

7 August 2024

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 5 July 2024, in which you asked for:

“Any DOC monitoring of the conservation covenants and all DOC permits granted within the conservation areas that relate to mining”

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

On 31 July I wrote to you to say that I had decided to release this information to you, but that the attachments would follow before 7 August.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *Any DOC monitoring of the conservation covenants:*

Please see attached documentation Items 1 - 9 in Schedule 1 for the eight monitoring visits undertaken in respect of the covenant between 2008 – 2017. Unfortunately, due to staffing turnover and capacity, the Department has been unable to undertake monitoring of the conservation covenant as frequently of late. The district is in the process of contracting a third party to undertake this monitoring in the coming year.

2. *All DOC permits granted within the conservation areas that relate to mining:*

The Department has provided five Letters of Authority to one applicant for exploration drilling purposes within the land area covered by the covenant which have been outlined in Items 10 – 14 in Schedule 1. Please note that the Letters of Authority are provided in respect of land which is subject to the covenant but is not public conservation land. A further two permissions applications for prospecting work have been received by the Department from the same applicant for activities on conservation land within the covenanted area. These applications are currently awaiting consideration and a decision is yet to be made.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed in Schedule 1, subject to personal details being withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people. In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act and determined there are no public interests that outweigh the grounds for withholding.

Furthermore, the photographs referred to in Item 7 cannot be found. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as despite reasonable efforts to locate them, the photographs cannot be found.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and attached documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Phillippa Fox
Director Regulatory Authorisations
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Schedule 1 – List of documents for release

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	17 April 2009	Monitoring File Note	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
2	20 December 2017	Monitoring File Note	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
3	18 July 2013	Monitoring Outcome Letter to Bendigo Station	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a).
3a	May 2013	Bendigo Special Lease Vegetation Monitoring Report	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
4	25 August 2011	Monitoring Outcome Letter to Bendigo Station	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
5	13 May 2008	Monitoring File Note	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
6	15 April 2015	Monitoring File Note	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
7	28 November 2012	Monitoring File Note	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a), Sec 18(e)
8	2 December 2016	Monitoring File Note	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
9	4 January 2017	Monitoring Outcome Email to Bendigo Station	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
10	18 October 2017	Letter of Authority: Approval for Mineral Exploration in the Bendigo Conservation Covenant	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
11	6 March 2018	Letter of Authority: Approval for further Mineral Exploration in the Bendigo Conservation Covenant	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
12	7 February 2019	Letter of Authority: Approval for further Mineral Exploration in the Bendigo Conservation Covenant	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
13	25 October 2022	Letter of Authority: Approval for further Mineral Exploration in the Bendigo Conservation Covenant	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
14	17 February 2023	Letter of Authority: Approval for further Mineral Exploration in the Bendigo Conservation Covenant	Withheld in part, Sec 9(2)(a)