



Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)

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FMC Member News November 2009

Here is the latest news on FMC advocacy, highlights from the Executive meeting held in Wellington on 21 November, and other significant developments of importance to trampers, climbers and all interested in safe outdoor recreation.

Wild Rivers - Family Fun Days - 28 & 29 November

Family fun days have been organised by the Wild Rivers Campaign for the weekend of 28-29 November to highlight the need to protect New Zealand's unique wild rivers. For information on the day, time, and activities in your area consult the Wild Rivers Campaign website (<http://www.wildrivers.org.nz/action/experience-your-local-wild-river>), click on the region of interest on the map and then scroll down to the activities list. FMC supports this joint campaign because:

- New Zealanders are passionate about wild rivers, which are central to our national identity and international reputation
- Wild rivers need the same protection as national parks and should be free to be enjoyed by everyone
- Our future energy needs and irrigation requirements need not involve sacrificing our remaining wild rivers

The Wild Rivers Campaign was also recently launched with a fabulous website (<http://www.wildrivers.org.nz>). Additionally, Forest and Bird's website includes a comprehensive list of wild rivers in a handy, map-type, format at <http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/saving-our-environment/freshwater/wild-rivers>. FMC is also maintaining information on wild rivers at: <http://www.fmc.org.nz/advocacy/rivers>.

Update on FMC Opposition to Mining in National Parks and other Conservation Lands

The November 2009 *FMC Bulletin* focused on the case against the National Government's review of conservation lands protected from mining by Schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act. The Bulletin and our website's mining page contain a wealth of information of interest to you. FMC and Wilderness Magazine are encouraging trampers to 'Post a Photo,' i.e. to support the campaign by e-mailing a photo of your favourite national park to the Prime Minister at j.key@ministers.govt.nz, or writing on the back of a print and posting it like a postcard for free, with an explanation of why you don't want it mined. You can get additional updates on this vital advocacy work via the FMC website; <http://www.fmc.org.nz/advocacy/mining/> and there is also a petition for you to download and circulate.

Northern Recreational Opportunities Review - Auckland Forum Report

This event, to discuss recreational opportunities in the upper North Island, was held on Saturday 31 October 2009. Executive members, Brian Stephenson, Viv Milne and Jane Dudley were in attendance along with representatives from DoC and the Auckland Regional Council. FMC recreational planning principles were endorsed. Suggestions from clubs and individual members will be sent to the Director General of the Department of Conservation. There was also discussion on the proposal of a 'Kauri National Park,' with the view that it should be formed from an amalgam of several existing forest parks. The forum was unanimously opposed to the mining of any national or other conservation/forest park.

Government Plans for Forestry on Conservation Land

FMC is seeking more information about plans for new forests on public conservation land. The Government's deal with the Maori Party over the Emissions Trading Scheme indicates that the Government will give iwi a 70-year lease to plant trees on 35,000ha of public conservation land and earn carbon credits. The agreement notes it is to be permanent indigenous forest, but other reports have suggested it could include exotic plantation forestry. Our initial response is that: First, the public should be assured that free recreational access will continue. Second, any forestry should use ecologically-appropriate indigenous species. Third; more pine trees in the high country would be a disaster. Assisting reforestation of conservation land has the chance to be good for conservation and recreation, or to be bad; so we are urgently seeking more information. Member clubs are invited to let FMC know their views and any concerns about this development: Please write to admin@fmc.org.nz

Dart-Milford Tunnel Proposals

This proposal has recently gained fresh attention through the media. Your Federation is exploring with DoC how the proposal could impact the management plans of both Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks. FMC is monitoring developments, and will keep you updated.

Great Response to FMC Topo Map Offer

Your Executive would like to thank all clubs and individual members that supported our Topo50 Map Offer. To date, we have received orders from 6 schools, 3 University Clubs, 9 Individual Supporters, and 25 Tramping Clubs for a total of 4050 maps!

FMC meets with the Office of Treaty Settlements

FMC President, Rob Mitchell, met with the Director of the Office of Treaty Settlements on 24th November for preliminary discussions on how your Federation could best engage in the Treaty settlement process. It is the Federation's intention to provide constructive input into any negotiations that might involve the potential transfer of crown recreational land, managed by DoC, in future Treaty settlements.

Welcome Discussions with Ngai Tuhoe and Ngati Wharetoa

Te Urewera National Park: Executive members, Brian Stephenson and Viv Milne recently met with members of Ngai Tuhoe for discussions about future options for management of Te Urewera National Park. This process is in its early stages, and your Federation is keen to explore areas where the strong connection of the Tuhoe with this area is respected whilst still allowing for full access and governance of a national park to be maintained as part of a nationwide integrated park system. We will keep you informed of any developments as they come to hand.

Access to Private Land in the Kaimanawas: Brian Stephenson, Barbara Morris and Viv Milne met with a representative, Tom Walters, of the Moana Foundation and East Taupo Lands Trust Board on 4 November. The owners of the land are interested in developing a range of guided walks across their land and are keen to engage with your Federation on how their proposals can be propagated further - Options could include discounts to members for any guided walks but also the possibility of pre-arranged off-track access. It is hoped that a meeting for all interested parties can be arranged for the end of January 2010 to further develop ideas

Project Hayes Wind-Farm Proposal Rejected by Environment Court

Earlier this month, the Environment Court rejected the resource management consent for the Project Hayes wind farm in Central Otago. Although the Federation did not actively engage in the RMA process, because the project did not present an immediate impact on areas important to tramping or climbing, we applaud the outcome because it promises added future protection for recreation in conservation areas that could otherwise be adversely impacted on by major infrastructural proposals with significant environmental effects. President Rob Mitchell has written to convey our sentiments to those that were more actively engaged in opposing Project Hayes.

Walking Access Commission Strategy and Code Launched – Reminder for Feedback, Please!

A reminder to readers that the Walking Access Commission has distributed its Draft Walking Access Code and Walking Access Strategy and that public comment is requested by 19th December 2009. Your Federation has been actively involved in the development of these, and encourages clubs and individuals to carefully consider the proposals. Please let us know if you have any ideas of how they can be improved. Copies of the documents are available on request. E-mail inquiries should be directed to the commission via: contact@walkingaccess.org.nz.

President Rob Mitchell on Leave from mid-January

Your Executive regrettably granted leave to President, Rob Mitchell from 15 January through to the June AGM due to personal commitments. A sub-committee has met to reallocate tasks and responsibilities. The Executive is very appreciative of Rob's commitment and enthusiasm to the role since his initial election in June 2008.

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