

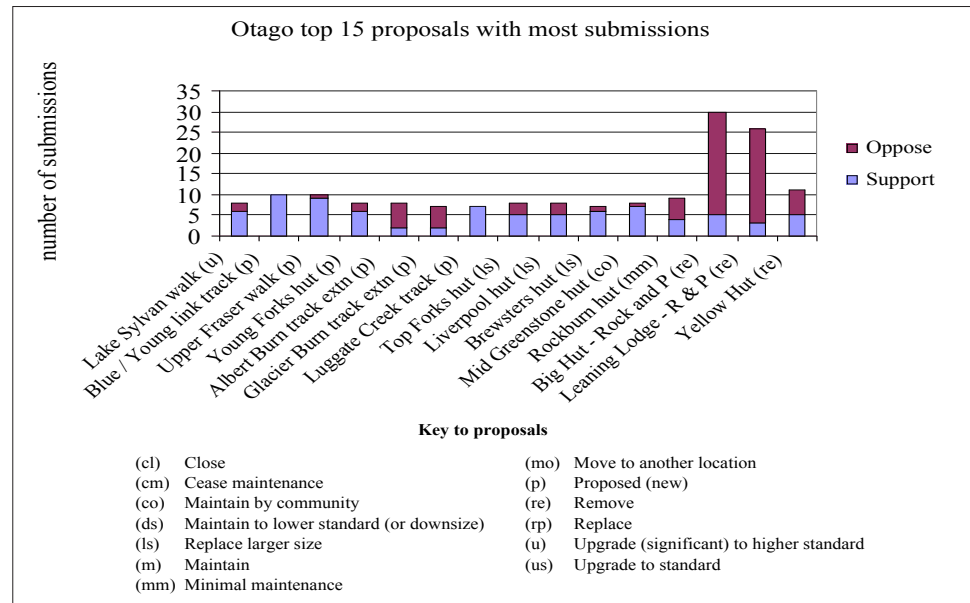


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Otago Conservancy recreation opportunities review

Summary of submissions and decisions

Submission analysis



- Many people and community based groups took the review as an opportunity to lobby for new visitor facilities. These proposals have been assessed for their strategic contribution.
- Submissions from national organisation representatives tended to discuss general issues without being specific to Otago Conservancy proposals.
- There were some views that remote and/or very low use huts should be retained irrespective of their condition.
- There are differing views on the role of DOC and of territorial local authorities over which agencies have the responsibility for facilities that are predominantly used by tourists rather than local residents.
- Several community interest groups did not believe that their local area was being supported equitably by DOC's new facility proposals.
- Support was gained for undertaking the heritage assessment of the number of huts listed as 'minimal maintenance' (some of which are dilapidated), before any final decisions are made.
- There was criticism that it was because of lack of attention to track or hut maintenance in the past that DOC is now proposing either removal or reducing the standard of facilities.
- DOC has been asked to take account of the potential outcomes of future High Country Tenure Review negotiations when making decisions on facilities.
- Some information provided in the Proposal Summary Report caused confusion for submitters.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Decisions

The Conservancy has a full range of recreation opportunities, with strengths in more basic backcountry tramping opportunities in Wanaka Area and easier tramping opportunities in Wakatipu Area. Proposals represented some rationalisation that had already been planned with the aim of meeting current demand and trends in use. In light of this, new proposals requested by local communities have, unfortunately, not been supported at this stage.

Central Otago Area

Two longer distance tramping track proposals totalling approximately 15 km have been withdrawn.

Two ex-tenure review tramping tracks totalling 10 km have been accepted as strategically important.

This Area has a relatively large number of new proposals for carparks, toilet facilities and short walks mainly associated with providing adequate infrastructure to support visitor use of already popular locations, with a focus on access to historic sites.

Coastal Otago Area

Coastal Otago proposals were aimed at some rationalisation of short and day walk opportunities taking account of other providers of public recreation opportunities in the region. A number of proposals to cease maintenance on low-use walks have received no comment. Most of the 'maintain by community' proposals have been accepted on the basis that community groups were already involved in managing those sites. Two small picnic areas proposed to be transferred to local authorities will now be retained by DOC. Discussions continue on the future of the Papatowai Camp Ground.

Discussions with user groups are underway to jointly upgrade one of the Silverpeaks huts allowing removal of another that is in a poor state. Of three huts on the Rock and Pillar range that came to DOC from the High Country Tenure Review process, one is used for research purposes and will be licensed, a second has recently been acquired by a private trust which is upgrading the hut to DOC standards and will make the facility available for public use. The third hut is privately owned, in poor condition and may ultimately be removed dependent on the outcome of discussions with Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club.

Wakatipu Area

This Area provides most opportunities for backcountry adventurer tramping opportunities for the conservancy. Shared management between DOC and Queenstown Lakes District Council of some urban and urban fringe tracks near Queenstown continues while the Department defines where its interests start and stop. A number of little used side-valley tramping tracks and routes have been identified for the 'cease maintenance' option as effort is focused on key arterial tracks for hunters and backcountry adventurers. One walking track is proposed for upgrading to wheelchair accessible standard. The Routeburn roadend, gateway to Mount Aspiring National Park, is long overdue for an upgrade.

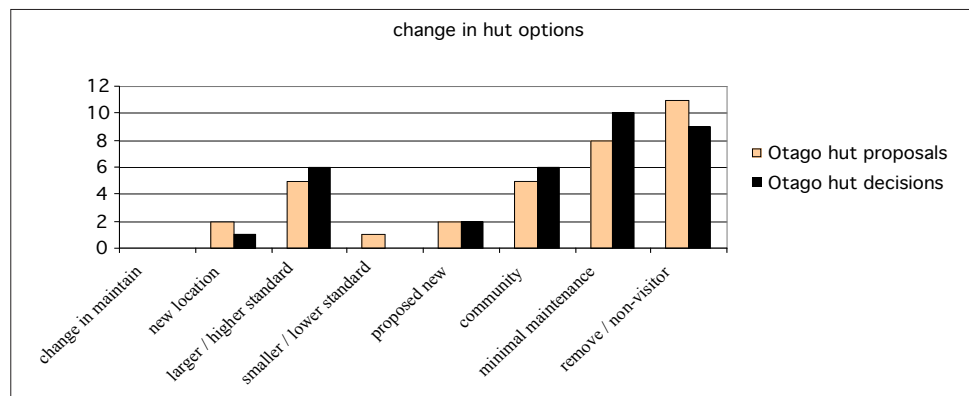
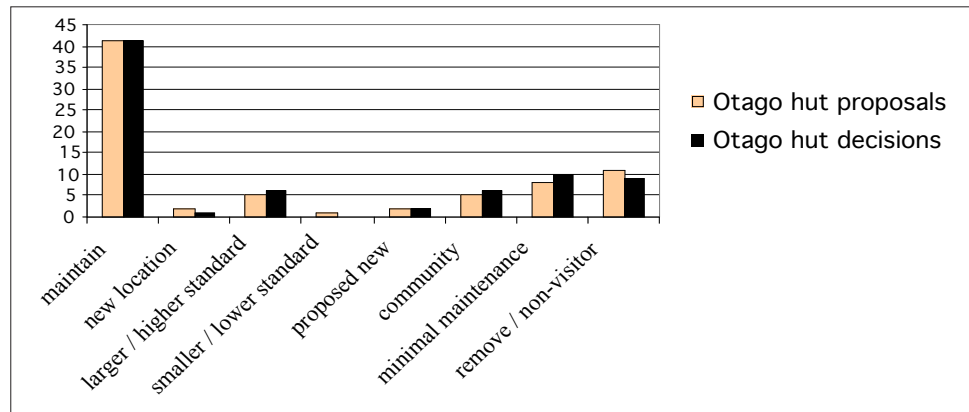
New walking track and amenity areas will be added to the core network arising from tenure review outcomes.

The old Esquilant biv will be removed as agreed with NZ Alpine Club. The old mid-Greenstone hut will be retained under a concession licence for use by hunters. A number of potentially historic huts are identified for minimal maintenance as a temporary measure until assessments of their heritage values can be completed.

Wanaka Area

This Area provides most opportunities for traditional backcountry recreation opportunities within the conservancy. New walking track and amenity areas will also be added to the core network arising from tenure review outcomes. Decisions have been made to phase out some huts and tracks; Big Hopwood Burn hut and route, Mid Flat hut, Bull Flat hut, Dunks hut, Ferguson Creek track, Hunter East Branch track, and Upper Timaru Creek track.

Six huts are identified for increases in size to meet current use levels only. A new link track from Blue Pools to the Young river mouth, including a new hut at Young Forks, will provide an all-weather access in the Gillespie pass circuit.



Otago Conservancy will manage 1451 km of track in the future, 289km 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.

