



# Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)

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## FMC Member News December 2009

*We wish all FMC members a very Happy Christmas. Have a safe and enjoyable time in our mountains and conservation lands over the holiday break. Here is the latest news on FMC advocacy, highlights, and other significant developments of importance to trampers, climbers and all interested in safe outdoor recreation.*

### Campaign against Mining in National Parks and other Conservation Lands

FMC has written formally to the Prime Minister expressing its opposition to the National Government's proposals to review Schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act with the intention to remove protection from mining in areas of national parks and other conservation lands. A copy of our letter is on the FMC website: <http://www.fmc.org.nz/advocacy/mining/>

Public concern was heightened by a FMC media release about the possibility that up to 20% of the Mount Aspiring National Park could have its protection removed. A new Facebook page - "Hands off Mount Aspiring National Park" - has been created to further voice concerns and has already attracted over 7000 registrants. If you use Facebook, please add your name now! There is also significant concern about Government decisions to allow more mining in the Coromandel area.

It is crucial that pressure is maintained on the government over the holiday period and well into 2010 - You can help by doing some or all of the following: 1) e-mailing a photo of your favourite national park to the Prime Minister at [j.key@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:j.key@ministers.govt.nz), or writing on the back of a printed copy and posting it for free, with an explanation of why you don't want it mined. FMC has printed 2000 postcards to assist the cause and will be distributing these to member clubs during December. 2) Raise awareness to the wider public by placing copies of FMC's November Bulletin in back-country huts over the holiday break (some spare copies are available by e-mailing [admin@fmc.org.nz](mailto:admin@fmc.org.nz)).

### Successful 'Day on a Wild River' Events - 28 & 29 November

These events to celebrate wild rivers were held across the country on the weekend of 28-29 November and were highly successful. They were attended by hundreds of FMC members and other coalition groups including Forest & Bird, Fish and Game, and Whitewater New Zealand, as well as by members of the public. Several media items (Radio NZ and newspapers) were generated as a result. It is crucial that public awareness is maintained as the campaign builds momentum. One way of accomplishing this is to distribute both the FMC Bulletin and the November issue of the Forest and Bird Magazine (which focuses on wild river issues) to back-country huts, waiting rooms, etc across the country. For the latest news on the wild rivers campaign please check the website <http://www.wildrivers.org.nz>.

### St James Management Plan released by DoC

The Department of Conservation has released the operational management plan for the St James Conservation Area: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/publications/about-doc/role/policies-and-plans/st-james-conservation-area-operational-plan/> Your Federation was active in the campaigning for the park and developing the management plan. FMC notes that the objectives for managing the area are to "to ensure that protection is provided for the area's natural and historic values while allowing for appropriate public and commercial use." It is excellent to see so many recreational opportunities confirmed on public lands after years of limited access. FMC welcomes the proposal to allow for regeneration of indigenous forest in the eastern section of the Park, and is pleased that there will be careful monitoring of 4WD and aircraft access to minimise adverse impacts on other recreational activities. However, we remained concerned about the decision to provide for the possibility of hydro electricity and water storage dams on the Clarence River and a wind farm on the St James Range.

### Molesworth Station Recreation Management - Revised Plan Delayed

The revision of the Molesworth Station Management Plan which includes substantial elements covering tramping camping, mountain biking, hunting and fishing has been delayed. It is now likely to be released for public comment in early 2010.

## FMC Membership Card - Benefits and New Ideas

When planning your Christmas and summer holidays in the mountains and back-country, remember that there are savings available through the use of your FMC membership card. For your easy reference, and to help promote those companies that support FMC, we will be listing the range of organisations and the membership benefits they offer to FMC members under the 'Services' section on our website. Looking further ahead, if you or your club have fresh ideas for card benefits please e-mail them to: [secretary@fmc.org.nz](mailto:secretary@fmc.org.nz)

## Northern Recreational Opportunities Review - Auckland Forum Report

The Federation's recommendations on recreational opportunities in Auckland and North Auckland will be sent to the Department of Conservation and the Auckland Regional Council before the Christmas break. We warmly thank all those who have contributed to this initiative.

## A reminder: 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. We will continue to seek more information and keep you informed.

## Temporary Closure of Ohakune - Turoa Access Road

The Ruapehu District Council will replace the bridge at the 9 km point on the Ohakune Mountain Road over the summer period. The road will be closed from 18 January to 28 February 2010. Trampers/climbers will be unable to gain access to the area above the bridge if travelling from Ohakune. It is still possible to do the Round the Mountain Circuit during this period, provided you enter or exit from other points. The old Blyth Track could be used if necessary, but it is in rough condition. For further information contact DOC Ohakune Field Centre, 06 385 0010, or the Ohakune Information Centre, 06 385 8427.

## Mountain Safety Council - Accident Research

MSC has published a scoping report on recreation participation and incidents or accidents and injuries. The report was prepared with the support of FMC and we thank the many Clubs that provided data. Here is a snapshot of information:

**Participation:** Numbers (trampers/walkers) range between 306,000 (ACC) to 616,000 (Active NZ - total comprised 121,000 trampers and 495,000 day-walkers) - This equates to ca. 9 % of the population and is slightly higher than the proportions in the USA (4 %) or Australia (6 %). The gender split was 60 % male and 40 % female, and most of the participants were in the 25-49 year-old age group. There were also an estimated 38,000 mountain climbers, 11,000 rock climbers and 745,000 mountain bikers.

**Accident rates:** (ACC Data - Rate per 1000 Participants): Tramping, 0.62. Mountaineering, 0.34. Rock climbing, 2.88. Mountain biking, 1.65.

More information is available in the full report. See: <http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz/Research/default.asp>

## Other News in Brief

**More Cooperation with NZAC:** Your President, Rob Mitchell, recently had discussions with the recently elected NZ Alpine Club President, Peter Cammell. The Federation looks forward to working more closely with the Alpine Club particularly in the field of advocacy.

**November Executive Meeting:** Minutes are now available for inspection on the website.

**Topo50 Map Offer:** The sale of the new Topo 50 maps to clubs & schools was very successful with over 4000 maps being ordered.

**FMC Travel Club:** There have been reductions in the prices of trips being offered by FMC Travel club. Go to the website for details

**Ashburton Lakes - Upper Rangitata Recreation Opportunities:** FMC's submission is now available for inspection on the website.