



# Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)

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## FMC Member News June 2009

*Here is a summary of activities by the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand in June 2009, including highlights from the AGM, plus news on significant developments of importance to trampers, climbers and all interested in safe outdoor recreation. If your club would like special assistance, please contact your local Executive representative or email the Federation direct.*

### Federated Mountain Club's 2009 Annual General Meeting

Over 40 comprising your Executive, representatives from member clubs, Mountain Safety Council, Land SAR and Forest and Bird attended the 78<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand at the Brentwood Motel in Wellington. The draft minutes of the AGM will be posted on the FMC website. The following is a summary of highlights:

#### Address by Hon. Tim Groser – Minister of Conservation:

In spite of a very tiring schedule (a 3 am departure from Apia), attendees were delighted that the Hon. Tim Groser was able to attend the AGM. The Minister's speech outlined the National government's policy on conservation and outdoor recreation, and addressed some of the concerns of our members. The speech was well received. Here are some of the salient points. Mr Groser acknowledged that he has less experience in his conservation portfolio than in trade matters and emphasized he was deliberately taking time to get a feel for the role. He stressed that the decision by Prime Minister, Mr Key, to appoint a person with an economic background to the conservation portfolio was a deliberate one. He recognized that whilst there might be a perception and concern that there were major differences between his two key portfolios, Trade and Conservation, the two were easily reconcilable. The new government was keen to implement policies that supported a "Conservation Economy" where there was a balance between economic development and preserving our natural environment. Mr Groser understood that there were key advantages to the economy as a result of preserving our natural environment and safeguarding it from large-scale degradation. Mr Groser expressed confidence in the Department of Conservation, staff and general thrust of its policies and directives. He stressed that the best investment in conservation was a well-educated public. Whilst it was accepted that conservation principles were generally well embedded into the NZ psyche, there was perhaps less of an understanding with the link to the economy. For example, he saw obvious links to tourism, but stressed that these did not have to be at the expense of ruining the conservation estate. A copy of the Minister's address will be posted on the FMC website.

#### Executive for 2009-10:

**President:** Rob Mitchell. **North Island Vice Presidents:** Owen Cox and Viv Milne. **South Island Vice Presidents:** David Barnes and Rick Barber. **Secretary:** Phil Glasson. **Treasurer:** Graeme Lythgoe. **Executive:** Richard Davies, Jane Dudley, Quentin Duthie, Robin McNeill, Barbara Morris, Dennis Page, David Round and Lex Smith were all returned. One remaining position was filled by Basil Hooper from Wanganui TC (nominated from the floor). The Executive acknowledges the large contribution made by Nelson representative Tony Haddon, who resigned from his position shortly before the AGM.

#### Reports

The reports from the President and the Treasurer for 2008-2009 were adopted as presented.

#### Voting on Constitutional Amendments:

Seven amendments were considered. The outcomes are as follows: The duration of the Immediate Past President's position will remain unchanged from a term of one year. After the 2010 AGM, the four Vice President positions will be replaced with a single position and to compensate for this, the number of positions on the Executive will increase from 10 to 13. Three amendments (4-6 in the club circular) that dealt with timing issues concerning nominations, notification of the AGM and closing dates for nominations and business items were carried. The amendment that increased the number of votes that a club delegate could exercise (from 2 to 3) was also carried.

### **AGM Workshops:**

The afternoon session ran three workshops that covered the themes of, the Bulletin (format and options for the future), Conservation Advocacy and Youth (Development and Promotion). Following the group discussions, key points were reported to the full meeting and passed to the Executive to assist future planning strategy development

### **Treaty Settlements and Potential Implications on the Conservation Estate – Your Input Required**

The Executive is keen to devise policy and strategy guidelines should it need to make future submissions in scenarios where conservation estate might be used as compensation for treaty claims. One area of immediate concern is the impact on access to areas of Te Urewera National Park. We welcome input from members with good local knowledge of this area that would assist us to liaise with local iwi and other interested parties to achieve positive outcomes in areas of common interest – Feedback to Brian Stephenson as soon as possible please at: [brian@bwstephenson.com](mailto:brian@bwstephenson.com),

### **Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ (ECO) Conference**

The 2009 ECO Conference, "Greening our way out of a recession", will examine the nation's economic situation and its impact, negative or positive, on managing our environment. The Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand (of which the Federation comprises one of the larger groups) was founded in 1971. The reform of the Conservation Act in relation to the RMA, renewable energy, and the wild rivers campaign as well as many other topical environmental issues will be covered at the conference: 10 - 12 July 2009, Karanga Camp, 79 Te Henga Road, Waitakere City (near Bethells Beach). Members from tramping, mountaineering and outdoor clubs and other interested persons are most welcome to attend. For more information: <http://eco.org.nz/conference/>

### **Outdoor Recreation Opportunities - North of the North Island**

The Department of Conservation plans to expand outdoor recreational opportunities in the Coromandel, Auckland and Northland regions and the Director General welcomes our input. A letter has been sent to all clubs north of a line from Tauranga to Raglan (including Hamilton) requesting suggestions. Club members should send suggestions for developing overnight tramps, new day walks, family walks, coastal access walkways, camping grounds and conservation or national parks, to Viv Milne at: [milne@ps.gen.nz](mailto:milne@ps.gen.nz) as soon as possible. FMC is also planning to hold a forum in Auckland to co-ordinate the best opportunities for outdoor recreation (details will follow shortly).

### **Mountain Biking Developments**

(1) Following the upgrading of a Whirinaki backcountry route to a shared-use tramping and bike track (refer FMC Focus, June 2009 Bulletin), Federated Mountain Clubs and the Mountain Bike Association of NZ (MTBNZ) will continue liaising in an effort to ensure future consultation by DOC with interested parties. (1) DoC has been asked specific questions about policies and processes for consultation with non-government organizations like the Federation and MTBNZ when established tramping tracks are converted to shared-use, or when new mountain-bike tracks are built on conservation lands. (2) The proposed draft review of the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan that may allow mountain biking on various tracks within the Park, including the Heaphy Track, will soon be notified for public submission within the next few weeks. For any comments or queries on mountain-biking issues, please contact MTB liaison person, Barbara Morris at: [btmorrison@paradise.net.nz](mailto:btmorrison@paradise.net.nz)

### **Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan - FMC Submission Completed**

The FMC submission for the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan has been lodged with the Department of Conservation. This represents considerable work on the part of convenor David Barnes and representatives of member clubs. The submission has been placed on the FMC website.

### **Helicopter Issues in Western Otago**

Federated Mountain Clubs has made a detailed submission on concession renewal applications for six helicopter operators in the Queenstown/Wanaka region (excluding Mt Aspiring National Park). DoC's response recognizes the effects of helicopter operations on other users. Their proposal should lead to an improvement in the management of concessions as they affect other users. These include a 'claw-back' clause, where operators not using their allocated landings lose the right to them, and a 'hotspot' clause where landing sites subject to significant complaints from other users can be reduced or cancelled. FMC's submission and DoC's response are being posted on the FMC website.