

11 June 2024

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 13 May 2024, in which you asked for:

“Im making this OIA about the tairua river catchment.including all brances and the hikuai stream/river catchment area

What endangered creatures or birds or animals live in the Tairua river catchment area? Including the hikuai stream/river catchment area.

Have any studies been done on endangered creatures in the Tairua river catchment area including all branches including the hikuai stream/river catchment area?

Have any studies have been done in the tairua river catchment in regards to canopy collapse?including all branches and the hikuai stream/river catchment.

How many aerial 1080 operations have been performed over the Tairua river catchment area? including all branches and the hikuai stream/river catchment area.

Thank you.”

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *What endangered creatures or birds or animals live in the Tairua river catchment area? Including the hikuai stream/river catchment area.*

The following are known to be present in the Tairua river catchment/Hikuai stream area:

- Long-tailed bats (Nationally Critical),
- Australasian bittern (Nationally Critical),

- North Island fernbird (Declining),
- Spotless Crake (Declining),
- Banded Rail (Declining),
- Archey's frog (Declining),
- Hochstetter's frog (Declining),
- North Island kaka (Recovering),
- Longfin eel (Declining),
- Giant kokopu (Declining),
- Inanga (Declining),
- Giant bully (Naturally Uncommon),
- Koura (Declining)
- North Island brown kiwi (Not Threatened).

For more information on these terms and the New Zealand Threat Classification System, please refer to: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/science-publications/conservation-publications/nz-threat-classification-system/>

2. *Have any studies been done on endangered creatures in the Tairua river catchment area including all branches including the hikuai stream/river catchment area?*

A fish survey was undertaken for the Department as part of an assessment for a restoration project at Duck Creek in 2015. This document accompanies our response as Attachment 1 (item 1).

As part of the Department of Conservations national monitoring programme to assess the status and trend in biodiversity across public conservation land, one plot has recently been monitored in the Tairua catchment – see the following link for more information on the monitoring programme and select Plot CU42 for specific information on the plot:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/monitoring-reporting/plot-level-report/>.

3. *Have any studies have been done in the tairua river catchment in regards to canopy collapse? including all branches and the hikuai stream/river catchment.*

We do not hold any information that investigates canopy collapse in the Tairua catchment. Subsequently this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the requested information is not held.

However, some historical data may possibly be of use. This data is publicly available via the National Vegetation Survey (NVS) and can be found at the following website: <https://nvs.landcareresearch.co.nz/Data/Search>

We have also located an unpublished DOC report of a field assessment in the past 25 years within the Tairua catchment which may be of interest. This document accompanies our response as Attachment 1 (Item 2).

4. *How many aerial 1080 operations have been performed over the Tairua river catchment area? including all branches and the hikuai stream/river catchment area.*

As advised in Ben Reddiex's letter of 23 April 2024, the Tairua river catchment falls within DOC's Hauraki Southern Forests aerial 1080 predator control site, where DOC is controlling rats, stoats and possums to protect vulnerable native species such as kiwi, Archey's and Hochstetter's frogs, and long-tailed bats across approximately 25,000 hectares. In the last 12 years, the Hauraki Southern Forests operation has taken place twice, in 2015 and 2020. An operation is currently being planned for 2024.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	2015	Biodiversity assessment of Duck Creek wetland [DOC- 2912806] (pdf file)	Released in part.
2	1999	Field Assessment, Tairua Valley. Unpublished report. [WAICO-5636]	Released in full

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.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

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

Nāku noa, nā



Hilary Aikman
Director Terrestrial Biodiversity
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai