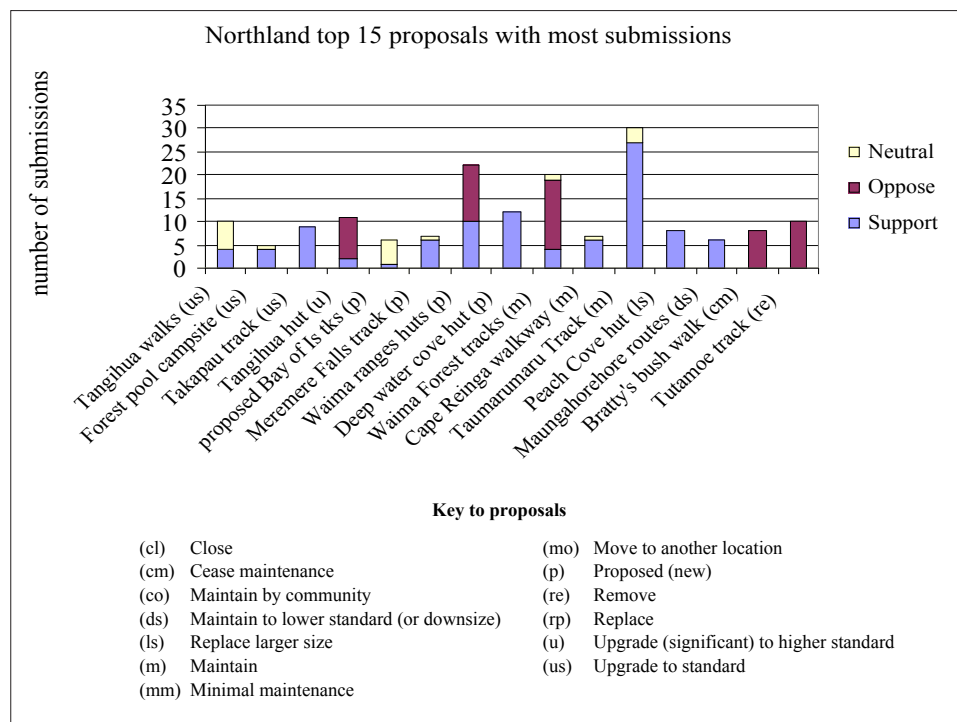


Northland Conservancy recreation opportunities review

Summary of submissions and decisions

Submission analysis



Themes that came through the submissions are outlined in the following general points:

- Holding on to Northland's remote experience in the Waima Ranges and the Warawara forest (referred to as Wilderness). Manage and maintain these areas with simple facilities like the track networks that already exist, but only 'to standard'.
- Near tourist hot spots like Bay of Islands, the Kauri Coast, Cape Reinga, bring walking and tramping experiences to 'standard' to enable the visitor group being catered for to achieve satisfying experiences.
- There is strong support for retaining existing Tramping Tracks and Routes. They should be managed and maintained to their designated standard, not 'Flashed up'.
- The submissions raised awareness of issues that had previously received little attention such as:
 - 10 submissions promoting tracks for botanising such as looking for native orchids.
 - There is a small but focused contingent of people seeking remote experiences in Northland.
- Many submissions also related to the general management of DOC-managed areas.



- A concern of Iwi groups that engaged in the process is that they are not public and should have been consulted separately and before the public process was undertaken.

Although Northland Conservancy does not have 'wilderness' areas the public process has shown that some areas are seen by Northlanders as a 'wilderness' experience and these areas should be respected as such, for example not putting huts on the Waima Range and the retention of access to the Tutamoe Plateau. Hukatere Track, Kahuwera Pa and the Mangahorehore Route lookout extension (500m) tracks that have a replicated experience elsewhere in the conservancy will cease maintenance.

Some concern was expressed that upgrade to standard implied tracks would be upgraded to higher service standards will be dealt with through better explanation of proposals, and many decisions to 'maintain' have been retained as initially intended through proposals.

Decisions

There will be a wider range of recreation opportunities in Northland including old and new facilities for disabled access (Tane Mahuta, Ahipara Gumfields and Taumarumaru track), a new opportunity for sea kayaking / tramping accommodation at Deep Water Cove, a wetland track experience at Waitangi and tracks investigating local points of interest at Waitata Point and Soda Springs. Also a potential community development of Kaheka Point as a camping opportunity in the Whangaroa Harbour.

The decisions tend to favour proposed campground facility provision. There has also been a shift to retain some day visit sites that were proposed to be removed (Tutamoe Track near Dargaville, Bratty's Bush track), and continuing with proposals to enhance these opportunities (Taumarumaru Coastal track, Waitangi wetland walk). The maintenance of existing backcountry facilities will continue. Three camp sites have been proposed, two out of three proposed huts are not going to proceed and three tracks are now not going to be removed.

Bay of Islands Area

- Mangahorehore Route will not be shortened as this would compromise visitor experience.
- The proposed Deep Water Cove Hut was well supported by sea kayakers and trampers alike.
- The proposed Kahika Point campsite and existing Kahika Point Track is undergoing further discussion with community and iwi, so these proposals remain unchanged.
- For the Merumeru Falls Track, it was decided that environmental damage of putting in new track would outweigh the benefits of the new work, and the falls can be seen from the existing track network.

Kaitaia Area

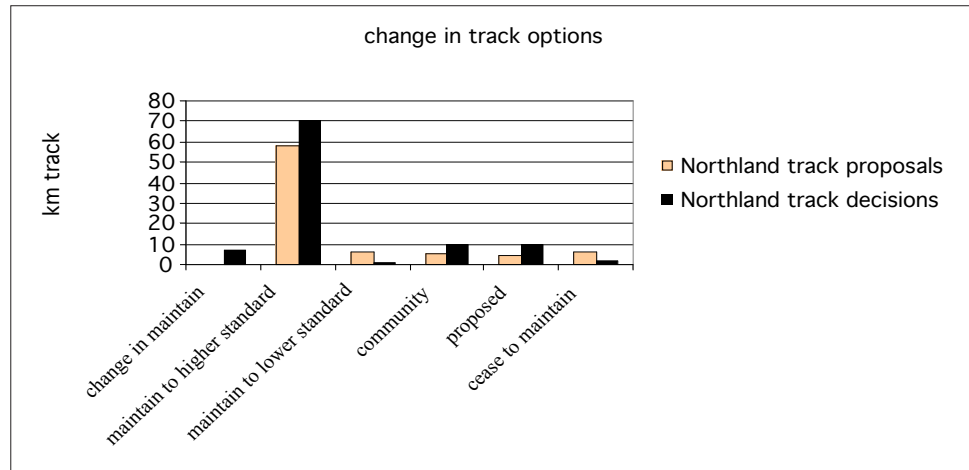
- There were no changes to track proposals.
- The proposed Taumarumaru Track had overwhelming support from local communities.
- The Ahipara Gumfields Walk proposal will be barrier free and accessible for the disabled.

Kauri Coast Area

- The two proposed facilities in the Waima Forest were strongly opposed by local communities and people seeking a ‘wilderness’ experience in Northland. However, there was support for the restoration of Framptons Hut and for overnight opportunities further in the Waima Ranges in the form of informal camping areas with composting toilets.
- Mt Tutamoe Track will continue to be maintained as the only access to the Tutamoe Plateau, for hunting and other remote experiences.

Whangarei Area

- The public proposed a vehicle accessible campground at Mimiwhangata.
- The community halls on Recreation Reserve in the Whangarei Area will be handed over to other community groups or administrated by respective District Councils.
- Bratty’s Bush Track will be retained and maintained to a lower standard as it is an important access track for botanists viewing native orchids.



Northland Conservancy will manage 570km of track in the future, 21 km more 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.

