

5.7 ROADING, VEHICLE USE AND OTHER TRANSPORT OPTIONS (OTHER THAN AIRCRAFT AND BOATING)

Some roads are considered necessary in Fiordland National Park to provide for public access, use and enjoyment. The Milford Road (SH 94) including the Hollyford Valley side road provides the major land access route into Fiordland National Park. The road itself is outside Fiordland National Park and managed by Transit New Zealand. There are significant issues associated with the management of this road which are discussed in section 5.3.9.2. The Borland Road and the Wilmot Pass Road provide important secondary routes within Fiordland National Park.

While the benefits of access are recognised, roads and other land transport systems can create the following issues:

- Adverse effects on natural and landscape values from construction of the road and a permanent impact on the natural state of Fiordland National Park.
- Fragmentation of ecosystems.
- Provide a corridor for pest infestation.
- Encourage a proliferation of ancillary utilities and facilities.
- Change the type of public use and displace existing recreational users.

Some control over use of the Wilmot Pass Road is necessary so that the effects of visitor use at Deep Cove can be managed (see section 5.3.9.3).

The Borland Road and the West Arm to Percy Saddle Road are maintained by Transpower NZ to allow it to service its electricity transmission lines from the Manapōuri Power Station. There is no obligation on Transpower nor the Department of Conservation to maintain the roads to a higher standard than that necessary to service the lines; however public access is provided for, to the extent that road and weather conditions and Transpower operations allow it.

Various other shorter sections of road within Fiordland National Park are maintained and managed by the Department of Conservation.

The off road use of vehicles is considered to be incompatible with park values because of its various impacts on the natural environment.

Borland and West Arm to Percy Saddle maintenance roads provide unique opportunities for mountain bike use within Fiordland National Park. While the Borland Road and West Arm to Percy Saddle Roads are not connected by a formed road, a short route over Percy Saddle between the Grebe Valley and West Arm, Lake Manapōuri exists. It is

considered that mountain biking opportunities provided in Fiordland National Park are greatly enhanced by these roads, although due to the nature of the terrain, bikes must be carried by hand for approximately 800 metres over part of this route beneath the Percy Saddle. This is a technically challenging walking section. The use of these roads by mountain bikes is considered to be consistent with the recreation opportunities provided in this visitor setting and the values of this place.

The General Policy for National Parks 2005 states that new roads are generally inconsistent with the preservation of national parks in a natural state and are not considered desirable in national parks. If a new road is to be developed in a national park, the General Policy indicates that the management plan would have to indicate so. In Fiordland National Park it is considered that any new roading development would only be appropriate in the frontcountry visitor setting where extensive infrastructure already exists. The effects of new roading outside of the frontcountry visitor setting on natural, historic, cultural and recreational values of this park are considered to be inconsistent with the purposes for which this park is managed.

The policy on aerial cableways within national parks is specified in Policy 10.5(a) of the General Policy for National Parks 2005. This states that aerial cableways should be confined to defined amenities areas and existing ski fields except where required as part of the core track network maintained by the Department or for necessary natural hazards monitoring.

NB: Refer to the Glossary for definitions of “road” and “vehicle”.

Objectives

1. To maintain, subject to natural hazards, the existing road access routes available to visitors within Fiordland National Park, recognising the opportunities they provide for public use and enjoyment.
2. To consider provision of new roading, or other land transport links, in frontcountry visitor settings only (see Map 7), and then only if they will improve visitor access and enjoyment of Fiordland National Park without impacting significantly on other recreation opportunities and national park values.

Implementation

1. New roading should not be authorised anywhere in Fiordland National Park except in the frontcountry visitor setting because of the likely adverse effects on the natural values or recreation opportunities that the other visitor settings are being managed for. Any proposal will require a full assessment of the adverse effects on the natural,

historical and cultural, recreational, landscape and amenity values also identifying how the proposal will improve the effective management of Fiordland National Park. An audit of this assessment to determine whether the effects are either acceptable or can be adequately mitigated should be required. Consideration of such proposals should include full public consultation. Refer also to Policies 10.3(h) and (i) of the General Policy for National Parks 2005.

2. Proposals for rail or monorail transport systems should not be authorised anywhere in Fiordland National Park except in the frontcountry visitor setting or existing road corridors because of the likely adverse effects on the natural values or recreation opportunities that the other visitor settings are being managed for. Any proposal for a rail or monorail transport system should demonstrate the necessity for the project and will be required to identify how the proposal will improve the effective management of Fiordland National Park. Any such proposal will require a full assessment of effects. This assessment should detail how the potential adverse effects on the natural, historical and cultural, recreational, landscape and amenity values resulting from the project will be managed. An audit of this assessment to determine whether the effects are either acceptable or can be adequately mitigated should be required. Consideration of such proposals should include full public consultation.
3. Aerial cableways, such as gondolas should not be authorised anywhere in Fiordland National Park except in amenity areas. There are no existing amenity areas in Fiordland National Park and any proposal to establish an amenity area would require an amendment to this Plan. Any proposal for an aerial cableway should demonstrate the necessity for the project and will be required to identify how the project would improve the effective management of Fiordland National Park. Any such proposal will require a full assessment of effects. This assessment should detail how the potential adverse effects on the natural, historical and cultural, recreational, landscape and amenity values resulting from the project will be managed. An audit of this assessment to determine whether the effects are either acceptable or can be adequately mitigated should be required. Consideration of such proposals should include full public consultation. Please also refer to section 5.1 with regard to amenity areas.
4. All planned roading developments within Fiordland National Park, including reconstruction, upgrading and significant maintenance works, will require an assessment of environmental effects. The assessment will outline the

need for the work and deal with the potential adverse affects on visitor experience and the natural, historic, cultural, recreational, landscape and amenity values. Design speed is an element affecting the degree of impact a section of road may have on the natural character of an area. The setting of design speeds within Fiordland National Park should recognise the importance of retaining natural values, which may mean lower speeds are used in some situations than might normally be adopted in a rural setting. This will be advocated to Transit New Zealand.

5. While recognising that regular maintenance works are essential to providing a continued quality service to visitors, these maintenance tasks should be carried out with a greater degree of sympathy and understanding for the environmental and scenic qualities of Fiordland National Park than would normally be applied in a rural setting. The following conditions should apply:
 - a) Road line vegetation should be trimmed back to the minimum necessary to be consistent with the needs of safe traffic passage;
 - b) Aggregate for all works should be sourced from acceptable sites within the Fiordland National Park, wherever possible, to reduce the risk of introducing weeds. Sites should be chosen based on historical use, availability of material and environmental effects including visual impact, and effects on indigenous flora and fauna. Gravel extraction is unlikely to be allowed from the Homer Hut area. Aggregate may be stockpiled at agreed sites but stockpiles should be used for works at the earliest opportunity and should be of a size and location to minimise visual effects. Some aggregate-based materials such as sealing chip and concrete aggregate will be allowed to be brought into Fiordland National Park, but should only be authorised on a case-by-case basis, if it is impractical to make it from resources from within Fiordland National Park (also refer to section 6.3); and
 - c) Dumpsites may be required for the disposal of spoil from construction works. Sites will be chosen and managed to minimise environmental effects. Landscaping and revegetation of the tip face may be required. Opportunities for habitat reconstruction will be examined.
6. The Milford Road will be managed according to the provisions of this section and section 5.3.9.2. The Transit NZ Avalanche Programme for State Highway 94 will be

supported, including providing for the necessary infrastructure directly associated with this programme, subject to all statutory and environmental considerations.

7. The Department of Conservation has established a system to provide a framework for the funding and management of the Wilmot Pass Road (refer to section 5.3.9.3).
8. All use of the Wilmot Pass Road excluding walkers or mountain bikes requires authorisation from the Department of Conservation. Bylaws will be enacted to enforce this policy. Authorisation for recreation and tourism purposes will be granted subject to the provisions of section 5.3.9.3. The provisions of this section do not restrict activities permitted through the Manapōuri - Te Anau Development Act (please refer to section 5.3.9.3).
9. The Borland Road and the West Arm to Percy Saddle Road will be maintained by Transpower NZ Ltd to the standard required by them to undertake maintenance of their transmission lines.
10. Public access on the Borland Road and the West Arm to Percy Saddle Road will continue, subject to Transpower maintenance needs, road and weather conditions and other safety requirements. This may mean temporary closure of the road during winter after heavy snowfall or slips, or access for four wheel drive vehicles only if road conditions make this necessary.
11. Vehicle use within Fiordland National Park is prohibited by park bylaws anywhere where there is not a formed road, campsite or car park. Except as provided for in Implementation 10, this includes mountain bikes.
12. The use of mountain bikes within Fiordland National Park is restricted to formed roads only. However, mountain bikes may be carried by person over the Percy Saddle between the Grebe Valley and West Arm, Lake Manapōuri, subject to the following conditions:
 - a) No concessions should be granted for this activity or associated mountain biking on the section of road between West Arm and Percy Saddle;
 - b) Access may be restricted or prohibited should any adverse effects of use become unacceptable; and
 - c) Access to the Borland and West Arm to Percy Saddle Roads is subject to Implementation 10.
13. If major facilities for transport options in new locations within Fiordland National Park are proposed, the establishment of an amenity area should be considered.

The establishment of an amenity area in Fiordland National Park will require an amendment to this Plan.