



# STATEMENT OF INTENT

2018–2022

NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION  
ARA HĪKOI AOTEAROA

PO Box 11181  
Manners St  
Wellington 6142

Telephone (04) 815 8502

[www.walkingaccess.govt.nz](http://www.walkingaccess.govt.nz)

[contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz](mailto:contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz)

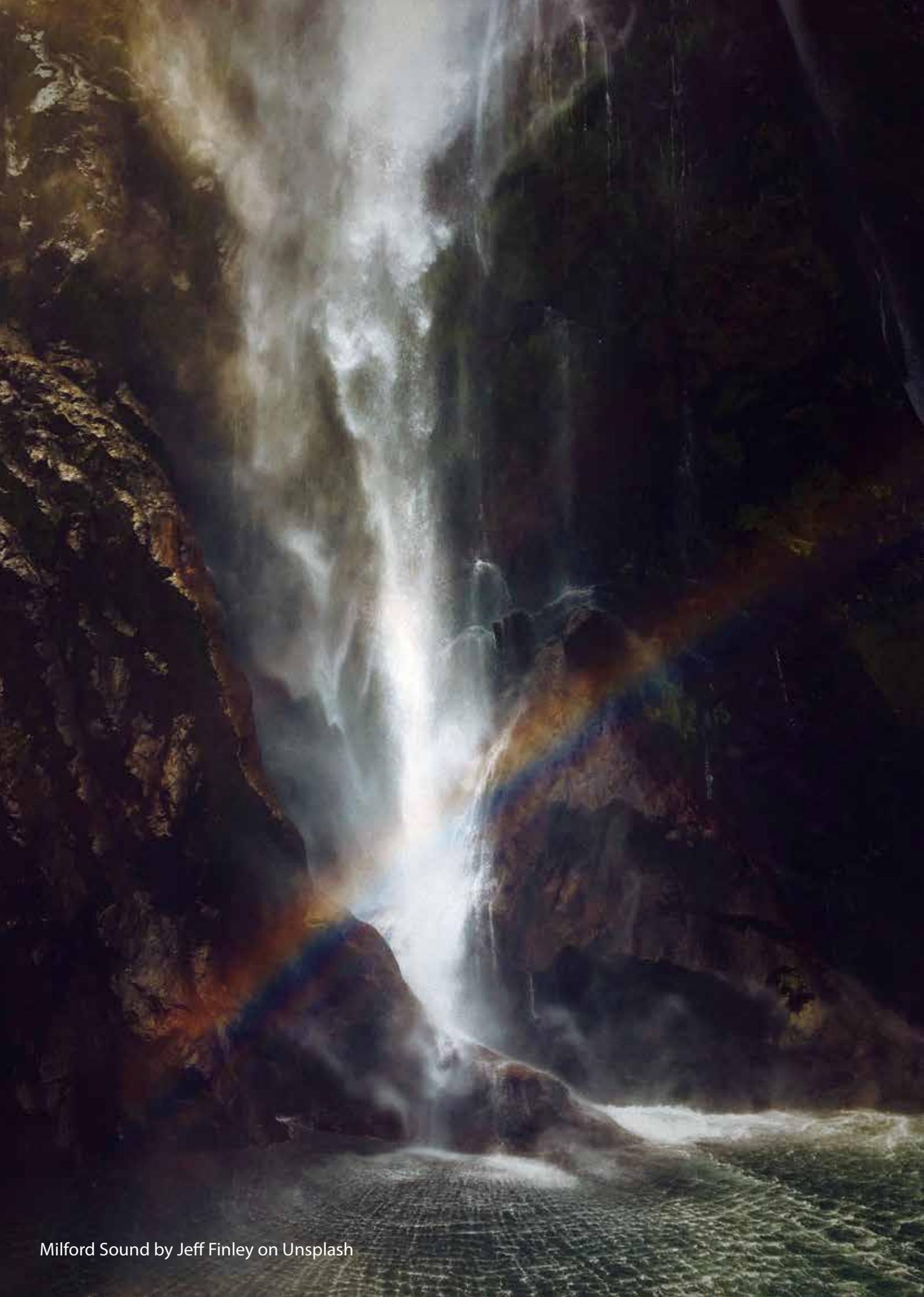
ISSN 1179-7606 (Print) ISSN 1179-7614 (Online)

Copyright New Zealand Walking Access Commission Ara Hiko  
Aotearoa 2018

Presented to the House of Representatives pursuant to Section 149 of  
the Crown Entities Act 2004.

# Contents

- 
- 1** Contents
  - 3** Statement from the Board
  - 4** Strategic Overview 2018-22
    - » Our purpose
    - » Who we are
    - » Our strategic context
  - 6** Strategic framework
    - » What do we intent to achieve?
    - » How will our outputs and activities contribute to what we intent to achieve?
    - » How do we know we are having an impact?
    - » Overall performance and cost analysis
  - 10** Financial strategy
  - 11** Organisational health and capability
    - » Our people
    - » Our systems
    - » Managing our health and capability
    - » Risk management
    - » Monitoring and evaluation



# Statement from the Board

This Statement of Intent (SOI) sets out what the New Zealand Walking Access Commission Ara Hikoi Aotearoa (NZWAC) intends to achieve or contribute to over the next four years and how it will manage its functions and operations to meet its intentions.

This SOI is produced in accordance with section 141 of the Crown Entities Act 2004.

The availability of public access to New Zealand's outdoor landscapes is an area of increasing importance. This is always a challenging issue, with the provision of secure access being reliant on NZWAC building strong relationships with landholders, central government agencies, local authorities, iwi, recreational and community groups.

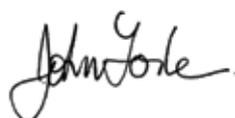
These relationships are key to identifying and creating new access, educating the public about how to behave in the outdoors, and encouraging resource planners and developers to consider access as part of their design work.

Over the next four years, NZWAC will increase its focus on both leadership and advice in relation to access matters, whether this is over public or private land, through a forest or along a water way. Growing relationships with iwi will

form a key part of this leadership and advice work.

Alongside its leadership role, NZWAC is also looking at how its work fits into New Zealand's wider economic landscape. In particular, the Commission will consider the impact of both urban development and of tourism on the desire for, and importance of, track and trail development and associated infrastructure.

This work represents a logical extension of NZWAC's core activities, and over the next four years, NZWAC will be looking to leverage opportunities in this space, while continuing to pursue free, certain, enduring and practical access.



John Forbes  
Chair



Penny Mudford  
Board member



Back row (left to right): Robin McNeill, Peter Brown  
Front row (left to right): Barbara Stuart, John Forbes, Penny Mudford

# Strategic overview 2018-2022

## Our purpose

The ability to freely access the great outdoors is a vital part of New Zealand's culture. Whether as part of an urban walking group, an organised tour, a tramping, hunting or fishing club or simply with your whānau and friends, our outdoor experiences shape who we are and how we live in this country.

The purpose of the New Zealand Walking Access Commission Ara Hikoi Aotearoa (NZWAC) is to ensure the public have free, certain, enduring and practical access to New Zealand's outdoors.

NZWAC works with a wide range of organisations, recreational groups, councils and iwi to ensure access to New Zealand's outdoors is secure. This encompasses access to those special places which are considered sites of significance by all New Zealanders. These sites include areas of natural beauty, as well as, those deemed as taonga by tangata whenua.

## Who we are

Established in 2009 as a result of the Walking Access Act 2008, NZWAC recognises that enjoying the outdoors in a wide variety of ways forms a large part of New Zealand's culture and identity.

NZWAC is the only government agency to have its primary focus on developing walking and other associated forms of access, such as cycling, horse-riding, vehicle and access with guns and/or dogs. To secure access across a variety of land types, NZWAC works with other government agencies such as the Department of Conservation (DOC), Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), and alongside local government, iwi and community groups.

NZWAC is a Crown agent, with its work being conducted at 'arm's length' from the government. As a Crown agent, NZWAC must give effect to Government policy that relates to its functions if directed by its Minister. Monitoring and oversight of the work of NZWAC is conducted by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). MPI is responsible for administering NZWAC's appropriation and legislation, and provides Ministerial advice when necessary.

## Vision

**Te mauri o te hīkoi – Journeys across the land and to our special places**

## Purpose

**Provision of free, certain, enduring and practical access to the outdoors**

## Our strategic context

### Our current strategic environment

The current strategic environment has a number of opportunities and challenges which require a response from NZWAC. These include:

- increasing numbers of tourists (both local and international) putting pressure on tracks and trails and related infrastructure;
- a desire from communities to build better connectivity during new urban development;
- biosecurity events affecting recreational access, such as didymo and kauri dieback;
- promoting access, tracks and trails as part of the One Billion Trees programme;
- a desire from iwi to gain access to significant sites and areas;
- supporting wider-government efforts to unlock the potential of Māori heritage and history;
- community groups seeking support and connections to create new public access, for both recreational and economic benefits; and
- creating better public health outcomes through enabling active recreation via attractive public access to the outdoors.

These opportunities and challenges have long-term impacts and drive the need for NZWAC to lift its focus from operational delivery to a more strategic footing – while also taking into account potential environmental costs associated with this work.

Provision of public access is a long and sometimes difficult process. Before access can be secured, NZWAC carries out

# Strategic overview 2018-2022

preliminary work to assess the suitability and location of an access opportunity. The work is a multi-stage exercise which is time consuming and resource-heavy. NZWAC's processes can involve engaging with any of the following:

- central government agencies such as MPI, LINZ, DOC and the Ministry of Justice;
- local government;
- current landholders, purchasers and their representatives;
- community groups, iwi, and recreational user groups; and
- lawyers, surveyors, resource planners and other specialist consultants.

When securing access, NZWAC must also ensure that all legislative requirements are met, in particular with regards to the:

- *Walking Access Act 2008*;
- *Land Transfer Act 1952*;
- *Conservation Act 1987*; and
- *Resource Management Act 1991*.

## Our strategic response for the future

NZWAC has revised its internal Walking Access Strategy 2017–2022, its outcomes framework and

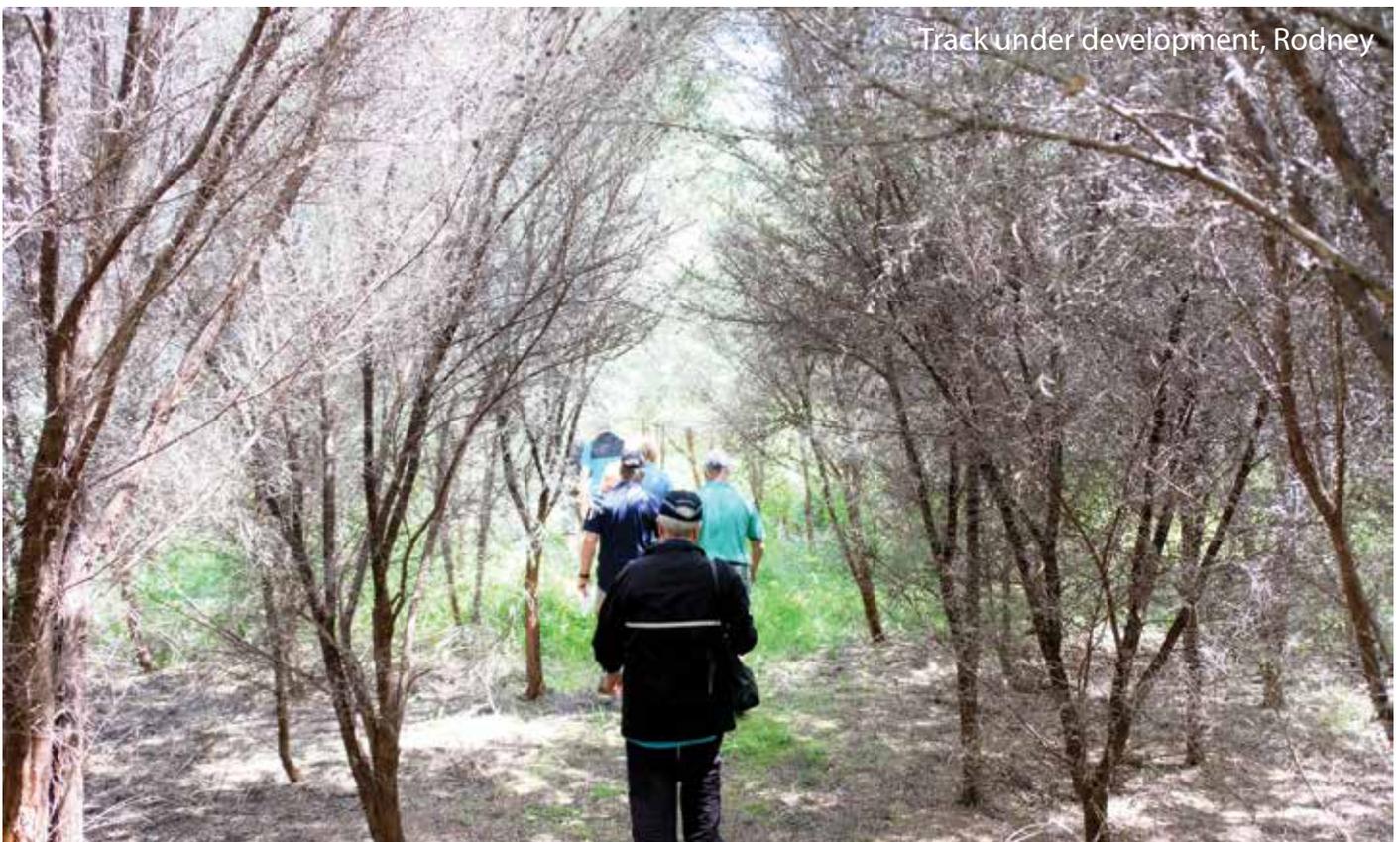
performance measures.

Over the next four years NZWAC will engage proactively with central and local government agencies, iwi and community groups to enhance public access to the outdoors. This focus will be supported by improved communication channels, which will enable the public to be kept up-to-date with where access is available, the type of access activities permitted and how to behave whilst in the outdoors.

In addition to the strategic changes, an operational review will also be carried out, to ensure processes are fit for purpose and resources are efficiently used.

## Our contribution to New Zealand's outdoor recreation sector

Over the next four years, work will be undertaken to enhance relationships and partnerships with other organisations within the outdoor recreation sector. One focus within this will be supporting community groups who are leading the development of tracks and trails in their areas. Through strong relationships with these groups, NZWAC can help to build a shared approach and best practice in this work, whilst leveraging relationships to influence key agencies and organisations at a range of levels.



Track under development, Rodney

# Strategic framework

<b>Our vision and purpose</b>	<b>Te mauri o te hīkoi Journeys across the land and to our special places</b>
	Our purpose is to provide New Zealanders with free, certain, enduring and practical walking access to the outdoors.
<b>Our mission</b>	<b>What we intend to achieve</b>
	Lead national development and support local implementation of public access to the outdoors
<b>Our stretch goal</b>	<b>How we will demonstrate our long-term achievement</b>
	To achieve our mission, we will be working to reach the following stretch target:  95% of all readily available access data is displayed on NZWAC mapping systems by 2025
<b>Impacts over time</b>	<b>How we contribute and influence</b>
	We will actively engage with central and local government agencies, iwi and community groups to generate public access opportunities that support healthy and prosperous communities.
<b>Our outcomes</b>	<b>How we know we are succeeding</b>
	We have identified the following outcomes as being important to the success of the Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managed access is available where and when it will add most value to communities.</li> <li>• People know how to find access.</li> <li>• People responsibly access the outdoors.</li> </ul>
<b>Our outputs</b>	<b>How we deliver</b>
	Under each outcome we are focused on the following outputs.  <i>Managed access is available where and when it will add most value to communities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access facilitation and leadership;</li> <li>• access dispute resolution;</li> <li>• management of the Enhanced Access Fund; and</li> <li>• community engagement.</li> </ul> <i>People know how to find access:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management of the access mapping system; and</li> <li>• provision of tracks and trails information.</li> </ul> <i>People responsibly access the outdoors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school education programmes;</li> <li>• digital-led behaviour change initiatives; and</li> <li>• walkway compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Our activities</b>	<b>What we work on</b>
	Key activities that support our output delivery include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigation, assessment, facilitation of access disputes;</li> <li>• Handling general access enquiries and case management;</li> <li>• Preparation and delivery of access recommendation reports for the Overseas Investment Office;</li> <li>• Contract management of Enhanced Access Fund applications;</li> <li>• Walking access policy development;</li> <li>• Workshops and meetings with other government agencies, landholders, iwi and community groups to promote access;</li> <li>• Management and maintenance of track and trail data;</li> <li>• Publicising and identifying access across all land types.</li> </ul>

# Strategic framework

## What do we intend to achieve?

NZWAC's mission is to lead the national development of access to New Zealand's outdoors. This is given effect by NZWAC providing support to local communities, stakeholders and interested parties to plan and implement secure public access in their areas.

By doing this, NZWAC fulfils two key aspects of its work programme – firstly enabling access across areas where legal entry may not be readily available or clearly defined and secondly, providing the means for the public to recreate in the outdoors by assisting in the creation and maintenance of tracks and trails.

### Improving availability of access information

By focusing on growing and defining New Zealand's tracks and trails network, NZWAC will be working to ensure all secured public access is readily identifiable and available for people to use – whether they are local to the area, or an outside visitor. The stretch goal to support NZWAC's mission is:

**95% of all readily available access data is displayed on NZWAC mapping systems by 2025**

To achieve this goal and fulfil its long-term mission, NZWAC will contribute to and influence these deliverables by monitoring impacts over time by:

### Aiding in the generation of enduring public access opportunities

NZWAC will continue its work to identify, secure and display access opportunities, as well as tracks and trails that both New Zealanders and overseas visitors can use to access the outdoors. This will be through further development of its work programme, supported by GIS improvements and new communications channels. The focus of these efforts is to grow NZWAC's public profile over the next four years, so the public knows when and where to find local access opportunities.

NZWAC will also expand its engagement with iwi, by working to secure access to traditional sites, special places and tracks and trails that are important across the country.

### Supporting development of healthy and prosperous communities

NZWAC will extend its work to create better links with communities that have established tracks and trails, along with those communities who may be seeking to develop new public access. A considerable factor in this work is the growing expectation for access to promote public

health opportunities and community well-being, as well as economic returns.

NZWAC will assist these communities by providing thought-leadership on concept development, suitability of location and negotiation of access where required.

## How will our outputs and activities contribute to what we intend to achieve?

### Managed access is available where and when it will add most value to communities

As part of its legislative functions, NZWAC works to provide leadership on the provision of access to New Zealand's outdoors. This is done primarily through community engagement – whether it be running workshops with community and recreational groups, or facilitating and mediating access solutions with landholders, recreationists and local authorities.

Alongside this work, NZWAC makes a contestable fund available to support access development. Recipients of the fund typically use their grants to secure access arrangements by assisting with costs related to surveys, legal advice and RMA consents. Funds may also be used to support signage and on occasion infrastructure, such as the construction of gates and stiles.

### People know how to find access

To deliver this outcome, work will continue to focus on the provision of tracks and trails information, supported by NZWAC's mapping system. Keeping mapping information as current as possible is a key task, which relies on strong partnerships with other agencies that hold GIS data. In addition, maintaining currency with GIS developments is also important, and is something that NZWAC will continue to actively invest in, ensuring the best and most user-friendly information is available for map users.

### People responsibly access the outdoors

The current Outdoor Access Code (OAC) was released in 2011 and is due to be refreshed. This will be done over the next 18 months to ensure the information provided is accurate and up-to-date.

Along with the revised OAC, the new NZWAC website has been configured to improve engagement with users. It also will provide additional information on how to access the outdoors responsibly through updated educational resources and online campaigns targeting behavioural change. Continued monitoring of walkways compliance

# Strategic framework



remains important, with reporting from controlling authorities now receiving more focus.

## How do we know we are having an impact?

Many factors need to be taken into account when determining how NZWAC's work is having its desired impact. These factors can influence how NZWAC achieves its outcomes and goals, a number of which are outside its direct control. Where possible, NZWAC will work with those stakeholders who are involved with accessing the outdoors – such as central and local government, landholders and the wider public, to provide assurance that progress to achieving its outcomes are on track.

NZWAC's outcomes are also subject to legislative changes that may affect its operating environment and the outdoor recreation sector generally. Where such changes are signalled, NZWAC will amend its strategic framework to best suit the changed environment.

The strategic direction and the supporting framework that NZWAC has chosen for the next four years is focused on linking operational work to strategic delivery. Data to support the new measures will be drawn from current systems, with a view to updating data capture as part of an IT rationalisation project.

As this is the first year of the new measurement set, medium impact measures in the two impact areas have not been developed as this stage, as NZWAC has not determined whether either a quantitative or qualitative approach to measurement is more appropriate. New impact measures are expected to be defined in the 2019/2020 SPE.

## Overall performance and cost analysis

### Performance summary

As noted above, the development of the new strategic framework has resulted in the NZWAC's performance measures also being revised. The updated measures are intended to create a line of sight from the operational work of the NZWAC to its strategic deliverables.

Each of the identified outputs has a measure for which data will be tracked. It is intended the measures will be data-driven, with some exceptions in regards to relationship management. A couple of measures do not have performance targets set for this year, as they require a baseline to be established, due to these being new outputs. It is expected that performance targets for these measures will be available from 1 July 2019, as part of the 2019/2020 SPE.



# Financial strategy

## Financial Position

NZWAC also measures its overall performance against expenditure and will provide updates of this in its Annual Report and in setting annual performance expectations.

Over the years a number of factors have resulted in a build-up of NZWAC's cash reserves, with a forecast cash/bank balance of \$3.420 million at 30 June 2019.

Looking forward, in the mid-term (3-5 years), NZWAC anticipates an increased workload that includes;

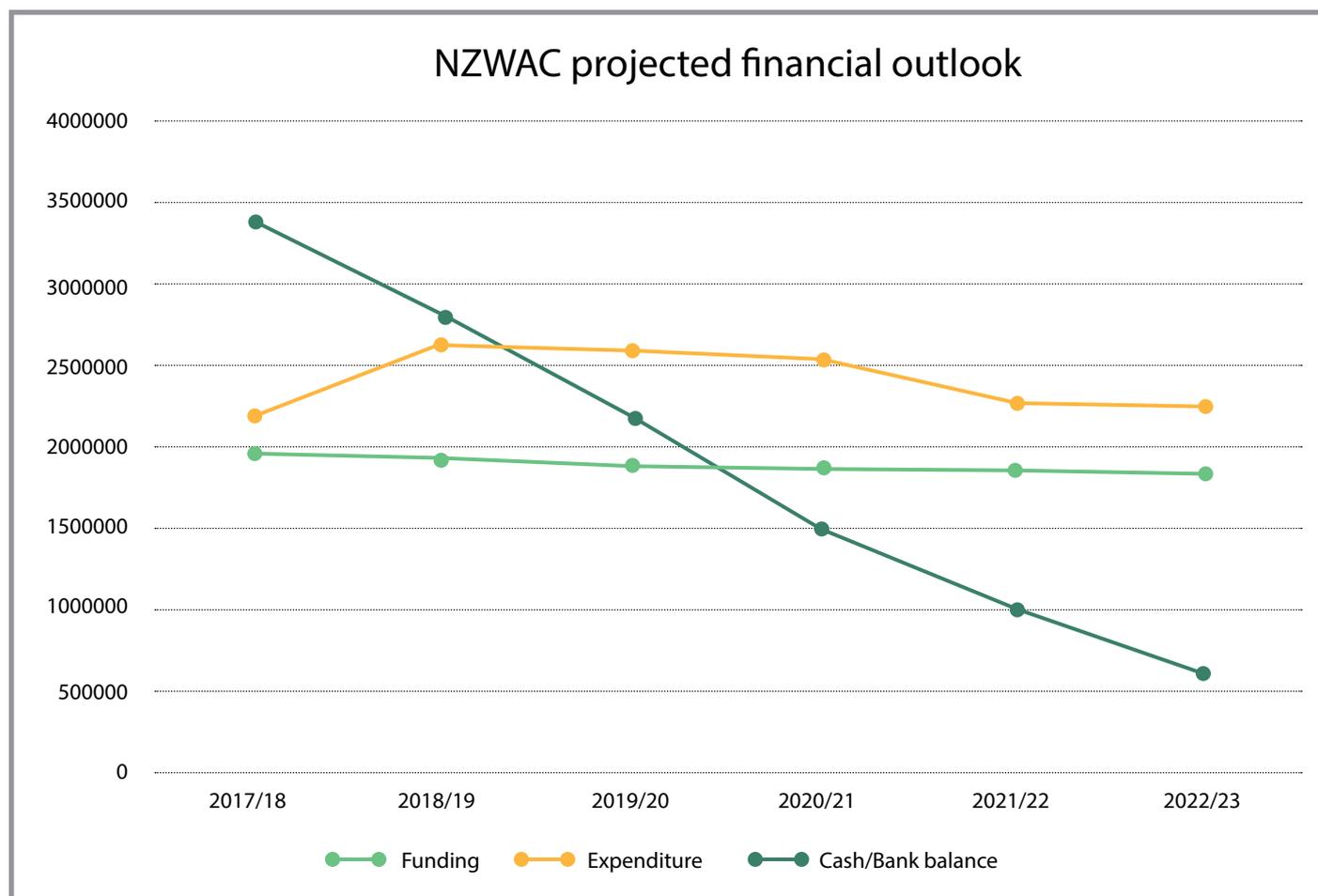
- an increased level of staffing;
- additional project related work in relation to web development, document management and rationalisation of outdated IT systems; and
- increased involvement in central and local government policy decision-making processes.

There is however, no projected increase in Crown funding for this greater workload.

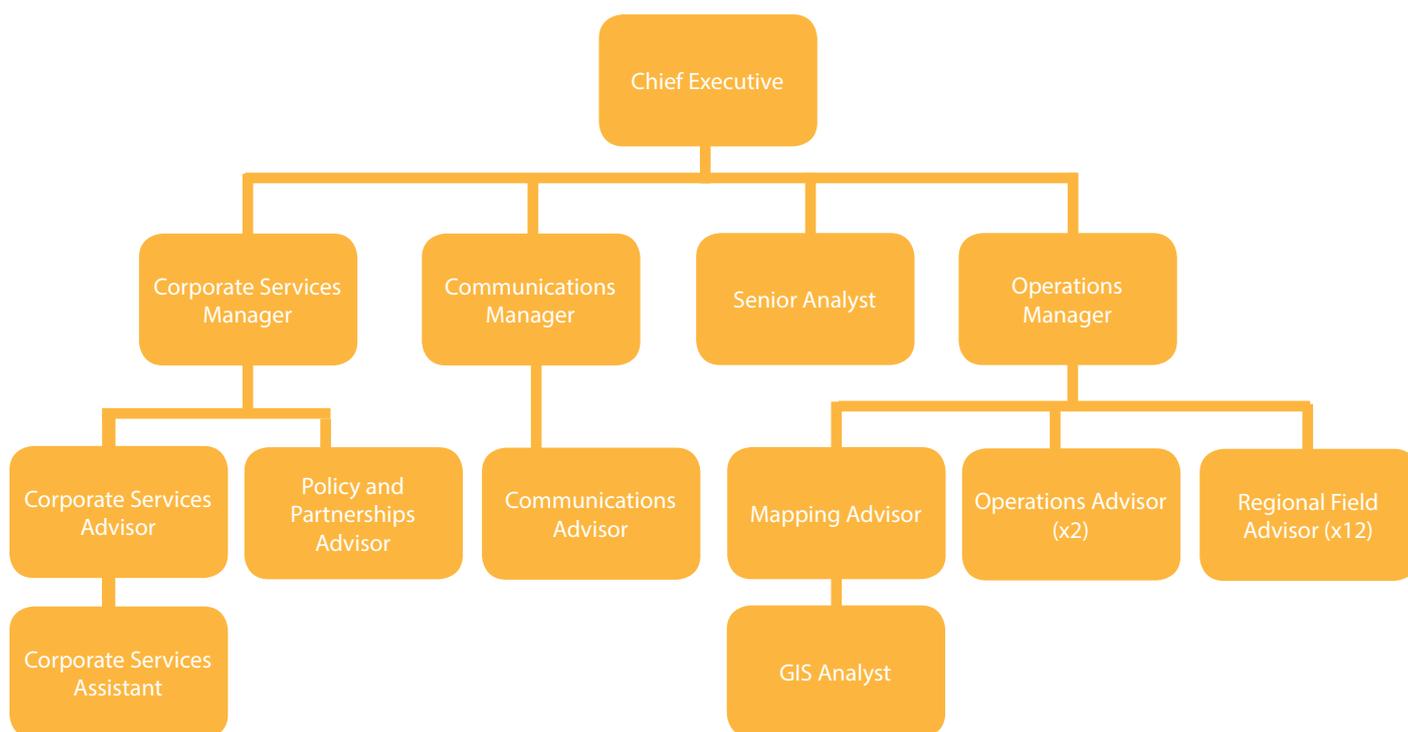
To fund its increased activities, NZWAC has made the decision to reduce its cash/bank position over time. The effect of this will be to use existing NZWAC cash reserves to fund future projected shortfalls between NZWAC's annual funding and its associated expenditure.

The following graph shows the anticipated drawdown from 2017/18 to 2022/23 and the effect that this shortfall has on NZWAC's cash reserves.

To address the forecast shortfall in the cash reserves from 2022/23, new funding will be sought via NZWAC's monitoring agency in 2019/20 and 2021/2022. This funding will seek to increase the NZWAC baseline to meet both operational and inflationary pressures. The final level of funding sought and timing of requests will be determined after the conclusion of the review of the *Walking Access Act 2008* in 2019.



# Organisational health and capability



## Our people

NZWAC's capability comprises its Board, a highly skilled team and relevant GIS systems and technology. This capability is employed to achieve NZWAC's statutory functions and the objectives outlined in its strategy and this SOI.

NZWAC is a small organisation that works to develop a collaborative culture, that values the input of all staff. It has a team of 13 staff (11.4 FTE) working from its Wellington office and 12 part-time contractors working as regional field advisors around New Zealand.

NZWAC also has a kaumātua to advise Board and staff members on tikanga Māori and to assist NZWAC to establish, build and maintain partnerships with Māori in respect of walking access matters.

Specialist support functions (information technology, human resources and legal advice) and regional field advice are contracted out by NZWAC. The main role of the regional field advisors is to liaise with territorial authorities, key stakeholders, user groups and the public.

## Supporting equality and diversity

NZWAC is committed to supporting equality and diversity within the organisation. It strives to treat people fairly and respectfully, ensuring equality of access to opportunities, as well as understanding and appreciating the benefits of individual differences.

NZWAC believes it benefits from having a diversified workforce, through its gender and ethnic diversity. NZWAC is committed to recognising and valuing different skills, experiences, specialties and perspectives of staff.

NZWAC's equal employment opportunities policy is committed to making employment decisions based on relevant merit. It ensures all employee and job applicants are treated fairly regardless of their age, gender, disability, employment status, ethnicity, involvement in union activities, marital or family status, political opinion, religious or ethical beliefs, or sexual orientation. NZWAC also expects all contractors it works with to have equitable employment practices.

## Our systems

Information technology (IT) is critical to the success of NZWAC, as many of its key resources are digitally-based. These include the Walking Access Mapping System, and the NZWAC website. Management of internal records is currently done via SharePoint.

A project to consolidate hardware, software and systems is now underway, and changes to the current platforms used are expected. The benefits of the project will allow NZWAC to operate a more cost-effective IT platform while taking advantage of new technology developments.

NZWAC is committed to managing the inherent IT risks involved in delivering many of its resources online.

# Organisational health and capability

Regular reviews will be conducted to ensure that the Commission's processes, risk management practices and resources allocated to managing its systems are sufficient to mitigate key risks such as outages, data loss and privacy breaches or leaks.

## Managing our health and capability

NZWAC's Board ensures that it has the skills and expertise to exercise good governance. It has a formal governance policy and undertakes a regular self-review. This review is assisted by an independent facilitator as necessary. The board regularly reviews its knowledge base and, as appropriate, sets time aside to explore governance-related topics in depth; for example, financial governance. NZWAC is committed to being a good employer (as defined in the Crown Entities Act 2004). The success of NZWAC relies on it being seen as independent, credible, responsive and authoritative. NZWAC is committed to:

- maintaining a culture where staff feel valued, enjoy coming to work and share a commitment to excellence;
- recruiting on an equal opportunity basis;
- providing for flexible working hours and location where appropriate;
- using the State Services Commission's code of conduct;
- using a performance review process to help manage employee development;
- conducting exit interviews with staff to help identify improvement initiatives; and
- having a health and safety policy to support a productive and safe work environment.

## Risk management

Risks and mitigation measures are regularly assessed to manage potential vulnerabilities. This ensures NZWAC is able to meet its objectives and maintain its performance when faced with challenges and adversity.

Risk	Response
Increased awareness of NZWAC's value, services, products, skills and expertise may generate resource pressures.	Priorities will be clearly communicated to staff and resources directed to statutory functions and achieving the outcomes of this Statement of Intent. NZWAC will consider opportunities to expand its revenue streams and increase its partnership activities.

Risk	Response
Differing local government, landholder and public views about the law and processes involved in managing and resolving access problems highlights the tension involved in managing public and private interests.	NZWAC will maintain an extensive programme of meeting with parties and providing independent and accurate advice and information.
Loss of key personnel results in a loss of institutional knowledge.	This will be managed through succession planning, using contractors and widening NZWAC's internal skill and knowledge base.  The small number of staff creates an environment conducive to good internal communication and exchange of information.
Disruption of IT systems caused by failure of provider systems, security failure, failure to deliver on objectives or an inability to maintain an appropriate level of investment.	These risks will change over time. Mitigation requires active engagement with service providers and constantly reviewing the nature and level of investment in the Walking Access Mapping System.

## Monitoring and evaluation

NZWAC's progress towards achieving the outcomes and impacts outlined in this document will be reported each year in the annual report.

Forecast financial statements and measures developed to assess performance are available separately in NZWAC's Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE). The SPE is reviewed annually, in conjunction with Audit New Zealand, to ensure the financial forecast statements current and the performance measures remain fit for purpose.

Performance is measured by monitoring of internal operational information and where required, external surveying.





**WALKINGACCESS**  
ARA HĪKOI AOTEAROA

New Zealand Government

PO Box 11181  
Manners St  
Wellington 6142  
(04) 815 8502  
[contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz](mailto:contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz)  
[www.walkingaccess.govt.nz](http://www.walkingaccess.govt.nz)