

Liam White

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Ref: OIAD-6226

1 May 2026

Tēnā koe Liam

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 31 March 2026, in which you asked for:

I request the following information regarding the potential continued presence of Moose / Elk (A. alces) in Fiordland National Park, held by DOC. Since 1995:

- *Reports of moose sightings from members of the public.*
- *Any advice held by DOC on the presence of moose in the Fiordland National Park.*
- *Any other information that would be relevant to determine the current status and history of moose in the Fiordland National Park.*
- *The official position of DOC on the "Fiordland moose question".*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. Reports of moose sightings from members of the public.

DOC does not hold any centrally recorded reports or logs of moose sightings submitted by members of the public, following reasonable searches of relevant systems.

We do, however, hold some observational reports and correspondence relating to possible moose presence, which are addressed under part 3 of your request.

2. Any advice held by DOC on the presence of moose in the Fiordland National Park.

DOC does not hold formal scientific advice or recent assessments confirming the presence of moose in Fiordland. Available information is limited and does not establish any current population.

Based on the absence of confirmed evidence in recent years, moose in Fiordland are generally regarded as likely locally extinct.

3. Any other information that would be relevant to determine the current status and history of moose in the Fiordland National Park.

We have identified the documents as within scope of your request, which are attached to this letter

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	February 2014	Attachment 1: Communication Plan Media Moose stories	Released in part – section 9(2)(a)
2	May 2017	Attachment 2: Trip Report	Released in part – section 9(2)(a)

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the OIA, as applicable:

- personal contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(a) – 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.

The 2017 trip report records observations from targeted field activity in areas historically associated with moose. It notes that no convincing evidence of moose presence was identified during that survey, and that earlier signs had not been observed since approximately 2011.

4. The official position of DOC on the "Fiordland moose question".

DOC's current position is that moose in Fiordland are likely locally extinct. This position reflects the absence of confirmed evidence of moose presence for over a decade, including targeted field observations and surveys.

There is currently no active population monitoring programme in place. This reflects both the lack of recent evidence of presence and DOC's prioritisation of conservation resources toward species and ecosystems at greater risk.

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

If you would like to discuss this response with us, please contact John Lucas, Operations Manager by email to jlucas@doc.govt.nz

Nāku noa, nā



Gabe Davies
Acting Director Operations
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai