

New approach for biking in CMS

Workshop 1: Purpose and Context

17th August 2023



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

New Zealand Government

Housekeeping

- › Presentation and notes will be shared on the website after each session
- › Raise your (virtual) hand to speak.
- › You can also put feedback in the chat. One of the project team will share it with the group.
- › We might put some issues in the car park for later.
- › Keep it respectful!



Photo credit: Brian Dobbie

There's quite a big group so I'll just run through some quick things we can all do to make sure this all goes smoothly and everyone gets a chance to speak. Today's workshop will last 1-2 hours. We wanted to ensure that we had plenty of space for discussion.

- We'll put the presentation and some notes on the website after each session.
- We've broken the workshop into sections, with spaces for discussion in between. Please, raise your hand if you would like to speak. For any MS Teams novices on the call, you just click on the little hand icon that's on the toolbar at the top of the page. Jacqui or myself will come to you for your thoughts. When we come to you for the first time, please feel free to briefly introduce yourself so we can get to know each other. If you're happy to, please turn your camera on so we can see your lovely faces when you talk! Please keep your camera off and mute yourselves if you aren't speaking.
- If you don't feel comfortable to speak, feel free to put any feedback or questions in the chat. One of the project team will share feedback with the group.

- If discussions run long, we may put issues in the virtual "car park". Depending on time, we will either come back to them at the end of the session, save them for the next session, or follow up with an email after the session.

- We ask that everyone is respectful of other participants and the project team. We've got people from lots of different interest groups here so it's important that we listen and learn from each other to make the most of these sessions. For this reason, we won't be discussing individual conservation management strategies or tracks. There's a big group of us here so we just wouldn't be able to discuss them all in detail. And this is the introduction – there will be plenty of time for more detailed discuss at the later workshops.

Who are we?

And what do we do?



I'll go round the team and get everyone to introduce themselves.



Today's workshop will cover...

- › Context and purpose
- › The journey so far...
- › Proposed new approach for biking
- › Content and dates of next workshops

- › Lots of opportunities for discussion throughout!

Today's workshop will be a high-level overview of the project. Apologies if some of this session feels like a bit of a repeat for some of you. There are a wide range of people here with varying experience with this specific topic and so we are going to have to go back to basics for the first session and ensure we are all on the right page. The next workshops will be a deep dive into the proposed approach, so we are trying to ensure we are all on an even level when we begin.

We'll talk you through the context for this project. What issues are we trying to address and what's the purpose of these workshops.

What've we been doing so far? Including the conversations we've had with many of you and other stakeholders to date.

What is our approach to managing the issues?

And what will happen at the next workshops?



Purpose of today's workshop

Why do we need your help?

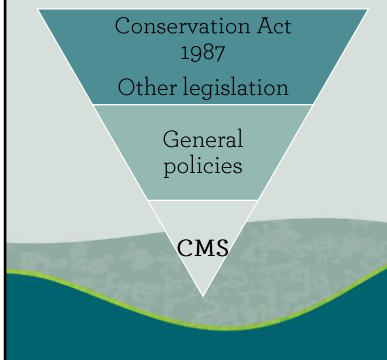
- › A new approach to managing biking on public conservation lands and waters is being developed
- › These workshops were set up to obtain your feedback on the proposed approach to make sure it will work well

So, why do we need your help?

A new approach to managing biking on public conservation lands and waters is being developed

These workshops were set up to obtain your feedback on the proposed approach

What is a Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)?



- › Provides a regional overview of conservation issues and direct management of public conservation land and waters, and species.
- › Identifies how natural, cultural and historic resources will be managed including for recreational purposes.
- › Required under the Conservation Act 1987
- › Must implement general policies and be consistent with legislation.

Before we start, I'll just go through a term you'll hear throughout. Conservation management strategy or CMS.

Conservation management strategies, sometimes referred to as CMS, are regional strategies that have been agreed with the community. They provide a regional overview of conservation issues and give direction for the management of public conservation land and waters, and species for which the department of conservation has responsibility.

Their purpose is to implement general policies (such as conservation general policy) and establish objectives for the management of natural, cultural and historic resources, and for recreation, tourism, and any other conservation purposes. CMS focus on outcomes for places that are special to communities and tāngata whenua.

They are required under the Conservation Act 1987 and are developed in accordance with the legislation under which DOC operates.

Simply put, CMS detail how we look after special places and values in a region. They

explain what and where activities can take on public conservation lands and waters. This extends to detailing where bike tracks can go and/or how to assess whether a new bike track should be permitted in an area. We'll talk about how they do this in a second but first, do you have any questions at this point?



Any questions?

We'll pause here for any questions...

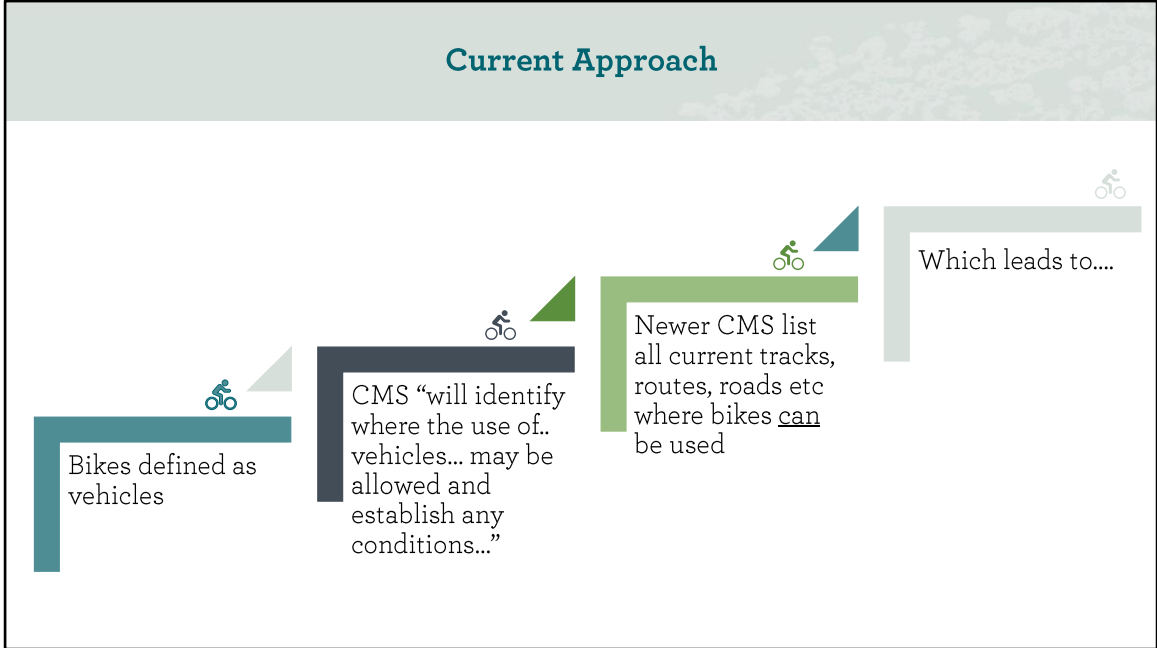
What issue are we aiming to address with the CMS?

- › Often DOC, biking and other community groups want biking to be authorized on existing walking tracks or to create new tracks for biking.
- › Biking proposals need to be consistent with a CMS.



Kate Salmon

What issue are we trying to address? Often, DOC, biking and other community groups want biking on some existing walking tracks or to create new tracks for biking where this would not negatively impact on natural and cultural values. But, up til now we cannot consider proposals if they are not consistent with the relevant CMS.



Bikes are defined as “vehicles” under the Conservation Act 1987, in line with the Land Transport Act 1998. Therefore, Conservation General policy considers them to be vehicles.

Policy 9.5(b) of the Conservation general policy states: “Conservation management strategies and plans will identify where the use of specified types of vehicles and other forms of transport may be allowed and will establish any conditions of use”.

CMS must therefore set out how vehicles are to be managed.

Newer CMS include policies listing all current tracks, routes, roads where bikes can be used. They also include policies which identify where new tracks are proposed to be built and require a partial review for proposals not identified.

However, this varies massively across the country. Some regions’ CMS are older and poorly define where bike tracks are permitted. Others are quite clear on where they are currently permitted but give very little scope to consider future tracks and/or have poorly defined criteria for the assessment of new bike tracks.

All of this leads to....

Current approach



CMS can't keep up!



Lack of clarity



Lack of consistency

... Some issues! Including...

- Because of this previous approach, our CMS cannot keep up with the changing demand for new bike tracks, changing biking technologies etc. For many of our CMS, we would have to do a partial review to add a single track and lots of them don't even mention e-bikes! We need to update the provisions for biking and ensure that they are future proof.
- The lack of clear criteria for the assessment of new bike tracks means that, while assessment of new bike tracks will always consider the impact on conservation values and the purposes for which the land is held, assessment may not be comprehensive. This could have unintended consequences for conservation values down the line. There is huge variation in the degree of assessment of new bike track proposals across the country.
- All of this leads to lots of national inconsistency in our approach to dealing with new bike track proposals. We don't have a nationally consistent way of assessing them which is, again, frustrating for applicants, DOC, our Treaty Partners and other key stakeholders.



Key issue:

Existing bike tracks that are inconsistent with current CMS

- › It's a separate work programme – and not a topic for this workshop series because it is far wider than CMS provisions
- › An existing bike track is: *“a bike track already developed on public conservation lands and waters used by bikes (including e-bikes) and excludes extension to existing bike tracks.”*
- › Some aren't consistent with CMS
- › DOC needs to understand the extent of this issue and how to manage existing bike tracks consistently

Before I move on, I just want to quickly address the elephant in the room! Existing bike tracks that are inconsistent with current CMS.

For our purposes, an existing bike track is defined as:

“a bike track already developed on public conservation lands and waters used by bikes (including e-bikes) and excludes extension to existing bike tracks.”

We are aware some existing bike tracks are not consistent with their relevant statutory documents (e.g. CMS and National Park Plans), causing issues for accessing funding and other unintended outcomes.

DOC is working to understand the extent of this issue and how to manage existing bike tracks consistently. In the meantime, only new bike tracks that are consistent with the relevant statutory documents will be authorised. We are very aware of the concerns over the management of these existing bike tracks and recognize the importance of dealing with this issue – it is way broader than CMS provisions and needs wider input.

A DOC-wide approach is being developed to address this issue. It's outside of the

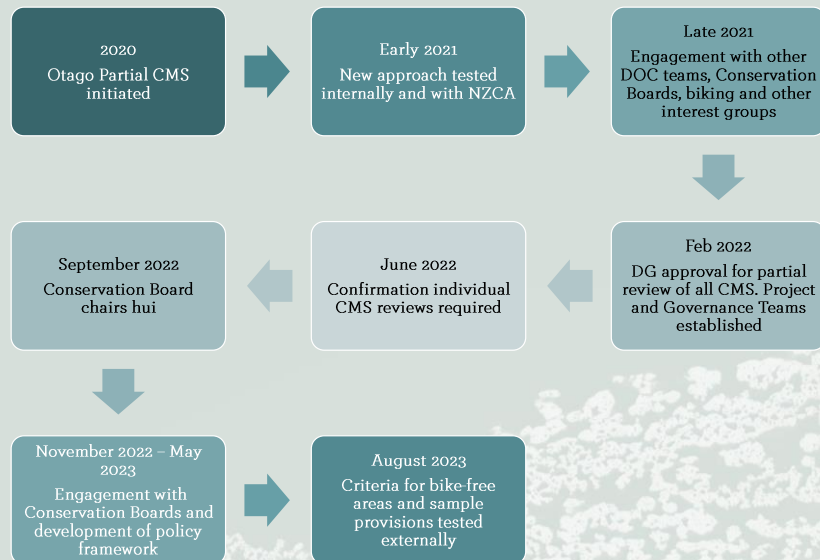
scope of the new biking approach so we won't be discussing it as part of these workshops.



Any questions?

Another pause for your questions ...

The story so far....



- The project has evolved since it began. Looking at addressing a topic across all CMS has never been done before! So, we've had to learn a lot as we've gone! However, this will stand us in good stead if we ever need to do anything like this again!
- Initially the plan was framed on the premise we could do one integrated national review of biking provisions in all CMS.
- In mid 2022, we were advised that the Conservation Act does not provide for one integrated review and that each CMS would need to be reviewed individually.
- Instead, we will conduct individual partial reviews and streamline this process wherever possible.
- Over the last few months, we have been testing our proposed approach with Conservation Boards like we did with key stakeholders in 2021. Feedback from conservation boards and stakeholders has fed into the proposed approach.

Proposed Approach

Bike-free areas

Areas where bike tracks and infrastructure will not be allowed under any circumstances to protect areas of significant conservation value (natural, historic, recreation and cultural).

Criteria for considering new bike track proposals

This includes re-purposing existing walking tracks, extensions to bike tracks and new tracks.

Managing biking activities

- Provision
- Concessions
- Education and advocacy
- Monitoring and Review
- Regulation and Enforcement

CMS would list “bike-free” areas where bike tracks and infrastructure are not allowed. The draft criteria for bike-free areas will be the topic of the next workshop. In each region, we would work with DOC district staff, the local conservation board, iwi, hapū and whānau and the community to determine where these bike-free areas should be.

Listing bike-free areas ensures that any applicants for new tracks can clearly see where bike track proposals would not be considered. It would also ensure that bike-free areas are broadly nationally consistent except where regional variation requires differences. It enables us to protect our most special places.

The CMS will then allow consideration of new biking opportunities in all other areas (excluding national parks). This doesn’t mean that we would allow biking just anywhere else. It would still take a fair bit of work for a track to be approved! New bike tracks would have to meet robust criteria which assess the effects on a case-by-case basis. This will be the topic of our third workshop.

The criteria will be broadly based on those from the Otago CMS review. The framework will enable us to consider new bike track proposals whilst protecting the special places in a region. It also means that our processes and assessment criteria

are clear and transparent for everyone. The criteria will be the topic of our third workshop.

We'll also be looking at how we will manage biking on bike tracks once they are approved.

All reviews will go through the public consultation process so there will be lots of chances for people to have their say in how bike tracks and infrastructure will be managed in their regions.

Ideal future state


CMS that:

- › Adopt a consistent approach to considering biking opportunities
- › Enable new biking proposals to be considered with clear criteria
- › Continue to protect the values of conservation land including natural, historical, cultural and recreation values



Tourism New Zealand

By taking this approach, we hope to reach a point where our CMS adopt a nationally consistent approach to considering biking opportunities which can be tailored to local conditions. It should enable new biking proposals to be considered with clear impact-based criteria and processes whilst continuing to protect the values of conservation land



What do you think of this approach?

› Recapping: the proposed approach is for CMS to:

- identify bike-free areas. These are areas where bike tracks and associated infrastructure would not be allowed; **and**
- allow consideration of new biking opportunities in all other areas (excluding national parks) using clear criteria.

At this point, we would like you hear what you think of the proposed approach

Next Steps

- › Presentation and summary on website
- › **Workshop 2: Bike-free areas**
7 September: 12:30 – 2:30pm
- › **Workshop 3: Criteria to assess new bike tracks**
5 October: 12:30-2:30pm
- › **Workshop 4: Wrap up**
26 October: 12:30-2:30pm

We'll pop the presentation and a summary of the session on the website shortly. Please feel free to share this with anyone who has missed this session.

The next two workshops will be a deep dive into the proposed approach

Workshop 2 will be held on 7th September at 12:30. We will look at the objectives and criteria for selecting bike-free areas.

Workshop 3 will be held on 5th October and will examine the criteria for the assessment of new bike tracks

The final workshop on 26th October will be a wrap up session. We'll run through any remaining issues, talk through any key changes we have made and do a little evaluation of how the workshops have gone. This will help us to refine our approach for future workshops.

We'll send out invitations to workshops 2-4 shortly.

Thank you for your time. Any final questions or thoughts?

For further information or to share your feedback, you can
also contact us at

NationalReviewBikingCMS@doc.govt.nz



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