

## Cycleway to open route to Russell

Tourists and locals will soon have a safe and enjoyable alternative transport option when visiting one of the Far North's most popular destinations once a cycle link is completed between Russell and Ōkiato.

Construction of the first section of the path was started in mid-July by Bay of Islands Walkways Trust which is leading the cycleway project with support from Far North District Council.

The new track will incorporate an existing walkway between Russell and Ōkiato but will also create new paths to take cycling commuters and tourists away from the main road for a safer and more enjoyable journey.

The trail will include large tracts of native bush that is home to indigenous birdlife and will provide views of Cape Brett, Orongo Bay and Oneroa Bay. Track cyclists and walkers can also visit local winery, Omata Estate, as well as cafés and historical sites in Russell and Ōkiato. Bay of Islands Walkways Trust hopes to add a loop track from the Orongo Bay Motor Camp to the route.

While the final route is still to be determined, it is expected that the new trail will connect Russell to Pou Herenga Tai, Twin Coast Cycle Trail. It is hoped the new track will also open Russell up to cyclists seeking a safe commute to Ōpua via the ferry.

The first of several track sections will be completed over the coming months and will provide an indication of construction costs per kilometre. The entire trail is estimated to be about 9km long and, once an accurate cost is calculated, funding will be sought from local organisations, charities, and track users. Parts of the route will require clearing to construct the all-weather trail and the trust will call on volunteers to help with working bees as required.



Cycleway construction is community-led and breaking new ground between Russell and Ōkiato.

## Library innovations shared in Fiji



Expertise developed by librarians in the delivery of online services to Far North library users is now benefiting schools and remote communities in Fiji.

Librarians at Suva City Council Library received advice and training on the latest technology innovations deployed in the Far North from two senior Far North librarians, Team Leader for Libraries Nicola Smith, and Outreach Services Librarian Roxanne Harrison.

The pair were part of a recent skills sharing visit organised by Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) as part of its PacificTA programme which is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

During the visit, the Far North librarians reviewed Suva City Council's existing services and explored options to improve the use of library services. A key part of the exchange included providing advice on how to enhance digital platforms by using self-checkout machines and the use of digital content, such as eBooks and databases.

PacificTA is a local government initiative that teams New Zealand-based experts with counterparts in Pacific Island nations. The programme encourages skill sharing to improve the way cities, towns, and villages are run. PacificTA was launched in 2012 and has been working with Suva City Council since 2018. The programme is funded by LGNZ.

## New footpaths coming to Ahipara



Pedestrian safety and community connection will be improved in Ahipara with the completion of a 152-metre-long footpath later this month.

Far North District Council contractor, Fulton Hogan, is constructing the footpath on Ahipara Road, the main route into the seaside community. The footpath will extend an existing path opposite Ahipara School and take pedestrians behind the newly-constructed giant Pou gateway, past Te Rarawa Rugby Club sports fields and will connect with another, existing footpath on Kokopu Street.

The path is funded through Provincial Growth Fund and is part of the Te Hiku gateway project. The project is due to be completed (weather permitting) before the end of August.

## Kohukohu wastewater submissions open

Kohukohu and Hokianga residents are being encouraged to have their say on an application to renew resource consent for the Kohukohu Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Unlike other wastewater treatment plants in the Far North, Kohukohu's wastewater undergoes primary treatment in septic tanks on individual properties and the plant only treats the liquid component of wastewater.

The application was notified by Northland Regional Council (NRC) on Wednesday 10 August and the public has 20 working days to make a submission.

To read the consent renewal application and make a submission, go to the NRC website. You can find out about the Kohukohu Wastewater Treatment Plant on our website.