



**Review to consider
Rangitahi/Molesworth future
management
Summary of survey responses
August 2022**

About PublicVoice

The analysis and reporting for the review to consider Rangitahi/Molesworth future management has been undertaken by PublicVoice Limited. PublicVoice is a research and engagement consultancy located in Wellington, New Zealand. We specialise in research and engagement activities related to public policy and public consultation. PublicVoice works for a range of New Zealand local and central government agencies. You can find out more about our work at www.publicvoice.co.nz.

Document status:	Final
Version:	1.1
Date:	12 th September 2022
Author(s)/contributor(s):	Jared Bothwell, Dianne Long, Ryan Jagers, Hayden Dyer

Table of contents

Executive summary	3
Background to the survey process	3
Synopsis of the main themes	3
Key findings by survey question.....	4
The survey process and responses	6
Where did responses come from?.....	6
DOC’s online response interface.....	6
Written responses received via email or post	6
Data analysis methodology.....	6
Thematic analysis.....	6
Climate change.....	8
(Q1) What strategies can we use to mitigate and adapt to climate change?	8
Public access and recreation opportunities.....	11
(Q2) Are there any specific recreational opportunities you would like the reserve to provide for and where in the reserve could these activities occur?	11
Natural values	15
(Q3) Are there any places within the reserve where specific actions are needed to protect the natural values? Please identify priority areas and actions.....	15
Environmentally sustainable commercial activities.....	19
(Q4) What small-scale activities are appropriate for the reserve? What large-scale uses of land, if any, are appropriate for the reserve?	19
Appendix 1 – Survey questions	22

Executive summary

This document summarises the responses to the survey on the future management of Rangitahi/Molesworth Recreation Reserve. Survey responses were received from 5 July 2022 to 7 August 2022. A total of 782 responses were received.

Background to the survey process

A review of the conservation management plan for Rangitahi/Molesworth Recreation Reserve is taking place to look afresh at how this spectacular high country reserve is managed. The conservation management plan review is an opportunity to pause and examine how Rangitahi/Molesworth Recreation Reserve, with its spectacular high-country landscape and rich cultural history, is managed. The Department of Conservation and Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura are together leading the preparation of a new plan for the reserve.

Before developing a draft plan, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura and DOC invited interested groups and individuals to make suggestions for Rangitahi/Molesworth's future management. The feedback received will contribute to the development of a draft plan.

Synopsis of the main themes

This synopsis presents the main themes covered by responses across all questions asked in the survey. These themes are presented alphabetically and not by order of prevalence or importance.

Access

Some respondents mentioned that maintaining or improving public access to Rangitahi/Molesworth was a concern. Some respondents wished to see seasonal restrictions on access removed, while others wanted to have more roads and trails to improve physical accessibility throughout the area. Concern was raised over existing and potential limitations to access, such as farming that restricts public access and the potential for tour or recreational operators to limit public access. On the other hand, some respondents were concerned about the impacts of increasing access and did not wish to see it improved.

Farming

Farming was a common theme mentioned by respondents. Some respondents would like farming to continue on Rangitahi/Molesworth using sustainable farming practices. Some suggested maintaining or increasing stocking rates to control weed growth and prevent fires, while others preferred to have farming scaled back or stopped altogether.

Hunting

Hunting was the most mentioned recreational activity associated with Rangitahi/Molesworth, and was commonly mentioned in conjunction with pest control on the reserve. Maintaining or improving access to Rangitahi/Molesworth for hunters was also discussed.

Pests and invasive vegetation

Controlling pests and invasive vegetation was a common concern among respondents, especially in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Regarding vegetation, wilding pines were a source

Review to consider Rangitahi/Molesworth future management

of concern for some respondents. Pest control was also a cause for concern, with hunting being mentioned by some as the most effective means to control pest populations.

Key findings by survey question

Q1. What strategies can we use to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

The most common mitigation strategies identified by respondents were:

- The revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=174)
- The implementation of sustainable farming practices (n=81)
- The promotion of sustainable recreation and active travel in Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=54)
- The protection of waterways, wetlands, and tarns (n=54)

The most common adaptation strategies identified by respondents were:

- To control pests and invasive vegetation in Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=177)
- To maintain or increase stocking rates to prevent fires and control weed growth (n=92)
- To protect the flora and fauna of Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=63)
- To implement fire control measures (n=60)

The most common comments not suggesting strategies included:

- Climate change is not a concern (n=64)
- On-site mitigation is negligible in global terms (n=56)

Q2. Are there any specific recreational opportunities you would like the reserve to provide for and where in the reserve could these activities occur?

The most common recreational activities mentioned by respondents were:

- Hunting (n=277)
- Walking and tramping (n=188)
- Mountain biking (n=163)
- Camping (n=100)

The most common areas for recreational opportunities identified by respondents were:

- For vehicle access — improved four-wheel drive access in Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=70) as well as year-round or extended times for road access (n=55)
- For active travel — increased trails for tramping and biking (n=79) and increased horse trekking (n=35) in Rangitahi/Molesworth
- For general amenity areas — more campsites (n=48) and more huts (n=39) are needed in Rangitahi/Molesworth
- Areas for hunting and fishing — improved access to Rangitahi/Molesworth for hunting (n=177) with improved access to rivers with more beats for fishing (n=11)

The most common suggestions of recreational activities to exclude were:

- Vehicles, specifically to limit or control access (n=35)
- Hunting (n=14)

The most common suggestion of areas to exclude were:

- To not increase or improve access to Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=33)
- Commercial activities (n=9)

Q3. Are there any places within the reserve where specific actions are needed to protect the natural values? Please identify priority areas and actions.

The most common priority actions suggested by respondents were:

- For flora and fauna — to control pests and invasive vegetation (n=214) and to protect flora and fauna (n=119)
- Management actions — to maintain the status quo (n=59) and to restrict vehicles to formed roads only (n=21)
- Farming actions — to continue with farming (n=43) and to utilise, check and repair fencing (n=33)
- For water — to protect waterways, wetlands and tarns (n=89) and to limit or exclude stock from grazing along waterways (n=37)
- For the environment — to identify and establish no-go areas (n=44) and to stop or minimise the use of poisons, e.g. 1080 (n=15)

The most common priority areas for action were:

- Ecologically sensitive areas or areas with high natural value (n=21)
- Controlling pests and invasive vegetation by Clarence (n=12)
- The whole of Rangitahi/Molesworth needs action (n=11)

Q4. What small-scale activities are appropriate for the reserve? What large-scale uses of land, if any, are appropriate for the reserve?

The most common small-scale activities mentioned by respondents were:

- Guided recreation/tour operators (n=168)
- Walking or tramping (n=138)
- Hunting (n=133)

The most common large-scale uses of land mentioned by respondents were:

- The continuation of farming (n=356)
- To implement sustainable farming practices (n=63)

The most common activities to exclude were:

- No further commercial activities should be allowed (n=52)
- No (large-scale) tourism or tour/recreation operators should be allowed (n=33)
- No visitor operations that exclude public access should be allowed (n=31)

The most common land uses to exclude were:

- To scale back or stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=37)
- To stop farming that impacts the environment or public access (n=29)
- To exclude any additional land use that would limit public access (n=26)

The survey process and responses

Responses were received via DOC's online response form, by email, or by post. A total of 782 responses were received.

Where did responses come from?

782 responses were received, 12 of which were written responses received via email or post.

DOC's online response interface

The online form allowed submitters to tell DOC their visions for the future of Rangitahi/Molesworth Recreation Reserve and provide suggestions for the new plan. The Department of Conservation, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, and PublicVoice developed the survey questions.

The questions asked via DOC's online response form are listed in Appendix 1.

Written responses received via email or post

12 written responses were received. Some of these responses indicated which survey questions they were directly answering. These responses were processed and analysed according to these questions. Whenever responses did not follow a set structure, they were analysed as per the survey questions with which they aligned.

Data analysis methodology

An online response form was built for the collection of responses. The interface questions formed the framework of analysis and reporting for all responses.

Thematic analysis

PublicVoice undertook the analysis of responses to open-ended interface questions. All responses received via the online response form and in written format underwent thematic analysis, whereby themes were extracted from comments received. The foundation for the thematic analysis used by PublicVoice is the methodology developed by Braun and Clarke, 2006.¹ A team of research analysts identified, analysed and interpreted patterns of meaning within the open-ended responses. Each theme was then analysed for frequency.

Classification of themes

The results from the thematic analysis were organised into top-level themes to aid interpretation. The most common themes have been listed below, along with a brief description.

Mitigation strategies — contains potential strategies to mitigate climate change, as mentioned by respondents.

Adaptation strategies — contains potential climate adaptation strategies as mentioned by respondents.

Recreational opportunities — lists the various recreational activities mentioned by respondents in relation to Rangitahi/Molesworth.

¹ Braun and V. Clarke (2006), 'Using thematic analysis in psychology'. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Areas — contains themes specific to various locations on Rangitahi/Molesworth. These areas have been grouped according to the activity mentioned to aid analysis and interpretation. For example, areas discussed in relation to hunting are coded into hunting blocks, and vehicle access has been coded according to roads and trails.

Priority actions — contains priority actions identified by respondents.

Priority areas — contains all the locations respondents identified as needing action.

Small-scale activities — includes respondents' suggestions of small-scale activities that are appropriate.

Large-scale land uses — includes respondents' suggestions of large-scale land uses they feel are appropriate.

When comments fit into more than one theme, they were placed into the theme which they alluded to more strongly. Tables are included to show the frequency of each to help illustrate their significance and level of support. Table 1 provides an example. Tables only include codes with a frequency of 2 or more.

Further classification

Responses were then further categorised into sub-themes under each of these top-level categories.

Table 1: Example of thematic analysis table

Main theme	Frequency
MITIGATION STRATEGIES	255
Revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth	174
Implement sustainable farming practices	81
ADAPTATION STRATEGIES	209
Control of pests and invasive vegetation	117
Maintain/increase stock rates - prevent fire/weeds	92

Climate change

Under a ‘business as usual’ scenario, climate change projections for Rangitahi/Molesworth predict the reserve’s annual temperature will increase 2.0-3.5°C by 2090. Hot days (>25°C at lower elevations) and dry days (<1mm rainfall) are both expected to become much more commonplace, while frost nights (<0°C) are expected to significantly decrease. Annual rainfall is expected to decrease, but will be somewhat offset by a slight increase in heavy rain days (>25mm rainfall). In other words, summers on Rangitahi/Molesworth will become more intense, winters are expected to become milder, and long dry spells will be punctuated by extreme precipitation events.

DOC and Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura wanted to hear how Rangitahi/Molesworth should be managed to adapt to these conditions. To that end, DOC and Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura wanted to understand submitters’ ideas regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation. Climate change mitigation is an intervention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation is an adjustment in natural or human systems to reduce harmful effects.

(Q1) What strategies can we use to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

The most common mitigation strategies identified by respondents were:

- The revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=174)
- The implementation of sustainable farming practices (n=81)
- The promotion of sustainable recreation and active travel in Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=54)
- The protection of waterways, wetlands, and tarns (n=54)

The most common adaptation strategies identified by respondents were:

- To control pests and invasive vegetation in Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=177)
- To maintain or increase stocking rates to prevent fires and control weed growth (n=92)
- To protect the flora and fauna of Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=63)
- To implement fire control measures (n=60)

The most common comments not suggesting strategies included:

- Climate change is not a concern (n=64)
- On-site mitigation is negligible in global terms (n=56)

Table 2: (Q1) What strategies can we use to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

Main theme	Frequency
MITIGATION STRATEGIES	409
Revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth	174
Implement sustainable farming practices	81
Promote sustainable recreation/active travel	54
Protect waterways/wetlands/tarns	54
Scale back/stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth	45
Identify and address causes of erosion	35
Renewable energy on-site/EV's/EV chargers	32
Control stocking rates to prevent degradation	31
Maintain the status quo	30
Restrict vehicle access	29

Fencing of waterways/sensitive areas	25
Allow hunting	21
Management activities need to consider net carbon	15
Prohibit aviation	10
Restrict all vehicles to formed roads only	8
Stop/minimise the use of poisons, e.g. 1080	6
Environmental education	5
Increased points of access to reduce travel	3
ADAPTATION STRATEGIES	353
Control of pests and invasive vegetation	117
Maintain/increase stock rates - prevent fire/weeds	92
Protect flora and fauna	63
Implement fire control measures	60
Invest in resilient infrastructure/water storage	46
Continue farming	44
Maintain/extend/adjust access times	29
Maintain/extend limits to public access	22
Adapt farming practices to projected changes	21
Revegetation with species that withstand changes	11
Actions that maintain/enhance food security	8
Restrict access during extreme weather	4
Do not build inside of the flood line	2
Strategy and resources for disaster relief	2
Gravel removal from rivers to prevent flooding	2
OTHER	156
Climate change is not a concern	64
On-site mitigation is negligible in global terms	56
Focus on adaptation rather than mitigation	21
Consult experts	16
Charge an access fee to fund strategies	8
Utilise a co-governance approach	4

“Planting of more native forests on marginal land. Disturbance of land surfaces, e.g. tracks not recommended due to potential erosion, which would be more extreme with predicted weather events. Continue sustainable farming practices, that enhance land use and minimise fire potential.”

Revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth

“Keep using horses in farming operations for mustering and farm work as opposed to helicopters and/or vehicles. Plant forest in areas where farming allows. Fence off/protect/restore wetlands. Trial regenerative agriculture and reduce dependence on synthetic fertilisers and topdressing. Avoid Nitrogen fertilisers.”

Implement sustainable farming practices

“Encourage non-mechanised access. Minimise motorised access to that which is necessary. That means no motorised recreation.”

Promote sustainable recreation/active travel

“Ensure infrastructure is as best possible prepared to withstand impacts of heavy rain fall events. Ensure there is a quick first response to any fire events as fire is one of the most damaging events for natural eco systems. Establishment of a body or group with good practical experience in weed and pest control which can manage these issues as currently they are largely focused on improving agricultural production. This work and management should be completely removed from station manager’s role to let him concentrate on stock management.”

Control of pests and invasive vegetation

“Continue to farm the property. Continue to graze cattle to maintain pasture cover and reduce potential fuel loads for wildfires. Continue to control woody weeds like briar rise, broom and wilding conifers as well as animal pests like pigs, deer, rabbits, feral cats, ferrets, stoats and possums. The potential to harvest bigger wilding conifers to help pay control of pests.”

Maintain/increase stock rates — prevent fire/weeds

“Planting trees is the only way of mitigating flood type downpours and mitigating an arid climate. If the species planted have an expected strength in securing the soil and can survive the expected climate then it would be good to start planting now for then. But please do not plant pine trees. Plant species that have at least a chance of improving food and habitat sources for bird life.”

Protect flora and fauna

Public access and recreation opportunities

Rangitahi/Molesworth is an extremely large area—larger than 10 of the 13 national parks in Aotearoa, New Zealand. The Acheron Road and Tophouse/Rainbow Road provide most visitors access into and experience of this vast landscape. There are also existing tramping tracks, routes and camping within the reserve, while hunting and fishing within the reserve is a bucket list trip for many. Others visit the reserve to go mountain biking, rafting, horse-trekking, and more. There is widespread potential to enable new recreation opportunities and facilities to expand access to other parts of the reserve. DOC and Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura wanted to hear suggestions on what activities should be encouraged and the areas of the reserve where these activities are most appropriate. Due to Rangitahi/Molesworth's location, there is also an opportunity to improve or even create new recreational links to neighbouring St. James Conservation Area to the west, Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park to the east (the Seaward and Inland Kaikoura Ranges), and to Leatham and Rainbow Run Conservation Areas to the north.

(Q2) Are there any specific recreational opportunities you would like the reserve to provide for and where in the reserve could these activities occur?

The most common recreational activities mentioned by respondents were:

- Hunting (n=277)
- Walking and tramping (n=188)
- Mountain biking (n=163)
- Camping (n=100)

The most common areas for recreational opportunities identified by respondents were:

- For vehicle access — improved four-wheel drive access in Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=70) as well as year-round or extended times for road access (n=55)
- For active travel — increased trails for tramping and biking (n=79) and increased horse trekking (n=35) in Rangitahi/Molesworth
- For general amenity areas — more campsites (n=48) and more huts (n=39) are needed in Rangitahi/Molesworth
- Areas for hunting and fishing — improved access to Rangitahi/Molesworth for hunting (n=177) with improved access to rivers with more beats for fishing (n=11)

The most common suggestions of recreational activities to exclude were:

- Vehicles, specifically to limit or control access (n=35)
- Hunting (n=14)

The most common suggestion of areas to exclude were:

- To not increase or improve access to Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=33)
- Commercial activities (n=9)

Table 3: (Q2) Are there any specific recreational opportunities you would like the reserve to provide for and where in the reserve could these activities occur?

Main theme	Frequency
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	568
Hunting	277
Walking/tramping	188
Mountain biking	163
Camping	100
Fishing	91
Four-wheel drive activities	91
Horse trekking	86
Canoeing/kayaking/Rafting	38
Motorcycling	31
Aviation	13
Allow dog access	12
Parapenting/paragliding/hang gliding	10
Mountaineering/climbing	9
Visiting cultural/archaeological sites	7
Promote sustainable recreation/active travel	6
All-terrain vehicle off-roading	6
Trail running/races	5
Skiing	4
Canyoning	2
OTHER	247
Maintain the status quo	71
Control of pests and invasive vegetation	70
Improve access in general	65
Allow activities that don't disturb the farm	57
Stop/minimise the use of poisons, e.g. 1080	16
Environmental education	6
Scale back/stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth	2
AREAS FOR VEHICLE ACCESS	163
Improve four-wheel drive access	70
Year-round/extended access	55
Year-round/extended access through Rainbow Road	13
Upgrade/maintain/build more roads	12
Year-round/extended access through Acheron Road	12
Roads linked to adjacent conservation areas	8
Motorcycle tracks on farm	7
Year-round/extended access through Tarndale	4
Horse float access	3
Year-round/extended access through Molesworth Road	2

AREAS FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL	139
Increase trails for tramping and biking	79
Improve horse trekking	35
Trails linked to adjacent conservation areas	11
Bridge across Clarence River	6
Allow access to all tracks	5
Form a great walk on Rangitahi/Molesworth	5
Free movement off trails	4
Disability accessible trails	4
Improve access to rivers for rafting	3
Lake Tennyson - Rainbow run trail	2
Tarndale/Acheron - Lake McCrae - Clarence trail	2
Tramping in central areas	2
AMENITY AREAS	122
More campsites	48
More huts required	39
More amenities needed, e.g. toilets	19
Facilities to keep horses overnight	13
Aircraft/helicopter landing sites	12
Increase visitor accommodation	11
Maintain current recreational areas	7
Access to cultural/archaeological sites	4
E-bike charging stations, e.g. solar powered	2
Year-round access to Tarndale historic homestead	2
AREAS - HUNTING BLOCKS/FISHING	117
Improve access to hunting	112
Improve access to rivers/more beats for fishing	11
More Chukar blocks in Guide	3
RECREATIONAL EXCLUSIONS/LIMITS	57
Limited/controlled vehicle access	35
Restrict hunting	14
Strict rules and enforcement are required	7
Prohibit aviation	4
No mountain/road biking	3
No hunting	3
No horse trekking	2
Fence life stock out of recreational areas	2
AREAS OF EXCLUSION	55
Do not increase/improve access	33
No commercial activities	9
Motorised vehicles limited to formed roads	8
No motorised vehicles	5

“Support, encourage and continue to allow recreational hunting in Molesworth as it is a very popular activity as evidenced by high block bookings.”

Recreational opportunities — Hunting

“Tramping is the predominant interest for most I believe. Creation of multiday tramps from 3 to 7 days is the ideal with huts provided. Dogs are always a problem with DOC but given most dogs are well controlled by owners there is leeway for this to be provided for. Living in Hamilton the predominant users of parks are dog walkers but DOC cannot get over this issue.”

Recreational opportunities — Tramping

“Mountainbike access all year round, a marked 4th/MTB track into Lake McCrae from the Acheron Road, then down to the Clarence.”

Recreational opportunities — Mountain biking

“More areas where camping can be undertaken but with only basic facilities. Similar to the two existing camp areas but more of them. Development of easy family friendly bike trails.”

Recreational opportunities — Camping

“Allow for open season year round on trout. They are an introduced pest which feeds on our only native freshwater fish which is threatened. Try to restrict 4x4 and motorbike use through freshwater environments. Run annual pig hunting competitions where number of pigs culled is the goal.”

Recreational opportunities — Fishing

“Recreational 4wd opportunities, using designated tracks, formed and unformed roads, and provide camping/exploration opportunities to the high country especially those less physically able than the tramping/hiking tracks for example.”

Recreational opportunities — Four wheel drive activities

“Horse riding access should be improved, particularly through trekking. The current permit model for horse access has no expected time frames for permits to be granted. More multi use tracks, including mountain biking trails.”

Recreational opportunities — Horse trekking

Natural values

One of the purposes of a recreation reserve is to protect natural values, including indigenous plants and animals, landscapes, wetlands, and freshwater.

Rangitahi/Molesworth is a land of extremes with vast landscapes, scree-covered mountains, wide river valleys, and tussock slopes. Not only is the reserve the headwaters to a number of the upper South Island's major river systems, but it is also an area of national ecological significance with over 70 threatened plants found in the reserve, one of which is found nowhere else on Earth. Lakes, wetlands, and kettlehole bogs provide a treasure trove of moisture-loving plants, while scree and drylands make Rangitahi/Molesworth one of the most diverse lizard habitats in the country.

The reserve also supports populations of nationally critical, endangered, and vulnerable bird species such as tarāpuka/black-billed gulls, pārerā/grey ducks, matuku/Australian bitterns, tarapirohe/black-fronted terns, kea, tūturiwhatu/banded dotterels, kārearea/New Zealand falcon and kāmana/southern crested grebes. Many of the reserve's lakes showcase ecosystems containing indigenous and endemic fish in the absence of introduced aquatic species.

(Q3) Are there any places within the reserve where specific actions are needed to protect the natural values? Please identify priority areas and actions.

The most common priority actions suggested by respondents were:

- For flora and fauna — to control pests and invasive vegetation (n=214) and to protect flora and fauna (n=119)
- Management actions — to maintain the status quo (n=59) and to restrict vehicles to formed roads only (n=21)
- Farming actions — to continue with farming (n=43) and to utilise, check and repair fencing (n=33)
- For water — to protect waterways, wetlands and tarns (n=89) and to limit or exclude stock from grazing along waterways (n=37)
- For the environment — to identify and establish no go areas (n=44) and to stop or minimise the use of poisons, e.g. 1080 (n=15)

The most common priority areas for action were:

- Ecologically sensitive areas or areas with high natural value (n=21)
- Controlling pests and invasive vegetation by Clarence (n=12)
- The whole of Rangitahi/Molesworth needs action (n=11)

Table 4: (Q3) Are there any places within the reserve where specific actions are needed to protect the natural values? Please identify priority areas and actions.

Main theme	Frequency
PRIORITY ACTIONS — FAUNA/FLORA	302
Control of pests and invasive vegetation	214
Protect flora and fauna	119
Collaborate with visitors on pest control/planting	40
Revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth	22
Breeding program for endangered fauna	7
Value species with no negative ecological effect	3
PRIORITY ACTIONS — MANAGEMENT	187
Maintain the status quo	59
Restrict all vehicles to formed roads only	21
No off-track tramping/cycling/motor vehicles	21
Limit accessibility	19
Allow hunting	17
Maintain accessibility	14
Environmental education	13
Maintenance of roads and tracks	9
Protect cultural/archaeological sites	8
Allow access for all forms of recreation	6
Restoration/addition of visitor facilities	6
Strict rules and enforcement are required	6
Parapenting/paragliding/hang gliding	5
Increase signage	5
Set aside areas for recreational activities	4
Consult experts	2
Establish a community group to consult with	2
Allow camping	2
Restrict vehicle access	2
PRIORITY ACTIONS — FARMING	131
Continue farming	43
Utilise, check and repair fencing	33
Maintain/increase stock rates - prevent fire/weeds	26
Limit/exclude grazing in sensitive habitats	25
Scale back/stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth	14
Improved farm/stock management	13
Implement sustainable farming practices	10
Beekeeping	2
PRIORITY ACTIONS — WATER	111
Protect waterways/wetlands/tarns	89
Limit/exclude grazing along waterways	37
Catchment management	6

Restrict recreational activities in waterways	6
Exclude powered vessels from waterways	5
Restrict access to waterways/wetlands/tarns	4
PRIORITY ACTIONS — ENVIRONMENT	91
Identify and establish no go areas	44
Stop/minimise the use of poisons, e.g. 1080	15
More roads/tracks to prevent going off-road/track	15
Implement fire control measures	10
Identify and address causes of erosion	4
Only allow activities with minimal impact	3
Protect high-altitude areas	2
Change reserve status to National Park	2
PRIORITY AREAS	74
Ecologically sensitive areas/high natural value	21
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Clarence	12
The whole of Rangitahi/Molesworth	11
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Tarndale run	7
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Sedgemere	7
Protect Sedgemere catchment	6
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Acheron River	5
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Hanmer Spring	4
Protect Tarndale catchment	4
Adjacent conservation areas need action	3
Protect Waiau Toa Gorge	3
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Lake McCrae	2
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Lake Tennyson	2
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Leatham river	2
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Bowscale	2
Control pests/invasive vegetation by Redgate	2
Protect Acheron River	2
Protect Lake Tennyson	2
OTHER	8
More information needed	5
Not enough natural value in Rangitahi/Molesworth	2

“The wilding pine, gorse and broom at the southern end of the station near Hanmer are a significant imminent threat. Pines in the upper acheron are a major issue but acknowledge these are already identified.”

Control pests and invasive vegetation

“Tarnsdale Lakes are critical because of their unique fish species. From a recreational and natural history perspective, they are interesting to visit, but it's also important to protect them from becoming contaminated with introduced species. A possible compromise to provide both access and protection would be to provide formed tracks. If necessary, viewing areas so that public access is possible, but harmful effects are reduced. Clearly marked routes would help reduce disruption of the natural environment.”

Protect flora and fauna

“Waterway protection should be prioritized, with farm and grazing animals kept out of all wetland areas and riverbeds. Stock movements in the river have been highlighted as a cause for early onset erosion and water quality degradation. This should be mitigated for the future”

Protect waterways/wetlands/tarns

“Molesworth is a Station and as such is already well cared for and respected by those that love it. Why change something that is already so precious.”

Maintain the status quo

“As previous, fencing of waterways especially wetlands, bogs & rivers. This protects native aquatic fauna & flora. Addition of fish barriers to mitigate risk of trout/salmon expanding into untouched water systems. High intensity visitor areas, such as Lake Tennyson, may need infrastructure improvements to stop sewage/rubbish entering waterways, and 4Wd vehicles damaging vegetation & waterways. Identification & protection of rare lizard habitat & bird nesting areas. Ensuring farming is not negatively impacting these areas (e.g. localised fencing of scree/shrub habitat). Weed control in Upper Awatere braided river bed weed control, particularly broom, and wilding pine control upper Clarence, Jak & Jollies Passes.”

Identify and establish no go areas

“Again the way it has been managed with grazing is positive and supports the ecosystem of the area. Stock manages weed growth and pest habitat options. They manage the space to enable safe access for human interaction.”

Continue farming

“Feral goats should be strictly controlled across the reserve. This could be achieved through more engagement with recreational hunting groups and users. Weed control should be continued - gorse along the Acheron river flats, wilding pines etc.”

Collaborate with visitors on pest control

Environmentally sustainable commercial activities

The review of the management plan will consider the current activities within the reserve and will guide any future environmentally sustainable commercial activities. At present, commercial activities range from small guiding operations to a large farming lease, and many activities in between. DOC and Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura wanted to hear what activities respondents believed belonged in Rangitahi/Molesworth.

(Q4) What small-scale activities are appropriate for the reserve? What large-scale uses of land, if any, are appropriate for the reserve?

The most common small-scale activities mentioned by respondents were:

- Guided recreation/tour operators (n=168)
- Walking or tramping (n=138)
- Hunting (n=133)

The most common large-scale uses of land mentioned by respondents were:

- The continuation of farming (n=356)
- To implement sustainable farming practices (n=63)

The most common activities to exclude were:

- No further commercial activities should be allowed (n=52)
- No (large-scale) tourism or tour/recreation operators should be allowed (n=33)
- No visitor operations that exclude public access should be allowed (n=31)

The most common land uses to exclude were:

- To scale back or stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth (n=37)
- To stop farming that impacts the environment or public access (n=29)
- To exclude any additional land use that would limit public access (n=26)

Table 5: (Q4) What small-scale activities are appropriate for the reserve? What large-scale uses of land, if any, are appropriate for the reserve?

Main theme	Frequency
SMALL-SCALE ACTIVITIES	495
Guided recreation/tour operators	168
Walking/tramping	138
Hunting	133
Mountain biking	121
Control of pests and invasive vegetation	103
Fishing	76
Horse trekking	66
Four-wheel drive activities	61
Canoeing/kayaking/rafting	55
Camping	53
Only allow activities with minimal impact	49
Recreational activities	34
Environmental education	24

Review to consider Rangitahi/Molesworth future management

Revegetation of Rangitahi/Molesworth	21
DOC hut stays	21
Beekeeping	18
Vehicle access to formed roads only	17
Motorcycling	17
Aviation	16
Vehicle tours/shuttle services	13
Heritage, arts and culture	11
Races	11
Allow activities that don't disturb the farm	9
Allow sustainable activities	9
Parapenting/paragliding/hang gliding	7
Visitor accommodation	6
Skiing	5
More toilets	5
Bird watching	3
Eateries	3
Retail/conference/wedding venue	2
Powered vessels	2
Photography	2
Mountaineering/climbing	2
Rubbish bins/recycling	2
Nursery	2
LARGE-SCALE USES OF LAND	409
Continue farming	356
Implement sustainable farming practices	63
Sheep farming	18
Forestry	6
Agriculture	6
Energy generation	4
Hydroelectricity	2
ACTIVITIES TO EXCLUDE	152
No further commercial activities should be allowed	52
No (large-scale) tourism/recreation/tour operators	33
Visitor operations that exclude public access	31
Any activities that would limit access	14
Aviation	11
Four-wheel drive activities	9
Limited access (numbers/time)	6
Identify and establish no go areas	5
Exclude powered vessels from waterways	5
Wild Animal Recovery Operations (WARO)	4
Beekeeping	3

Hunting	2
No increase in trails/mountain bike tracks/parks	2
Motorcycling	2
LAND-USES TO EXCLUDE	118
Scale back/stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth	37
Farming that impacts the environment and accessibility	29
Any land use that would limit access	26
No additional large scale land-use	25
No further/large-scale accommodation	9
Dairy farming	4
Forestry	3
GENERAL COMMENTS	50
Maintain the status quo	48

“Guiding seems very compatible, fishing, hunting, vehicle tours, bird watching, tramping etc. At present, the farming seems to override the rights of access to recreational user. While understanding the juggling act of farming and recreation, this is public land foremost but seems to be secondary to the farming operation. There are no hunting zones(some of the better areas)that have no clear justification, ie. Guide, Upper Awatere yet though anecdotal reports are still hunted by Molesworth staff.”

Guided recreation/tour operators

“The only appropriate commercial activity for the reserve is continued farming at a similar or smaller scale than current, due to the land management benefits of farming activity in the reserve. It is difficult to imagine any other commercial activities taking place in the reserve without compromising the nature of the place, so I do not support this.”

Continue farming

“Farming is appropriate if profitable and sustainable in the environment. Presumably, it also allows funding for pest control. Public access is an asset, but part of the beauty is its isolation - "development" or intensive tourism would not be appropriate.”

No further commercial activities should be allowed

“I believe farming near these areas is not a good use of the reserve. However small scale activities that encourage people to engage with and appreciate our Taonga is what reserves should be aiming for. This should include highly accessible activities for those who are not as mobile or able as well as a broad range of other activities that others may engage with such as camping/hut stays, hunting and general tramping.”

Scale back/stop farming on Rangitahi/Molesworth

Appendix 1 – Survey questions

1. What strategies can we use to mitigate and adapt to climate change?
2. Are there any specific recreational opportunities you would like the reserve to provide for and where in the reserve could these activities occur?
3. Are there any places within the reserve where specific actions are needed to protect the natural values? Please identify priority areas and actions.
4. What small-scale activities are appropriate for the reserve? What large-scale uses of land, if any, are appropriate for the reserve?