

19-E-0802 / DOC-6138945

13 December 2019

██████████
Email: ██████████

Dear Mr. ██████████

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, dated 15 November 2019. You requested the following:

- 1. I would like to know why the department did not close all the tracks it judged to be affected by kauri dieback before upgrading and reopening them, but instead chose to leave most of them open and upgrade them progressively.*
- 2. Apart from Goldies Bush, why has DOC not asked the Ministry for Primary Industries to declare controlled area notices over tracks that have been upgraded and reopened?*
- 3. How many kilometres of track have been upgraded to the national kauri dieback track standard and what was the cost?*

The information provided in this response is restricted to Public Conservation Land (PCL) and the Department of Conservation's decisions/opinions.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

- 1. I would like to know why the department did not close all the tracks it judged to be affected by kauri dieback before upgrading and reopening them, but instead chose to leave most of them open and upgrade them progressively.*

The Department did not take these decisions lightly and a proactive approach was taken. All tracks were surveyed to understand the extent of kauri in proximity to the track and potential risk. A series of workshops were then held in each region followed by consultation with stakeholders and iwi on the best approach for each track.

The recommendations for and ultimate decision on permanent closure, temporary closure and/or mitigation was based on the following principles for each track:

- Kauri are protected
- Mitigation is cost effective, sustainable and effective
- Recreation opportunities are maintained
- Understanding the impact on the visitor experience and safety
- Partners are included in the decision (iwi / council / key stakeholders)
- Aligns with tangata whenua and community aspirations and interest
- The decisions are well informed.

2. *Apart from Goldies Bush, why has DOC not asked the Ministry for Primary Industries to declare controlled area notices over tracks that have been upgraded and reopened?*

The Controlled Area Notice (CAN) introduced at Goldies Bush was part of a wider management approach for the area.

CANs are a tool under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and as such can only be enforced by certain people under the Act. Use of CANs is certainly one tool in the wider range of options for kauri forest management.

The department looks to make use of a range of management tools depending on what is deemed to be best for specific situations or areas. The department has put a strong focus on education and behavioural change of public conservation land users. For example, behavioural studies have shown track ambassadors to be one of the most effective methods for ensuring voluntary compliance and overall behaviour/attitude change. For this reason, the department has utilised track ambassadors as a mechanism to obtain the necessary objectives on high use tracks.

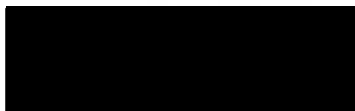
3. *How many kilometres of track have been upgraded to the national kauri dieback track standard and what was the cost?*

Note that currently there is no national kauri dieback track standard. The department is / has been upgrading tracks in accordance with technical specifications derived from the best available knowledge. These technical specifications have been shared across the programme partners.

The total kilometres of upgraded tracks to date is 294km and the total capital spent to the end of October 2019 is approximately \$8.6m.

Please note that this response will be published on the Department's website, however your name/ personal details will be withheld.

Yours sincerely



Ben Reddiex
Director, National Operations Issues and Programmes