



Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)

P O Box 1604
WELLINGTON

FMC Member News December 2008

Guided Walk Concessions – Tongariro Alpine Crossing

Your Executive is working with the Mountain Safety Council and DoC to ensure that guides who are taking parties on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing are properly trained in bushcraft and alpine safety leadership. Clubs with a special interest in this issue should contact Executive Member, Barbara Morris, btmorrison@paradise.net.nz

Spotlight on Great Walks Management

In 2009 FMC will be focusing attention on the management of the Great Walks managed by DoC. FMC's purpose is to ensure that these walks are well managed and cater for the needs of our member clubs and other trampers that use the walks. The March issue of the FMC Bulletin will review management of the Routeburn Walk. Members with positive ideas to include in the bulletin feature, or special concerns they wish to discuss, should contact the Bulletin Editor, Shaun Barnett: blackrobin@clear.net.nz.

FMC Concerns about the Waikato CMS

FMC has sent a second letter to clubs in the Waikato area asking them to examine specific planning proposals for the new Waikato CMS – particularly those relating to outdoor recreation and tourism. Clubs are asked to forward information to FMC Executive Member, Viv Milne (milne@ps.gen.nz), or make their own submissions where they feel strongly about the CMS. FMC is very concerned about the general nature of the Department of Conservation Management Strategy that has been drafted for the Waikato region. This follows earlier dissatisfaction with the management standards set out in the Bay of Plenty CMS and news that the NZ Conservation Authority is examining the adequacy of the Department of Conservation's Regional Conservation Management Strategies.

Kaimanawa Matters

- 1) Snow/Wind damage on the Kaimanawa Ridge Route: Reports have been received about extensive wind and snow damage on the ridges east of the Te Waiotupuritia Stream. Parties wishing to use the route along those ridges between the Cascade and Oamaru valleys should allow additional time to complete their journey.
- 2) Access Across Central and Southern Kaimanawa Private Land: Trampers that wish to do extended trips across the privately owned blocks between the western and eastern portions of the Kaimanawas will be aware of the difficulties imposed by the need for permits. FMC will discuss access across the private blocks in the Kaimanawas with the Department of Conservation, which has undertaken in its management plan to consider solutions. Those who have a preference for particular routes across the private blocks should contact Viv Milne, milne@ps.gen.nz

Management Planning Progress for St James Conservation Area

On 1-2 December, your Executive Member, Tony Haddon, and Bulletin Editor, Shaun Barnett, attended a two-day briefing and familiarisation tour of the St James Conservation area. Now it has taken over the property, DoC is consulting with recreational groups on how outdoor activities should be managed in the area, and how the natural values will be protected. Clubs that have recommendations should contact Tony Haddon; tony@kaka.co.nz, or the FMC Secretary, Phil Glasson: secretary@fmc.org.nz

Access Commission Consultation

This month, FMC representatives; President, Rob Mitchell, and Secretary, Phil Glasson, will meet with the members of the Access Commission to brief them on the particular interests of trampers and climbers in ensuring freedom of access to public conservation lands, and agreeing on reasonable conditions governing access over leasehold or privately owned land. Clubs with special issues should contact FMC for assistance.

Improving Links with DoC

In November, FMC President, Rob Mitchell, and North Island Vice President, Owen Cox, met with DoC Director General, Al Morrison, to establish improved lines of communication on conservation and recreational management. Regular follow-up meetings are planned. FMC is ready to assist clubs in their liaison with DoC. If you have ideas to assist the Department improve their strategies and performance we are ready to relay your ideas to them.

Molesworth Recreation Area

A new management and recreation plan is about to be drafted. FMC is disappointed at the current level of commitment regarding public access on land that is essentially still managed as a Landcorp station. Your Executive is compiling a submission to DoC in an attempt to remedy the situation. Club and supporter input is very welcome and can be directed to Tony Haddon, tony@kaka.co.nz

Support for Hurunui Conservation Order

Your Executive supports the application for a water conservation order on the Hurunui River in North Canterbury from the Fish and Game Council and the NZ Recreational Canoeing Association. FMC is especially interested in preserving the outstanding natural and recreational values in the Upper Hurunui and around Lake Sumner, which are very popular tramping, camping, canoeing and fishing areas. These values are under threat from irrigation interests with plans to raise Lake Sumner's level by 1.5 metres. Support for the Conservation Order should be directed to the Ministry of the Environment, Wellington.

Braemar Tenure Review Recommendations

FMC is reviewing the Linz tenure review recommendations for Braemar Station on the eastern side of Lake Pukaki. Written submissions on the recommendations by the Commissioner of Crown Lands should be lodged with QV Valuations, Christchurch, by 12 February 2009.

Dingleburn Aircraft Access

DoC is allowing continued aircraft access into the Dingleburn following the formation of the Hawea Conservation Area. DoC will be surveying recreational and aircraft user attitudes to the policy this summer. FMC is keen to hear from members who have views on how aircraft impact on natural amenity values and aircraft management can be improved.

Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan Review

Stand by! The new Draft Management Plan for the Mount Aspiring National Park is to be released for public comment early in 2009.

Feedback Sought on Hydroelectric Policy

At its 9 November Wellington Meeting, the FMC Executive considered options on how to best approach responding to the growing number of proposals that concern hydroelectric power schemes on many of this country's rivers. Currently, there is no policy in place and that means responses tend to be reactive, lacking in guidelines and may not provide for enough time to canvass the wider opinion of our membership when compiling a submission. FMC is keen to remedy this situation and is seeking your help/input. Attached, as a separate page to this newsletter, is the option that best outlines a policy that the Executive would be keen to adopt. Please tell us what you think and/or how it could be improved. Feedback can be sent care of the Secretary, Phil Glasson, at secretary@fmc.org.nz

Merry Christmas from Your President and Executive!

To all FMC members and their families, have a wonderful Christmas and New Year. If you are heading into our mountain country for tramping, camping or climbing; take care, relax, and enjoy the break!

For Membership Feedback - FMC Draft Policy on Hydroelectric Power

In responding to proposals for new hydroelectric power schemes on NZ's rivers, your Executive's proposed new policy would be as follows:

Principled Selective Opposition and Principled Selective Acceptance:

- 1) Take no position on schemes located outside FMC's geographical areas of interest.
- 2) Take a strong position on opposing any new schemes in national, conservation or forest parks.
- 3) Identify other areas where hydroelectric development would be particularly obnoxious
- 4) Keep free of development recreational areas close to large population centres – but recognise that this runs counter to the minimisation of energy 'leakage' via line/transmission loss.
- 5) In general, oppose large schemes.
- 6) In principle, support small schemes.
- 7) Identify mitigating features such as:
 - Small reservoirs.
 - Minimising long-term effects on landscape.
 - Avoiding or minimising the impact of access roads.
 - Concealing built features - e.g., penstocks.
 - Placing underground or minimising the visual impact of transmission lines.
 - Adding recreational opportunities as part of scheme – e.g. tracks and huts.
- 8) Raise broader issues such as the reduction in the nation's energy demand.
- 9) Encourage the developers to make the scheme 'reversible' where possible.

The advantages of this policy are as follows:

- 1) It engages with the problem, instead of ignoring or denying its existence.
- 2) It engages with the issues as far forward as possible, even before specific scheme proposals are developed.
- 3) It is principled and credible.
- 4) It acknowledges the wider issues and the competing interests.
- 5) It allows sensible planning and allocation of FMC's resources.
- 6) It provides guidelines and standards for advocacy.
- 7) It can be canvassed with members, to provide for a democratic basis.
- 8) It positions FMC as an insider, with respectable views to contribute.

Please send your comments and feedback to the FMC Executive, care of the Secretary, Phil Glasson at secretary@fmc.org.nz