

26 January 2024

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 8 December 2023, in which you asked for:

DOC worked to get “good biodiversity outcomes” towards the end of the above motorway construction in 2022

It was reported DOC had input to Waka Kotahi proposed mitigation work to improve the catchment, and Doc said “We will continue to engage as Waka Kotahi develops the mitigation package” <https://newsroom.co.nz/2022/04/16/peering-into-transmission-gullys-environmental-blind-spot/>

I request a summary of DOC’s involvement since, in respect of 2 phases:

** 1. Pls summarise the inputs and outcomes of DOC engagement during construction as reported above*

** Pls as part of that provide a list of the names and dates of any reports DOC had input to re this*

** Pls provide a copy of the two most substantive of those reports*

** 2. Pls summarise the inputs and outcomes of DOC engagement since the road opened, regards biodiversity/the various catchments*

** Pls as part of that provide a list of the names and dates of any reports DOC had input to re this*

** Pls provide a copy of the two most substantive of those reports*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982. Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. Summary of inputs and outcomes of DOC engagement during the construction of Transmission Gully as reported in *Peering into Transmission Gully’s Environmental Blindspot*. Names and dates of any reports that DOC had input to regarding this.

In November 2021 the New Zealand Transport Agency (Transmission Gully) sent DOC pre-application consent documents related to stream works and associated earthworks to mitigate and restore Wainui and Te Puka streams and resolve fish passage issues. DOC responded to NZTA in February 2022 on the proposed mitigation plans after a site visit and review of the documents. Initial comments were provided, stating DOC agreed in principle with the plans but suggesting more robust fish passage options be explored.

A working group was established in 2018 due to concerns raised about the protection of indigenous fish species in the catchment and the desire to provide solutions. The working group included NZTA, DOC, Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC), CPB-HEB Joint Venture and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). The purpose of the group was to collaboratively identify and discuss fish passage issues and solutions. DOC has attended meetings with the working group.

DOC has not had input to any reports during the construction of Transmission Gully.

2. Summary of inputs and outcomes of DOC engagement since the opening of the Transmission Gully, with regards to biodiversity/catchments. Names and dates of any reports that DOC had input to regarding this.

Since the opening of the road (March 2022) DOC has not been approached by NZTA for input or feedback as to environmental matters associated with Transmission Gully.

Since the opening of the road, GRWC has reestablished the working group referenced above and DOC has been involved in ongoing discussions

DOC has not had input to any reports after the opening of the road.

DOC is amenable to continued engagement with lead agencies to continue to advocate for biodiversity and fresh water.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act and determined there are no public interests that outweigh the grounds for withholding.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Alice Heather
Director Operations
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai