enabling wilderness:
Creating the opportunity for disabled tramping within New Zealand's National Parks

Country / City	Wellington, New Zealand
University / School	Victoria University of Wellington
Academic year	2016
Title of the project	Enabling Wilderness
Authors	Matt McKone

PERFORMATIVE NATURE

Barcelona International Landscape Architecture Biennial

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SCHOOL PRIZE

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Máster d'Arquitectura del Paisatge -DUOT - UPC
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TECHNICAL DOSSIER

Title of the project	Enabling Wilderness
Authors	Matt McKone
Title of the course	LAND591 – Architecture research thesis
Academic year	2016
Teaching Staff	Jacqueline McIntosh and Bruno Marques (supervisors)
Department/Section/Programofbelonging	LandscapeArchitecture
University/School	School of Architecture - Victoria University of Wellington

Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

Internationally known for its picturesque landscapes, New Zealand encourages both locals and tourists to experience them first hand by walking one of the many tracks around the country, an activity locally known as tramping. The Department of Conservation has identified a small number of these tracks as showcasing particularly picturesque areas; naming them the 'Great Walks' of New Zealand. These allow fit individuals to traverse unique landscapes over multiple days, staying over night in rustic huts. The relationship between healthy wellbeing and outdoor experiences is well documented; however, not every fit individual is physically able to experience some of New Zealand's most significant landscapes due to the difficulty of access.

This thesis breaks new ground for landscape architecture, combining elements of landscape architecture with new technologies in a conservation area to propose a new 'Great Walk' for New Zealand that would allow athletes with a physical impairment to experience New Zealand's unique landscapes. Physically pulling/pushing and manoeuvring through 'backcountry' landscapes, this research-led-design enables the physically impaired community to engage with difficult terrains in a multi-sensorial manner that improves physical and mental wellbeing. Using design to direct views and experiences, appropriating technologies from industrial and mountaineering applications and addressing impairment specific barriers, it removes disability by enabling the wilderness through landscape design.

For further information
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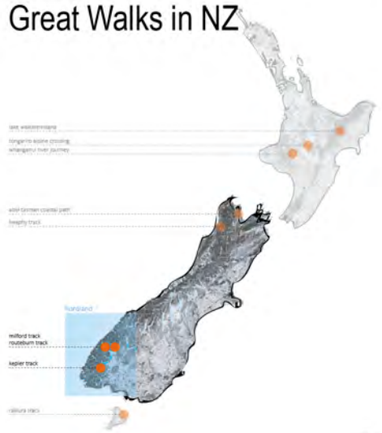
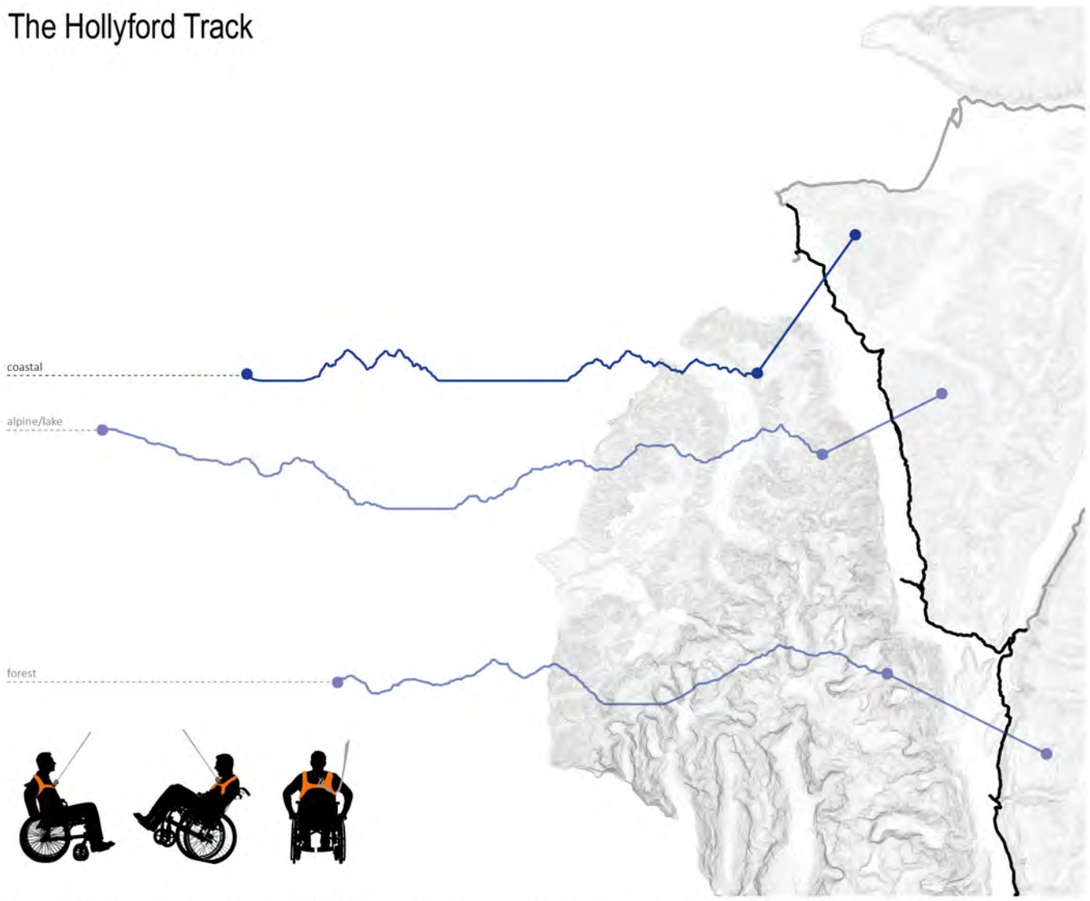
Great Walks in NZ

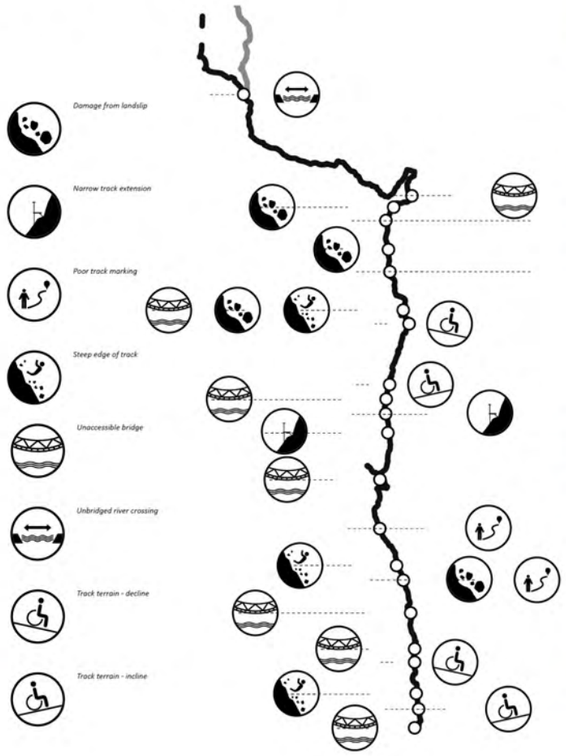


Fiordland

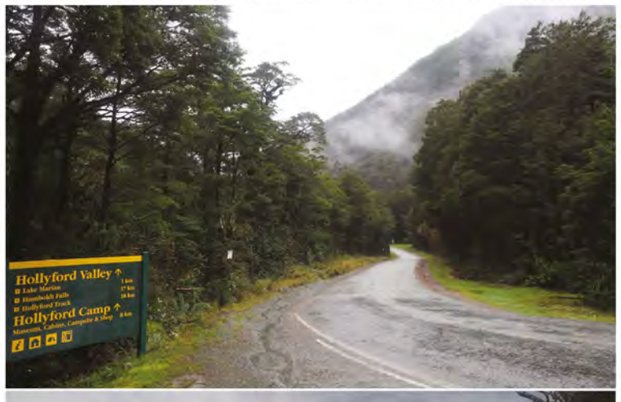
The Hollyford Track

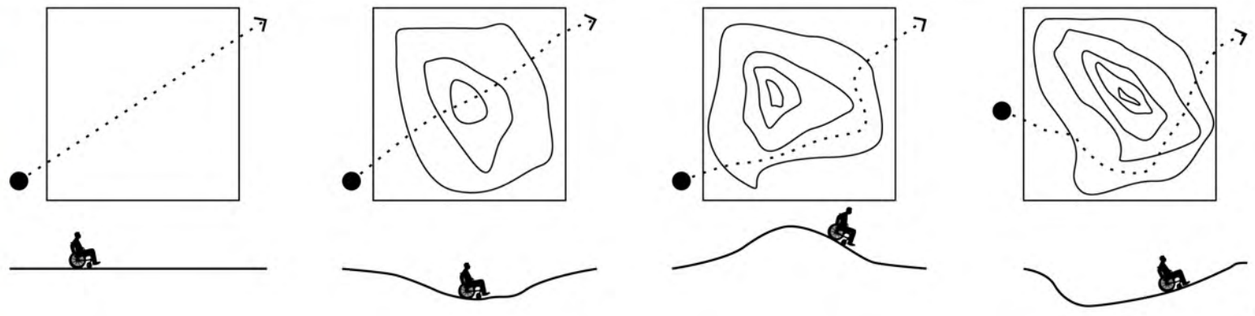


Site:
The Hollyford Valley - Hazards.



"Emotive Responses"

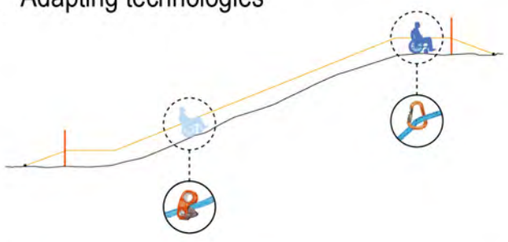




A series of diagrams illustrating how the topography can be used to turn a direct path into a dynamic path. This is a common technique when designing switchback systems to navigate a slope.

Designing the experience

Adapting technologies



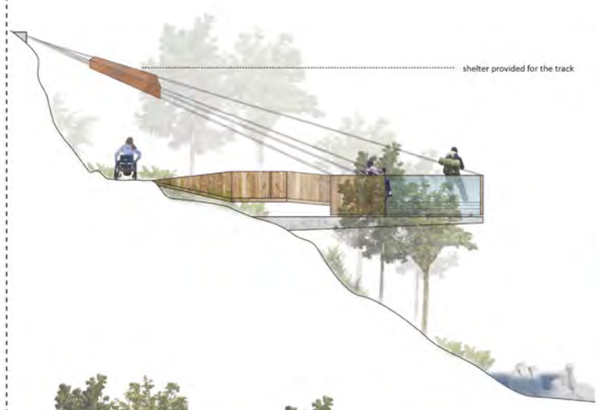
Combining the adapted technologies and rope/cable systems allows for a simple safety system permitting the wheelchair athlete to scale inclines without the anxiety of falling backwards.

The nature of the adapted technologies allows for a si[illegible]e 'c[illegible]on, cl[illegible]ff' method when moving to a different slope or section o[illegible]e tr[illegible]

Forest:
Ecologies - Hidden Falls

Currently, the waterfall at Hidden Falls is most commonly seen from the bridge as you cross the stream, with a proper view of the waterfall only accessible through leaving the track. This inspires a sense of way-finding as you choose your own path depending on how much rain has fallen in the recent weeks as you pass over the heavily trampled understory of the forest.

Directing views to intensify experience



As the water rises, way-finding methods become increasingly limited, placing the designed path at the mercy of the land.

Alpine:
Bridged Crossing

The existing river crossings either involve an extremely narrow suspension bridge, or no bridge at all; creating a hard challenge for a wheelchair athlete to utilise. Located on another track within New Zealand is a historic piece of D.o.C technology purposed for use when the river is in flood.

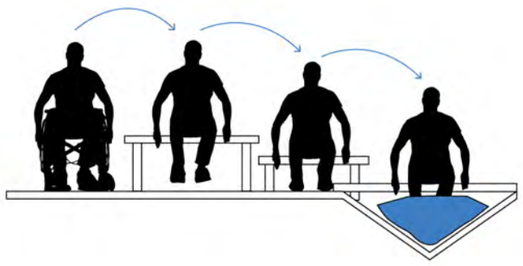
Appropriating industrial technologies

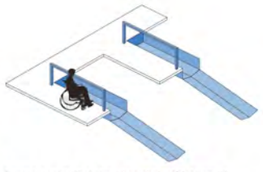
Providing a method of access to the landing platform, a wheelchair athlete is able to utilise the cable-cart; therefore providing a safe river crossing.

Lake:
Kayak - Landing + Launch System

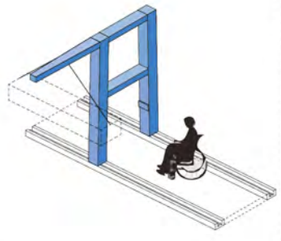
The kayak system is designed to allow for independent access where the wheelchair occupant can use a side transfer method to lower themselves into a kayak. The kayak is rested in a cradle in the water; preventing any sudden influences from the lake. Initially a ramp concept was developed, with a crane-like system also considered however these produced difficulty in safely accessing a kayak.

Designing for independence





A ramp system that the wheelchair athlete could move into the kayak into using a bar and side-loading method.



Taking inspiration from a container crane system based on a pulley system, this option creates a tower that a user can pick the kayak up with and place it in the water; affording a greater sense of independence.

Wetland:
Ecologies - the McKenzie Lagoon

The boardwalk over the space is designed to enhance the experience of the track for all users, showcasing the unique ecologies within the area. This is through using a strategy of constantly changing the direction of the path to guide the eye to special moments in the lagoon.

Removing disability by enabling the landscape

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