

New approach for managing biking on public conservation lands and waters

Project update 4, December 2023

A note from the team

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you for your continuing interest in DOC's new approach for biking on public conservation lands and waters.

This update follows some valuable online workshops with stakeholders and conservation board members. We've also received some helpful written feedback. So, before we start our update, we just want to acknowledge everyone's mahi and say a big thank you!

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou!

We are now hard at work going through the feedback we have received.

In this update, we will cover:

- Project recap
- What did we hear from you?
- Addressing existing bike tracks
- What's next for the project?

Ngā mihi,

The Management Planning Team

Project recap

Currently, we can't even consider proposals for new bike tracks unless they are already provided for in Conservation Management Strategies (CMS). This project aims to develop a nationally consistent approach to the consideration of bike tracks on public conservation lands and waters, excluding national parks. The purpose of this work is to provide greater flexibility for decision makers when considering future bike tracks

whilst protecting conservation values. The draft approach contains robust criteria for assessing new biking proposals, rather than specified tracks, alongside potential bike-free areas where new bike tracks wouldn't be considered.

You can find more information on the proposed approach, including past project updates, on our [website](#). We continue to test and refine this approach so watch this space for regular updates.

What did we hear from stakeholders?

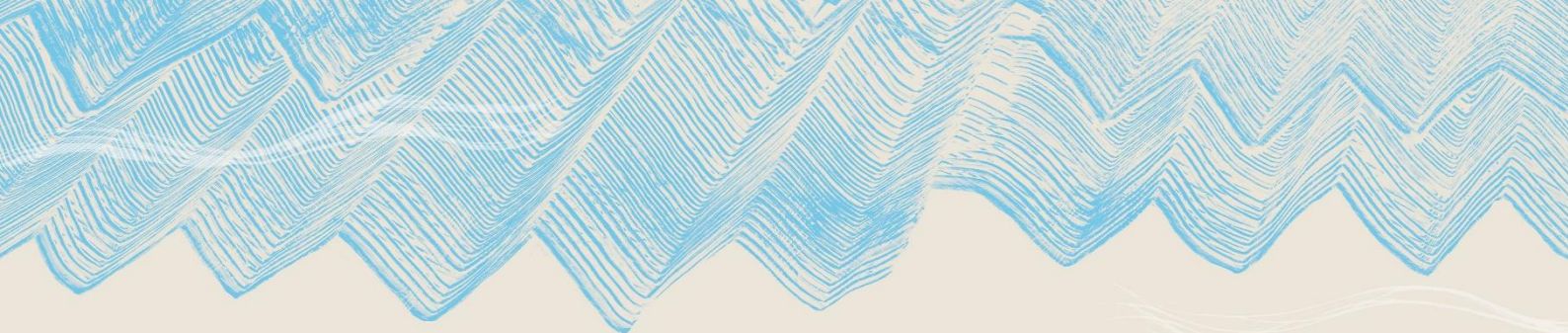
We set up a series of online stakeholder workshops to share and gather information on the proposed approach.

Workshops 1 and 2 have taken place. You can find the presentations and a summary of discussion topics on our [website](#).

Here is a [very small](#) snapshot of the discussion topics covered:

- Exploring alternative approaches for managing biking on public conservation lands and waters;
- Suggestions for improvements to criteria for considering new bike track proposals;
- Whether the proposed bike-free area criteria are more conservative than they need to be;
- Incorporating positive impacts of bike tracks;
- Considering effects on conservation values and other recreational users; and
- Applicability of the approach to multi-use tracks.

We are considering the feedback we have received. As several matters raised need further thought, we have



postponed workshops 3 and 4 to give these matters the appropriate level of consideration.

We will contact participants with new dates as soon as they are set. If you couldn't attend the previous workshops but would like to attend the next ones, please contact us at NationalReviewBikingCMS@doc.govt.nz

What did we hear from Conservation Boards?

Conservation boards were invited to provide feedback on the proposed approach, including the draft policies, by attending a workshop on 11 October or providing written feedback.

Some of the discussion topics raised at the workshop included:

- Conservation boards' role in determining bike-free areas and assessing bike track proposals;
- Engagement with iwi, hapū and whānau;
- Improving and strengthening criteria for considering new bike track proposals; and
- Applicability of the approach nationally.

We also outlined and discussed some of the key feedback and alternative approaches discussed at stakeholder workshops.

How will the feedback be used?

All feedback, including from stakeholders, the New Zealand Conservation Authority and conservation boards, will be used to inform this work.

We are currently exploring the alternative approaches suggested by stakeholders during the workshops. This includes testing any assumptions around the Conservation General Policy that might have been constraining previous thinking.

We are also looking at any other suggested policy changes including re-examining some of the definitions we shared and refining the criteria for the assessment of new bike track proposals.

We'll be in touch to share any changes we make and hear further feedback. If you would like to be part of the next workshops, please get in touch via the project email!

Please note that gathering feedback at this stage is not part of a formal consultation process or a partial or full CMS review. We will need to work with Conservation Boards and iwi, hapū and whānau before any review, full or partial, is initiated.

There will be further opportunities to have your say once the new approach is included in a draft CMS for consultation.

Existing bike tracks

We know some existing bike tracks are not provided for in relevant statutory documents e.g., CMS and national park plans.

DOC is working to understand the extent of this issue and how to manage existing bike tracks consistently.

Next, we will..

- Continue to work through the feedback received from conservation board and external stakeholder workshops.
- Hold the last of the stakeholder workshops.
- Stay connected with conservation boards and test the approach with the NZCA.

How to get in touch

We'll keep you updated through the [DOC website](#), where more information on the project can also be found. If you have any questions, or want to be added to our contacts list, please email us at: NationalReviewBikingCMS@doc.govt.nz

We'll do another update in early 2024 so you can keep up with progress.