



Bay of Plenty 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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Foreword

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

Taking account of the submissions and other information received, and following a national assessment process including key national recreation associate organisations, decisions have been made by this Conservancy.

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

Henry Weston

Conservator

Bay of Plenty

1. Executive summary

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Letters of invitation were sent to known local and regional recreation groups and other key associates, including iwi, to attend public meetings during November 2003. At these meetings people learnt about the proposals and how they could have their say by making written submissions by 31 January 2004.

SUBMITTERS AND SUBMISSIONS

There were a total of 149 submitters who provided 546 submissions between them; 84% of which opposed the proposals. These submissions consisted of 156 group submissions and 390 individual submissions. Between them submitters commented on 57 of the 72 proposals. Submissions were entered into an excel database and analysed during February and March. A representative group of trampers and tramping club members were invited to an informal meeting in the Tauranga DOC office in March to discuss issues of interest.

SUMMARY OF GENERAL POINTS FROM SUBMISSIONS

Submitters would generally like to see:

- Multi day tramping options on track networks with loop options.
- Retention of *all* back country huts as the essence of Kiwi tramping opportunity.
- Networks of huts or shelters along the North South track in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park required enabling multi-day tramp.
- Huts retained for use in search and rescue operations.
- Access for the disabled to tracks, signs and facilities e.g. toilets, car parks, huts, booked accommodation.
- New tracks developed around the Rotorua Lakes.
- Extension of the walkway at Tanners Point.
- More resources spent on facilities which are closer to urban areas.
- Tracks upgraded and maintained in the Kaimai rather than fund upgrading of Whirinaki Tracks.
- More strategic planning of recreational facilities in BOP
- More and better interpretation is needed in areas of historical, cultural and environmental interest.
- Better track and hut maintenance.
- Tracks retained at their present standard in the Whirinaki.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY VISION STATEMENT AND FUTURE CORE FACILITY NETWORK

Bay of Plenty

Bay of Plenty Conservancy is dominated by volcanic history providing a diverse range of landscapes and ecosystems. Remnant pre-human lowland forests and rich human history both feature strongly in this conservancy.

The Conservancy presents a variety of recreational settings including forest, lakes and coast. These recreational resources are within relatively easy reach of over half of New Zealand's population. There is increasing demand for recreational opportunities from the nearby urban areas of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga and Rotorua. As well as the coastal area of the Bay of Plenty, three nodes of recreation growth and pressure are the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park, Whirinaki Forest Park and Rotorua Lakes.

The need for the provision of a range of recreation opportunities, incorporating these settings, has been reinforced through the recreation opportunities review. There is increased emphasis on short stop and day visit sites and overnight tramping opportunities in the Kaimai Mamaku and Whirinaki forests.

The future network of facilities reflects both submissions, and the need to retain a core network of recreation facilities. By taking into account submissions more huts will be maintained, fewer huts will receive minimal maintenance and although there will be huts removed, alternative basic accommodation will be provided at locations that will support overnight tramping.

Proposals for tracks in the Bay of Plenty take into account both submissions and ongoing strategic development. The standard of tracks will be improved at several day visit and short stop sites.

Tracks decisions in the Northern-Kaimai reflect the intention to provide for a heritage trail and overnight tramping opportunities. Overnight tramping opportunities will continue to be developed in the Whirinaki Forest. Many sections of these tracks have already been upgraded and some decisions relate to track classification changes only, rather than increasing the present standard of the track. When the remaining sections of track are upgraded the overall result will be a high quality track network at Easy Tramping Track standard. There were a number of submissions suggesting either a new track at Tanners Point or enhancing the tracks in the Rotorua Lakes region. Further investigation will take place to determine the practicality and merit of these proposals.

Rangitaiki Area

The Rangitaiki Area contains a wide range of opportunities for recreation from the Whirinaki Forest Park to Waipunga Conservation Area, the beautiful Ohiwa Harbour and Moutohora Island. Whirinaki Forest contains amazingly tall trees, clear rushing rivers, a wide variety of habitats and a fascinating past.

This was one of New Zealand's most famous conservation battlegrounds, where people actively fought to save a magnificent native forest. Today Whirinaki's beauty is protected for everyone to enjoy through a comprehensive network of walks, tracks and huts and a range of more easily accessible opportunities for visitors.

Three huts in the Rangitiaki Area had proposals for minimal maintenance and three had proposals for an upgrade. Of these six, five will be maintained, and the Lower Matakuhia Hut will receive minimal maintenance until its retirement date.

The majority of the Whirinaki Circuit is already at Easy Tramping track standard. Several tracks for which upgrades are proposed entail a classification change only rather than any actual work on the ground. The upgrade of the remainder of this track, to complete the circuit, will allow a wider range of users to access the park in safety; in particular younger and older trampers and those of less ability than others.

All road and amenity area proposals received few submissions and are unchanged. Some road will be retained as mountain-biking or 4-wheel-drive recreational opportunities.

Tauranga Area

From forest to coast the Tauranga Area has a wide variety of places and opportunities for people to experience. Within easy driving distance of the majority of New Zealand's population, this Area includes the historically, environmentally and culturally significant Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park and the beautiful Orokawa Bay. It also contains many Scenic Reserves and islands such as Motuotau.

The proposal to remove Te Aroha and Mangakino Huts remains unchanged. Kauritatahi and Motutapere Huts will be removed and replaced with one shelter. Daly's Hut will receive minimal maintenance until the end of its life or until dilapidated. A community maintenance agreement is being pursued for Mangamuka Hut, if this is unsuccessful then it will also receive minimal maintenance until dilapidated or retired. Waitawheta Hut will be replaced with a larger (26 bunk) hut and Hurunui Hut will be maintained.

Due to public support there are two new proposals for new huts or shelters in the Kaimai, enhancing opportunities for overnight tramping from North to South. The 8 proposals to 'downgrade' tracks from the Easy Tramping Track classification (that they were mistakenly given some years ago) to Tramping Track standard remain unchanged, but people should note that the current track is generally below Tramping Track standard now, and some upgrade work will have to proceed.

Significant public interest has resulted in tracks between Te Rereatukahia Hut and the Wairongomai Valley being considered for an upgrade to Tramping track standard. An assessment of the track from Te Aroha/Wairongomai to the old Waitawheta Hut will take place, with the creation of a historic heritage trail from Wairongomai to Karangahake a consideration. The Waitawheta track will be upgraded, allowing a wider range of user access. The Wairongomai low level track, a Short Stop site, will be upgraded to enable wheelchair access.

Rotorua Lakes Area

The Rotorua Lakes Area contains some of the most spectacular landscape in the country, from forest-fringed lakes to the geothermal and volcanic landforms surrounding them. Rotorua's geothermal field contains 1200 geothermal features which include geysers, hot springs, mud pools and fumaroles, as well as silica terraces and flats.

Rotorua's geothermal wonders have been internationally famous for over a century. The city's steaming footpaths, mud pools, bathing hot pools and geothermal backdrop form a unique environment which continues to attract visitors from around the globe.

The Rotorua Lakes area received very few submissions; consequently there have been few changes to the original proposals. However, due to support and suggestions from several organisations and members of the public, the concept of a network of tracks around and between the lakes will be explored. Further investigation will take place to determine the practicality and merit of these proposals.

CONCLUSIONS

- These decisions balance the need to maintain the majority of the existing facility network while accommodating some demonstrated demand for new options.
- A wide range of opportunities will continue to be maintained, with some enhancement of day visit/short stop facilities and overnight tramping opportunities.
- In addition to a better network of facilities there will be increased possibilities for interpretation and community involvement in conservation activities.

2. Introduction

2.1 CONSULTATION

- Public consultation was undertaken as part of the Department's Recreation Opportunity Review 'Towards a Better Network of Visitor Facilities'.
- Consultation was launched on 30 September 2003, with a press release from the Minister of Conservation, and a press release from this conservancy. Letters were sent to local recreation groups and other key associates inviting them to attend public meetings during October 2003 to learn about the consultation process. Proposal documents and background resource material were provided as publications and on the DOC website to provide the basis for making submissions.
- A meeting was held with a group of recreational hunters and trappers or their representatives to explore some issues further.

2.2 IWI INVOLVEMENT

Local iwi have been involved from the start of the process with information provided on significant dates in the Review process and dates for area meetings. With regard to the possible future development of Rotorua lakes tracks, the Rotorua Lakes Area office has contacted all related iwi. The support of these members of the community is considered essential to the progress of this strategy.

2.3 PROCESS OF SUBMISSION CONSIDERATION

31/1	Closing date for submissions
1/2 - 7/3	Submissions entered into Excel database by Recreation Planner
3/3	Recreational Opportunity Review team meeting held at Conservancy with Recreation Planner, Community Relations Manager and the three Programme Managers to discuss analysis process.
1/3-19/3	Submissions analysed by Recreation Planner.
19/3-29/3	Summary of submissions circulated to Areas for comment.
18/3	Focus group meeting at Tauranga Area Office.
30/3-2/4	Area meetings held with Recreation Planner, Area Managers and Programme Managers to discuss submissions and make draft decisions.
3/4-15/4	First draft of Analysis Report written
16/4	First draft of Analysis Report circulated to Technical Support Manager, Community Relations Manager, Area Managers and Programme Managers for comment.
22/4	Recreational Opportunities Review team meeting (members as above) held at Conservancy to discuss effect of decisions on recreational opportunities in the Conservancy.
23/4	Final draft of Analysis Report given to Conservator for review
28/4	Decisions entered into Visitor Asset Management System
12/5	Final draft of report sent to Head Office for analysis.

2.4 SUBMISSION ANALYSIS PROCESS

- Submissions were all considered on their own individual merit. All submissions on the same proposal were then considered to determine the overall strength of submissions. Possible decisions were then considered, and compared with the stated strategic objectives for the location, such as those contained in the Conservation Management Strategy.
- The overall strength of submissions relating to particular proposals were addressed on the strengths of argument of all submissions with merit, and checked against the strategic intent behind the proposal.
- Those proposals that received no submissions were accepted provided that the original proposal reasons still stood and no general submission theme arising from further analysis would influence that decision.
- All decisions that differed from original proposals were considered together to establish the effect this may have had on the range of Conservancy recreation opportunities.

2.5 WHAT DECISIONS NOW MEAN

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

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

Formal planning processes will continue to provide the mechanism for change of these decisions as needed and ensuring public input (e.g. Conservation Management Strategy review, National Park Management Plan review), and Conservation Boards will assist the department to manage specific facility provision issues that will arise from time to time.

Section One

3. Submitters and submissions

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

3.1 NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS

- 149 submitters provided 546 submissions between them.
- Submissions consisted of 156 group submissions and 390 individual submissions.
- 52% of submitters came from within the Conservancy; 7% came from neighbouring Conservancies and 41% from further away (of which 38 or 26% of the total came from Auckland).
- 2 submissions made direct reference to the Principles to Guide the Core Facility Network (contained in the National Resource Document).
- 16% of submissions were supporting proposals and 84% were opposing proposals.

3.2 MAIN PROPOSALS COMMENTED ON

ASSET NAME (VISITOR GROUP)	SUBMISSIONS TOTAL: (OPPOSE/SUPPORT)
Te Aroha Mountain Hut (BCA)	62 (59/3)
Mangakino Hut (BCA)	55: (52/3)
Kauritatahi Hut (BCA)	51: (49/2)
Mid Okahu Hut (ON)	24: (20/4)
Waitawheta Hut (BCA)	21: (13/8)
Daly's Clearing Hut (BCA)	20: (13/7)
Nth-Sth Track to Wairongomai - Kauri Grove Track (BCA)	17: (15/2)
Nth-Sth Track - Cashmores to Te Rereatukahia Hut (RS)	15: (13/2)
Mangamuka Hut (BCA)	15: (14/1)
Te Tuhi Track (DV)	15: (13/2)
Cashmores Clearing Track (RS)	14: (11/3)
Nth-Sth Track (Wairere to Te Tuhi) (DV)	14: (11/3)

ASSET NAME (VISITOR GROUP)	SUBMISSIONS TOTAL: (OPPOSE/SUPPORT)
Nth-Sth Track - Cashmores Track to Pukekohutu Pk (RS)	13: (11/2)
Whangatawhia Hut (Skips) (BCC)	12: (8/4)
Motutapere Hut (BCA)	11: (10/1)
Upper Te Hoe Hut (BCA)	11: (8/3)
Hurunui Hut (BCA)	10: (2/8)
Hendersons Tramline (Western Branch) track (DV)	9: (7/2)
Upper Matakuhia Hut (BCA)	8: (7/1)
Mt Eliza Mine - Nth-Sth Track (BCA)	8: (6/2)
Waitawheta Track (Bluff Stm Jcn -Waitawheta Hut) (BCA)	8: (7/1)

3.3 PROPOSALS THAT RECEIVED THE MOST SUBMISSIONS AND SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY

RANGITAIKI AREA

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME	PROPOSAL (SUBMISSIONS)
Whirinaki Forest Park		
32286	Mid Okahu Hut	Minimal Maintenance (24 submissions: 4 support/20 oppose)
<p>Key argument was that the hut is well used for hunting and could be easily maintained. Submitters felt only reason DOC was running the hut down was to allow larger huts to be built. Community maintenance offers from NZDA. Strength of submissions indicates that there is a significant recreation group that wants to keep this hut. Federated Mountain Club (FMC) NZ and the Alpine Club agreed with the proposal.</p>		
32214	Whangatawhia Hut (Skips)	Replace - Bigger Size (8 Submissions: 4 support/4 oppose)
<p>Some submitters found proposal unclear. The proposal is to maintain the hut until its retirement date in 2020 and then 'remove and not replace' and build a new hut at Rogers. Some submitters may have been unclear that the proposal will not take place until the hut is retired and also that this hut was to be removed and another built at the Rogers site.</p> <p>The four opposing submitters wanted this hut to be retained in its present location, rather than being moved to Rogers Hut site. Two reasons were given. The first being that the hut is accessible for families and people who travel far to get to the park and who only wish to walk a short distance on the first night; the second that the hut is mosquito and sand fly free in comparison to the Rogers Site. Submitters did not want to see removal of the historic Rogers Hut.</p> <p>Six opposing submissions see this hut upgrade as part of a wider proposal to upgrade the Whirinaki Circuit Track and are against this (Contradicting the Bay of Plenty Conservation Management Strategy 3.8.3). Four state that the upgrade would lead to budgets being diverted from other parts of the conservancy such as the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park. The Alpine Club agreed with the proposal as long as it was no bigger than 10 bunks.</p>		
32568	Upper Te Hoe Hut	Replace - Bigger Size (11 submissions: 8 oppose/3 support)
<p>Submitters were mainly unaware of the proposed date of replacement (2025), perceiving replacement to be taking place earlier. The key argument against the proposal is that the present hut is an appropriate size and the use of it does not warrant its upgrading. As with previous proposal submitters do not want facilities upgraded in the Whirinaki at the expense of facilities elsewhere in the conservancy. There were seven individual submissions. FMC NZ and the Alpine Club support the proposal.</p>		
Waipunga Conservation Area		
34249	Upper Matakuhia Hut	Minimal Maintenance (8 submissions: 7 oppose/1 support)
<p>The key argument is that this hut does receive visitors and so should be maintained.</p> <p>Submitters argue that too many backcountry huts are being removed and that a network of basic huts is more important than a few large huts. Three tramping clubs state that they use this hut and want it maintained. The Alpine Club was in favour of the proposal.</p>		

TAURANGA AREA

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME	PROPOSAL (SUBMISSIONS)
Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park		
32545	Te Aroha Mountain Hut	Remove/Not Replace (62 submissions: 59 oppose/3 support)
<p>There is a considerable strength of submissions opposing this removal.</p> <p>The key argument against this proposal is that some form of shelter is needed at this site for safety reasons (22 submissions), particularly for Search and Rescue (SAR) teams. Several submissions suggest that the hut could be replaced with a shelter modelled on examples used on Stewart Island. Many submissions state that the hut should be kept on heritage grounds (23) and as part of a network of smaller huts (12).</p> <p>Other arguments for keeping the hut were that it was close to large centres of population; resources used for removing the hut would be better spent on track maintenance; the hut requires minimal maintenance; it could be given to local hunting clubs or individuals; it is being maintained by the public and its removal would result in a reduction of facilities for traditional New Zealand trampers with larger facilities being built for tourists.</p> <p>Several submissions suggested that the hut was well used and well located. However the hut book indicates less than 50 bed nights per year for the last 3 years and around 120 visitors per year, indicating that the hut has low use.</p> <p>Two tramping clubs, Thames Valley Deerstalkers, Te Aroha Community Board and Matamata Piako District Council were opposed to the removal of this hut. Supporters of the proposal, including the Alpine Club, stated that the hut was not needed.</p>		
32280	Mangakino Hut	Remove/Not Replace (55 submissions: 52 oppose/3 support)
<p>There is a considerable strength of submissions opposing this removal. The key argument against the removal of this hut was that it requires minimal maintenance, is part of a network of small huts and is used for walking the historic Mangakino Pack Track so should be kept on historic grounds. Further arguments are that this hut is needed for trampers caught out in adverse weather and that if it is removed it should be replaced with a shelter.</p> <p>Some submitters state that Daly's Clearing Hut is offered as an alternative yet is proposed to be removed as well; that the hut requires minimal maintenance, is being maintained by the public, so why use resources to remove it when these resources could be better spent on track maintenance; that the hut is close to large centres of population and therefore needed; that the hut is used by fishermen and by SAR teams.</p> <p>Some submitters state that the hut is important as it is accessible from Auckland on a Friday night with only 90 minutes tramping, challenging the hut principle that a hut should not be retained if it is less than 3 hours from a road end. Three tramping clubs, Thames Valley Deerstalkers, Te Aroha Community Board, and Matamata Piako District Council were opposed to the removal of this hut. The submissions that agreed with the proposal did not view the hut as being needed. The Alpine Club also agreed with the proposal.</p>		
32403	Kauritatahi Hut	Remove/Not Replace (51 submissions: 49 oppose/2 support)
<p>There is a considerable strength of submissions opposing this removal.</p> <p>The key argument against the removal of this hut is that the ecological damage caused by deer is worse than the localised damage caused by hunters accessing the hut. Therefore by removing the hut and reducing access for hunters the deer population would increase. In addition that the damage is caused because the track (that submitters argue does exist) to the hut has not been cleared and clearance would reduce localised damage and deer.</p> <p>A second key argument is that the hut is well located and part of local heritage; that this hut is needed as part of a network of smaller huts and that a campsite would not be appropriate at this site due to adverse weather conditions and boggy ground. A few submitters also argue that this hut is necessary as a shelter for SAR teams.</p> <p>One tramping club and Thames Valley Deerstalkers were opposed to the removal of this hut. Several submitters suggested maintain by community would be a good option. One submission that agreed with the proposal did not view the hut as being needed. The Alpine Club also agreed with the proposal.</p>		
32233	Waitawheta Hut	Replace - bigger size (21 Submissions: 13 Oppose/8 Support)
<p>The key argument against the proposal is that the resources used for the replacement would be better spent on the maintenance of track and a network of smaller huts. This would indicate that many submitters were unaware that the resources for this hut would come from the National Pool rather than Conservancy managed capital.</p> <p>Several of the submitters also argue that a replacement is not necessary and that the present hut should be maintained.</p> <p>Several of the submitters, both for and against the proposal, state that the new 'old mill' site is not as good as the original site. Reasons given in favour of the old original site are that it faces north so gets the sun, is in a sunny clearing that can be used for camping and helicopter landing, is near a swimming hole, has a good water supply and has a good escape route in case of visitors being trapped by a rising river. The lack of an escape route is given as a disadvantage for the old mill site as is the fact that the site would not be accessible if the two bridges that need to be crossed to get to the site were damaged.</p> <p>Of the 8 submitters who were in favour of the hut being replaced, 3 suggested that a warden was not needed and that the finance needed should be used elsewhere, e.g. track maintenance. The Auckland Catholic Tramping Club, the Te Aroha Community Board and Matamata Piako District Council were not in favour of the proposal. FMC NZ agreed with the proposal if it is built at the sawmill site. The Alpine Club agreed with the proposal providing the hut was not greater than 10 bunks.</p>		

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME	PROPOSAL (SUBMISSIONS)
32323	Daly's Clearing Hut	Minimal Maintenance (20 Submissions: 13 Oppose/7 support)
<p>The key argument against the proposal for minimal maintenance and removal once dilapidated for this hut is that it is popular and well located enabling overnight tramps on the Mangakino Loop track. Some submitters argue that it is excellently located for family orientated overnight tramps and for lesser abled trampers due to its proximity to a road end. This argument is based on the merit of the hut and challenges the hut principle that a hut should be removed if less than three hours from a road end.</p> <p>Submitters that agree with the proposal argue that vandalism is an issue, but that the hut should be replaced with a shelter if removed. Two tramping clubs were opposed to minimal maintenance. FMC NZ and the Alpine Club agreed with the proposal.</p>		
96447	Nth-Sth Track to Wairongomai - Kauri Grove Track	Cease Maintenance (17 submissions: 15 oppose/2 support)
<p>The key argument against this proposal is that this track and the other 3 tracks proposed for Cease Maintenance provide a significant recreation opportunity for local and regional visitors; and that well defined tracks and boardwalks would reduce impacts on vegetation. One submitter indicates that local groups have been protesting the lack of maintenance on these tracks for 10 years.</p> <p>Other arguments for maintenance are that these tracks have a heritage component as they are part of the old North-South Track; access is needed for SAR; Venture Scouts and Rangers and the public use the track as a loop track; and that if these tracks cross areas of ecological significance then a well formed track would both enable visitors to view the vegetation and create less impacts than a derelict track. Two tramping clubs, Rotorua NZDA, the Te Aroha Community board and Matamata Piako District Council and FMC NZ were against the closure of these tracks.</p>		
96449	Nth-Sth Track - Cashmores to Te Rereatukahia Hut	Cease Maintenance (15 submissions: 13 oppose/2 support)
<p>The key argument against this proposal is that this track and the other 3 tracks proposed for Cease Maintenance provide a significant recreation opportunity for local and regional visitors; and that well defined tracks and boardwalks would reduce impacts on vegetation. One submitter indicates that local groups have been protesting against the lack of maintenance on these tracks for 10 years.</p> <p>Other arguments for maintenance are that these tracks have a heritage component as they are part of the old North-South track; access is needed for SAR; Venture Scouts and Rangers and the public use the track as a loop track; and that if these tracks cross areas of ecological significance then a well formed track would both enable visitors to view the vegetation and create less impacts than a derelict track. Two tramping clubs and Rotorua NZDA were against the closure of these tracks. Te Aroha Community Board was happy with this proposal</p>		
32410	Mangamuka Hut	Minimal Maintenance (15 submissions: 14 oppose/1 support)
<p>The key argument against the proposal is that this hut is needed for recreation hunters and should not be removed once dilapidated. Submitters argue that the hut is well used by recreation hunters who contribute to the eradication of pest deer.</p> <p>One submitter agrees with minimal maintenance, but not with removal and suggests an addendum stating 'Review needs for campsite/shelter when minimal maintenance no longer an option'. Another submitter suggests that the shelter be moved to the site of the old Ngamuwahine shelter at the end of its life.</p> <p>Thames Valley Deerstalkers made an offer to maintain this hut. One tramping club and the NZDA were against the proposal. The Alpine Club was in favour of the proposal.</p>		
96391	Te Tuhi Track	Maintain at Lower Standard (15 submissions: 13 oppose/2 support)
<p>The key argument against downgrading this track from Walking Track to Tramping Track is that it is significant both in terms of recreation and heritage. Submitters perceive the track has not been maintained in recent years and that downgrading will result in the track being closed. Some submitters wanted the track upgraded further and interpretation panels installed to advise visitors of the track's historic significance (an old stage coach track and stock route).</p> <p>The Thames Valley Deerstalkers and the NZDA were against downgrading. One individual submitter indicated the track should be maintained at Tramping Track standard as did FMC NZ. At a focus group meeting several of these submitters were advised that by maintaining the track at Tramping Track standard the standard of the track would be higher than it is now. This point was accepted.</p>		
96451	Cashmores Clearing Track	Cease Maintenance (14 submissions: 11 oppose/3 support)
<p>The key argument against this proposal is that this track and the other 3 tracks proposed for Cease Maintenance provide a significant recreation opportunity for local and regional visitors; and that well defined tracks and boardwalks would reduce impacts on vegetation. One submitter indicates that local groups have been protesting the lack of maintenance on these tracks for 10 years. Other arguments for maintenance are that these tracks have a heritage component as they are part of the old North-South track; access is needed for SAR; Venture Scouts and Rangers and the public use the track as a loop track; and that if these tracks cross areas of ecological significance then a well formed track would both enable visitors to view the vegetation and create less impacts than a derelict track.</p> <p>Two tramping clubs and Rotorua NZDA were against the closure of these tracks. Te Aroha Community Board was happy with this proposal. FMC NZ did not object to the closure.</p>		

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME	PROPOSAL (SUBMISSIONS)
96399	Nth-Sth Track (Wairere to Te Tuhi)	Maintain at Lower Standard (14 submissions: 11 oppose/3 support)
<p>The key argument against the downgrading of this track from Walking Track to Tramping Track standard is that it is used by hunters and trampers as an access track to the park and is of historic significance. Most submitters want the track maintained at least to the level it is now if not up graded. One individual submitter and FMC NZ indicated the track should be maintained at Tramping Track standard. At a focus group meeting several of these submitters were advised that by maintaining the track at Tramping Track standard the standard of the track would be higher than it is now. This point was accepted.</p>		
96456	Nth-Sth Track – Cashmores Track to Pukekohutu Pk	Cease Maintenance (13 submissions: 11 oppose/2 support)
<p>The key argument against this proposal is that this track and the other 3 tracks proposed for Cease Maintenance provide a significant recreational opportunity for local and regional visitors; and that well defined tracks and boardwalks would reduce impacts on vegetation.</p> <p>One submitter indicates that local groups have been protesting against the lack of maintenance on these tracks for 10 years. Other arguments for maintenance are that these tracks have a heritage component as they are part of the old North-South Track; access is needed for SAR; Venture Scouts and Rangers and the public use the track as a loop track; and that if these tracks cross areas of ecological significance then a well formed track would both enable visitors to view the vegetation and create less impacts than a derelict track.</p> <p>Two tramping clubs and FMC NZ were against the closure of these tracks. Te Aroha Community Board and Matamata District Council were happy with this proposal.</p>		
32336	Motutapere Hut	Minimal Maintenance (11 submissions: 10 oppose/1 support)
<p>The key argument against this proposal is more to do with the fact that the hut will be removed and not replaced at the end of its life. Submitters would prefer to see the hut replaced with a shelter, modelled on those on Stewart Island, to facilitate SAR. Some submitters including the Auckland Catholic Tramping club indicate that the hut is at present maintained by the public and should be maintained on historic and recreation grounds. Some submitters suggest community maintenance would be a good option. The Alpine Club was in favour of the proposal.</p>		
32833	Hurunui Hut	Replace – bigger size 10 submissions: 2 oppose/8 support)
<p>The key argument in favour of upgrading this hut is that a hut is needed at this location as part of a North –South Track in the Kaimai Range. Some submitters suggest that the Ngamuwahine Clearing would be a better place for a new hut. Some submitters make the point that as the local population increases and track are upgraded so this park will become more popular so necessitating more huts. The two submitters that did not agree with the proposal including Auckland Catholic Tramping Club did not agree that the hut need replacing just maintaining. FMC NZ and the Alpine Club agreed with the proposal. The Alpine Club would like the hut to be no bigger than 10 bunks.</p>		
96397	Henderson’s Tramline (Western Branch) track	Maintain at Lower Standard (9 submissions: 7 oppose/2 support)
<p>The key argument against downgrading this track from Walking Track to Tramping Track standard was that the track should be maintained at least to its present level; as it is popular with hunters and trampers and part of a circuit track. At a focus group meeting several of these submitters were advised that by maintaining the track at Tramping Track standard the standard of the track would be higher than it is now. This point was accepted. FMC NZ agreed with Tramping Track standard.</p>		
96828	Mt Eliza Mine – Nth-Sth Track	Maintain at Lower Standard (8 submissions: 6 oppose/2 support)
<p>The key argument against downgrading this track from Walking Track to Tramping Track standard was that the track should be maintained at least to its present level; as it is popular with hunters and trampers and part of a circuit track. At a focus group meeting several of these submitters (including the NZDA) were advised that by maintaining the track at to Tramping Track standard the standard of the track would be higher than it is now. This point was accepted. One submitter agreed that the track should be maintained to Tramping Track standard. FMC states that Route is appropriate.</p>		
96438	Waitawheta Track (Bluff Stm Jcn –Waitawheta Hut)	Upgrade to Higher Standard (8 submissions: 7 oppose/1 support)
<p>The key argument against the upgrade of this track is that submitters don’t want to see resources take away from other tracks and spent on this one. They also indicate that they want this track maintained at Tramping Track standard to provide a challenge. One submitter also questioned whether upgrading the track would allow easier access to the new Waitawheta Hut and so increase the likelihood of vandalism. One tramping club and FMC NZ oppose the upgrade of the track.</p>		

3.4. OTHER SUBMISSIONS ON PROPOSALS

Rangitaiki

WHIRINAKI FOREST PARK

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
32700	Mangamate Hut (Replace Bigger size)	3 Against/4 For	Those submitters against the proposed replacement argued that the money saved by not building the hut could be spent on upgrading/maintaining other huts and tracks in the conservancy. Of the 4 that supported the proposal (including FMC NZ and the Alpine Club), one suggested a 12 bunk hut and one no more than 10.
96633	Cathedral Grove Track (Cease Maintenance)	2 Against	One submitter suggests maintain at Route standard.
96674	Plateau-Upper Whirinaki Track (Maintain at Lower Standard - Route)	4 Against/2 For	Submitters want a basic cleared track as, they argue, it is popular and trampers take children along it and it should be maintained at existing standard (Tramping Track).
96690	Caves to Upper Whirinaki/Whirinaki River to Upper Whirinaki Hut Tracks (Maintain at Lower Standard - Tramping Track)	3 Against/1 For	Submitters want a basic cleared track as, they argue, it is popular and trampers take children along it and it should be maintained at existing standard (Easy Tramping Track).

ALL UPGRADE TO HIGHER STANDARD (EASY TRAMPING TRACK)

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
96629	Moerangi Stm (Rogers to Moerangi) Track	7 Against	The key argument against these proposals to upgrade tracks in the Whirinaki Forest Park to Easy Tramping Track standard is that this track in neither appropriate nor necessary and that the resources would be better spent elsewhere in the Conservancy i.e. the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park. In addition several submitters make the value judgement that they prefer the rugged nature of the Whirinaki to Easy Tramping Tracks.
96632	Central Te Hoe to Mangakahika Track (Bullring to Mangakahika Hut)	5 Against	
96651	Pukahunui - Upper Te Hoe Track	4 Against/1 For	
96676	Taumutu Stm Track	4 Against	
96677	Mangamate Stm Track	3 Against	
96631	Central Te Hoe to Mangakahika Track - Central Te Hoe swingbridge to Bullring	4 Against	
96678	Moerangi track	4 Against	
97779	Upper Whirinaki Track	5 Against	
96682	Upper Te Hoe - Central Te Hoe track	6 Against	
99021	Pukahunui Track (road to Upper Whiri Track Junction)	3 Against	
96684	Oruiwaka Ecological Area Track (Upgrade to Higher Standard - SW)2 Against		Submitters argue that upgrade is unnecessary and this track should be maintained at Easy Tramping Track Standard.
100011	Okahu Campsite (Cease Maintenance)	1 Against/1For	NZDA argues that this campsite should be maintained as it is well used by hunters. FMC NZ agreed with the proposal.

WAIPUNGA CONSERVATION AREA

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
34250	Lwr Matakuhia Hut (Minimal Maintenance)	6 Against/1 For	Submitters are against the removal of this hut on the grounds that it should be maintained as part of a network of small huts. The Alpine Club was in favour of the proposal.
96624	Opureke Track (Maintain at Lower Standard)	2 Against/2 For	Submitters want the track maintained to Tramping Track standard as it would provide a good day tramp and suggest lack of use is because of lack of maintenance. One submitter wants the track marked where it leaves Waipunga Road. FMC NZ state Route is appropriate.

AWAITI WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT RESERVE

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
97782	Awaiti Wetland Loop Track (Cease Maintenance)	1 Against	NZDA are strongly against this proposal as, they argue preservation, conservation and maintenance of the wetland depends on EBOP, Fish and Game and duck-hunters being able to access the area with vehicles.

ALL ROAD PROPOSALS

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
98448	Mangawiri Access Road (Maintain at Lower Standard - Walking Track)	1 For	FMC NZ agrees with the proposal to retain these roads as mountain bike tracks.
98450	Hydro Access Road (Maintain at Lower Standard - Tramping Track)	1 For	FMC NZ agrees with the proposal to retain these roads as mountain bike tracks.
98466	Kopuatoto Road (Maintain at Lower Standard - Tramping Track)	1 For	FMC NZ agrees with the proposal to retain these roads as mountain bike tracks.

Tauranga

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
97788	Lake Hiwiroa Track (Cease maintenance)	6 Against	Submitters want this track maintained, one suggests at Route standard. FMC NZ would like to see the walk retained.
96411	Te Rereioturu Falls to road track (Maintain at Lower standard - Tramping Track)	5 Against	Submitters argue that this track should be maintained (to Tramping Track standard) as part of the North South Track and because it is well used. One submitter added that it needs to be maintained on safety grounds and that the closure of Frankhams Road by a locked gate on the Ng-atuhoa Stream prevents emergency vehicles from reaching exhausted or injured trampers. FMC NZ requests an alternative access to the Falls given the Lodge owner's entrenched position and the resulting access difficulties for the public.
96412	Youth Lodge to Te Rereioturu Falls Track (Maintain at Lower standard - Tramping Track)	6 Against	Three submitters said maintain at Tramping Track standard, two wanted the track maintained on safety grounds, including the Kaimai Youth Camp Society which wanted an upgrade on safety grounds as many school age students use the track. FMC NZ requests an alternative access to the Falls given the Lodge owner's entrenched position and the resulting access difficulties for the public.

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
96424	Wairongomai - Kauri Grove track (Maintain at Lower standard - Tramping Track)	5 Against/2 For	Submitters say this track should either be maintained or upgraded with one submitter stating that there are plenty of examples of ways to access Kauri without damaging them. FMC NZ states Route is appropriate.
96473	Te Rereioturu Falls Track, Ngatuhoa (Maintain at Lower standard- Tramping Track)	4 Against/1 For	Three submitters want this track maintained at Tramping Track standard and one is happy with the proposal. FMC NZ requests an alternative access to the Falls given the Lodge owner's entrenched position and the resulting access difficulties for the public.
97786	Wharawhara Link Track (Maintain at Lower Standard - Tramping Track)	4 Against/1 For	Submitters feel that this track should be either maintained or upgraded as it is part of the North-South Track, it is an access point to the North-South Track or it allows a loop trip to be made. FMC NZ agreed with the proposal.
96396	Rapurapu Kauri Track (Upgrade to higher standard - Walking Track)	5 Against	Submitters (including FMC NZ) wanted this track maintained at Tramping Track standard, two because they did not want to see resources directed away from track maintenance on other tracks which they saw as a higher priority and one because they did not want the challenge of the track taken away from children who come to the site. They just wanted the landing and steps around the kauri and the approaches to the stream crossings upgraded.
96459	Wairongomai Low Level track (Upgrade to higher standard- Walking Track)	5 Against/1 For	Submitters felt that this track did not need upgrading and that resources should not be directed away from other tracks which needed clearing or upgrading. FMC NZ stated that Walking Track was appropriate.
96461	Te Aroha Track (Upgrade to higher standard - Walking Track)	2 Against/3 For	Three submitters were in favour of the upgrade (including YHA NZ and FMC NZ), one felt that it should be maintained as a route and one felt that it should maintained at the present level and the resources saved spent on upgrading or clearing the track in between Te Aroha and Waitawheta Hut.

Rotorua Lakes

LAKE ROTOMA SCENIC RESERVE

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
96446	Rotoma Bridle Track (Maintain by community)	1 Against/3 For	Three submitters were happy to see the track maintained by the community (including YHA NZ), but the Rotoma Ratepayers Association (RRA) was strongly against the proposal for a variety of reasons, mainly that the sustainability of maintenance was not reliable and local skill level was uncertain. RRA also believed the track was well used by the local community. The proposal documents justification for community maintenance is that this track has marginal levels of visitor use. RRA state that this indicates tracks used by visitors/tourists are considered (by DOC) to be more important than those used by locals.

LAKE OKATAINA SCENIC RESERVE

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
96428	Te Auheke Track (Upgrade to higher standard)	1 Against/1 For	One submitter was happy to see this track upgraded but one would like to see the track remain at Walking Track not Short Walk standard.
96437	Rongomai Track (W.Okataina W/way to L.Okataina Road) (Maintain at lower standard - Cease Maintenance/ Tramping Track)	1 Against/1 For	One submitter stated that they would be strongly in favour of a loop track completely around Lake Okataina at Tramping Track standard if land ownership makes this practical. FMC NZ agreed with the proposal.

MOKAIHAHA ECOLOGICAL AREA

ASSET NUMBER	FACILITY NAME (PROPOSAL)	SUBMISSIONS	SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY
96646	Mokaihaha Track (Upgrade to higher standard - Walking Track)	1 Against	The submitter would like to see this track maintained at Tramping Track standard as Walking Track is unnecessary in this area.
98471	Mt Tarawera Access Road (Maintain by community)	1 Against	The submitter would like to see the road maintained by MTNZ Ltd.

3.5 PROPOSALS THAT DID NOT RECEIVE SUBMISSIONS

Rangitaiki

96647 Matata SR Track, Matata Scenic Reserve (Maintain at a lower standard)

96649 Lathams Track, Awakeri (Maintain at a Lower standard)

100345 Ohope Roadend carpark (Upgrade to higher standard)

All road proposals except 98448, 98450, 98466

Tauranga

None

Rotorua Lakes

96648 Rotoma Mountain bike track (Cease Maintenance)

96634 Blue Lake Track (Maintain by community)

101209 Manawahe picnic area, Lake Rotoma Scenic Reserve (Upgrade to standard)

98474 Rainbow Mtn Summit Road (Maintain by community).

4. User group meetings

A working group was held at Tauranga Area Office on 18 March consisting of several submitters on Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park proposals. Several areas were discussed with the main topic of the meeting being the Conservancy's proposals for huts. The meeting was advised of the 'Maintain by community' process and a contact person identified.

Main points that came out of the meeting were:

- Deerstalkers from Te Aroha and Tauranga were interested in providing volunteer labour to help with maintenance work. They were particularly interested in Hurunui and Mangamuka huts.
- Kauritatahi Hut could be replaced with a hut further down the valley.
- There was general agreement that a hut was needed in the vicinity of Motutapere to provide shelter/stopover opportunity for trampers doing the North South track.
- The majority of participants were happy to replace Te Aroha Hut with a shelter.
- Mangakino was still seen as a popular hut close to a road end and currently maintained by users.
- General agreement that the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park has been neglected and needed an injection of funding.

A meeting was also held at Bay of Plenty Conservancy to discuss ecological damage regarding tracks near Cashmores Clearing proposed for cease maintenance. A Technical Support Officer advised they would be comfortable with this track being reopened providing the track was maintained to a higher level than at present, particularly with regard to water management.

5. Summary of general points

The following comments relate to the merits of the general points in terms of relevant legislation and Recreational Opportunities Review process guidelines, namely:

- Consistency with Principles to Guide a Core Facility Network
- Visitor Strategy
- CMS objectives
- Proposal document Conservancy Overview section
- Consistency with neighbouring conservancies where relevant

Submitters would like to see multi day tramping options on track networks with loop options.

The department's response to this is that this is fully compatible with strategic intent and is a sound track planning principle. This will be pursued in the future.

Many submitters would like to see the retention of all back country huts as the essence of Kiwi tramping opportunity:

The department's response is that this is not achievable given the limitations of funds available and the objective of achieving a core network of recreation opportunities that meet the needs and expectations of a range of user groups.

Some submitters would like to see a network of huts or shelters along the North South track in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park that will enable a multi-day tramp.

The department's response is that this is a sound idea that will be pursued.

Submitters highlight the value of huts in search and rescue operations. Submitters raised concerns that the loss of huts will mean operations would take longer, with the risk of loss of life and greater difficulties for the rescue teams.

The department's response is that the huts in question are not needed due to the predominant use of helicopters in Search and Rescue.

Submitters would like to see improved access for the disabled to tracks, signs and facilities e.g. toilets, car parks, huts, booked accommodation. Four submitters including CCS make the point that wheelchair access is desirable. Several submitters suggest that there is a need for more Walking Track/Short Walk sites to cater for trampers with disabilities or older/less fit trampers.

The department is obligated under the New Zealand Disability Strategy to consider disabled people before making decisions. In the course of ongoing track management, the department intends to evaluate existing short walks and walking tracks, and their links to car parks and toilets, to enhance wheelchair accessibility.

Submitters would like to see a Maintain by Community option for tracks and contract track maintenance where the Department is unwilling or unable to maintain these assets.

The department's response is that there were few actual offers made. Although there were several offers to give voluntary help to DOC for the maintenance of tracks in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park. This suggests there is room for expanding the volunteer programme operating out of the Tauranga Area Office.

Some submitters would like to see new tracks developed around the Rotorua Lakes. There were four general submissions regarding the need for a track to complete the circuit around Lake Okareka; four regarding the need for a track to complete the walkway around Lake Okataina and five regarding tracks around Lake Tarawera.

The department response is that new tracks are not generally appropriate as this review and the additional funding are not seen as an expansion process. However new tracks may be appropriate where there is a deficiency of a particular opportunity or on merits of being essential or of future strategic value. The feasibility of establishing these tracks will now be investigated.

Twelve submitters make the point that the additional funding should be spent on maintaining current tracks rather than upgrading others or constructing new ones.

The Department's response is the same as the last point in that this period should not be seen as one of undue expansion. Rather it is one of consolidation of existing issues. While options may be investigated for new tracks, at this stage few new tracks will be constructed.

Submitters want the department to ensure there is accurate track and but information in Area Offices.

The department's response is that this issue is being addressed with improved information in Area offices and on the DOC website.

A considerable number of submitters would like to see a track constructed across the marginal strip at Tanners Point, Katikati. This track would contribute to the development of Tauranga Harbour walkway.

The department response is that new tracks are not generally appropriate as this review and the additional funding are not seen as an expansion process. However new tracks may be appropriate where there is a deficiency of a particular opportunity or on merits of being essential or of future strategic value. The feasibility of establishing these tracks will now be investigated.

Submitters would like more resources spent on facilities which are closer to urban areas. There were 17 submissions that highlighted the fact that the Bay of Plenty is within range of a large proportion of the population of New Zealand. In particular submitters suggest that tracks and huts in the Kaimai should be upgraded due to rapid growth in nearby urban areas. In addition some submitters criticised the lack of track and hut maintenance in recent years.

The department's response is that all Areas of the Bay of Plenty will see an improvement in the quality of the recreational facilities within them in the next few years. The Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park will have considerable investment in track maintenance, recreation facilities, interpretation and in the quality of information available to the people using the Park. The lack of maintenance has been acknowledged and will be addressed as funding becomes available.

Submitters perceive the proposal to upgrade tracks in the Whirinaki as being at the expense of tracks in the Kaimai; which they consider to be closer to centres of population. Submitters would prefer to see the upgrade and maintenance of tracks in the Kaimai rather than the funding of Whirinaki Track upgrades.

The Department's response is that no Area within the Conservancy will have resources directed to it at the expense of another. All Areas and the facilities within them are of equal priority.

Some submitters feel there appears to be little strategic planning of recreational facilities in the Bay of Plenty.

The department's response is that this is being addressed in the Bay of Plenty Recreation Strategy.

Submitters suggest more and better interpretation is needed in areas of historical, cultural and environmental interest.

The department's response is that this is being addressed in the Bay of Plenty Interpretation Strategy.

Section Two

6. Making decisions

These decisions for facilities have been based on the material provided by the submissions, meetings, general points and meetings with Area and Programme Managers. Consistency has been sought in decisions where similar arguments apply.

6.1 RANGITAIKI AREA

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Whirinaki Forest Park				
Mid Okahu Hut 32286	Minimal Maintenance	Basic Maintenance/Community Maintenance	Maintain	Although close to road end this hut is popular with hunters and requires little maintenance. Hut has significant current use. Decision may be reviewed in the future if current use patterns decline.
Whanga-tawhia Hut (Skips) 32214	Replace - bigger size	Maintain at present site or if upgraded retain at present site.	Maintain	Popular hut and often crowded. Maintain until retirement date (2020). Then replace with larger hut at present site.
Upper Te Hoe Hut 32568	Replace - bigger size	Maintain	Maintain	Popular hut in strategic location. Maintain until retirement date (2025). Then replace with larger hut.
Mangamate Hut 32700	Replace - Bigger Size	Marginally in favour of upgrade.	Maintain	Popular hut in strategic location. Maintain until retirement date (2015). Then replace with larger hut. On popular weekend tramping opportunity.
Waipunga Conservation Area				
Upper Matakuhia Hut 34249	Minimal Maintenance	Maintain	Maintain	Submissions are in favour of maintaining this hut. Maintain to end of life (2015) and monitor visitor nights to determine if hut will be replaced.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Lower Matakuhia Hut 34250	Minimal Maintenance	Maintain	Minimal maintenance	Remove and not replace at retirement date (2015) or when reaches dilapidated state. Hut is poorly located strategically, has minimal use and does not provide a significant recreational opportunity.
Whirinaki Forest Park – Track				
Cathedral Grove Track 96633	Cease Maintenance	Maintain at Route	Cease Maintenance	Low use site due to extremely difficult access over poor condition forestry roads. Not suited to predominant visitor group unless access improves.
Plateau - Upper Whirinaki Track 96674	Maintain at Lower Standard (Route)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain track at Tramping Track standard when surrounding tracks upgraded to Easy Tramping Track as not part of circuit track.
Caves to Upper Whirinaki/Whirinaki River to Upper Whirinaki Hut Tracks 96690	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain track at Tramping Track standard when surrounding tracks upgraded to Easy Tramping Track as not part of circuit track.
Moerangi Stm (Rogers to Moerangi) Track 96629	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	9km of new track needed to ensure visitor safety and to complete Whirinaki circuit and enable increased access from a wider cross section of society.
Central Te Hoe to Mangakahika Track - Bullring to Mangakahika Hut 96632	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Tracks)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	The majority of this track is currently at Easy Tramping track standard. One bridge is required to complete this section of the circuit. Change in classification to align track with its current standard.
Pukahunui - Upper Te Hoe Track 96651	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	This track is currently at Easy Tramping track standard. Change in classification to align track with standard.
Taumutu Stm Track 96676	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	The majority of this track is currently at Easy Tramping track standard, a short section will be upgraded to bring this track to the standard of surrounding tracks. Change in classification to align track with its current standard.
Mangamate Stream Track 96677	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	A 4km section of track either side of the Mangamate Hut is already at Easy Tramping track standard. Upgrading of this track at either end will ensure visitor safety and align track with surrounding tracks.
Central Te Hoe to Mangakahika Track - Central Te Hoe swing-bridge to Bullring 96631	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	This track is currently at Easy Tramping track standard. Change in classification to align track with standard
Moerangi Track 96678	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track Standard.	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	The majority of this track is already at Easy Tramping track standard. This upgrade is required for track rationalisation and to align track with its current standard.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Upper Whirinaki Track 96679	Upgrade to Higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Due to track realignment 5km of new track is required. Track will be upgraded to align track with surrounding track standard and to complete the circuit track.
Upper Te Hoe - Central Te Hoe Track 96682	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	The majority of this track is currently at Easy Tramping track standard. This reclassification aligns track with its current standard.
Oruiwaka Ecological Area Track 96684	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Short Walk)	Maintain at Easy Tramping Track standard.	Maintain at present standard (Walking Track)	Align with current standard of track. Upgrade of track to Short Walk standard would involve considerable realignment that would be problematic in an ecological area.
Pukahunui track (road to Upper Whiri Track Junction 99021	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Track does not need to be upgraded as part of the Circuit.
Awaiti Wildlife Management Reserve				
Awaiti Wetland Loop Track 97782	Cease Maintenance	Maintain	Cease Maintenance	Existing vehicle access track provides appropriate walking access to this site. Is not a visitor asset. Need for access for biodiversity management to be catered for by future agreement with Fish and Game and DOC through an easement.
Waipunga Conservation Area				
Opureke Track 96624	Maintain at Lower Standard (Route)	Evenly in favour and against	Maintain at lower standard (Route)	Maintain track to marked route standard due to current condition of track, predominant visitor group and level of use. Monitor track and possible upgrade to Tramping Track standard depending on use.
Matata Scenic Reserve				
Matata SR Track 96647	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	No submissions	Maintain at present standard	Decision to be deferred until after Treaty of Waitangi settlement.
Awakeri				
Lathams Track 96649	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	No submissions	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	May be realigned in future following discussion with landowner.
Amenity Area				
Ohope Roadend carpark 100345	Upgrade to Higher standard (Short Walk)	No submissions	Upgrade to higher standard (Short Walk)	Popular amenity area. Insufficient traffic management and provision of parking. Concept plan to be implemented.
Okahu Campsite 100011	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease Maintenance	Low use. Campsite at Okahu Roadend more popular.
Roads				
Mangawiri Access 4wd Road 98449	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease Maintenance	Low use road. Benefits of upgrade less than deferred maintenance costs.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Ngapaaka /Pylon Road access road 98454	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease Maintenance	Pylon access only. Remove bridges and cease maintenance or formalise management agreement for road and structures with power company
87/88 loop 4wd rd 98459	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease Maintenance	Low use road. Deferred maintenance cost exceeds benefit of upgrade.
Waione 4wd rd 98461	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease Maintenance	Low use road. Alternative access available on Heruiwi Road
Tangitu 4wd road 98463	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease Maintenance	Secondary Access only
Mangawiri access road 98448	Maintain at Lower Standard	One in favour	Maintain at lower standard as MTB track (DV)	Maintain as track asset for easy-moderate mountain-biking (DV)
Hydro Access road 98450	Maintain at Lower Standard	One in favour	Maintain at lower standard as MTB track (BCA)	Site not retained as a road asset. Maintain site for moderate to hard mountain-biking (BCA).
Kokomoka road (mid section) 98452	Maintain at Lower Standard	No submissions	Maintain at Lower Standard	Provides hunting access - 4x4 access only
Kokomoka Road (lower section) 98453	Maintain at Lower Standard	No submissions	Maintain at Lower Standard	Access to Kokomoka forest and Waipunga River. 4x4 access only
Kokomoka road (upper section) 98456	Maintain at Lower Standard	No submissions	Maintain at Lower Standard	Provides hunting access - 4x4 access only.
Kopuatoto 4wd rd 98466	Maintain at Lower Standard	One in favour	Maintain at lower standard as MTB track (BCA)	Site not retained as track asset. Maintain site as track asset for moderate mountain biking (BCA)

6.2 TAURANGA AREA

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park – Huts				
Te Aroha Mountain Hut 32545	Remove/Not Replace	Maintain/replace with shelter	Remove and not replace by 10/06	Hut unsound with very low use and no longer needed. Area is too exposed for a shelter and a shelter is not needed in this area for search and rescue. Retention cannot be justified on economic, safety or recreational grounds.
Mangakino Hut 32280	Remove/Not Replace	Maintain	Remove and not replace by 10/06	Hut has low use and is not needed for recreational hunting. Given the fact that all back country huts will not be able to be retained this hut is of low priority and its retention cannot be justified on economic or recreational grounds.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Kauritatahi Hut 32403	Remove/Not Replace	Maintain for hunters	Remove and replace with shelter	Replace with shelter at Grid Ref 622909 on T14. This will create a better network of huts.
Waitawheta Hut 32233	Replace - bigger size	Mixed. Those against want the hut maintained at present site and don't want an upgrade to direct funds from areas requiring maintenance. Those for upgrading the hut it retained at the old site and not too large.	Replace - bigger size	Replace with a larger (26 bed) hut at the Old Mill Site. New site has helicopter landing, water access. The bridge access issue is the same at both sites. Historic component integrated with recreation. More sun at new site. Existing site can be used for camping/swimming.
Daly's Clearing Hut 32323	Minimal Maintenance	Maintain as popular and well located for Auckland trappers and allows overnight tramps on the Mangakino Loop track	Minimal Maintenance	Long term retention of hut unacceptable due to both ongoing maintenance costs associated with vandalism and local environmental degradation issues. Replace with shelter at retirement date (2015) or when hut reaches dilapidated state.
Mangamuka Hut 32410	Minimal Maintenance	Maintain for hunters or replace with shelter at Ngamuwahine Clearing	Seeking Community Maintenance	'Maintain by Community' option pursued with Thames Valley Deerstalkers and unsuccessful. However agreement may be reached with NZDA, if unsuccessful then continue with Minimal Maintenance and remove and not replace at retirement date (2020) or when reaches dilapidated state.
Motutapere Hut 32336	Minimal Maintenance	Maintain or replace with shelter	Remove and replace with shelter.	Replace with shelter at Grid Ref 622909 on T14. Will create a better network of huts.
Hurunui Hut 32833	Replace - bigger size	Generally in favour of upgrade.	Maintain	Maintain until retirement date (2020). Then replace with larger hut at same site to create a better network of huts on the North South Track.
Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park – Tracks				
Nth-Sth Track to Wairongomai - Kauri Grove Track 96447	Cease Maintenance	Maintain/Upgrade	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Propose ecological assessment in May to determine possibility of maintenance at Tramping Track standard. Creates significant recreational opportunity with loop track via Waitawheta and Te Rereatukahia Huts.
Nth-Sth Track - Cashmores to Te Rereatukahia Hut 96449	Cease Maintenance	Maintain/Upgrade	Upgrade to higher standard (Tramping Track)	Propose ecological assessment in May to determine possibility of upgrade to Tramping Track standard. Creates significant recreational opportunity with loop track via Waitawheta and Te Rereatukahia Huts
Te Tuhi Track 96391	Maintain at Lower Standard	Maintain	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Cashmores Clearing Track 96451	Cease Maintenance	Maintain	Cease Maintenance	Track not needed as part of loop track.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Nth-Sth Track (Wairere to Te Tuhi) 96399	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Nth-Sth Track - Cashmores Track to Pukekohutu Pk 96456	Cease Maintenance	Maintain/Upgrade	Upgrade to higher standard (Tramping Track)	Propose ecological assessment in May to determine possibility of upgrade to Tramping Track standard. Creates significant recreational opportunity with loop track via Waitawheta and Te Rereatukahia Huts
Hendersons Tramline (Western Branch) track 96397	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Mt Eliza Mine - Nth-Sth Track 96828	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with current track standard. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Waitawheta Track (Bluff Stm Jcn -Waitawheta Hut) 96438	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Easy Tramping Track)	Upgrade will enable access for visitors with a wider range of abilities and will improve access to the new Waitawheta Hut. Tramping Track and Route standard tracks provided further south in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.
Lake Hiwiroa track 97788	Cease Maintenance	Maintain at Tramping Track or Route	Cease Maintenance	Track to be closed as there is no legal road access to track. Road has been closed by Fletcher Challenge.
Te Rereioturu Falls to road track 96411	Maintain at Lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Youth Lodge to Te Rereioturu Falls track 96412	Maintain at Lower Standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Wairongomai - Kauri Grove track 96424	Maintain at Lower Standard	Maintain/Upgrade	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Submitters would like to see this track maintained or upgraded. Maintain at present standard to allow access to Kauri and loop track.
Te Rereioturu Falls Track, Ngatuhua 96473	Maintain at Lower standard	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Wharawhara link track 97786	Maintain at Lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintain/Upgrade	Maintain at lower standard (Tramping Track)	Maintenance at Tramping Track standard justified as aligns track with surrounding track standards. Will result in an upgrade due to Tramping Track being a higher standard than the current condition of the track.
Rapurapu Kauri track 96396	Upgrade to Higher standard (Walking Track)	Maintain at Tramping Track standard.	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Decision reflects submissions. Upgrade not justified at this site. Carry out visitor monitoring to determine if upgrade is required at a future date.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Wairongomai Low level track 96459	Upgrade to higher standard (Walking Track)	Maintain at Easy Tramping Track standard.	Upgrade to higher standard (Short Walk)	There is a need for an increased number of high quality short walk tracks in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park as it is near to large centres of population and to allow ease of access for people with disabilities or older trampers.
Te Aroha track 96461	Upgrade to higher standard (Walking Track)	Upgrade	Maintain at present standard (Tramping Track)	Track too steep for any higher standard.

New proposals

FACILITY NAME	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	NEW PROPOSAL	REASON FOR NEW PROPOSAL
Shelter	Network of huts/shelters required in the South Kaimai to enable recreational hunting and tramping from Kaimai Summit to Te Rereatukahia Hut	New shelter to replace Kauritahi and Motutapere Huts at Grid Ref 622909 on T14.	Many submissions suggest that huts are needed at regular intervals along the North South track of the Kaimai between the Kaimai Summit and Karangahake Gorge. These two proposals will enable trampers to make use of existing huts at Hurunui and Te Rereatukahia with huts or shelters at regular intervals of around 4 hours in between. Shelter must be constructed by 10/06.
Wairere Shelter or Hut	Network of huts/shelters required in the South Kaimai to enable recreational hunting and tramping from Kaimai Summit to Te Rereatukahia Hut	New shelter or Hut at the head of the Wairere Falls Stream to enable North South tramp.	Many submissions suggest that huts are needed at regular intervals along the North South track of the Kaimai between the Kaimai Summit and Karangahake Gorge. These two proposals will enable trampers to make use of huts at Hurunui and Te Rereatukahia with huts or shelters at regular intervals, of around 4 hours, in between. Hut/Shelter must be constructed by 10/06.
Te Aroha to Waitawheta Track 96462	See general submissions from Matamata Piako DC and Te Aroha Community Board in favour of upgrade.	Maintain or relocate	Cost to be determined to bring track to standard, relative to relocation of track to the south. If cost and other factors indicate relocation is the preferred option then relocate track. Improves access to new Waitawheta Hut and enables loop track via Daly's Hut in line with submissions from community organisations.

6.3 ROTORUA LAKES AREA

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Lake Rotoma Scenic Reserve				
Rotoma Mountain Bike Track 96648	Cease Maintenance	No submissions	Cease maintenance	Parking limitations on SH30 limit levels of visitor use. Significant issues with ongoing maintenance and management of site and access through private land.
Rotoma Bridle Track 96446	Maintain by community	Maintain	Seeking Community Maintenance	Maintenance agreement being pursued by DOC. Track will be brought to standard by DOC before handover.

FACILITY NAME	DOC PROPOSAL	SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION REQUESTS	DOC DECISION	REASON FOR DECISION
Lake Okataina Scenic Reserve				
Rongomai Track (W.Okataina w/way to L.Okataina Road 96437	Maintain at Lower Standard	Evenly for and against	Maintain at lower standard	Exit track from W.Okataina Walkway. Cease maintenance on southern section of existing loop track; maintain remainder of track to Tramping Track standard in accordance with rest of W.Okataina Walkway.
Te Auheke Track 96428	Upgrade to Higher standard	Evenly for and against	Upgrade to Higher Standard (Short Walk)	Significant short loop walk opportunity. Popular with users of outdoor education centre. Proposed realignment/upgrade to wheelchair accessible Short Walk standard.
Whakarewarewa Conservation Park				
Blue Lake Track 96634	Maintain by community	No submissions	Seeking Community Maintenance	Agreement in principle with Rotorua District Council and Fletcher Challenge. Agreement to be formalised.
Mokaihaha Ecological Area				
Mokaihaha Track 96646	Upgrade to higher standard	Maintain at Tramping Track	Upgrade to higher standard (Walking Track)	Popular walking track and provides hunting access, particularly for local communities.
Amenity areas				
Manawahe picnic area 101209	Upgrade to higher standard	No submissions	Upgrade to higher standard	Visitor assets located on lake margins are strategically important for BOP Conservancy. However, provision of quality facilities at this site is difficult due to vandalism, illegal camping and other activities. Site requires upgrade to better meet visitor needs and to mitigate visitor impact. Develop concept plan for site.
Roads				
Mt Tarawera Access Road 98471	Maintain by Community	Maintained by MTNZ Ltd	Seeking Community Maintenance	Public access to summit restricted by Mt Tarawera NZ Ltd in 2002. Formalise management agreement with Mt Tarawera NZ Ltd or cease maintenance.
Rainbow Mtn Summit Road 98474	Maintain by Community	No submissions	Seeking Community Maintenance	Agreement being negotiated with Kaingaora Timberlands

7. Summary of decisions

7.1 RANGITAIKI AREA

Six huts in the Whirinaki Forest and Waipunga Conservation Area had proposals. Of these proposals one remains unchanged (Lower Matakuhia Hut: Minimal Maintenance until the end of its life). The remaining five will continue to be maintained (The original proposal was for two to receive minimal maintenance until the end of their lives and for three to be upgraded to larger huts. This includes Whangatawhia (Skips) which, like the others, may be replaced by a larger hut when retired in 2020).

The majority of the Whirinaki Circuit is already at Easy Tramping track standard. The upgrade of the remainder of this track, including Mangamate and Moerangi Stream tracks, will allow a wider range of users to access the park in safety; in particular younger and older trampers and those of less ability than others.

Some tracks, such as the Plateau to Upper Whirinaki track will be downgraded to Tramping Track rather than Route. Some tracks such as the Oruiwaka Ecological Area track will be maintained at their present standard. The Pakahunui and Caves to Upper Whirinaki Tracks will now be maintained at Tramping Track standard as they are not considered part of the Whirinaki circuit. The proposal to cease maintenance on the Cathedral Grove track is unchanged. All road and amenity area proposals received few submissions and are unchanged. Some road will be retained as mountain-biking or 4 wheel-drive recreational opportunities.

7.2 TAURANGA AREA

The proposal to remove and not replace Te Aroha and Mangakino huts remains unchanged. This was considered carefully and was due to the level of use, future financial implications and recreational opportunity. Two huts, Kauritatahi and Motutapere will be removed and replaced with one shelter, predominantly for hunters.

Daly's Hut will be managed on minimal maintenance until the end of its life. Daly's suffers from ongoing vandalism and the department cannot justify the ongoing cost of repairing this hut. When this hut reaches the end of its life it will be replaced, both with a campsite and a more robust shelter. Although Mangamuka does not provide a significant recreational opportunity, it is of use to some hunters. A community maintenance agreement is being sought with the New Zealand Deerstalking Association.

Waitawheta Hut will be replaced with a larger hut, to provide a central focus for the Kaimai. Hurunui will be maintained rather than upgraded. Due to public support there are two new proposals for new huts or shelters in the Kaimai, enhancing overnight tramping opportunities.

Proposals for huts have been considered carefully in conjunction with track development. The eight proposals to downgrade tracks to Tramping Track standard remain, but people should note that the current track standard is generally below this standard now, and some upgrade work will have to proceed.

For two tracks, Cashmores Clearing and Lake Hiwiroa the original proposal to cease maintenance will remain. For Cashmores Clearing this is due to ecological and recreational reasons and for Lake Hiwiroa this is due to a lack of access.

However significant public interest, and a reconsideration of the recreational network in this area, has resulted in tracks between Te Rereatukahia Hut and the Wairongomai Valley being considered for an upgrade to Tramping track standard. Although this represents a significant shift from the original proposal of cease maintenance, this will allow an overnight tramp from the new Waitawheta Hut to Te Rereatukahia Hut and then down to the Wairongomai Valley.

An assessment of the track from Te Aroha/Wairongomai to the old Waitawheta Hut will take place. The cost of repairing and maintaining this track, which has been badly eroded, will be compared to developing a new track along a historic tramline in between the Wairongomai Valley and the new Waitawheta Hut. There are many issues to consider, but the creation of a historic heritage trail from Wairongomai to Waitawheta to Karangahake would be of great interest to many people. This would provide opportunities for guiding from local people and provide opportunities for historical, cultural and environmental interpretation.

Although there is opposition the Waitawheta track will be upgraded to Easy Tramping Track standard. This will allow a wider range of users to access the new Waitawheta Hut. Some bridging of the river at its deepest places will take place. This will maintain the historical integrity of the old tramline. Bridging of the river will allow a safer exit from the middle of the Kaimai in times of severe weather.

Due to public support the Wairongomai-Kauri Grove Track will be maintained. The Wairongomai low level track will be upgraded to a higher standard to allow wheelchair access. The Rapurapu-kauri track will be maintained at its present standard, although visitor numbers and satisfaction will be monitored. If numbers justify then this track may be upgraded at a future date. The Te Aroha track will be maintained at its present standard as an upgrade is impracticable due to the gradient.

Due to considerable public interest the feasibility of constructing a walkway across the marginal strip managed by the department at Tanners point will be investigated. This track would contribute to the development of Tauranga Harbour walkway.

7.3 ROTORUA LAKES AREA

This Area received very few submissions; consequently there have been few changes to the original proposals. However, due to support and suggestions from several organisations and member of the public, the concept of a network of tracks around and between the lakes will be explored. Further investigation will take place to determine the practicality and merit of these proposals, including negotiation with landowners.

SUMMARY OF THE ORIGINAL PROPOSALS AND THE DECISIONS THAT HAVE BEEN
TAKEN AS A RESULT OF THE ANALYSIS PROCESS (SEE 1.0).

BAY OF PLENTY CONSERVANCY (72 PROPOSALS)						
FACILITY	TAURANGA AREA (26)		RANGITAIKI AREA (37)		ROTORUA LAKES AREA (9)	
	Before Consultation	After Consultation	Before Consultation	After Consultation	Before Consultation	After Consultation
Huts (14)	8		6		0	
Replace - bigger size	2	1	3	0	N/A	N/A
Remove and replace with one shelter	0	2	0	0	N/A	N/A
Minimal maintenance	3	1	3	1	N/A	N/A
Remove and not replace	3	2	0	0	N/A	N/A
Community maintenance	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A
Maintain	0	1	0	5	N/A	N/A
Tracks (42)	18		18		6	
Maintain at present standard	0	5	0	4	0	0
Upgrade to a higher standard	4	4	11	9	2	2
Maintain at a lower standard	9	7	5	3	0.5	0.5
Seeking community Maintenance	0	0	0	0	2	2
Cease maintenance	5	2	2	2	1.5	1.5
Amenity Areas (3)	0		2		1	
Upgrade to a higher standard	0	0	1	1	1	1
Cease maintenance	0	0	1	1	0	0
Roads (13)	0		11		2	
Maintain by community	0	0	0	0	2	2
Maintain at a lower standard	0	0	6	6	0	0
Cease maintenance	0	0	5	5	0	0

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

The Bay of Plenty contains major recreation resources. These resources are within relatively easy reach of over half of New Zealand's population. There is increasing demand for recreational opportunities from the nearby urban areas of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga and Rotorua. As well as the coastal area of the Bay of Plenty, three nodes of recreation growth and pressure are the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park, Whirinaki Forest Park and Rotorua Lakes.

The goal for Bay of Plenty is to create a range of recreation opportunities within the Conservancy. The aim of these decisions is to reach this goal through the provision of a core network of facilities.

Tauranga tracks

The aim for the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park is to encourage short to medium walks and to be a showpiece for community based tourism, including historical heritage and nature trails and environmental education. The Park is close to regional and national centres of population and there is a strategic need, and a desire amongst submitters, to see increased accessibility within and to, the Kaimai ranges.

The proposals will maintain traditional multi-day tramping tracks in the Park and develop a series of 1–2 day loops and trails accessible from the North, East and West of the North Kaimai Area. This has the potential to foster interest in the historical heritage of the area and enable recreation to play a part in the development of a conservation story. Two new proposals have been made which contribute to the development of overnight loop tracks in line with submissions.

A Recreation Development Plan for this Park, reflecting these decisions, will be completed as part of the Recreation Strategy for the Bay of Plenty during 2004/5.

There were a number of submissions suggesting the upgrade of the existing track across the Tanners Point marginal strip. This walkway would enhance recreational opportunities in this area and contribute to the local authority's strategic aim of creating a walkway around Tauranga Harbour. The feasibility of constructing this walkway will now be investigated.

Rangitaiki tracks

There are no opportunities for multi-day Easy Tramping Track standard walks in the Bay of Plenty Area. The closest being the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy which is likely to come under increasing pressure from tourism in the future. The decisions reflect the intention to improve overnight tramping opportunities in the Bay of Plenty

The majority of the Easy Tramping track network creating the Whirinaki circuit is already complete. The circuit will enable a wider cross-section of the population to access the area and to get a back country experience. There are many kilometres of

track provided at a more challenging standard to the East in Te Urewera National Park and to the South in the Kaimanawa Ranges.

A Recreation Development Plan for the Whirinaki Forest Park, reflecting these decisions, will be completed as part of the Recreation Strategy for the Bay of Plenty during 2004.

Rotorua Lakes tracks

There were a number of submissions suggesting enhancing the tracks in the Rotorua Lakes region. Further investigation is needed to determine the practicality and merit of these proposals. Given the proximity of the lakes to urban areas; their outstanding natural beauty; and capability for drawing visitors, both domestic and international, to the area, a network of tracks around the lakes is an exciting proposition. Due to the lengthy consultation and feasibility studies needed these tracks will not be included in these proposals.

Bay of Plenty

Overall submissions have resulted in nine tracks being maintained at their present standard that would otherwise have been upgraded, downgraded or had maintenance ceased.

Huts

The Conservancy overview in the National Resource document states that this Conservancy will reduce hut provision, particularly in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park, because some are poorly located. The new funding is going to be sufficient to properly maintain *most but not all* of what is currently there, especially if some new facilities are needed.

Some huts have been identified in both Forest Parks as having limited recreation use in comparison to other huts. These will either be removed or receive minimal maintenance as indicated earlier. Some of these huts attracted many submissions in favour of future maintenance. The decision to remove two huts, Te Aroha and Mangakino, was not taken lightly. Decisions were based on level of use, recreation opportunity, strategic requirements and replacement costs.

By taking into account submissions more huts will be maintained, fewer huts will receive minimal maintenance and although there will be huts removed, alternative basic accommodation will be provided at locations that will support overnight tramping.

Conclusion

The decisions balance the need to maintain the majority of the existing facility network while accommodating some demonstrated demand for new options. A wide range of opportunities will continue to be maintained, with some enhancement of day visit/short stop facilities and overnight tramping opportunities.

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.