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**To:** [David Bishop](#)  
**Subject:** Ruahine Conservation Park consultation  
**Date:** Sunday, 1 March 2015 8:18:37 p.m.

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Comments/status: The current proposal is deficient and we do not support it on the current terms.

The Forest Park has a status that encourages recreation. Currently the Makaroro River bed provides two critical access points to the Forest Park. There are very legal access routes into the northern Ruahines.

The land covered by the proposal is alongside the river bed. One of the access points is across the river, through one of the revocation blocks and onto the track to Parks Peak and the the Yeoman Track. The other access route is up the publically owned river bed. This gives access from the Makaroro River to huts and tracks in the main body of the Park. These routes are used extensively by individuals and clubs from throughout the North Island.

The evaluation of the proposal completely ignores the impact on recreation. Any revocation of status needs to consider the implications for recreation, especially given the threat to access to the Park from the dam flooding the riverbed including this conservation land. The land should be taken from the Park until such time as satisfactory access arrangements have been arrived at. If this proposal goes without DoC will have given up any bargaining strength it has to secure reasonable access to the Park.

We would remind you that included in the functions (ie purposes) in s6 of the Conservation Act is that DoC is 'to foster the use of natural and historic resources for recreation'. Ignoring this function as the papers relating to the revocation and land swap do now is not acceptable.

The issue of access has been raised at the Board of Inquiry into the proposed dam under the RMA. However, this decision is yet to be implemented and no access provision has been laid out on the ground.

Comment/exchange: Our objection to the proposed exchange at this time is as outlined above. Under Section 16(2) of the Conservation Act before an exchange can be made it must be established that any exchange ....'will enhance the conservation values of land managed by the Department and promote the purposes of this Act.' Note the use of 'and' in the legislation – it involves both Conservation and the other purposes of the Act.

Any exchange should wait until it is clear that secure and practical legal access from the formed public road to the boundary of the main Forest Park is obtained at:

- the point the Makaroro River leaves the main park block
- the Yeomans and Park Peak tracks.

If necessary any exchange should be modified to facilitate the provision of these access points.

Recreational use in the Park is severely hampered by a past failure to develop enduring access arrangements. The opportunity to develop an enduring arrangement should not be missed here.

Personal details removed: No  
Hearing: Maybe  
email submission: Yes