



fiordland trails trust

SUMMER 2023/24

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the first Fiordland Trails Trust newsletter. Read on to find out about trail developments, an impact analysis of the Lake2Lake Trail, plans for 2024, and more.

We are hugely grateful to our wonderful community of supporters, volunteers, sponsors, and funders for all that you have done and continue to do to make these trails exceptional. If you are interested in helping, please get in touch! We welcome enquiries and help where we can get it. Please email info@fiordlandtrails.nz or visit our website <https://fiordlandtrails.nz>.

David Boniface, Fiordland Trails Trust Chair

Impact Report

Earlier this year, the Trust embarked on a mission to find out how people felt about the Lake2Lake Trail, and how much difference it was making to the community. We believed in the trail, but when we first saw the results we were shocked – in a good way. See the next page for some of the key highlights.

Importantly, these results reflect the incredible generosity and effort the local community has put in to making these trails happen. It's a credit to all Fiordland residents out there supporting, volunteering, fundraising, and let's not forget enjoying themselves while improving their health, wellbeing and connection with nature - thank you for getting behind our vision!



LAKE2LAKE TRAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Visitor expenditure + event-related expenditure + trail expenditure shows a direct economic contribution made by the Lake2Lake Trail to the Fiordland District in the year ending March 2023 as \$3.025 million

- More than 5100 visitors to Fiordland can be attributed to the Lake2Lake Trail
- Collectively, these visitors stayed more than 10,000 nights in the area
- 15% of trail users travelled to Fiordland only/mainly to experience the Lake2Lake Trail; a further 16% were visiting for other reasons but extended their stay to experience the trail
- Direct economic contribution accruing as a result of visitor expenditure in Fiordland was almost \$1.8million
- Events, including the Meridian Hydro Half Marathon and Mitre 10 Te Anau 10k, and the Spring Challenge, contributed \$981,118 to the local economy
- There has been a direct positive contribution to employment in Fiordland
- Businesses reported up to 13% of revenue could be attributed to the Lake2Lake Trail

REASON FOR TRAIL USE

- Exercise/improving fitness (68%)
- Be in the outdoors in nature (57%)
- Relaxation/peace and quiet (44%)
- Improving physical health (37%)
- Improve mental health (36%)
- Sightseeing (32%)
- Socialise (28%)

Other reasons included experience/learn about the natural environment, walking a dog, training for an event, experience/learn about local culture and heritage, participating in an event, paid working (part of my job), and other

TRAIL USERS

- 49% Fiordland residents
- 51% visitors
- 82% NZ residents
- 18% international visitors
- 60% female
- 51% aged between 50-69 years
- 59% biking
(of those, 52% mountain biking, 38% e-biking)
- 32% walking
- 7% running
- 2% other

OTHER IMPACTS

- Health benefits
- Social capital
- Environmental
low-carbon tourist activity,
active commuting, plantings)
- Events
- Mental health benefits
- Use by schools
- Attracting visitors
- Attracting business

OTHER FINDINGS

- 82% of users rate their trail experience either 8, 9, or 10 out of 10
- Key highlights for trail users were scenery/views and the trail construction, design and maintenance
- Stakeholders describe the trail as an important resource, adding value and enhancing other offerings in Te Anau/Fiordland



On the Horizon...

Lake2Lake Trail Update

The Trust is working hard on plans to complete the Lake2Lake Trail from Te Anau to Manapouri. A draft scoping report has been completed, and a preferred route to the east of the Fiordland National Park has been identified. We have appointed a Resource Planner and Ecologist to support us with the consenting process and, all going well, we hope to have consent applications lodged with Southland District Council and Environment Southland in mid 2024.

Currently, to complete the full 28km Lake2Lake trail, users need to travel on the State Highway for approximately 4km. The proposed new route would avoid going through the national park but would still offer trail users a high quality, scenic experience – and eliminate the need to travel on the State Highway.

While there is much to be done, there are positive steps being taken - watch this space for updates.



Trail extension underway

The development of more than 14km of multi-use trail in Te Anau is underway. Work is well progressed on a trail extension from the Upukerora River to Patience Bay, which we hope will be available for public use by Christmas 2023.

Construction beyond Patience Bay is subject to obtaining a Wildlife Permit, which includes an approved Lizard Management Plan. This is a critical part of the plans to progress to Sinclair Road and beyond, and we are hopeful this will come through in early 2024.

As per the Lake2Lake Trail, this trail extension is being built to New Zealand Cycle Standards Grade 2 and will be 2.2m wide; allowing for plenty of traffic, whether it be on mountain bike, e-bike, prams, wheelchairs, or on foot.

We are really excited about this work and look forward to celebrating as each stage becomes available for public use.



Highly Commended at environmental awards

The Fiordland Trails Trust was thrilled to be awarded a Highly Commended award at the 2023 Environment Southland Community Awards.

The Trust was awarded Highly Commended in the Environmental Action in the Community section for its environmental mahi enabled by the Jobs for Nature project – Bringing the Park to the People. This three-year project enabled the enhancement and extension of the trail network in Fiordland, including significant weed and predator control and a native planting programme that has seen thousands of natives planted. The Environmental Action in the Community Award recognises groups working collaboratively within their community to enhance Southland's environment.

One of our Trustees, Steve Hoskin, was also a finalist in the Individual Environmental Leadership or Action category, recognised for his work in turning the Fiordland Trail Trust's ideas and concepts into reality.

The Trust is so pleased to be working on initiatives that link recreation and the environment – two absolutely core parts of our community that we are privileged to support.

Support the trails

The Fiordland Trails started small, with a big vision; to create a user-friendly, accessible network of trails that celebrates the beauty of the natural surrounds while giving locals and visitors alike an opportunity to improve their sense of health and wellbeing by connecting with nature. Our trails are made possible with your support, of which we are eternally thankful.

The vision is to grow the trails and make this a world class great ride, but we need your help so that we can maintain our current pathways, create new trails, and care for native flora and fauna to make this truly special.

We understand not everyone is in a position to give a donation, but if you are, please get in touch or visit our supporters page: www.fiordlandtrails/donation for giving options. Every little bit helps - thank you!

PHOTO CREDIT: Many of the photos used here are the work of the amazing Martin Sliva. We can't thank Martin enough for capturing the beauty of the trails! You can view more of his work at <https://www.newzealandphoto.info/>