

Luna

Whare Kaupapa Atawhai | Conservation House

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Ref: OIAD-8175

Tēnā koe Luna

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 2 June 2026, in which you stated and asked:

*“ I understand you help with the annual plan for Te Urewera.
Can I please have the annual plans from 2020 to present. ”*

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

We are transferring your request in full under section 14 of the OIA to Te Urewera Board (Board). This is because the information to which your request relates is more closely connected with their functions.

Please note that you will hear back from the Board in due course, in accordance with their obligations under the OIA.

In the meantime, and for the purposes of context only:

Te Urewera – a Legal Personality

- Legal personhood refers to the idea that a particular entity has rights and obligations under the law in and of itself. Applying the idea of legal personality to things like regions and rivers is quite new, but the idea has been applied to organisations in New Zealand and overseas for a long time.
- Te Urewera is recognised in New Zealand law as a living person.
- Section 11 of Te Urewera Act 2014 (TU Act) gives Te Urewera “*all the rights, powers, duties, and liabilities of a legal person*”.

Governance of Te Urewera

- The land and its natural resources cannot act or speak as a person. Instead, Te Urewera is spoken for and governed by Te Urewera Board (Board).
- From 2017 (per section 21 of TU Act), the Board is to consist of nine members, appointed as follows:
 - six members appointed by the trustees of Tūhoe – Te Uru Taumatua; and
 - three members appointed by the Minister of Conservation.
- The purposes and functions of the Board are set out in sections 17 and 18 of TU Act. Further provisions relating to the Board include sections 19 through 37 and Schedule 2 of TU Act. The Board is also subject to the OIA.

- The Board is obliged to plan and care for Te Urewera, while giving expression to Tūhoe concepts.
- It is also required to prepare and approve Te Urewera management plan; issue an annual statement of priorities; approve the annual operational plan (AOP); and monitor the implementation of the AOP.
- *Te Kawa o Te Urewera* is the management plan in place.

Management of Te Urewera

- Care for Te Urewera, including the tracks and facilities, is carried out by Te Uru Taumatua (TUT) – Ngāi Tūhoe's operational entity. The Department plays a supportive role.

Annual Operational Plan

- Each year, to guide operational work in Te Urewera, TUT and the Department jointly draft an AOP, which is then submitted to the Board for approval.
- In approving the AOP, the Board ensures alignment with Te Kawa o Te Urewera and the Board's annual priorities. Copies of the approved AOPs are held by the Board.
- The AOP year runs from 1 April to 31 March, aligning with the Tūhoe tax year.
- The Board meets quarterly to consider governance matters relating to Te Urewera.

Nāku noa, nā

OIA Team
Governance & Government Services
Department of Conservation | *Te Papa Atawhai*