



It's Happening: Updates from the Hump Ridge Great Walk Project

Keeping you up-to-date with the news and latest information from the team developing the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track to Great Walk status.

Kia ora!

Welcome to the latest project newsletter. Keeping in touch with you about the project is important to us. We will keep sharing how we are doing but also any constraints or delays we encounter.

To recap a few things from 2022 as our last project update was at our Community Information Day on 13 October. Thanks to everyone (~45 attendees) that came along, listened to the presentations and asked questions. It was neat to see new people come along as well as greet those who we met at our 2021 event.

The project team shared the key achievements of 2022. The big-ticket item was the approval of the detailed business case that confirmed the budget and expected work. Namely,

- The project's capital expenditure budget is \$7.9m.
- The project will deliver a Great Walk at the Hump Ridge by upgrading the track surface and structures.
- This includes a new swing bridge at the Edwin Burn to bypass the Edwin Burn Viaduct. *Note: the viaduct is not being removed nor is it unsafe - this bridge will provide an alternative crossing should the viaduct become unusable.*
- The work listed also includes an extension of carparking at Rarakau and an entrance waharua (gateway), shelter and toilet.
- The high-level experience design, which includes storytelling and interpretation, is approved for detailed development.
- The work on the detailed assessment for the protection of the heritage and cultural values for the track and environs, including a conservation heritage plan for Port Craig
- The main construction phase began in late 2022 and will continue during 2023.
- The project is forecast for completion in late 2023.

Since then, it has continued to be a busy time for the project team, our partners and colleagues. Keep reading!

Small population of BIG snails.

A goal of any DOC project is to ensure construction work is managed well to prevent any adverse effects to the biodiversity of the area we're working in.

Our track teams have been carefully managing any possible impact to the population of Powelliphanta snails located



near Okaka Lodge. These snails are among the largest snails in the world, and also among our most threatened invertebrates.

Powelliphanta are mostly "spot endemics". This means each species and subspecies are confined to its own small area. The stronghold for these snails is in wet native forests and alpine tussock, especially around north-west Nelson and north Westland. To have a local population in Fiordland/Southland coastal mountains is pretty special.

Prior to beginning their assigned track work, the contracted construction teams were provided with fact sheets that explained what the snails looked like, where they are likely to be found, and what to do if they find one (or many) during their work. To date, no snails have been located in the work areas.

One critical thing we want to share is that it is against the law to take or hold Powelliphanta shells without a permit.

Our biodiversity colleagues are super keen to hear from anyone that finds Powelliphanta snails or shells. Leave them where they are but send us your observations – i.e., photos, GPS points, description of the find, location, etc.

You can read more snail news at

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/invertebrates/powelliphanta-snails/>

Completed Track Upgrades

The 61 km track has been divided into 7 sections. This will allow the construction contracting teams to undertake the track upgrade work concurrently but also focus on the section most in need of repair.



John Henderson Construction, (JHC) one of the successful contractors for the track construction work, recently completed track upgrade work to two sections.

Section D is the piece of track from the Edwin Burn Viaduct for 1.5km towards Okaka which trampers encounter during their second day of hiking. See 'After' photo above left. Section O goes from the Okaka Junction up to the Okaka Lodge Link Track. See 'After' photo above right.



February – March 2023

Continued construction works on Sections A & C

April 2023

Anticipated start for Track Section B - Flat Creek to Okaka Junction - by JHC.

Our next project newsletter

Other project work keeping us busy:

- Negotiating legal easements with landowners to secure public access.
- The development of the waharoa (gateway) for the track entrance at Rarakau carpark.
- The ongoing monitoring & protection of the heritage and cultural values/impacts for the track and environs, throughout the construction period.
- Working with consultants on the digitising and archiving of historical records.
- The preparation work for the tendering process of the Rarakau Car Park upgrade works
- Prior to Christmas, the process began for the interpretation and story-telling package. Proposals received from interested parties were evaluated and are currently in the internal procurement phase.

Safety during track upgrade works.

The contractors are responsible for managing the worksite, including visitor safety and access through the sections of track under construction. Track users & visitors are asked to obey all signage and instructions and expect minor delays from time to time.

Information will be also shared by the Hump Ridge Track Operations Office and on the DOC website.

Our project webpage contains the map that shows the sections of track. In this newsletter, we have begun sharing the contractor company doing the work at each section, their start date and progress of their track upgrade work.

Want to know more?

To know more or to book the **Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track** -contact the Track Operations Office directly via www.humpridgetrack.co.nz

Project Webpage: Stay informed via: www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/hump-ridge-great-walk-project

Project Email: Get in touch to ask questions or to be added to the newsletter distribution list: HumpRidgeGWP@doc.govt.nz

Media enquiries: please contact media@doc.govt.nz

He rau ringa, e oti ai

With many hands, the job will be finished

Project Progress, Tasks and Timeframes

We know there is always keen interest in how the project is tracking. Some recent key achievements are listed below.

October 2022

Community Information Day in Tuatapere, Thursday 13 October at Waiiau Town & Country Club. The handout and presentation are saved on the project webpage.

The approval of the contractual agreements for two track construction companies for their awarded track sections.

November 2022

JHC continued the track work on Section D and started upgrade work for Track Section O.

December 2022

The upgrade work on Track Section D and O completed.

January 2023

Track Section A started – Track Burn Entrance to Flat Creek Junction - by JHC.

Track Section C started – Okaka Junction to National Park Boundary - by WestReef Services (WRS).

Hump Ridge Great Walk Project

A collaboration between Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track Charitable Trust, Te Rūnanga o Ōraka Aparima and Department of Conservation Southland, New Zealand

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