



Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)

P O Box 1604
WELLINGTON

admin@fmc.org.nz

FMC Member News April 2009

Here is a summary of the past month's activities by the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand together with news on significant developments of importance to trampers, climbers and all interested in safe outdoor recreation. Your Executive welcomes information on areas of special interest to you or your club. If you would like special assistance on particular issues, please contact your local Executive representative or email the Federation direct.

Special Offer – Introduction of New Topo50 Maps

Federated Mountain Clubs is supporting the introduction of the new Topo50 maps later this year and between September and December 2009, will offer bulk purchasers of the new maps significant discounts on the normal retail prices. The coordinates used in the Topo50 series will supersede those of the current NZMS 260 series and the new maps will be essential for those using GPS navigation aids or requesting aid from rescue services such as LandSAR and DoC. Clubs and individual members wishing to take up the special offer should contact Secretary, Phil Glasson: secretary@fmc.org.nz, or Gail Abel on admin@fmc.org.nz.

Changes to Concession Management signaled by DoC

The Department of Conservation is planning to introduce changes designed to simplify its concession management. It will be important that any changes are in accord with DoC's empowering legislation and that there is appropriate consultation with affected parties. It is critical that any new regulations for commercial activities do not adversely affect the enjoyment of conservation areas and national parks by trampers, climbers and other outdoor recreationists. Your Executive is monitoring developments.

Campaign to Protect our Remaining Wild Rivers

A coordinated campaign has begun, involving a wide variety of recreation and conservation groups with interest in keeping New Zealand's remaining wild rivers wild. In early April, Executive members Rick Barber and Quentin Duthie, joined other NGO representatives for a two day workshop and campaign planning meeting at Murchison. Murchison is the epicenter of wild-river hydro proposals at the moment, with schemes planned for the Matiri, Matakaitaki, Maruia, Mokihinui, and ongoing threats to the Buller itself. The gathering at the NZ Kayak School developed analyses, alliances and strategies to promote wider appreciation of our remaining wild rivers, the ability to generate NZ's power needs without sacrificing wild rivers, and the need to improve protection under the law for wild rivers rather than continue to fight river by river. Expect to see more of this campaign in the FMC Bulletin and on our website soon.

Executive Policy on Hydro Electricity Development

Following on from the proposals that were circulated with your December newsletter, your Executive has adopted a set of guidelines that will underpin its stance on hydro electricity development. These principles are aimed at emphasizing the importance of rivers for their intrinsic natural values and recreation. Details of the principles are available on the FMC Website (<http://www.fmc.org.nz>)

FMC Concerns about Changes to the Regulation of Overseas Investments

Federated Mountain Clubs has written to the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Bill English, expressing concern over the lack of time for a proper debate about the Government's proposals to simplify the regulation of overseas investment in New Zealand. It is vital that any investment is soundly managed to ensure that long-term conservation and associated recreational and tourism values are not eroded or destroyed by poor governmental management of irreplaceable national assets.

Developments in Tenure Review

Federated Mountain Clubs is finalizing its submission on the tenure review for Glenfellan Station in the headwaters of the Nevis Valley. Your executive is requesting improved access for trampers, mountaineers and backcountry skiers in the Diggers Creek area. Submissions on the Mt Aspiring Station in the Matukituki Valley are also being finalized and we are also developing submissions on other leaseholds currently under review. These include: Cambrian Hills, Cluden, Deep Creek, Long Gully, and Mt Pisa. Members who have issues that they believe FMC should consider in submissions should contact executive members: David Round; djround@xnet.co.nz, David Barnes; mcilroy.barnes@clear.net.nz, or Mike Floate; mike.floate@xtra.co.nz. In addition, Mike would also appreciate any offers of assistance from members that could accompany him on his inspections of high country properties undergoing the review process.

Proposals to Change the Resource Management Act

Your Executive has sent a submission to the Select Committee that is examining proposed amendments to the Resource Management Act. On the surface, the amendments are intended to 'streamline and simplify' the Act, but a closer examination has revealed many changes that will worsen environmental outcomes and decrease public participation, including that of Federated Mountain Clubs and its members. The submission is available on the FMC website. FMC also has a keen interest in the proposed Phase 2 reforms of the RMA. These will be much more fundamental and will tackle the big environmental issues including freshwater pollution and allocation, and the role of an Environmental Protection Agency. Your Executive will have representatives at a conference hosted by the Environmental Defence Society in Auckland in July, which will debate the Phase 2 reforms and potential solutions for these major environmental issues.

Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan Review

After many months of delays the Department of Conservation has released the draft revisions of the Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan for comment from interested parties. Your Executive will be developing a submission based on consultation with key local clubs. Other members and clubs who wish to participate are asked to contact David Barnes; mcilroy.barnes@clear.net.nz. DoC is encouraging feedback and their website reference is: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/current/mt-aspiring-national-park-draft-management-plan/>

Wanganui and Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) Reviews

Members and clubs in the lower North Island are advised that the Wellington and Wanganui CMSs are up for review in the very near future. Your Executive will shortly be inviting all of those with a vested interest in these areas to provide input into the FMC's submission. We would also encourage clubs and other users of the conservation estate in these areas to make independent submissions and can assist with this also.

Executive Changes

FMC has accepted with regret, the resignation of Barbara Spurr (from Rangiora) due to ill health. Elected in 2008, her involvement over the past year has been warmly appreciated. The Executive also records with regret, the resignation of Hannah McGregor, following her acceptance of significant new career responsibilities in the Justice Department. Thank you for your consistent and valuable contributions, Hannah. Jane Dudley formerly of the Auckland University Tramping Club, and now living in Wellington, has accepted an invitation for appointment to the executive.

2009 AGM - Executive Nominations and Items of Business

The 2009 Annual General Meeting will be held at the Brentwood Motel, Wellington, on Saturday 20 June 2009.

1) A reminder that nominations for the Executive close on 30 April. Nomination forms have been sent to all clubs and any nominee needs to be nominated by a member club. If you need another copy of the nomination form, please contact the secretary at secretary@fmc.org.nz

2) A reminder that any items for discussion at the AGM, and particularly any Constitutional Amendments, must be with the Secretary by 30 April. In early May all clubs will be posted the agenda, a list of nominees and matters to be discussed at the AGM.

Editors: Rob Mitchell: rmitchl28@xtra.co.nz

Dennis Page: dennis.page@bdg.co.nz