

August 2026

Use of Public Conservation Land Report (section 19)

For the referral application for Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power
Scheme Reconsenting Project: FTAA-2607-1258



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

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Introduction

This report has been prepared under the appropriate delegation of the Director-General of Conservation in accordance with section 19 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). It provides information for the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) in relation to the use of public conservation land (PCL) as part of the consideration of the referral application for Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme Reconsenting by Manawa Energy Limited.

This report addresses the information that must be contained in a report in relation to PCL as set out in s19(2)(a) and (b) of the Act and outlines any consultation undertaken as required by s19(3), as outlined in the sections below.

The information required under s19(2)(c) is not required in this report because Contact Energy Limited does not require a ministerial determination under section 24(2) or (4) for new electricity lines as part of the Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme Reconsenting project and the referral application is not required to provide information under section 13(4)(q) or (r).

The Referral Application

The referral application is for the reconsenting of the existing Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme (the Scheme). This would allow the continued operation and maintenance of the Scheme.

The application would allow for the following activities:

- the damming, taking, diversion and use of water;
- the discharge of water and sediment;
- the disturbance of riverbeds;
- the deposition of sediment;
- the maintenance of structures within waterbodies; and
- the erection and placement of structures within waterbodies (included on a precautionary basis).

The Act defines PCL as land to which either or both of the following apply:

- (a) *The land is held, managed, or administered under the Conservation Act 1987, the National Parks Act 1980, the Reserves Act 1977, or the Wildlife Act 1953:*
- (b) *The land is listed in Schedule 4*

The Scheme area has been identified to include land which meet the Acts' definition of PCL. The areas of PCL are:

- Tararua Forest Park (Figure 1)
- Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area (Figure 2)
- Mangahao Conservation Area (Figure 3)

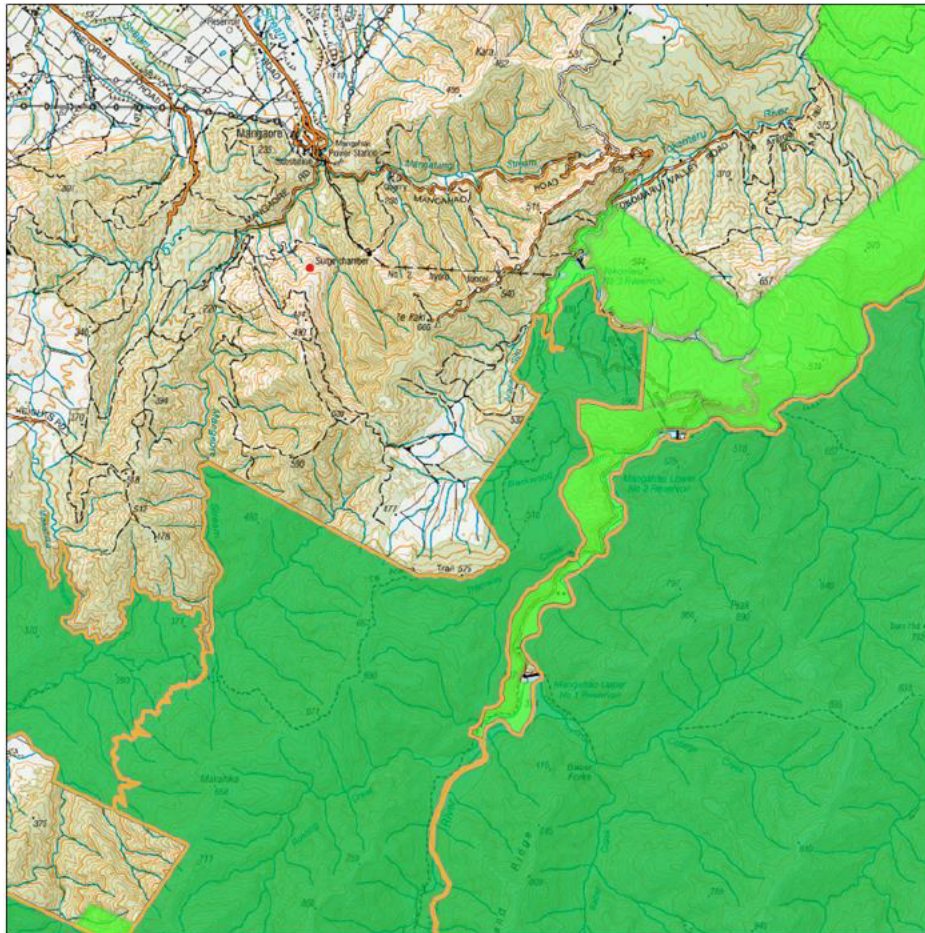


Figure 1 - Tararua Forest Park (in dark green)

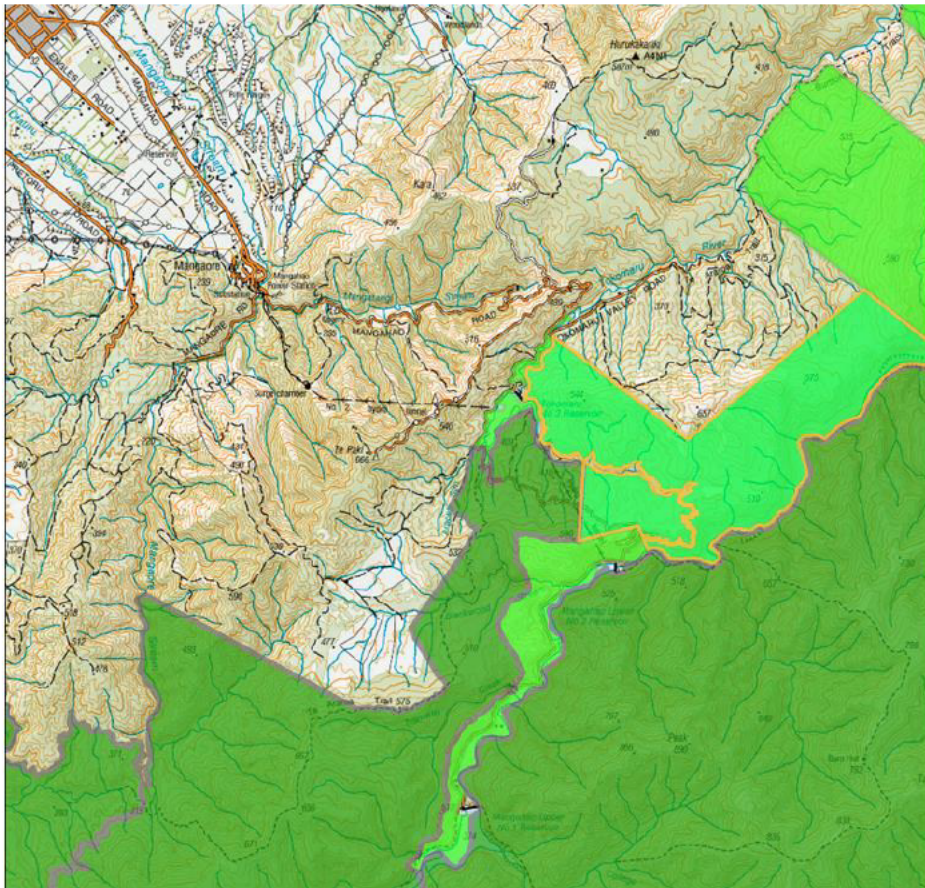


Figure 2 - Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area (outlined in yellow)

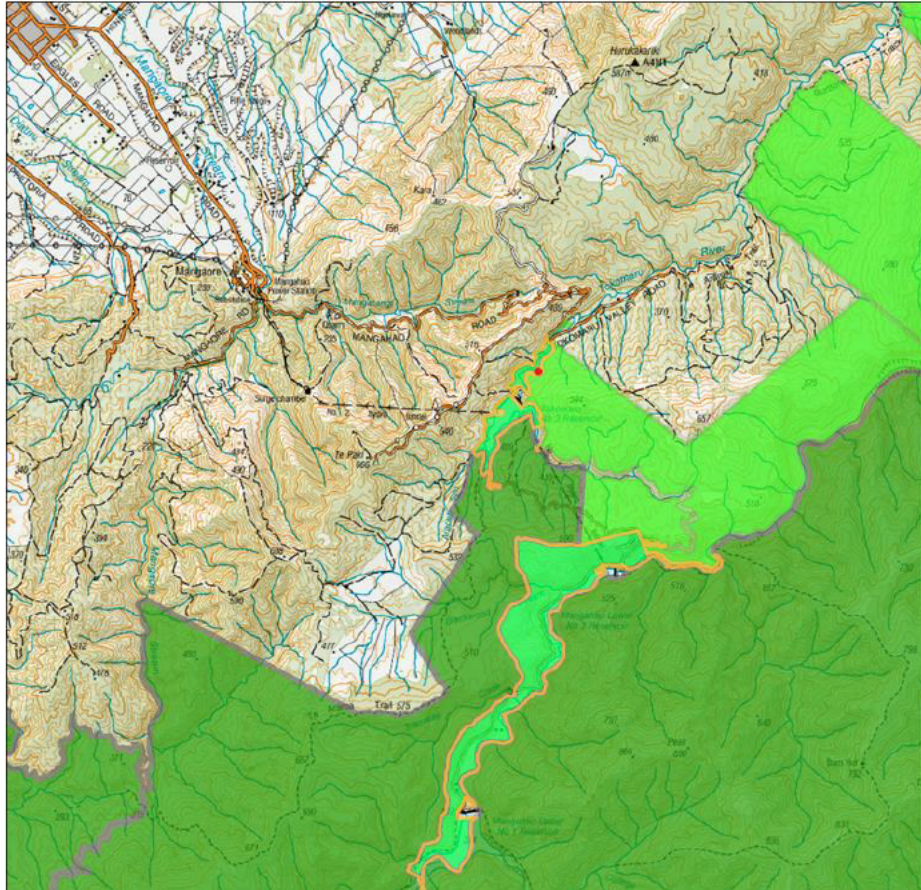


Figure 3 - Mangahao Conservation Area (outlined in yellow)

Department of Conservation advice

As outlined further below, the applicant has an existing easement for the proposed activity on PCL. There are several other parties with existing arrangements and DOC approvals that relate to the PCL; none directly conflict with the proposed activity.

DOC considers that the risks and potential liabilities for the Crown that may arise from the proposed activity are addressed through the existing easement conditions.

Existing arrangements for the public conservation land

Administration:

The Department directly manages all three areas of PCL.

Access:

Mangahao Road provides access to the PCL. This access is used by the general public. There are no other road access points to Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area or Mangahao Conservation Area.

The Te Araroa Trail passes through this area along Burton's Track and the Mangahao Makahika Track via part of the Mangahao Road.

The furthest extent of the Mangahao Road also provides access to the Burn Hut Loop & is one of the main entry points for the Mangahao Flats Hut Walk.



Figure 4 - Tracks Around the Project Area

Use:

DOC Approvals:

For the purposes of this report a DOC approval covers an approval authorised by DOC under the Wildlife Act 1953 (Wildlife Authorities) and approvals under the Conservation Act 1987 (typically Part 3B).

A search of the Permissions Database has shown 25 active, and 1 approved, DOC approvals for the area of the proposed project. Several of these cover more than 1 of the 3 pieces of PCL relevant to the application.

Other approvals for these areas of DOC managed PCL, that do not occur within the proposed project area have not been considered in this report.

Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area

There are 15 DOC approvals relevant for this Conservation Area. 4 are Wildlife Authorities, 3 are Research and Collection Permits, 7 are Wild Animal Recovery Operation (WARO) permits, and 1 is a guided fishing permit.

Mangahao Conservation Area

There are 5 DOC approvals relevant for this Conservation Area. 3 are Wildlife Authorities, and 2 are Research and Collection Permits.

Tararua Forest Park

There are 16 DOC approvals relevant to the Project area for this Forest Park. 4 are Wildlife Authorities, 7 are Research and Collection Permits, 4 enable aircraft landings, 1 is a filming permit for a hunting show, and 1 is a guided walking permit (on track).

Further details on all relevant DOC approvals can be found in Appendix 1 – List of Relevant DOC Approvals.

None of these approvals authorise or require sole use of the Land, and all should be able to operate alongside the proposed project without conflict.

Other Interests:

DOC is aware of the following additional uses of the DOC managed PCL relevant to the proposed activity:

- Mangahao Hut 1 (Individual)
- Mangahau Hut 2 (Hokonui Bush Club)
- Mangahao Hut 3 (derelict)
- Mangahao House No. 1 (Central Districts Field & Game Club)
- Mangahao House No. 2 (Horowhenua Hunting Club)
- Mangahao House No. 3 (Heretaunga Tramping Club)

The Upper Mangahao Track (GWBN) and Te Araroa Trail (Te Araroa Manawatū Trust) are both managed by community groups, as are Burn Hut (Horowhenua Hunting Club) and Mangahao Flats Hut (Manawatu Tramping & Skiing Club).

The Mangahao Road forms a key point of access for all of these.

State Owned Enterprises Grant of Easement

There is an existing easement for the Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme, authorised 1 September 1997 under the State-Owned Enterprises Act, which enables the proposed activities on the PCL identified in this report.

The easement was authorised under s23(1) of the State-Owned Enterprises Act, in gross with an in perpetuity term. As such, and as outlined in DOCs s17 comments, DOC considers that the applicant does not need to seek additional concessions to enable the proposed activity.

Risks and potential liabilities to the Crown

DOC considers that the risks and potential liabilities posed by this application are addressed through the existing easement conditions. DOC considers that if any new risks or liabilities appear through the substantive application, DOC can raise these for the panel's awareness through the s53 comments.

Outcomes of consultation

There are no other owners, administrators or managers of the PCL. As such DOC has undertaken no consultation in the preparation of this report.

Appendix 1 – List of Relevant DOC Approvals

Permission Number	Holder	Approval Type	Activity	Expiry Date	Public Conservation Land
102100-GUI	Afoot Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	Guided day and overnight walks throughout the North Island	31-08-2033	Tararua Forest Park
74165-WARS	Alpha Helicopters Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	WARO permit for the North Island	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
119328-AIR	B Line Helicopters Limited	Conservation Act - Licence	Aircraft landings & hovering with Tararua Forest Park	30-06-2028	Tararua Forest Park
117767-FLO	Best Care (Whakapai Hauora) Charitable Trust	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Collection of seed, plant, clay and rākau samples from PCL in the Lower North Island	31-12-2035	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park
111141-FAU	Best Care (Whakapai Hauora) Charitable Trust	Wildlife Act – Collect, capture, handle, release or kill	Lizard surveys in all public & private land in the Manawātū region	10-10-2034	Mangahao Conservation Area, Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park
93148-WARS	Hokitika Helicopter Services Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	National WARO permit	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
74161-WARS	Individual	Conservation Act - Permit	WARO permit for the North Island	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
108800-RES	Individual	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Collecting samples of Salticidae (family of jumping spiders) across North Island	05-03-2034	Tararua Forest Park
103663-AIR	Kapiti Heliworx Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	Helicopter landings in Tararua & Ruahine Forest Parks	31-08-2028	Tararua Forest Park
104782-FLO	Massey University (National Holder)	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Collecting alpine plant seeds and voucher specimen from Tararua & Ruahine Forest Parks	08-02-2027	Tararua Forest Park

74160-WARS	McNicholas Aviation Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	WARO permit for the North Island	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
117165-FLO	Muaupoko Tribal Authority Incorporated	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Collecting plant seeds and cutting from specific areas of PCL in Manawatū & Wairarapa districts	21-12-2034	Mangahao Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park
71016-RES	New Zealand Institute for Earth Science Limited	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	GPS surveying and research in Middle & Lower North Island	17-04-2029	Tararua Forest Park
94716-GUI	New Zealand Professional Fishing Guides Association	Conservation Act - Permit	National concession (excluding Northland) for guided fishing	31-05-2032	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
64146-FAU	Ospri New Zealand Limited	Wildlife Act – Collect, capture, handle, release or kill	National authorisation for trapping ferrets and possums on all DOC managed PCL	10-05-2028	Mangahao Conservation Area, Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park
119842-RES	Rangitane o Manawatu Cultural Trust	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Gathering rock, soil and plant materials in the Rangitane o Manawatu area	10-07-2035	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
122643-FAU	Rangitāne o Manawatū Settlement Trust	Wildlife Act – Collect, capture, handle, release or kill	Lizard Survey in all public & private land in the Rangitāne o Manawatū Settlement Trust rohe.	09-11-2035	Mangahao Conservation Area, Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park
111516-AIR	Tararua Heliwork Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	Helicopter landings in Tararua & Ruahine ranges	31-05-2035	Tararua Forest Park
126191-FAU	Te Tumatakahuki Society Incorporated	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Collect plants, soil, water and rocks from specified PCL	31-08-2036	Mangahao Conservation Area, Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park
76864-FIL	The Hunters Club	Conservation Act - Permit	Nationwide filming for 'The Hunters Club' incl. use of a drone	01-12-2028	Tararua Forest Park
119879-WARS	Thompson Twins Contracting Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	WARO permit for the North Island	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
118820-WARS	Trap and Trigger Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	WARO permit for the North Island	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area

100573-AIR	Wairarapa Helicopters Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	Helicopter landings in Tararua Forest Park	30-11-2027	Tararua Forest Park
74162-WARS	Wairarapa Helicopters Limited	Conservation Act - Permit	WARO permit for the North Island	30-09-2028	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area
118851-FLO	Wellington City Council	Conservation Act – Research or Collection Permit	Collecting seeds and cuttings from Remutaka, Tararua Forest Parks and Turakirae Head Scientific Reserve	20-03-2035	Tararua Forest Park
76749-FAU	Wildlands Consultants Limited	Wildlife Act – Collect, capture, handle, release or kill	Catch and handle native skinks in Lower North Island on private and specified DOC land	31-12-2031	Tokomaru Valley Road Conservation Area & Tararua Forest Park