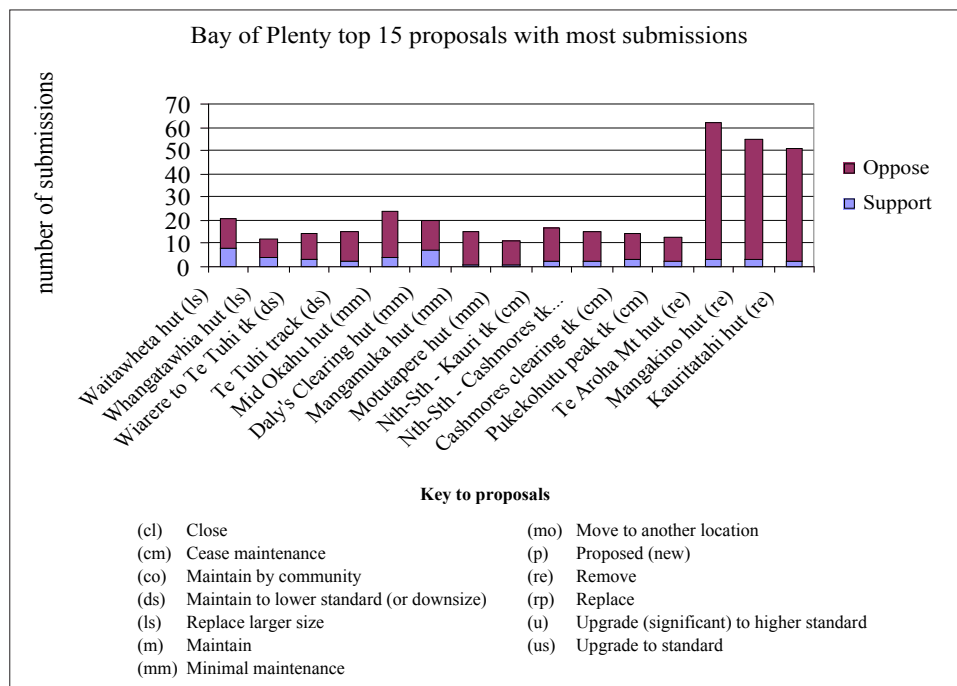


# Bay of Plenty Conservancy recreation opportunities review

## Summary of submissions and decisions

### Submission analysis



### General themes

- Submitters recognise the actual and potential growth in both population and international visitors to the region.
- The Bay of Plenty is considered to be a valuable and under-utilised resource for residents of urban areas of the northern half of the North Island, providing the larger protected areas that Auckland and Waikato Conservancies lack.
- Submitters would like to see all backcountry huts retained.
- There was support for a network of tracks around the Rotorua Lakes.
- Submitters would like to see a network of huts in the Kaimā-mamaku Forest Park that would enable a multi-day tramp with loop options.
- Conservancy resource commitment was discussed in relation to back country huts and track provision, with the Whirinaki Forest Park perceived as benefiting at the expense of other Areas of the Conservancy.



## Proposals

Proposals that received most submissions were on removals of huts and closure of tracks in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park, particularly Te Aroha, Managkino and Kauritatahi huts and tracks around Cashmores Clearing. The majority of submissions were in opposition. The predominant argument in favour of retaining these huts, which are small ex-Forest Service deer culler huts, is that they are needed for search and rescue; that they are heritage items and for their contribution to the network of backcountry huts.

A number of submitters questioned the necessity of upgrading tracks within the Whirianki Forest Park, which they perceive as being at the expense of other tracks that are proposed for downgrading in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.

## Decisions

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The following are key decisions for the conservancy.

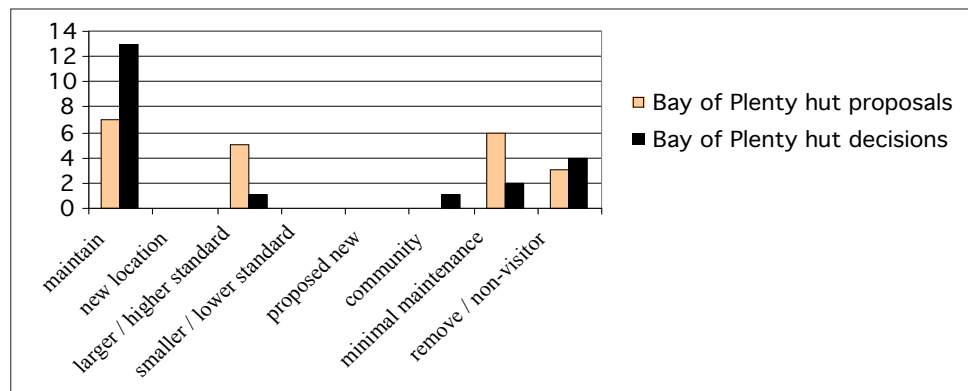
- Development of loop tracks in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.
- Completion of 4-5 day easy tramping track circuit in Whirinaki Forest Park.
- Explore the potential for new tracks around the Rotorua Lakes.
- Huts with little strategic value to be replaced with shelters at sites that will support the backcountry recreation opportunities.

By taking into account submissions, more huts will be maintained, fewer huts will receive minimal maintenance and although some will be removed, alternative basic accommodation will be provided at locations that will support overnight tramping.

There are currently no opportunities for easier multi-day tramping trips in the Bay of Plenty Area. The neighbouring Tongariro National Park options are coming under increasing pressure. The conservancy has decided to proceed with the 'Whirinaki circuit' proposal, which continues existing strategic direction for the park.

Current standards set for Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park tracks were originally set too high to realistically reflect the preferred conditions current users would expect.

Maintenance to date has actually been insufficient to even meet a lower service standard. Thus 'maintain to a lower standard' should still see a better but not significantly different track condition. This point was explained and accepted by the people who attended a user-group meeting during the consultation process.



Bay of Plenty Conservancy will manage 544km of track in the future, 12km less than the current track network. The changes in proposals for tracks, resulting from consultation, are shown in the following figure. The first bar represents the *change* in track length to be 'maintained' as *decisions* compared with *proposals*, and the other bars compare actual length of track first with *proposals* and then *decisions* to change from the current situation.

