within the conservancy, or the relevant DOC national or regional office for their consideration and action.

## 6.2 COMMENTS ON THE FACILITIES NETWORK

### **Access**

A number of submitters raised concern about decreasing access to the more remote areas of the park. A number of submitters called for a focus on retaining and enhancing the existing network, with some suggestion that it should be restored to reflect the New Zealand Forest Service network.

Reduction in access and recreational opportunity was seen as a consequence of removing or reducing the standard of facilities in the remoter areas. Submissions generally encourage and support widespread access and use of the parks, facilitated through the provision of tracks and basic huts.

The feeling was that if access to the remoter areas of forest park is limited, due to reduction in facilities, increasing numbers of people will be channelled into smaller areas and larger huts, causing crowding and detrimental environmental impacts. There was also concern that the upgrade of tracks could produce the same crowding and environmental effect.

There was a challenge to the idea that unmodified environments, those with no facilities, actually create a recreation opportunity, or that DOC should be trying to actively manage to provide such opportunities.

### **Funding**

Submitters were concerned about the lack of parity between investment in the front country and 'fringes' against the investment in facilities in the more remote areas of the parks.

One of the concerns expressed was that reductions were being imposed on the network through over-expenditure on a few expensive huts and structures (bridges). If huts and structures could be built more cheaply then more could be retained overall.

There was also the feeling that the priorities in the Tararua Aorangi Hut Committee (TAHC) hut strategy reflected a lower level of funding than is now available and that ROR proposals should therefore be more generous than those presented in the TAHC hut strategy.

## **Safety**

Submitters felt that safety was an important issue with regard to make up of the facility network. The placement or spacing of back country accommodation was commonly mentioned, with submitters calling for the conservancy to consider the uniqueness of the challenges presented in the Tararua in particular. Comments were made that 3 to 4 hours between huts on the alpine tops can become 5 - 6 hours in adverse weather. Having alpine huts 3 - 4 hours apart is safer given the high likelihood of rapid weather change found in the Tararua. Submitters also wanted to see huts retained on important escape 'route's from the tops.

Submitters also highlighted that upgrading tracks presents a safety risk where high quality tracks lead into more challenging areas of the ranges. There was also a call for the placement of signs on key junctions on open tops, to assist with 'route' finding.

## **Appropriateness and impact of facilities**

Submitters highlighted the need to ensure that conservation and environmental protection were taken into consideration when facilities are being developed or upgraded.

Submitters also sought assurance that facilities would be 'appropriate'. This applied to huts tracks and structures. They commented that existing 'tramping tracks' should not be 'upgraded' to the point where they become over-engineered benched, and metalled. The general feeling is that when building facilities and tracks we need to ensure that as little modification of the natural environment takes place in order to retain the essential character and spirit of the outdoors.

A related concern was that increasing the standard of facilities should not extend into areas where it is not appropriate, for example large huts and 'walking tracks' should not be built on Alpine tops. This particular concern related to Maungahuka Hut where users felt a 10 person limit was more appropriate for the setting and use.

## **Variety**

Submitters were supportive of providing a variety of experiences for users with differing levels of experience. This is consistent the Department's Draft General Policy (Conservation Act) which states that a range of recreational opportunities should be provided in different settings for visitors with different capabilities, skills and interests.



# Section Two

## 7. Making decisions—the Department's response

The team which made decisions of the future of facilities took into account the comments discussed in section 6 and the comments presented on each of the individual facilities. This was put in the wider context of DOC's strategic direction which is informed by a number of documents including the Draft General Policy (Conservation Act), the Visitor Strategy, the CMS and the Statement of Intent. As a result, changes have been made to a third of the proposals put forward for comment.

The Department's Draft General Policy (Conservation Act) states that a range of recreational opportunities should be provided in different settings for visitors with different capabilities, skills and interests.

The Department recognises the significance of the backcountry hut and track network, as part of the character of the national network of parks. An appropriate mix of recreation opportunities is being sought, which includes areas with higher levels of facility provisions, others with basic facilities and still others with no facilities.

The reality is that facilities in the front country, through higher use by less experienced users, tend to cost more than those in the backcountry. The main message we have taken from this is that there should be parity in the quality of back country and front country networks and that they should be funded to an appropriate level. 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.

Nationally, over 12,000 km of tracks provide access to a significant portion of New Zealand's backcountry. 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).

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. The intention of the recreation planning process is to ensure that by managing facilities appropriate to the expectations and experience of predominant user groups and appropriate to a location or setting, the



seepage of higher standard of facility into remoter areas of the conservancy will be avoided.

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.

In deciding on a core facility network the Department is considers the contribution that any particular facility makes to the safety of the predominant visitor group within the context of typical visitor use. The Department also endeavours to ensure that sufficient information is available for trampers to assess their own level of competence and to choose their own level of risk.

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.

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).

## 8. Decisions

The following is a summary of the original proposals for facilities, submitter's comments and the DOC decisions.

### TARARUA FOREST PARK

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
8570 Nichols Hut	Move to Another Location	Submitters feel that a hut in this location is of high strategic importance. The hut is located on through routes via the Main Range and a Middle Crossing which involved ascent/decent via Park Forks. A number of submitters also supported the retention of the hut based on the need for shelter on the exposed Main Range. Submitters noted that travel over alpine tops sections can be hazardous.	Maintain	The original proposal, which was consistent with the CMS, was made in order to provide even spacing of huts on the Main Range for remoteness seekers. For this visitor group the hut principle provides guidance that huts should be at least 6 hours apart. Submitters have presented compelling reasons why huts along the Main Range should be closer to 3/4 hour intervals as per Nichols and Andersons. The key points taken on board from submitters is the need to consider the unique conditions found on the Main Range and Nichols strategic location for Middle Crossings. Kapiti NZDA is the hut custodians for Nichols Hut.
9109 Dorset Ridge Hut	Remove (and not replace)	Recreational hunters in particular expressed an interest in securing the future of this hut which they feel is located in a prime hunting spot in the Tararua. The feeling is that the hut provides a unique experience which differs from the more popular Tarn Ridge Hut. Submitters also believe that the hut is an important for shelter and safety reasons.	Seeking Maintain by Community	The hut is less than three hours from Tarn Ridge so remains non-core, but it has become a popular destination for hunters. DOC has received a number of offers for the ongoing management and maintenance of the hut. These offers will be explored with the relevant parties. The hut will be maintained under an agreement with a community group.
9606 Neill Forks Hut	Maintain by Community	Submissions suggest that the hut is essential due to the role it plays providing valley shelter at the end of a well used and important escape route to the SE off the alpine tops from Maungahuka. The upgrade of the Tararua Peaks ladder has made Maungahuka Hut more accessible from the east. A number of submitters also noted the huts' importance at the intersection of a numbers of traditional routes in the heart of the forest park.	Maintain	The hut is around three hours away from Maungahuka, so should not be a core hut if guidance is taken from the DOC hut principles. However, submitters have presented compelling reasons for the retention of the hut. The strength of submitters comments is that like Arete Forks, the hut is used as a valuable escape route off Maungahuka when, as often happens, the Tararua Peaks are not passable.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
8590 Maungahuka Hut	Replace bigger size	Submissions were supportive of replacement of the hut in its current location based on the strategic importance of the site. The site is important in relation to Nichols and Andersons, on the Main Range, and from the East, via the Tararua Peaks. Submitters also suggested that careful consideration be given to the size of the hut due to concern over the environmental and social impact of increasing number on more remote, challenging routes. There was strong opposition of moving the hut to Pakihore Ridge.	Replace bigger size	A ten person hut will be built on the current site within the next 2 to 3 years. Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club, who are the hut custodians, will be involved in commenting on the design of the new hut. DOC acknowledges and supports the concept of minimising the environmental and visual impact of structures in remote areas this will be addressed through the Assessment of Environmental Effect (AEE) which will be carried out before the hut is constructed.
9106 Arete Forks Hut	Minimal Maintenance	Submitters have commented that 'low use' should not be a primary reason for proposing 'minimal maintenance' on huts. They submit that whilst Arete Forks may be low in use it is a recognised escape route from a variety of routes including off the tops of the Northern Crossing. Submitters pointed out that the hut is part of a circuit that can be done from Mitre Flats/Tarn Ridge along open exposed tops to Cow Creek.	Maintain	DOC accepts that the hut provides a unique opportunity for recreation in this area and that the hut is in the line of a series of major escape routes. The present hut site is being eroded by the Waingawa River and is not suitable as a long term location. When the hut needs to be removed, or reaches retirement, users will be consulted with regard to the location of a new hut in the catchment. The hut will become a 'core' hut. It will be replaced and fully maintained into the future.
191729 Proposed Rae Ridge Track	Proposed	Submitters request that the Rae Ridge section should not be highly modified and that the essential bush character of the Rae Ridge should be retained. It will enhance the opportunity for day and short overnight tramps in the Otaki area but may put pressure on existing accommodation. Submitters express concern about environmental impact of such a track and the visitor safety risk of inexperienced trampers having easy access to open tops.	Supported	As a result of submitters comments the decision is to manage this as two separate tracks: (a) Sheridan Creek Historic Walk - 'walking track' mainly for day visitors; and (b) Rae Ridge Track - 'tramping track'. This is in response to requests that the Rae Ridge section should not be highly modified and that the essential bush character of the Rae Ridge should be retained. The decision also means that, by managing the Sheridan Creek section as a 'walking track', more visitors will have access to this important historic site.
7849 North Ohau Hut	Remove (and not replace)	The submission process has highlighted that hunters, in particular, would like to retain this hut as it allows access to good hunting in the Ohau catchment.	Seeking Maintain by Community	DOC uses the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) to classify conservation areas, with the intention of managing for a range of recreational opportunities. Fewer facilities are expected to be provided in more remote areas such as North Ohau. DOC does not maintain tracks in this area and expects that only very experienced and prepared people would venture into the area. The hut will not be part of the core network; however, DOC has received a number of offers for the ongoing management of the hut and will pursue these with the relevant group. This should ensure the retention of a small hut in this location.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
9146 Cattle Ridge Hut	Maintain by Community	Submitters commented that Cattle Ridge provided a different experience from that gained at Roaring Stag, it is useful as a safety shelter on the tops. Good hut for introducing intermediate level trampers to the tops. It provides access to routes in the NE Tararuas.	Seeking Maintain by Community	Given that the hut is so close to Roaring Stag Lodge, around 2 hours; it will remain a non core hut. However; DOC will work with the current custodian, NZDA Wellington, to assist in the ongoing care and management of the hut. Some upgrade work has been completed and the hut is currently sound.
7262 Oriwa Hut (Biv)	Remove (and not replace)	Oriwa Hut (Biv) offers a different experience to Waiopehu Hut. It is one of a declining number of Forest Service bivvies, and as such ought to be seen as part of historic heritage. The ambience is distinctive and authentic. Serves as a haven in bad weather for ventures into east Waitewaewae and Upper Otaki catchments as well as Makaretu Stream. It provides good shelter on the arduous Oriwa Ridge.	Remove (and not replace)	DOC uses the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) to classify conservation areas, with the intention of managing for a range of recreational opportunities. Fewer or no facilities are expected to be provided in 'remote' areas such as Oriwa Ridge. DOC does not maintain tracks in this area and expects that it is used by self-sufficient hunters and trampers who have a high level of bush craft skill. Good sheltered campsites are available near the biv site. DOC recognises the importance of the biv in collecting water and will seek to find a way of ensuring water remains available near the site.
8859 Atiwakatu Hut	Replace bigger size	Feedback from submitters is supportive of the proposal. However, they comment that further discussion is needed to determine the exact location and size of a new hut.	Replace bigger size	The Atiwakatu Hut is due for retirement in 2010 however it needs some structural work to bring it up to standard. It is a core hut. Rather than spend money on upgrade the feeling is that the money should be invested in replacement. This is considered a very important hut for families and groups. The Wairarapa Area will work with Masterton Tramping, the hut custodians and other users to determine size and location.
191735 Snowy Hut	Proposed	Submitters comment that this opens up a great 3 day circuit opportunity, partly untracked, using Tregear Ridge to get up to Kime Hut. Would provide an easy to moderate loop walk available from Otaki Forks, and the relatively easy country of the Waiotauru catchment would provide suitable opportunities.	Postponed	During consultation it became apparent that there is a more urgent need for a replacement hut in the Ohau River catchment. This will take priority over a hut in the eastern Waiotauru River catchment. A new hut in the eastern Waiotauru may be pursued only when all current facilities have been brought up to standard and after a new Ohau Hut has been built.
96712 Waiopehu Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed.	Maintain	The track will be brought to and maintained to "tramping track" standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004) Damage repaired to minimize environmental impact.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96818 Waitewaewae Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed.	Maintain	The track will be brought to and maintained to "tramping track" standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004) Damage repaired to minimize environmental impact.
8827 Dracophyllum Hut	Minimal Maintenance	Comments on Dracophyllum generally highlight the importance of retaining Nichols which adds to the strength of proposals for Nichols becoming a core hut. Submitters also feel that Dracophyllum itself offers shelter, being located in the bush, and good hunting opportunities.	Minimal Maintenance	The Nichols and Dracophyllum proposals were interlinked. Comments on Dracophyllum generally highlight the importance of retaining Nichols which adds to the strength of proposals for Nichols proposal becoming a core hut. Dracophyllum hut has recently been upgraded and is in a sound condition. A 'minimal maintenance' proposal will mean it is able to be maintained through to its proposed retirement in 2015.
9110 Blue Range Hut	Maintain by Community	Submitters comment that the hut provides accessible and varied tramping for younger and older tramping groups within the Tararua. It is useful for a Friday late night as part of the Bannister Crossing or a trip into the Upper Waingawa, or a number of other trips that cannot be completed if you have to start from a road end on Saturday morning, or camp late at night in an awkward site.	Seeking Maintain by Community	The hut is not part of the core network as there are a number of huts providing similar easy and accessible overnight experiences on the eastern side of the ranges. Proceed with 'maintain by community' option. DOC has an established relationship with Masterton Tramping Club, the hut custodians, and will seek to formally confirm this arrangement.
96754 Penn Creek to Table Top	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters keen to ensure that the track is only upgraded to 'tramping track' standard. Some called into question the value of the track.	Maintain	Given that Penn Creek Hut has a 'maintain' proposal, and that access to the hut via Penn Creek track will be discouraged, this track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96838 Roaring Stag to Cattle Ridge	Maintain at a lower standard	Submissions in general challenged the idea of reducing the standard and level of facilities in the Ruamahanga and highlighted its recreational importance. Some also challenged the assumption that experienced back country users do not want facilities.	Maintain	DOC acknowledges the role that recreation infrastructure in the North Eastern Tararua in providing access to recreation opportunity in the forest park. In response to this, proposals for the tracks in the area have been reconsidered and the replacement of Roaring Stag will proceed. Ridge/ Dundas, the track will be maintained as a 'tramping track' as far as Cattle Ridge, and a 'route' from Cattle Ridge to Dundas Hut. The 'tramping track' and the 'route' will both be navigable and maintained to ensure ongoing access to the area.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96765 Penn Creek Track – Stone Wall to Penn Creek	Cease to Maintain	Some submitter opposed the proposal on the basis that Penn Creek Track offers some of the best opportunities for hunting, trout fishing, and the most scenic tramping in the Otaki Forks Area. They wanted the track re-instated or an alternative line for the track found within the Otaki Gorge, perhaps on the other river bank.	Cease to Maintain	DOC has considered alternatives suggested by submitters, however, given the high cost associated with search and rescue retrieving people stuck on this track and with attempts to maintain it, the decision is to proceed with the proposal to maintain Penn Creek/Table Top as an all weather track to and from Penn Creek Hut and cease to maintain the Penn Creek track.
9148 Roaring Stag Lodge	Replace bigger size	Submitters have generally highlighted Ruamahanga as an important recreational location in the North Eastern Tararua.	Replace bigger size	DOC acknowledges the role that recreation infrastructure in the North Eastern Tararua in providing access to recreation opportunity in the forest park. In response to this proposals for the tracks in the area have been reconsidered and clarified (see later) and the replacement of Roaring Stag, which is a core hut, will proceed.
191731 Sheridan Creek Bridge	Proposed	Submitters are supportive of the proposal. One submitter objected on the basis that money was being spent on unnecessary bridges and that the Sheridan Creek/Waiotauru area is generally useable.	Supported	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed. Viewed as a means of creating greater access to the historic log hauler site. (See also comments on Rae Ridge Proposal )
96697 Totara Creek/Lower Waiohine Tks	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters comment that the section between Walls Whare and Totara Flats should be the focus of development to begin with. Other comments suggest that tracks are heavily used due to popularity of high occupancy Totara Flats hut. The section from Gentle Annie to Totara Creek is extensively rutted and muddy environmental damage is getting worse as more users walk off track to keep feet dry etc. Similarly the lower Waiohine Tks sections are very muddy and will only get worse if people walk wider to avoid mud.	Maintain	Maintained to “tramping track” standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
191366 Lower Otaki Exit Track	Proposed	There is some concern that the track may encourage inexperienced users to use the Otaki River as a means of accessing the Penn Creek Hut if the Penn Creek Track is closed.	Supported	DOC has taken on board submitters comments with regard to visitor safety. The Kapiti Area will ensure that the track is an exit track only. Further to this the site will be managed in such a way that people are not ‘drawn’ down to the Otaki River from the river terraces. This is consistent with requests from submitters.
191733 Waiotauru Bridge (1)	Proposed	Submitters supported on the basis that it would enhance the recreational opportunities and safety in the Waiotauru Valley.	Supported	Proceed with decision. The proposal will enhance the recreational opportunities and safety in the Waiotauru Valley.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
191734	Proposed Waiotauru Bridge (2)	Submitters supported on the basis that it would enhance the recreational opportunities and safety in the Waiotauru Valley.	Supported	Proceed with decision. The proposal will enhance the recreational opportunities and safety in the Waiotauru Valley.
192530	Proposed Totara Creek Bridge	Submitters feel that bridging the creeks in the lower half of the Waiohine Valley should be a priority for DOC.	Supported	During the consultation process the point was made that bridging the creeks in the lower half of the Waiohine valley should be a priority. Only when Makaka and Clem Creek have been built will Totara Creek bridge be considered.
96796 Mt Reeves Track	Maintain by Community	Should be core, is of historical significance.	Seeking Maintain by Community	The original rationale for this not being a core track remains. Other Tauherenikau access tracks offering similar experience and opportunity exist. Wairarapa Area Office has suggested that a local tramping group may maintain the track. They will pursue this option.
96830 Waiotauru Road	Maintain by Community	Submitters were concerned that if the current custodian, Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee, withdrew from their agreement to maintain the section between Akatarawa Road and Renata Saddle the road would close. There was also concern that the road was not being managed to a high enough standard.	Seeking Maintain by Community	The Waiotauru Road was the subject of a number of submissions. The conservancy is required under its Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to adopt a 'maintain by community' approach to motorised off-road vehicles (MORVs). The CMS states that: 'DOC will not maintain these roads and old logging trails for horses and MORVs but will encourage and allow groups to do this for their own benefit to standards set by the Department' The other example of this in the Conservancy is the Te Kopi/Waikuku Road. However, if the management agreement with Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee is not renewed, other groups could approach the Department. If no management agreement is reached then the road would be maintained to ensure foot access.
8103 Renata Hut	Minimal Maintenance	Submitters comment that the hut is still a valued overnight stop despite the Cloustonville access being denied. Hut maintenance is more difficult as a result. Renata Hut provides a convenient 'Friday night' shelter at the start of longer trips, or an easy day or overnight destination. This is the only hut in this area - Waiotauru Road - Frances Creek. It is a significant distance to Elder, and a new Elder hut serves a different area.	Minimal Maintenance	The hut will remain non core due to its close proximity to Renata Saddle. The Catholic Tramping club want to continue their involvement with the management of hut and have offered to assist financially in the completion of remedial work required to bring the hut up to a safe and sanitary condition. The hut will be in sound condition following remedial works. Retirement date 2015.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
7851 Burn Hut	Maintain by Community	Submitters who oppose generally feel that the hut and track provides excellent opportunity for young and novice trampers and that the hut should be essential within the core network.	Owned Maintained by Community (Legal Agreement in Place)	There is already a legal management agreement in place that secures the future of this hut through the Horowhenua Hunting Club. The club is actively involved in fund raising to fund the hut and has recently also secured funding to build a bridge. DOC wish to continue to honour this arrangement with the club who have a high degree of ownership over the hut. The decision is 'owned and maintained by community'.
191738 Makaka Creek Bridge	Proposed	Submitters supportive and also highlighted the importance of ensuring the creeks in the lower half of the Waiohine are given priority.	Supported	Bridging of Clem Creek and Makaka Creek which will proceed ahead of a bridge over Totara Creek; this will enhance access up the valley from the Waiohine Road end.
192529 Clem Creek Bridge	Proposed	Submitters supportive and also highlighted the importance of ensuring the creeks in the lower half of the Waiohine are given priority.	Supported	Bridging of Clem Creek and Makaka Creek which will proceed ahead of a bridge over Totara Creek; this will enhance access up the valley from the Waiohine Road end.
96691 Powell Hut Track - Mountain House to Powell Hut	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters support the upgrade. It is managed as a 'tramping track' but is below the standard required for such a track.	Upgrade to higher standard	Work will be undertaken to bring it to <u>easy</u> 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96757 Cow Creek to Cleft Creek	Maintain at a lower standard	Submissions in general challenged the idea of the reducing the standard and level of facilities in the Ruamahanga and highlighted its recreational importance. Some also challenged the assumption that experienced back country users do not want facilities.	Maintain	The track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004).
96819 Waitatapia Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters support the proposal and suggest that some work is required to upgrade the section which crosses over the large slip.	Maintain	Maintain to "tramping track" standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96693 Kaitoke Carpark to Smith Creek Dobson	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters highlighted the need to retain the essential bush character of the track.	Maintain	The decision is to split the site and manage the track as two sections. The proposal is to manage the section from the carpark to the Puffer and to the Smith Creek shelter as one site and as a "walking track". The section from Puffer up on to the Marchant Ridge at the old Dobson hut and return to the carpark site managed as a quality 'tramping track' retaining existing character .



	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
9134 Smith Creek Shelter	Maintain by Community	Submitters who were in opposition wanted the shelter retained within the core network.	Owned by DOC maintained by Community	DOC acknowledged the importance of the hut as a 'shelter' for day walkers and day visitors to the Tauherenikau Valley. The long term plan is to replace the existing structure with a more basic shelter which will become part of the core network.
96775 Mangatarere to Sayers Hut	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters were concerned that this track would be downgraded to the extent that it would not be navigable.	Maintain at a lower standard	The track will be managed as a 'route' standard which will be navigable and maintained as per the new DOC standards. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96783 Neill Winchcombe-Cone Saddle Track	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters were concerned that this track would be downgraded to the extent that it would not be navigable.	Maintain	Cone to Cone Saddle - 'tramping track'. Cone to Neill via Neill Ridge - 'route'. As is noted in previous proposals maintaining a track as 'route' will ensure it remains navigable; the Ridge will continue to be managed as a for more experienced backcountry users. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96808 Cloustonville to Renata	Cease to Maintain	Submitters were opposed to the proposal for this track. The feeling was that closure of this track effectively closes a large area of Maymorn Renata area to trampers. One option presented was that the Department to negotiate, with help from Upper Hutt City Council, a walkway easement over private land, into and along Frances Stream, and up to Maymorn Ridge.	Cease to Maintain	Kapiti Area has sought to resolve the public access issue with regard to this track and conclude that it is unlikely to be resolved while the land remains in private ownership. Access to the Renata ridge is also available from a number of other tracks in the area including Waiotauru Road and the Kapakapanui track. The feeling from the Kapiti Area is that the Cloustonville/ Renata access issue is irreconcilable in the short to medium term. If at some point in future the access issue is resolved they will reconsider the status of the 'tramping track'.
8008 Waiotauru Hut	Maintain by Community	One submission was interpreted as 'opposition' as the submitter commented that the hut should be a part of the core network of huts. However, the proposal was generally supported.	Maintain by Community	DOC has an established relationship with Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee with regard to the management of this hut and Waiotauru Road and wishes to continue with this arrangement. In the meantime the hut is not considered essential for accommodation and will remain a non core hut. The hut principles state that: road end huts are not retained unless a caretaker is on site or the hut is booked.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
9251 Sayers Hut	Maintain by Community	Submitters generally in support of continuation of the current arrangement. However, the club is keen to see the hut become a core hut based on its historic value and on par with Cone hut in the upper Tauherenikau.	Seeking Maintain by Community	Cone Hut has been officially designated an 'historic hut' though the CMS process. Sayers will receive further assessment and if it is considered on a par with Cone then the proposal to officially designate an 'historic hut' will go through the CMS process. In the meantime the hut is not considered essential for accommodation and will remain a 'non core' due to its close proximity to Totara Flats.
96695 Walls Whare to Cone Saddle	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters who opposed this proposal were voicing opposition to elevation of the track to above 'tramping track' standard.	Maintain	It is not the intention to elevate this track above 'tramping track' standard. The track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96696 Makaka Creek to Cone Hut	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters who opposed this proposal were voicing opposition to elevation of the track to above 'tramping track' standard.	Maintain	It is not the intention to elevate this track above 'tramping track' standard. The track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96788 Totara Flats/Cone/Neill Forks/Maungahuka	Maintain	Submitters were supportive of this proposal.	Maintain	Maintain to 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96791 Gentle Annie - Atiwhakatu to Mountain House	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were concerned that an upgrade would mean elevation to an even higher standard.	Maintain	The track is currently managed as a 'walking track'. However, the track is not to 'walking track' standard. The upgrade proposal means that work will be done to bring it to, and maintained it at its current standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96836 Ruamahanga River Track	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters felt that the track was an important part of the network and should no be maintained at a lower standard, but should be maintain. The two remaining submitters felt it was appropriate to manage as a to 'route' standard.	Maintain at a lower standard	The most popular access into the Cow Saddle Area is Blue Range Hut. The Ruamahanga River gorge provides an alternative, more challenging access into this site. It will be retained in the network and maintained to 'route' standard. The 'route' will remain navigable etc (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96837 Lower Ruamahanga	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters felt that the track was an important part of the network and should no be maintained at a lower standard, but should be maintained. The two remaining submitters felt it was appropriate to manage to 'route' standard.	Maintain at a lower standard	The most popular access into the Cow Saddle Area is Blue Range Hut. The Ruamahanga River gorge provides an alternative, more challenging access into this site. It will be retained in the network and maintained to 'route' standard. The 'route' will remain navigable etc (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
191364 Otaki Campsite Septic Toilet	Proposed	Submitters commented that this is a good proposal for public health.	Supported	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed. DOC will plan to install a septic tank toilet at the Otaki Forks campsite within the next 3 - 5 years as a means of controlling and managing potential environmental impact.
8332 Edwards Shelter	Remove (and not replace)	One submitter commented that it was imperative that some form of small shelter and, more importantly, water supply remain close to the current site. With the proposed upgrade of the Waiopehu track and more people visiting the hut a shelter is required.	Remove (and not replace)	The decision is that DOC will within the next two years, remove the current shelter, however, in response to concerns raised during the submission process signage will be put in place to clearly identify water sources, addressing the water supply issue. DOC would welcome an approach from LWTC to construct a shelter on the newly upgraded track and be responsible for it ongoing maintenance.
96822 Frith Track	Maintain by Community	Submitters generally supportive. One submitter 'hoped' that the track can be kept open this has been included as support for the proposal.	Seeking Maintain by community	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed. SWTC are involved assisted by Wairarapa Area office.
97841 Cone Saddle side track to Cone Hut	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters who opposed this proposal were voicing opposition to elevation of the track to above "tramping track" standard.	Maintain	It is not the intention to elevate this track above 'tramping track' standard. The track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard only. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
8154 Mt Dagg Hut	Remove (and not replace)	Submitters voiced no objection to this proposal.	Remove (and not replace)	Proceed with 'remove' and not replace option. No objections to this proposal.
8787 Penn Creek Hut	Maintain	Two submitters commented that the hut provides neither safe refuge, nor good circular options, nor access to remote country, nor serves the novice or older trumper and is an effective dead end. One submitter suggested that with the closure of Penn Creek Track the hut be put on minimal maintenance.	Maintain	Penn Creek hut is a core hut both in the Tararua Hut Committee Strategy and the Wellington Conservancy CMS. This hut will continue to be maintained to the standard required of a 'standard' backcountry hut. Remedial work has recently been completed on the hut and it is now to the standard required.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
8574 Arete Hut	Maintain	Submitters were concerned with the deteriorating state of the hut. Submitters suggest upgrade not maintain.	Replace- same size	This hut is due for retirement and DOC supports the comments from submitters that the proposal should be to upgrade or replace. DOC feels that replacement makes the greatest economic sense. The hut will be replaced within the next 3 - 5 years with a basic two person hut.
8734 North Mangahao Hut	Maintain by Community	One submission was interpreted as opposition as it commented that the hut should be a part of the core network of huts.	Seeking Maintain by community	The hut remains non core. Proceed with the 'maintain by community' proposal. DOC has an established relationship with Pahiatua NZDA and wishes to continue to this arrangement.
9605 Totara Flats Bridge	Maintain	Submitters expressed concern with regard to the safety of the bridge and submit that replacement of Totara Flat bridge should be the highest priorities.	Maintain	Proceed with 'maintain' proposal. The bridge will not be replaced, however, work has been undertaken to address the 'sway' concerns identified in submissions.
96727 Burn Hut Track	Maintain by Community	Both submitters support keeping open the track. It is unclear if one of the submitters feels that it should be part of the 'core network' or is happy with 'maintain by community' option. The important thing to both is that the track is kept open.	Owned by DOC maintained by Community	There is already a legal agreement in place that secures the future of this track through the Horowhenua Hunting Club. DOC wish to continue to honour this arrangement with the club who have a high degree of ownership over the hut. If the agreement expires and the club no longer wish to maintain the track DOC will.
96742 Tokomaru Valley Track	Cease to Maintain	One submitter comments that this area is a recent addition (last 10 years) to the Forest Park and should not be closing it down. It would also give improved network coverage. There are very few tracks in the Northern Taranaki.	Maintain	Since the proposal was put forward DOC has been given information that there is a proposal for a new residential area nearby. In light of this, and in anticipation that such a development may place greater pressure on the use of the Tokomaru Valley for recreational purposes, the track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard.
96744 Atiwhakatu Track	Maintain	One of the submission notes the need to upgrade the bridge on the Donnelly Loop to allow wheelchair access to the Donnelly Flat and further up the Atiwhakatu Valley.	Maintain	Atiwhakatu track will receive the work necessary to bring it to and maintain it at 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004) One of the submission notes the need to upgrade the bridge on the Donnelly Loop to allow wheelchair access to the Donnelly Flat and further up the Atiwhakatu Valley. As a first stage in this process DOC will upgrade the Donnelly Loop for wheelchair access.
96771 Kakariki Access Easement	Lower Standard	Submitters supported this proposal.	Maintain at a lower standard	Maintain as to 'route' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION	
	96798 Cow Creek/Arete Forks/ Waiohine Pinnacles	Maintain	Both parties commented that the track should be maintained into the future and that work was required to bring the track up to standard.	Maintain	This is a core network track. Work will be carried out on the track to bring it up to 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
	98211 Mangahao Dams Road	Maintain by Community	Submitters supported this proposal.	Maintain by community	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed.
	99014 Pakihore Ridge track	Maintain	Submitters comment that if savings are required the Table Top track/ Pakihore ridge route could be removed in order to maintain more beneficial options.	Maintain	There no strength of submission to suggest that the track should not be core. Maintain to 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
	98208 North Manakau Road End	Maintain	Submitter supportive of this proposal.	Maintain	DOC acknowledges that this is an important access for day visitors and school groups utilizing lower valleys. DOC will work with Horowhenua District Council to try to maintain car access.
	9149 Pedestrian Bridge – Ruamahanga	Maintain	Submission supported. The bridge in Roaring Stag area must be maintained to allow wet weather access.	Maintain	Proceed with 'maintain' proposal. Bridge will be maintained to required standard.
	9365 Walls Whare Bridge	Maintain	Submitter requested that the bridge be upgraded.	Maintain	Proceed with 'maintain' proposal. The bridge will continue to be maintained to the required standard as determined by the DOC structural engineer.
	9402 Atiwhakatu Bridge	Maintain	Submitter requested that the bridge be upgraded to accommodate wheelchair access into the Donnelly Loop walk.	Upgrade to bring to a higher standard	Upgraded to allow wheelchair access to the Donnelly Flat loop walk. The track itself is managed to "walking track" standard and is suitable for wheelchair access in most places.
	9447 Cow Creek Bridge	Maintain	Submitter thought that the bridge was a bit excessive for the location. If a more simple design had been used money may have been left over to invest in huts.	Maintain	The bridge will continue to be maintained, and was built to the required standard. The new bridge was constructed in a more ridged manner to prevent sway. Problems with sway have been identified for other bridges during the submission process.

## AORANGI FOREST PARK

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION	
	96804 Aorangi Crossing	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters pointed out that the vegetation type and rapid growth rate means that regular cutting and clearing of this track is required to allow it to remain navigable.	Maintain	To ensure a higher level of maintenance the track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96825 Bull Hill Track	Cease to Maintain	Submitters commented that this should be a core network track due to the uniqueness of the opportunity it provides.	Seeking Maintain by Community	Wairarapa Area has suggested that there may be a tramping club interested in becoming involved in maintaining this track. They will follow this up with local clubs. If no club is interested it will resort to 'cease maintenance'.
9357 Ngapotiki Hut	Maintain by Community	Three of the submissions made a case for the hut to be in the core network. The NZDA Wairarapa, the club custodian, felt that the hut provides a unique opportunity in the area.	Seeking Maintain by Community	The DOC hut principles determine that: road end huts are not retained unless a caretaker is on site or the hut is booked. The strength of submissions does not support a change in the approach to the way the hut is managed. Wairarapa Area will work with NZDA Wairarapa to ascertain ways in which assistance can be provided to support the club's continued involvement.
8546 Averills Hut	Minimal Maintenance	One submitter hoped that the hut could be retained. We have interpreted this as opposition to the minimal maintenance proposal.	Minimal Maintenance	Proceed with 'minimal maintenance' proposal. No strength of submissions to suggest otherwise. Averills Hut reached its retirement date in 2003 and no upgrade work has been undertaken on the hut. Wairarapa Area will work with the Department's engineer to assess and review the retirement dates.
96781 Stonewall Track	Cease to Maintain	One submitter opposed on the basis that the track should be maintained even as a 'route' because it is an access track.	Cease to Maintain	There is no strength of submissions to suggest that the proposal should be other than 'cease to maintain'.
99056 Ngapotiki Road	Maintain at a lower standard	One submitter opposed on the basis that some people are unable to walk this track, yet still wish to visit the area to enjoy the scenery. Want 4x4 accesses to be developed and retained.	Maintain at a lower standard	For future consideration - exploration of legal easement over the private land to ensue long term formal walking access to Ngapotiki Lodge. Retaining access by foot is the priority for this private road.
98519 Te Kopi to Waikuku	Maintain by Community	One submitter opposed on the basis those motor vehicles, cause damage, especially on steep sections, to plant communities and soils.	Maintain by community	There is a legal agreement in place, with Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC), to secure long term 4x4 use of the road. The agreement ensures access and has conditions which require a variety of measures to reduce environmental impact, which was a highlighted as a concern within the submission process. The road remains open to foot and bicycles at all times, 4x4 access is managed by ARAC. This is consistent with the Wellington CMS which states that, in relation to motorised off-road vehicles: DOC will not maintain these roads and old logging trails for horses and MORV's but will encourage and allow groups to do this for their own benefit to standards set by the Department.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
8547	Maintain Mangatoetoe Hut	Submitter comments that they have heard suggestions that Mangatoetoe to be replaced. Renewing this hut now would be a waste of resources—just improve the chimney.	Maintain	This hut will be maintained to the standard required for a 'standard' hut in the backcountry. (See DOC Hut Service Standards) There are no immediate plans to replace this hut; however, there are plans to bring the huts in the Aorangi Forest Park up to the required standard.
8553	Maintain Washpool Hut	Submitter comments that Washpool hut could do with a facelift of the kind done well in the Ruahine (paint, repairing, clear some re-growth for light etc).	Maintain	This hut will be maintained to the standard required for a 'standard' hut in the backcountry. (See DOC Hut Service Standards) There are no immediate plans to replace this hut; however, there are plans to bring the huts in the Aorangi Forest Park up to the required standard.
9345	Bull Hill Viewing Platform Cease to Maintain	Submitter comments that some judicious tree pruning would ensure key sightlines are maintained from the viewing platform (or that the viewing platform is raised) to maintain the expansive views that are possible from this point.	Remove (and not replace)	Proceed with proposal to 'remove (and not replace)'. There is no strength of opposition to this proposal. Will be removed within the next two years. The platform no longer provides 'a view'. (See the proposal for Bull Hill track)
96832	Mt Ross Track Maintain	Submitter concerned that the track north along the Aorangi range is not being maintained from the point where the track leaves the bushline. The track disappears into impenetrable scrub and now provided a difficult 'route' in what should be a pleasant loop track involving Mt Ross. Suggests that the northern 'route' be re-opened and maintained.	Maintain	The track will be maintained to 'tramping track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004).

## RIMUTAKA FOREST PARK

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96721	Mukamuka Stream to South Saddle Cease to Maintain	Submitters are unanimously opposed to this proposal, suggesting that the track provides a distinct and unique opportunity associated with the highest peak in the Rimutaka.	Maintain	DOC has underestimated the use and importance of this track in relation to the South Saddle route to Mt Matthews. The decision is to maintain to 'route' standard as per SNZ HB 8630:2004) This means it will be navigable and maintained.
9394	Battery Stream Hut Remove (and not replace)	Submitters feel that the biv should be retained. The feeling is that this hut has some life left in it and it provides a different type of experience from the huts in the main Orongorongo Valley.	Seeking Maintain by Community	This remains a non core hut due to its close proximity to Wharepapa. However, through the process DOC has received an offer for the ongoing management of the Battery Stream hut. This offers will be pursued.

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96827	Wai-orongomai Track Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters commented that this should be a core track on the basis that it provides the only short walk into the eastern Rimutaka Range, outside the Rimutaka Incline. Waiorongomai Hut provided an easily accessible overnight experience, something not found elsewhere in the eastern Rimutaka, suitable for easy for intermediate trampers. The track is not well marked at the start now, and needs better signage.	Maintain at a lower standard	Submitters also note that this track needs better marking and signage. Maintain as to 'route' standard. The 'route' will be marked, maintained and navigable etc (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
96826	Corner Creek to Windy Point Maintain at a lower standard	Submitter comments that this road should be closed to motor vehicles, to prevent further damage to indigenous mat plant and sand-binding plant communities on this 'route', some of which have threatened conservation status. Nationally, coastal ecosystems are among those most under threat, especially from motor vehicles.	Maintain at a lower standard	Proceed with proposal to manage for walking and mountain bike access only.
96823	Pylon Road Maintain by Community	Submitter supportive of existing arrangement.	Maintain by Community	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed.
98213	Cattle Ridge Road Maintain at a lower standard	Submitter supportive of this proposal.	Maintain at a lower standard	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed. The short section of old road left over after realignment will be maintained to 'waking track' standard to allow access by foot and by horse
99060	Boar Bush Gully Maintain by Community	Submitter supportive of existing arrangement.	Maintain by Community	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed.

## ISLANDS

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96709	Wilkinson and Trig Track Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were generally supportive. There was one objection on the basis that the track is already of a high quality.	Maintain	Proceed with decision, supported by submitters, maintain to 'walking track' standard. High use site often used by inexperienced back country users. (See New Zealand Handbook – Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
191376	Rangatira Low Level Walk Proposed	Submitters were in support of this proposal. One submitter noted the need to 'raise' the track above sea level of allow for elevated views of the flats.	Supported	Develop 'walking track' at Rangatira Flat on Kapiti Island to enhance the quality and quantity of day visitor opportunities on Kapiti Island. As per the request of submitters the track line will run through Rangatira Flat rising above the flat.



191724 North End Track	Proposed	Submitters were in support of this proposal. There was also the suggestion the option to develop a track at the north end would take the pressure off the Trig Track at Rangatira Point.	Supported	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed with the construction of a 'walking track' to enhance opportunities at the north end of Kapiti Island.
191725 Kapiti Island Composting Toilet	Proposed	Submitters were in support of this proposal.	Supported	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed. DOC will plan to install a composting toilet at the north end of Kapiti Island within the next two years. This is required in order to open visitor access at the north end of the island. The toilet and a shelter will be provided for visitors.
191726 Kapiti Island North End Shelter	Proposed	Submitters were in support of this proposal.	Supported	DOC proposal supported through the submission process therefore proceed. DOC will plan to install a shelter at the north end of Kapiti Island within the next two years. This is required in order to open visitor access at the north end of the island. The toilet and a shelter will be provided for visitors.
8906 Northern Jetty Matiu	Remove	Submissions have not been forthcoming from users of the wharf.	Remove (and not replace)	Submissions have not been forthcoming from users of the wharf. The decision will be to remove and the Poneke Area will undertake further consultation with user groups on the future of the wharf.

## OTHER (WALKWAYS ETC)

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96710 Colonial Knob Walkway	Upgrade to bring to standard	Fully supported by submitters. Submitters also commented on the need to ensure the track in not over engineered and that it retains its bush character.	Maintain	Proceed with decision to maintain to 'walking track' standard. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
8152 Castlepoint Reef Jetty	Owned by DOC maintain by community	Submission supports DOC and locals working together to maintain the jetty.	Owned by DOC maintain by community	Proceed with the 'owned by DOC maintain by community' option. DOC will seek to work with the local Castlepoint community in the ongoing maintenance of the jetty.
96769 and 96770 Mangaone Walkway	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters supported the proposal to manage this as a 'walking track', there was also a suggestion that toilet facilities be provided. Two submitters commented that steam crossing/bridges should be upgraded throughout the walkway. One submitter, who opposed the upgrade, felt that any change to the current track should be a downgrade.	Maintain	The 'maintain as 'walking track'' will mean that the Waikanae River will be bridged. (See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)

	PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
96921 Parata Track	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed. Submitters request that the essential bush character of the track is retained.	Maintain	Maintain to 'tramping track' standard only.(See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004).
96922 Te Au 'route'	Upgrade to bring to standard	Submitters were supportive and wanted to ensure that the track would not be overly developed. Submitters request that the essential bush character of the track is retained.	Maintain	Maintain to 'tramping track' standard only.(See New Zealand Handbook - Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures SNZ HB 8630:2004)
192463 Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve Walk	Proposed	Submitters fully supported this proposal. A welcome proposal. 'walking track' will be developed. DOC has received comment from local environmental group KEA. They may wish to be involved in the planning of the track.	Supported	Proceed with the development of a 'walking track' in Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve to enhance walking opportunity for residents of Paraparaumu.
192464 Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve - Carpark	Proposed	Submitters comment that this is a welcome proposal. DOC has received comment from local environmental group KEA who may wish to become involved in the planning of the track.	Supported	DOC will proceed with planning, in the longer term, for an accessible, safe carpark at Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve. DOC will also endeavour to work with the local environmental group on the development of this project.

# 9. Overview of decisions in terms of recreation facilities and opportunities

## 9.1 FACILITIES

### **Backcountry hut summary**

The majority back county huts in the conservancy will be retained. Only two huts, Mt Dagg Hut and Oriwa Hut (Biv), are to be removed. The number of huts to be maintained, and replaced (core huts) has increased from 39 to 42. The huts to be included in the core are Arete Forks which was proposed to be on 'minimal maintenance' and Neill Forks which was a 'maintain by community' hut. Nichols Hut was proposed to be 'moved to another location' but it will remain in its current location as a core hut as will Maungahuka Hut. The present Arete Hut site is being eroded by the Waingawa River and is not suitable as a long term location. When the hut needs to be removed, or reaches retirement, users will be consulted with regard to the location of a new hut in the catchment.

These huts received strength and depth of support for management change during the public consultation process. Many of the core huts are club huts and they will continue to be administered in partnership with clubs.

We anticipate that nine huts will be managed by community groups, a further one hut, (Burn Hut) is currently managed under a legal management agreement. The nine 'seeking community maintenance' includes the Waiotauru Hut where the Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC) has had a management agreement with Kapiti Area. The agreement is due for renewal.

Dorset Ridge Hut, North Ohau Hut and Battery Stream Hut have received offers for community management, and management agreements will be sought for them.

Ngapotiki and Sayer huts are currently managed by the Wairarapa NZDA. The club called for the huts to be brought into the core network; Ngapotiki on the basis that it provides a unique recreation opportunity and Sayers Hut because of its historic status. Sayers Hut is less than three hours from Totara Flats therefore it is not considered to be essential for accommodation; however, further work will be undertaken to determine its historic status.

North Mangahao is currently managed by Pahiatua NZDA. Cattle Ridge Hut will remain non-core being only a couple of hours from Roaring Stag Lodge. The hut is currently in good condition. The Wairarapa Area will continue to work with the custodians of Cattle Ridge and Blue Range in managing these huts.

Informal agreements already exist for many of the non core huts. The intention, by December 2006, is to formalise agreements for hut to be maintained by clubs and groups. This is to allow for a shared understanding about roles and responsibilities.

Three huts will remain on minimal maintenance; Renata Hut, Dracophyllum Hut and Averills Hut. Dracophyllum Hut is currently in very good condition and will require little maintenance through until its proposed retirement in 2015. The Catholic

tramping club has offered to finance limited work on Renata to ensure it is safe, and sanitary; this also has a proposed retirement date of 2015. Averills Hut reached its retirement date in 2003 and no upgrade work has been undertaken on the hut. Wairarapa Area will work with the Department's engineer to assess and review the retirement dates.

Two huts will be removed. Oriwa Hut (Biv) will be removed in an effort to ensure some areas of the park remain 'facility-free'. This is to provide an opportunity where self sufficient back country users with high skill levels can experience bush in a close to original state.

There was no objection to the removal of Mt Dagg Hut which is a road end hut susceptible to vandalism.

A new South Ohau hut is proposed in the Ohau catchment. Discussion will be progressed with users and the Tararua Aorangi Huts Committee to determine the location of this hut.

#### SUMMARY OF HUT NETWORK DECISIONS

PROPOSAL	ROR PROPOSAL	DECISION	COMMENT
Maintain / Replace	39	42	Nichols, Arete Fork, Neill Forks Huts added to the core network. If a hut is in the core network DOC will provide full funding to bring the asset up to the required standard (if it is not currently to standard), administer, maintain and inspect the asset. Where relevant, the asset will be replaced at the end of its life and, at this point, DOC intends to replace the asset with an asset of the same size. For club huts this will be done in partnership with the hut owner/custodian. The club may or may not wish to contribute financially to the management of the asset.
Move to another location	1	0	Nichols Hut now a core hut.
Seeking Community Maintenance	9	9	Non core huts. Community agreements will be sought/formalised for the management of Dorset Ridge Hut, North Ohau Hut, Battery Stream Hut, Blue Range Hut, Cattle Ridge Hut, North Mangahao Hut, Waiotauru Hut, Ngapotiki Lodge and Sayers Hut. DOC will discuss ongoing maintenance and replacement of the facilities with such groups and will seek to establish a management agreement for maintenance. If a group agrees to maintain a hut to the relevant service standards it will be transferred to that group/authority.
Owned by DOC maintained by Community	0	1	Smith Creek Shelter - This is considered core, and DOC will fund replacement. It is assumed that some costs may be able to be met by a community group.
Owned and Maintained by Community	0	1	Burn Hut There is already a legal agreement in place that secures the future of this hut through the Horowhenua Hunting Club. The club is actively involved in fund raising to fund the hut and has recently also secured funding to build a bridge. DOC wish to continue to honour this arrangement with the club who have a high degree of ownership over the hut.
Minimal maintenance	4	3	Averills Hut, Dracophyllum Hut and Renata Hut The building will be inspected by DOC every 2 years. Some minor maintenance (that can be done during the regular inspection) will be undertaken. The building will be retained in its minimally maintained state as long as it is weatherproof, not dangerous and not insanitary. When the regular inspection, or the re-inspection by engineers, concludes that the building no longer meets these bottom line standards, and if there is no organisation willing to bring it up to standard and maintain it to standard, it will be removed.

PROPOSAL	ROR PROPOSAL	DECISION	COMMENT
Remove (and not replace)	5	2	Oriwa Hut (Biv) and Mt Dagg Hut All assets with these decisions must be physically removed within two years of final decisions being made.
Proposed (new)	1	1	A new South Ohau hut is proposed in the Ohau catchment. Discussion will be progressed with users and the Tararua Aorangi Huts Committee to determine the location of this hut. A proposal for a new hut in the Snowy catchment has been dropped.
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59</b>	

### Track summary

The main issue for submitters, with regard to tracks, appeared to be track standards and concern about (a) the elevation of tracks to above ‘tramping track’ standard and (b) the downgrading of track to ‘routes’ with the concern that they would no longer be navigable.

The bulk of tracks in the Conservancy will continue to be managed to ‘tramping track’ standard. (See SNZ HB 8630: 2004) ‘tramping track’s which, prior to public consultation, had ‘upgrade to standard’ proposal now have a ‘maintain’ decision to indicate work will be undertaken only to bring them to ‘tramping track’ standard and not above. This includes a number of tracks including the following which received high levels of submissions: Waiopehu Track, Waitewaewae Track, Penn Creek to Table Top, Penn Creek Track - Stone Wall to Penn Creek and Totara Creek/Lower Waiohine Tks.

The cease maintenance proposals will remain for three tracks: Penn Creek Track, due to the instability of the track, Cloustonville/Renata Track due to lack of access and the Stonewall Track due to its isolation and detachment from the track network.

The Tokomaru Valley Track and the Mukamuka Stream to South Saddle ‘route’ to Mt Matthews will be maintained. The Wairarapa is currently exploring options for the management of Bull Hill Track with the local tramping club.

There were a number of tracks proposed to be ‘maintained at a lower standard’ which meant they would be maintained as ‘routes’. As a result of public feedback, the Aorangi Crossing, Roaring Stag to Cattle Ridge and Cow Creek to Cleft Creek tracks will be managed as ‘tramping tracks’. Neill Winchcombe-Cone Saddle will be split and managed as a combination of a ‘route’ and a ‘tramping track’. The Rumahanga River, Waiorongomai and Mangatarere to Sayers tracks will be managed as ‘routes’ and will be maintained and navigable.

The decision on the Rae Ridge is to manage this as two separate tracks: (a) Sheridan Creek Historic Walk—mainly for day visitors; and (b) Rae Ridge Track—‘tramping track’. This is in response to requests, from submitters, that the Rae Ridge section should not be highly modified and that the essential bush character of the ridge should be retained.

Walking tracks such as Mangaone, Hemi Matenga and Colonial Knob will be brought up to their existing ‘walking track’ standard. Care will be taken to ensure that these areas retain their essential bush character. New walks will be developed at Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve and at the north end of Kapiti Island. The Gentle Annie ‘walking track’ will be worked on to fix damage caused by erosion and, at Kaitoke road end, the Smith Creek Dobson track will receive much needed work to enhance the access into the Tauherenikau Valley.

Included in the submissions were a number of proposals from the public for new tracks. One of these proposals has been adopted as it was considered, in light of the changes to the management proposals for Dorset Ridge and Nichols Hut, to be of very high strategic importance. A new track will be developed between Dorset Ridge and Nichols Hut via Park Forks.

The conservancy will retain a list of all track proposals for future planning purposes and is currently undertaking feasibility work on a short walk at Pukaha/Mt Bruce in response to an approach from the National Wildlife Centre Trust.

#### SUMMARY OF TRACK NETWORK DECISIONS

PROPOSAL	PROPOSAL		DECISION		COMMENT
	NUMBER	LENGTH (km)	NUMBER	LENGTH (km)	
Maintain / Replace / Upgrade / Maintain to lower standard	148	702.6	150	715.1	Mukamuka Stream ('route') and Tokomaru Valley ('tramping track') included in core.
Seeking Maintain by Community	3	23	4	28.37	We will seek community maintenance for Bull Hill Track. This figure includes Burn Hut track where there is a management agreement already in place.
Non-visitor DOC managed	1	0.5	1	0.5	No change
Remove/Cease to Maintain	6	(36.8)	3	(19km)	Cease to maintain Cloustonville/Renata, Penn Creek and Stonewall Track
Proposed (new)	5	11.9	6	14.9	Park Forks 'tramping track' has been added.
<b>Total maintained</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>738.00</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>758.87</b>	

### Structures

Submitters generally supported the building of bridges. Totara Creek Bridge generated a fairly high level of discussion. During the consultation process the point was made that bridging the creeks in the lower half of the Waiohine valley should be a priority. Edwards Shelter on the Waiopahu Ridge will also be removed; however, management steps will be taken to address the issue of ensuring adequate water supply on this popular track to Waiopahu Hut.

### Amenity areas and roads

The Waiotauru Road was the subject of a number of submissions. The conservancy is required under its Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to adopt a 'maintain by community' approach to motorised off-road vehicles (MORVs). The CMS states that: *'DOC will not maintain these roads and old logging trails for horses and MORVs but will encourage and allow groups to do this for their own benefit to standards set by the Department'* The other example of this in the Conservancy is the Te Kopi/Waikuku Road. However, if the management agreement with Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee is not renewed, other groups could approach the Department. If no management agreement is reached then the road would be maintained to ensure foot access. The track would be managed to 'tramping track' standard.

## 9.2 IMPACT ON RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Department is committed to providing a range of recreation opportunities for all New Zealanders. The Department's Draft General Policy (Conservation Act) states that a range of recreational opportunities should be provided in different settings for visitors with different capabilities, skills and interests. We had this principle foremost in our minds when thinking about what the submissions were telling us, who was being represented in the submissions, and how we could sustain a variety of opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors. Day visitor opportunities, highlighted as a priority in the Department's Visitor Strategy, will be enhanced mainly through an increase in quality 'walking tracks', specifically at Mangaone, Colonial Knob, Hemi Matenga and Kapiti Island and new tracks in Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve, and Kapiti North End and through the provision of facilities such as the Kapiti Island shelter.

The Wellington Conservancy proposal summary identified a gap in provision of 'tramping tracks' for people new to the outdoor or those who wanted a shorter day loop. Progress towards filling this gap will be made by proceeding with the Sheridan Creek and Rae Ridge proposal and through the building of a number of bridges which will make tramping through some of the major valley systems more achievable.

The strength and depth of submissions centred on the requirement to retain a back country and remote network of huts and tracks, particularly in the Tararua Forest Park. This has been taken on board and reflected in the level of infrastructure that will be maintained to support more experienced back country users. This includes the inclusion of two non core standard huts in the core network, the retention of Nichols and Maungahuka on their current sites, a new hut in the Ohau catchment, maintenance of a number of 'tramping tracks' proposed for 'downgrade' or 'cease maintenance', and the development/reinstatement of a 'tramping track' via Park Forks in the interior of the park.

# 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.