

03/08/2026

FTAA-2607-1258

Peter Chrisp
Director-General of Conservation
Department of Conservation
Email: s 9(2)(a)

Dear Peter

Request for report in relation to the use of public conservation land under section 19 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 for the Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme Reconsenting project

Note: The due date for the section 19 report is **26/08/2026, 11.59PM.**

A referral application has been received by the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister) from Manawa Energy Limited (the applicant) for the Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme Reconsenting project (the project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). Project summary details are in Appendix A.

This application is substantially similar to the project previously referred to the fast-track approvals process on 10 November 2025 (application reference FTAA-2507-1086), following a referral application lodged in July 2025. The principal difference is that it includes certain existing operation and maintenance activities, and associated landholdings, including Crown land administered by the Department of Conservation, that were not clearly captured in the earlier application. The applicant states that no changes are proposed to the project's operating regime. As a result, a report is being sought from you under section 19 of the Act in relation to this application, whereas no such report was sought in relation to application FTAA-2507-1086.

The project area includes public conservation land (defined under the Act) and requires the following proposed approvals under specified Acts:

- resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991
- the applicant identifies that an approval under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 will be required and states that further ecological investigations will determine whether a standard or complex freshwater fisheries approval is necessary.

Under delegation from the Minister and in accordance with section 19(1) of the Act, I am writing to request and obtain a report in relation to the use of public conservation land that is prepared by the Director-General of Conservation.

As specified under section 19 of the Act, the report must include the following:

1. the existing arrangements (whether formal or informal) for the administration, access to, or use of public conservation land within the project area.
2. advice on the risks to, and potential liabilities of, the Crown that relate to any proposed approvals of the kind described in [section 42\(4\)\(e\), \(f\), \(l\), or \(m\)](#) (concession, land exchange, or access arrangement).
3. if the referral application was required to include information under [paragraph \(q\) or \(r\) of section 13\(4\)](#), advice on the matters set out in the applicable paragraph.

Please note, as required under section 19(3), the report content related to the existing arrangements and advice on risks and liabilities must be prepared in consultation with every owner, administrator, or manager of the land who is not the Crown.

Please provide the section 19 report no later than **17 working days** from receipt of this letter (refer to the due date above). If you do not consider the report can be prepared by that date, please let us know as soon as possible.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and refer the project to the fast-track approvals process, the applicant will be required to complete any preliminary steps under the Act before lodging a substantive application. If the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) deems the substantive application complete, an expert panel will be appointed to make a final decision on the required approvals.

The information you are receiving is being provided to you consistent with the statutory requirements under section 19 of the Act. The information is being provided in-confidence and may be commercially sensitive. It should not be forwarded to, and comments should not be sought from, anyone outside of your organisation.

Before the due date, please upload the report to the application portal feedback page. Alternatively, if you wish to email the report or have any queries about this letter, please email to referral@fasttrack.govt.nz and include the name of the lead contact - Antonia Croft. For assistance with the application portal or to update your account details, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Frame', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Stephanie Frame
Manager – Fast-track Operations

Appendix A: Project summary details

Cc: Linda Kirk - s 9(2)(a)
Amelia Taaka - s 9(2)(a)
Grace Masterton - s 9(2)(a)
Team Email - fast-track@doc.govt.nz

Appendix A – Project summary details

Application number	FTAA-2607-1258
Project name	Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme Reconsenting
Applicant name	Manawa Energy Limited
Project summary details	The project is the reconsenting of the existing Mangahao Hydro-Electric Power Scheme to enable its continued operation and maintenance. The Scheme is located in the northern part of the Tararua Ranges, approximately 28 kilometres south-west of Palmerston North and 15 kilometres north-east of Levin. It draws water from the Mangahao River and generates up to 39.9 megawatts of electricity, with an average annual output of 131 gigawatt-hours, sufficient to power approximately 20,000 homes. The project includes existing maintenance activities occurring on multiple Crown land parcels administered by the Department of Conservation. The activities applied for include: • 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 project will require the proposed approvals: • resource consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 • the applicant identifies that an approval under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 will be required and states that further ecological investigations will determine whether a standard or complex freshwater fisheries approval is necessary. The applicant also explains that no changes to the existing operating regime are proposed.