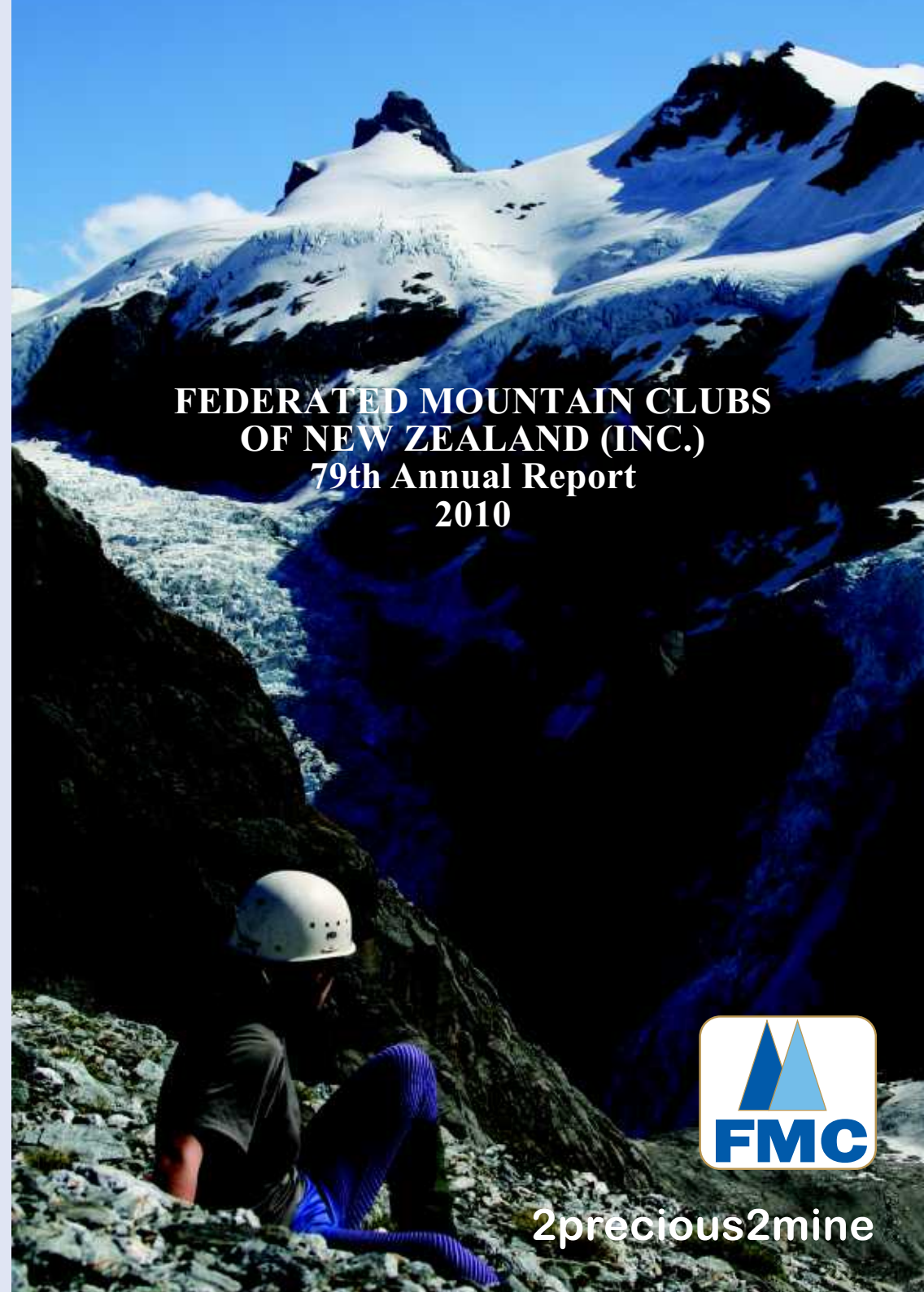




Federated Mountain Clubs (NZ) Inc
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FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS
OF NEW ZEALAND (INC.)
79th Annual Report
2010



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Cover Picture

From Trinity Col, Annelies Inghelbrecht looks across to the Andy Glacier draining the Olivine Ice Plateau with Tower and Little Ark peaks above.

Lara Wilcocks

Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)

PATRONS

Allan Evans QSM, Arnold Heine OSM

EXECUTIVE 2009 - 2010

PRESIDENT

Rob Mitchell (*Dunedin*)
(on leave from February 2010)

VICE-PRESIDENTS

North Island

Owen Cox (*Kapiti Coast*)
Viv Milne (*Auckland*)

South Island

David Barnes (*Dunedin*)
Rick Barber (*Greymouth*)

SECRETARY

Phil Glasson (*Kapiti Coast*)

TREASURER

Graeme Lythgoe (*Wellington*)

EXECUTIVE

Richard Davies (*Wellington*)
Jane Dudley (*Auckland*)
Quentin Duthie (*Wellington*)
Baz Hooper (*Wanganui*)
Robin McNeill (*Invercargill*)

Barbara Morris (*Taupo*)
Dennis Page (*Hutt Valley*)
David Round (*Christchurch*)
Lex Smith (*Havelock North*)
Brian Stephenson (*Auckland*)

AUDITOR

Accountants Plus Limited, Lower Hutt

FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS OBJECTIVES

Prime objectives of the Federated Mountain Clubs are:

The promotion of climbing, mountaineering, skiing and winter sports, tramping, hunting, mountain-biking, canoeing and kayaking in the mountains and other wild lands of New Zealand and overseas and of the better knowledge of those mountains and other wild lands through literature, art and science.

The conservation and wise management of New Zealand's natural wild lands, mountains, lakes, rivers and coasts and the promotion of sound management of recreation and sport connected with those places in the interests of those actively involved in such recreation and sport and the public generally and to take such action joint or otherwise as may be necessary to carry out these objects and to maintain in perpetuity the quality of the environment necessarily implied by the objects.

2009 – 2010 PRESIDENT'S OVERVIEW

For FMC 2009 - 2010 was a year of dedication, challenge and opportunity.

Dedication

It was a year in which FMC continued its dedication to its founding objectives.

- Advocacy for sound long term conservation and recreational management especially for New Zealanders.
- Ensuring free public access to conservation lands.
- Exploring new outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Representing FMC members interests.
- Seeking better understandings with other recreational stakeholders.

The year was marked by a significant level of Department of Conservation policy reviews and revision of National Park and Conservation Management Strategies. FMC and member involvement in consultations and submissions with the Department of Conservation opened the way for improved management that is more aware of tramping and climber needs in the future. Substantial energy was invested in promoting recreational values in submissions for the inaugural Rakiura National Park Management Plan, the St James Conservation Area Operational Plan, and the revision of the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. Review of the management plan for the Molesworth Station also offered FMC the opportunity to present views on how tramping, camping and mountain biking recreational activities in backcountry Marlborough could be extended.

FMC participated in the quest to define new regional outdoor recreational opportunities in Coromandel, Auckland and Northland. Members of the Executive, club members and others participated in developing a series of recommendations regarding tramping day hiking and camping for consideration by the Department of Conservation, and regional and central government.

There continue to be expanding recreational opportunities in the South Island high country through vesting areas of land unsuited for farming in conservation management through tenure review. FMC continued its work in this area in conjunction with other NGO groups.

Throughout the year, the Federation's advocacy activities were given added substance by the informal networking with a range of non governmental organizations. Prominent amongst those were: Royal Forest and Bird Society, Fish and Game, Council of Recreational Organisations of NZ, Public Access NZ, NZ Deerstalkers Association, Mountain Biking NZ, Whitewater NZ and Te Araroa. At a fundamental level, coordinated NGO action is important in forums organized by the Department of Conservation, Ministry of Tourism, Land Information New Zealand and the Walking Access Commission. It also ensures more coherent action in developing submissions for government agencies and representing FMC interests.

During the year, FMC extended its engagement with Maori. Constructively, FMC has joined the process that could see some Crown lands currently managed by the Department of Conservation, being transferred to Maori ownership under the Treaty of Waitangi settlement process. FMC has registered its interest with the Office of Treaty Settlements in any outcomes that could impact on current management of conservation and recreation land. The Federation envisages a process similar to that of tenure review which will guide positive outcomes for all stakeholders. FMC is also consulting with relevant North Island iwi on recreation management options in the Kaimanawa Range and the Urewera National Park.

A focus on increasing FMC membership brought positive results, reversing the trend of reducing membership in previous years. The Federation is always receptive to introducing new benefits to members. The launch of new topographic map series, Topo50, saw FMC offer a successful discount for members. Our motive was to encourage members to use the new maps utilizing international datum. Increased compatibility between trampers' maps and GPS technology improves tramper navigation and safety.

Challenges

After decades of bi-partisan agreement on the management of New Zealand's conservation assets, the changes mooted by the new National government are challenging. Distinct from FMC's constructive recommendations on conservation planning and management to different government agencies, a vitally important aspect of FMC's advocacy throughout the year has been to express stakeholder concern about potentially adverse impacts on conservation and recreation values that could arise from resulting abrupt politically motivated change in national parks and on other areas managed by the Department of Conservation.

Five threats have been addressed by FMC. Introducing the Conservation Economy or the commercialization of public lands, mining on conservation lands, changes to the Resource Management Act, a reduction in positive outcomes for recreation and conservation from tenure review and development threats to wild rivers.

The year 2009 - 2010 saw the National government launch its proposal for a *Conservation Economy*. The Minister of Conservation's address to the FMC Annual General Meeting and subsequent speeches by both the Minister and the Director General of Conservation sought to justify an expansion of commercial use of lands managed by the Department. This new approach seeks to blend seemingly contradictory strands of economic development with the conservation of natural resources. National's vision raises important questions that need to be answered. Prime issues are:

- How can management strategies directed to generating short term economic gain be reconciled with the management and stewardship of natural assets ensuring that they are still available for future generations?

- How should public assets such as water, be utilized or sold so that the benefit is gained by all New Zealanders?

Government attempts to articulate its policy have been vague and evidence of political experimenting are evident in new DoC management plans such as the St James Conservation Area “Operational Plan.” FMC is monitoring this issue closely.

FMC is unequivocally opposed to mining the national parks and conservation lands with high intrinsic values. Its opposition was sparked by the announcement of a government review of opportunities for mining on conservation lands managed by DoC in mid 2009. The policy changes were not part of the Government’s election policy and cannot be considered part of their mandate for government.

We are pleased at the increased momentum in the tenure review process. Unfortunately the potential for positive outcomes for access and recreation risks dilution due to reduced government support for high country parks. FMC is opposed to political suggestions that there should be no further additions to conservation parks or national parks. Low-value farmland is best managed by public agencies. The suggested alternative of covenants with landowners is a poor substitute. The history of high country private covenants has produced unsatisfactory management outcomes. Compromises produce difficulties in monitoring and sound management of covenant conditions increasing potential for disputes over access, facilities and other aspects necessary for balanced recreation and conservation management.

Opportunities and Outlook

Continuing popularity of tramping and climbing presents an imperative for FMC action. There will be a continuing demand to meet the need for facilities for tramping, climbing and allied activities such as camping, mountain biking and kayaking. During the past year the Federation has made good progress in representing its member clubs and the interests of a much wider constituency of trampers and climbers who pursue their recreation individually or with family and friends. In 2010 FMC will convene its second youth forum and will implement new awards to encourage youth involvement in outdoor recreation.

The coming year will be one for the organization to build on its strengths and to develop its capabilities in member advocacy and providing member benefits. There will be new recreational opportunities to explore. I see FMC concentrating on these areas.

- Protecting New Zealand’s national park and conservation park network.
- Promoting new recreational opportunities and improved recreational access.
- Communication of FMC’s ideas and activities and achievements.
- Closer liaison with FMC membership.
- Developing new sources of funding for its activities.

FMC shares the widespread public confidence in the general standards of conservation and recreational management by DoC. The coming year offers new opportunities and inevitably, further challenges for FMC.

Political efforts to halt mining in national parks, protection of our wild rivers, promotion of tenure review and improved access to benefit recreation should continue. The Government will be seeking to establish a platform of politically popular achievements to sustain them in their bid for re-election in 2011. It presents an excellent opportunity for FMC and all outdoor recreation enthusiasts to clearly signal that the Government should lift its commitment to protection of New Zealand’s heritage.

GOVERNANCE

The Executive met on four occasions. The first meeting in March was in Napier and on the Sunday the Executive joined with the Heretaunga Tramping Club for a day walk to Sunrise Hut in the Ruahines. The Executive met again in June, September and November in Wellington. At the September meeting a special focus was on advocacy issues. From this meeting the anti-mining campaign evolved. At the November meeting there was a greater focus on governance and management issues. Your Executive is working towards a stronger sub committee structure and being more proficient at making use of modern technology to improve our communication.

The 2009 Annual General Meeting was held in Wellington in June attended by about 50 members. The highlight was the first significant conservation speech by Hon. Tim Groser, Minister of Conservation where he outlined his thoughts on a “Conservation Economy” for New Zealand.

ADVOCACY PROJECTS

2009 was a year of advocacy challenge for FMC.

Opposition to Diluting the Resource Management Act

In line with its commitment at the last election, the Government has reviewed the Resource Management Act. FMC responded to plans to limit public submissions by arguing that public participation in RMA planning processes is *fundamental* to the equitable assessment of adverse social and environmental effects that could flow from development proposals. FMC further submitted that there is particular need to ensure public submissions on recreation access and conservation issues relating to development applications.

Keeping the Integrity of DoC Management Strategies

Together with the Department of Conservation’s statutory responsibilities, Conservation Management Strategies (CMS) establish parameters for regional management objectives. They should also play a vital part in communicating management guidelines to stakeholders and the general public. After disappointment that draft CMS documents prepared for the Bay of Plenty and Waikato were pitched at too high a level and gave little useful information to recreational users of those Conservancies, FMC, in partnership with the NZ Alpine Club, has been active in campaigning against the reduction in usefulness of the Department’s CMSs. We welcome the Department’s change of approach in the past year following this lobbying and involvement of the NZ Conservation Authority.

Major Involvement in High Country Tenure Review

FMC continues to have the valued input from Dr Mike Floate in the research and preparation of submissions for Crown leasehold properties going through the process of tenure review. FMC submissions are given more depth through the cooperation between FMC and other non-governmental organizations including Forest and Bird, Public Access New Zealand, Fish and Game and the Freshwater Anglers.

Submissions were made by Dr Mike Floate on behalf of FMC for the Tenure Reviews of the following properties:

Ben Nevis	Braemar	Branches	Cambrian Hills	Carrick
Cloudy Peak	Cluden	Craigroy	Deep Creek	Emerald Hills
Gem Lake	Glenfallan	Glenrock	Holbrook	Long Gully
Mt Alexander	Mt Aspiring	Riverslea	Rollesby	Shingley Creek
Temple Peak	The Larches			

David Henson and David Round submitted of behalf of FMC on Manahune Station.

FMC is indebted to the efforts of these people for this work.

The present government remains committed to tenure review; however it seems to be inclined to favour more freeholding of pastoral lease land with associated protective covenants rather than taking that land into the public conservation estate. Cuts to the Department of Conservation’s budget will also make management of further pastoral lands more of a challenge for the Department. The entire question is still politically charged and rapidly changing. Irrigation and intensive dairying “cubicle farming” in the MacKenzie country is currently controversial.

Review of Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan

The review of the Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan led to FMC involvement in a series of consultative meetings and a comprehensive submission being developed and presented by Executive member David Barnes. Key components were the necessity of:

- A sound recreational zoning framework to accommodate conflicting objectives of different recreational activities.
- Strict management and monitoring of commercial activities.
- Improved management of aircraft flights over the National Park.
- Opposition to the proposal for a tunnel between the Routeburn and the Hollyford Valleys.
- Rejection of the proposal for a zone for commercial filming in the Forbes Range.
- Management of aircraft landings at Bevan Col.

The plan is now with the Otago Conservation Board for consideration.

Rakiura / Stewart Island National Park and Conservation Management Strategy

The first Department of Conservation CMS and National Park Management Plan for the Rakiura provided FMC with the opportunity to submit on protecting natural values and providing adequately for outdoor recreation enthusiasts. FMC welcomed the assistance of former Executive member and dedicated conservationist Rob Brown in this work. FMC’s submission was considered to be very valuable by the hearing panel and FMC is pleased with the outcome.

Management Planning for the St James Conservation Area – Progress and Concerns

FMC was active in contributing to the management planning for the new St James Conservation Area in the highland reaches of Canterbury, Nelson and Marlborough. The new conservation park

is welcomed because of the added diversity of outdoor recreation available and the improved access to the southern perimeter of the Nelson Lakes National Park. The December 2009 operational plan revealed the Government's attempt to give effect to the "conservation economy". While many ideas in the discussion document are enthusiastically supported, the Federation opposed provision for electricity generation and water storage in the St James Conservation Area .

Aim to Improve the Molesworth Recreation Management Plan

The review of the Molesworth Station Management Plan after ten years of operation offered FMC an avenue to present views on how the tramping, camping and mountain-biking recreational activities in backcountry Marlborough could be extended. Emphasising the limited progress that has been made under the current farm-focused, management plan, FMC proposed increased provision for camping and tramping activities. The potential to offer facilities that complement outdoor recreation planning in the adjoining St James and Kaikoura Conservation Areas has been emphasized.

CAMPAIGNS

During the year FMC joined other conservation groups in two important campaigns.

Opposition to Mining on Conservation Lands

In mid 2009 the Government initiated a review of mining potential of conservation land and possible changes to Schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act 1991 that restricts mining in many of the most desirable parts of national parks and forest parks. The three areas under greatest threat are the Great Barrier Island, Coromandel and Paparoa areas which have high conservation and recreation values. FMC is convinced of the need to protect New Zealand's internationally admired conservation lands from further mining. A campaign has been mounted aimed at stopping any proposals to extend mining on conservation lands. This campaign has been directed to the outdoor recreational community and the voting public. Letters voicing firm opposition have been sent to the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Conservation and of Economic Development. Widespread public support for FMC's position and ill-ease over Government moves have been expressed in the news media and on the web. Illustrating this concern was the rapid growth of the Facebook (8,200 members in February 2010) site *Hands off Mt Aspiring NP*, after FMC discovered up to 20% of this iconic national park could be opened up for mining.

Protecting our Wild Rivers

The Federation has joined other non governmental organizations in a campaign to protect the nation's wild rivers from further degradation and despoilation. Special threats that have been identified are hydro electricity development, farm irrigation schemes, long-term degradation of water quality because of human activity and farm run-off. For this reason we joined a coalition of other conservation groups to oppose the damming of the Mokihinui River on the south western flank of the Kahurangi National Park, and FMC has contested the application to raise Lake Sumner for irrigation and proposals to build water storage dams in the St James Conservation Area. FMC has made submissions advocating the continued protection of the Mokihinui and the Hurunui. In late 2009 FMC joined other groups to promote recreation on wild rivers. Successful promotion days were held in the North and South Islands.

REGIONAL REPORTS

NORTHERN

FMC advocacy activity in the northern part of the country has included:

- The Bay of Plenty Conservancy has been expanded by the addition of part of the East Coast Conservancy which was part of the Hawkes Bay Conservancy.
- The Bay of Plenty Conservation Management Strategy (CMS), which was before the NZCA for a considerable length of time, has been withdrawn and will be re-written. It is understood that this will take up to two years and will take the opportunity to incorporate changes to make the CMS more acceptable to stake holders. The CMSs for Northland and Auckland have been delayed and new dates for release for consultation are not known.
- The Department of Conservation plans to expand outdoor recreational opportunities in the Coromandel, Auckland and Northland regions. The Director General welcomed input from Federated Mountain Clubs. Many club members have responded to FMC's request for suggestions which provided an excellent base for an FMC submission to DoC. FMC's thanks go to those that sent suggestions.
- The northern recreation opportunities forum was held in Manukau on 31 October and was attended by members representing northern clubs, representatives of the Auckland Regional Council and the Conservator, DoC Auckland. The suggestions in the previous item were discussed, many worthwhile comments were received and contributed to the FMC submission. FMC's thanks go to those who contributed their time and help.

CENTRAL

FMC advocacy in the central part of the country has included:

- A submission on the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan partial review.
- A submission on the future management of the St James Station.
- We had discussion with the person preparing the draft Management Plan for Molesworth Farm Park.
- Comment and discussion on the route of Te Araroa walkway through the Tararuas. In the end DoC agreed with us that the Oriwa Ridge route is not the best. The route will initially follow the already tracked route along the Northern Main Range to Waitewaewae. In the longer term it is likely that a route in the western foothills will be identified and used.
- FMC submitted on a number of regional parks and forests that are run by the Wellington Regional Council. The areas include parts of the Tararuas (the Hutt Catchment), the Rimutaka Range, East Harbour, Belmont and the Akatarawas.
- The Kahurangi National Park Management Plan is undergoing a partial review. The review covers only some provisions of the Management Plan and mainly concerns the Heaphy Track, use of mountain-bikes in the limited areas of the Park (including the Heaphy Track between May and October) and air access.

SOUTHERN

FMC advocacy in the southern part of the country has included:

- Submitted on the Mt Aspiring National Park management plan. Major areas of interest were guiding in the wilderness area, aircraft in the Forbes Mountains and at Bevan Col, and the Routeburn tunnel.
- Submitted on the Rakiura National Park Management Plan and Conservation Management Strategy. Major area of interest was the Pegasus Wilderness area boundaries.
- Alerted DoC to concerns over concession compliance on the Hump Ridge, Routeburn and Remarkables.
- Conveyed our strong opposition to a concession application for security and surveillance activities on behalf of Solid Energy to be undertaken on the conservation Estate.
- Supported Water Conservation Orders on the Nevis and Hurunui.
- Continued active involvement in the tenure review process.
- Commented on DoC's proposed Wild Animal Recovery Operation (WARO) framework – including its impact on 'natural quiet' and wilderness areas, deer number reductions and interactions with other users.
- Engaged in proposals for management of the St James acquisition.
- Continued to await the Mokihinui hydro dam outcome.
- Monitored, engaged in, submitted on and generally kept an eye on a myriad of other issues impacting on the places we like to recreate in.
- Kept a weather eye open on the entrepreneurial shortcuts to Milford Sound.

MEMBERSHIP

There has been a positive trend in overall FMC membership over the year. Club membership declined slightly but this was offset by the increase in individual members and a doubling of the number of secondary schools affiliated as Associates. The efforts at attracting Individual Supporters is showing success with a gain in this area. Over 50% of the increase in Individual Supporters has come through the website.

The “associated” membership category is an attempt to find out from clubs how many people are involved in club activities who are not permanent members of the club. Regrettably less than 50% of clubs supplied this information on their renewal form. It is through these figures that we hope to be able to show that FMC speaks for a significant proportion of the 300,000 New Zealanders who say they go tramping.

We put out a redesigned “Join a Club” Brochure which attracted favourable comment from those clubs that took advantage of it but less than 20% of our member clubs took up the opportunity to get a free brochure promoting club membership.

The effort to attract secondary schools which teach and assess Outdoor Recreation at the senior level back in to FMC resulted in a doubling of numbers and we will be making further efforts in this area during 2010. FMC will be making a direct approach to tertiary institutions which teach Outdoor Recreation to encourage them to actively support the work of FMC in 2010.

A summary of membership as at 28 February 2010 is:

	As at 28 February		
	2008	2009	2010
Number of affiliated Clubs	84	84	82
Club financial membership	8844	8672	8520
Club associated membership	2184	2476	3290
Total Club Membership	11028	11148	11810
Individual Membership	248	320	363
School Students	n.a	n.a	947
Total	11276	11468	13110
Associates (Schools)	12	12	25
Associates (Other)	19	19	19

FINANCE

FMC relies predominantly on membership subscriptions for its operating budget and this year income has again been boosted by a welcome grant of \$24,000 from Sport and Recreation New Zealand. Because of prudent financial management, no increase in club membership fees has been made for more than a decade, despite the decreased purchasing power of the dollar due to inflation and the increasing demands placed on FMC to deal with advocacy issues.

Over the year 2009-2010, Federated Mountain Clubs operated within its budget and concluded the year with a deficit of \$3442 instead of the budgeted \$23,000 which would have absorbed the previous year's surplus. Once again expenditure was less than budgeted which is a reflection of the real pressure to maintain a high level of activity in a voluntary organization.

Key sources of revenue were:

Subscriptions	\$90439	(up by 3.3% from last year)
Interest from invested funds	\$15438	(down by 15.6% from last year)
SPARC Grant	\$24000	(same as last year)

The main areas of expenditure were:

Administration	\$52455	(down by 12.4% from last year)
Honoraria	\$19000	(down by 2.5% from last year)
Advocacy & Campaigns	\$13644	(up by 50% from last year)
Bulletin (net)	\$58347	(up by 26.6% from last year)

For the full audited Annual Accounts for year ending 28 February 2010 refer to the separate booklet. (Also available on the website).

PUBLICITY & PROMOTION

Some 300,000 New Zealanders identify tramping as a pastime, but only some three per cent belong to FMC-affiliated clubs. So, our challenge in 2009 was to justify our claim to be the national voice of walkers, trampers and climbers and to increase public perception of our organisation. With clubs as the cornerstone of FMC, it was obvious that the membership base must be widened to include those who, for various reasons, do not wish to be involved in a club. Advertising in national adventure/walking magazines has, we believe, contributed to the modest, but steady rise in Individual Supporter numbers over the past year. In 2009 we embarked on a direct campaign to attract back secondary schools which teach outdoor education at the senior level. The result has been pleasing, with a number of schools taking up the offer of Associate membership. It is hoped that the students will continue their association with FMC in later life, either through the club environment or as an individual supporter. This effort will continue in 2010. A similar approach has now been made to the outdoor education departments of New Zealand's ten polytechnics, and in 2010 we will be contacting over one hundred and forty walking groups throughout the country to encourage them to become members of FMC.

We hope all these initiatives will produce a positive outcome for membership numbers, upon which our funding depends, and also raise the Federation's public profile.

Developing FMC's Communications

Throughout the year FMC continued to build the effectiveness of its three key communications vehicles – the FMC Bulletin, the newsletter and the website.

Popular Support for the FMC Bulletin

The quarterly flagship magazine FMC Bulletin continues to be a highly respected publication, under the skilled editorship of Shaun Barnett. It concentrated on a series of important themes during the year: the importance of protecting New Zealand's wild rivers, the need for consistently high standards of management of Great Walks and front country recreation, the diversity of member clubs, recreation in the Tararua Ranges and marshalling opposition to mining in national parks.

A 2009 survey of FMC members on Bulletin design and contents confirmed a high degree of reader loyalty. Based on club feedback, the Executive decided to keep the current format, 64 pages and the mix of articles. The Editor and Executive thank all those who participated and contributed their views, and also a big thank you to John Rhodes (advertising) and Juliet Oliver (proof-reading).

FMC initiated its first national photo competition through the Bulletin, which aims to encourage clubs to run their own competition and then submit winning entries.

Newsletter Stimulates Member Activity

Through the year the FMC monthly email newsletter edited by Dennis Page and Rob Mitchell continues to be a regular means of informing member clubs, our Individual Supporters and a range of other groups about FMC activity. A bonus is the way it encourages discussion with members and allows for more timely interaction with clubs in developing submissions and other advocacy initiatives. FMC has been encouraged by the complimentary feed back from members, government departments and kindred recreational organisations.

Increased Website Interaction

Continuing work by Phil Glasson has expanded the value of our website (www.fmc.org.nz) for communicating information and FMC's activities to current and prospective members, politicians, the public service, public and the media. Information streams about FMC advocacy and information on developments in outdoor recreation and member benefits are now much more accessible. Positive feedback from website visitors indicates the FMC website is building a better public understanding about the organization and its position on conservation recreational issues.

Liaison, Services to Member Clubs

Throughout the year Executive members took up opportunities to explain FMC activities to a range of member clubs and FMC maintains continuing contact with the lead national mountaineering organization, NZ Alpine Club, on advocacy issues and training.

Each year FMC negotiates a series of benefits from outdoor retailers, travel providers and DoC for FMC members. These discounts are listed on the membership cards and the website. This continued in 2009. Another popular initiative was arranging cut-price supply of the new Topo50 maps to FMC members.

Tramping: The leading Form of Outdoor Recreation

During the year, FMC member clubs assisted the Mountain Safety Council to explore "Outdoor Recreation Participation and Incidents in New Zealand." This useful scoping study describes participation in key outdoor activities: tramping, mountain biking, hunting, fishing and snow sports. The SPARC statistic that some 300,000 or 9.4 percent of New Zealanders undertake at least one overnight tramp a year underlines the importance of the continuing role of FMC as the lead tramping advocate. At the same time the lack of data on alpine climbing and rock climbing combined with data variability on tramping activity such as day walk participation, highlight the need for additional research to aid mountain safety programmes, search and rescue, recreational development and activity planning in the conservation and national parks.

LIAISON WITH OTHER BODIES

Department of Conservation

Throughout the year FMC has participated in the regular NGO forums coordinated by the Department of Conservation. It has also found the ongoing stakeholder discussions through the Tourism Liaison Group constructive in building relationships with other conservation stakeholders

with differing objectives. FMC has also appreciated the opportunities for information gathering and dialogue development that have occurred through regular informal meetings with representatives of the senior management group.

FMC representation has been shared amongst the President and Wellington-based members of the Executive. The dedication and flexibility of Phil Glasson, Owen Cox, Richard Davies and Quentin Duthie in blending FMC representation with work, family and personal commitments is appreciated.

NZ Conservation Authority

Immediate Past President Brian Stephenson has continued to ably represent FMC interests on the NZ Conservation Authority. His knowledge of developments in conservation policy forums provides valuable guidance to the FMC Executive in developing advocacy strategies. Significantly, the NZCA is taking a close interest in issues that have been of concern to FMC, including the national park planning implications of a possible Routeburn-Hollyford tunnel, the retention of detailed conservation management strategies, and the review of government policies governing mining in conservation lands.

Walking Access Commission

In its second year of operation, the previous President Brian Stephenson continued as a Walking Access Commission member while President Rob Mitchell formally represented the FMC at its stakeholder forum in Wellington to discuss the WAC strategy and elements of its communications programme.

The WAC's strategy has established foundations for future activity that are generally accepted by its diverse stakeholder groups including FMC. Public knowledge of current access will be enhanced by the launching of the Commission's mapping project in late 2010. This project will clarify the legal standing of public access in key recreational areas. FMC is confident that the stakeholder discussion about differences in interpretation that may result will stimulate discussion that should result in positive long term outcomes.

New Zealand Geographic Board

Executive Member David Barnes has continued his role as FMC nominee on the NZ Geographic Board. He contributes through his extensive tramping background and comprehensive knowledge of NZ mountain areas. The forum also provides FMC with opportunities for constructive discussions with other Board members including Maori.

Sport and Recreation Council and Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council

In mid 2009 the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council was created and began operation. Later in the year the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council Strategy was released. FMC fully supports the council's long term objective of increasing the number of people who participate on outdoor recreation activities through:

1. Supporting the development of the outdoor recreation sector;
2. Ensuring the availability of and access to high quality natural areas;
3. Ensuring all New Zealanders have requisite participation skills and knowledge.

FMC 's objective is to develop a productive working relationship with the new body.

Mountain Safety Council

FMC maintained its membership of the Mountain Safety Council, contributing to its Annual General Meeting and programme review. As noted elsewhere, it provided assistance in data collection for its research project scoping participation in outdoor activities. The Federation is reviewing how it can utilize MSC resources more effectively in providing skills training for member clubs.

LandSAR

LandSAR continued its development as a stand alone organisation during the year with a major constitutional change which altered its governance model to give more influence to the members of LandSAR, and reducing the powers of the old council. FMC supported the proposal, recognizing the importance of strong governance, and the importance of enabling LandSAR's members to hold the Board to account. FMC continues to work with LandSAR as a partner and LandSAR continues to rely on club trampers and climbers to provide field teams in the regions.

Mountain Biking NZ

There was regular and positive consultation between Mountain Biking New Zealand and FMC in a variety of areas including recreational planning for the St James Conservation Area and Molesworth Station. In particular FMC liaised with MTB NZ over shared use tracks in the Whirinaki Forest. The particular concern in this area was the lack of consultation by DoC with either FMC or MTB NZ on the development of this concept. This issue has been raised with DOC. We maintained a watching brief over proposals to allow mountain bikes to use the Heaphy Track.

The planned National Cycleway is another area we are watching. Nothing that has emerged so far is contrary to FMC's core interests.

We submitted on a proposed MTB race over Harper Pass and were successful in getting the date timed to not interfere with holiday tramping by other users. Steps were taken to ensure the concessionaire had regard to minimizing the effect on the mountain vegetation.

FMC MOUNTAIN AND FOREST TRUST

The objectives of the FMC Forest and Mountain Trust are to enhance mountain and forest recreation in New Zealand by:

- support for the conservation of New Zealand's wild or natural lands.
- funding research or projects related to mountain or forest recreation.
- provision of recreational and educational facilities.
- financing conferences, lecture tours and publications related to mountain and forest recreation.

A medium term objective for FMC is to significantly expand the trust funds to provide a satisfactory level of support funding for FMC. The future of the Trust lies in its ability to generate donations and bequests. The Board Members are looking at ways to encourage and lift this income stream. Your continued generosity will certainly assist with this.

It is pleasing to report that in the year 2009 - 2010, FMC Mountain & Forest Trust funds increased from \$241,000 to \$252,000.

Grants totaling \$36,917 were approved. The Trust contributed towards the construction of an enlarged Papatahi Hut in the Orongorongo valley near Wellington. The funds came from an earlier bequest tagged by the estate of Gilbert McCaul and a commemorative plaque has been arranged. A grant of was allocated to Hillary Low for a promising book project, "Henry Whitcombe's Journey across the Southern Alps in 1863".

The Trust has made a commitment for three years to support the FMC Scholarship proposal for young people being introduced in 2010 subject to satisfactory criteria for the Scholarship being established.

Appreciation is recorded for the work of the Trustees in their custodianship during the year, especially to Lex Smith for his dedication as Secretary and Graeme Lythgoe for his competence as Treasurer.

THANKS AND APPRECIATION

In my second year as President, I have been privileged to receive sound advice from the whole Executive particularly senior members including Past President Brian Stephenson. On the administrative side, the vital operation of FMC's Wellington Office has been marked by the sterling work of Gail Abel with the back up of Owen Cox, Secretary Phil Glasson, and Treasurer Graeme Lythgoe.

FMC's activities over the past year have been characterized by consistency and a flow of new ideas. The efforts of long standing FMC Executive members have been stimulated by a group of younger and very able new comers. I warmly acknowledge the fresh ideas and energy they have injected into FMC's strategy development and activities. The new balance in the Executive membership augers well for meeting the advocacy challenges of the coming year.

I am grateful for the sympathetic support and counsel from the Executive to negotiate difficult personal circumstances. It is with sincere regret we acknowledge the passing of former Executive member, Barbara Spurr of Rangiora. FMC valued her participation, so tragically cut short.

Rob Mitchell
President 2009 - 2010