

Submission on enduring stewardship of Crown pastoral land

April 2019

Submitter details:

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Submission:

Introduction

1. The New Zealand Recreation t/a Recreation Aotearoa is a registered charity and the organisation responsible for providing leadership, advocacy and professional development opportunities for those involved in the broader recreation sector. We work at an agency, industry and professional level to build capability, develop partnerships, and equip individuals and organisations with the skills they need to deliver high quality recreation experiences that engage participants.
2. Recreation Aotearoa's membership includes recreation policy makers, territorial local authorities, voluntary organisations, regional sports trusts, outdoor recreation businesses, and others involved in the delivery of recreation throughout New Zealand.
3. Our role is to champion high-quality recreation for the benefit of New Zealand.
4. Our vision is that by 2020 New Zealand will have a strong recreation industry that meets the needs of current and future participants, so that through recreation, New Zealanders are active, healthy, and connected
5. Recreation Aotearoa believes recreation is vital to New Zealand society. Recreation is not just about enjoyment, it is about being healthy, engaged, stimulated, and interacting with others, and this occurs via outdoor recreation, community recreation, parks, and aquatic and facility-based recreation centres.
6. Recreation is a major contributor to the physical and mental health of individuals, and to the resilience of our communities. 90 per cent of New Zealanders believe that by being active they are in turn maintaining a good level of health and fitness, and this helps to relieve stress.
7. A thriving recreation industry can also help our nation prosper socially and economically. Sport and active recreation contributes \$4.9 billion or 2.3% to our annual GDP, and the sector employs more than 53,000 New Zealanders. The nation's recreation values and opportunities are fundamental to the nation's tourism industry. Approximately 50% of

international visitors to New Zealand participate in one form of outdoor recreation or another.

8. Recreation is part of what it is to be a New Zealander. Many of us are members of clubs and groups that enjoy recreation for fun, health and social reasons. 84% of New Zealanders believe sport and physical activity bring people together and create a sense of belonging.
9. For individuals, recreation contributes to physical and mental wellbeing and provides an opportunity to meet new people. People define themselves and their communities through their recreation opportunities. Recreation fosters community cohesion and resilience and supports the integration of social groups such as diverse ethnic groups. 74% of New Zealanders agree that sport and physical activity help build vibrant and stimulating communities.
10. Investment in recreation generates tourism opportunities and supports regional development by encouraging skilled professionals and migrants to consider business options in and beyond the main centres.
11. Research shows that recreation makes a significant contribution to social resilience. It allows individuals to thrive, and to connect with each other. This, in turn, makes communities stronger. A society in which people are active and healthy is also more economically sound.
12. Physical inactivity is associated with loss of productivity, health costs, as well as associated costs such as pain and suffering. Healthier, happier individuals are more likely to do well in other areas of their lives, whether it is in social or professional situations. This has a positive flow-on effect for communities and society as a whole.
13. Greater understanding of these benefits and their downstream impacts, along with awareness of how laws and regulations can influence recreation delivery, are key to ensuring that New Zealand's recreation opportunities remain among the world's best.

General Comments:

14. Recreation Aotearoa has long-held concerns around issues of public access to and across Crown Pastoral land during the Tenure Review process.
15. In 2016, we wrote a letter to the CEO of Land Information New Zealand which included the following:
*"....the tenure review process does not adequately maintain or enhance access to areas of recreational interest, that was otherwise available when the farms were leasehold. This perception was held by hunters, trampers, people interested in fishing, outdoor education providers and to a lesser extent, those interested in kayaking.
...we also note that the consultation partners in stage 2 are asked to make comment on protection which seems to imply values associated with biodiversity and ecosystems, not recreational access. We also note that when considerations of easements and public access are considered by LINZ, there are no specific consultation partners mentioned.*
16. Additionally, in 2016 Recreation Aotearoa wrote to various Conservation Boards expressing:
*"It is our belief that there may have been cases of tenure review being tacitly approved by various Conservation Boards, without adequate credence and provision given to recreational access to Public Conservation Land beyond the freehold farm land. While we recognise that in almost all cases, DoC has sought to include an easement of some form, these are often only convenient to the farmer and not the recreational user.
We encourage all Conservation Boards involved in the tenure review process to pay particular care when considering proposals, to ensure that the access interests of the community are provided for and that we can all enjoy reasonable access to our Public Conservation Land."*
17. As such, Recreation Aotearoa submits that improving access for Outdoor Recreation on Crown pastoral lease land should be a central outcome of this review.
18. Recreation Aotearoa submits that Outdoor Recreation is a key driver of conservation and environmental awareness amongst New Zealanders. Appreciation for our natural heritage and its protection is often a result

from people enjoyment of our natural spaces via recreation. Public access opportunities for outdoor recreation contribute to long term conservation.

19. Recreation Aotearoa submits that public access for Outdoor Recreation is clearly articulated as an outcome of the management of Crown pastoral land.

Feedback in detail:

20. Recreation Aotearoa submits that the mechanisms for ensuring public access for Outdoor Recreation were already weak, and in some cases, ineffectual under Tenure Review. We submit that under the transition from Tenure Review, recreational access interests will further deteriorate
21. Recreation Aotearoa supports the establishment of clear outcomes that provide for environmental sustainability, public access for recreation and economic viability. We submit that there is inadequate reference to, or regard for, public access across Crown Pastoral land.
22. Recreation Aotearoa supports that the involvement of iwi in the governance of Crown pastoral land is welcomed by the Board. The proposed language of taking Treaty principles “into account” is relatively weak. Recreation Aotearoa submits that LINZ could go a step further by committing to a full partnership approach to fulfilling its Treaty of Waitangi obligations.
23. Recreation Aotearoa supports the use of the term ‘natural capital’ as it pertains to the pan-government Wellbeing Framework.
24. Recreation Aotearoa supports the development of a regular Statement of Performance Expectations for the Commissioner of Crown Lands, approved by the Minister of Land Information.
25. Recreation Aotearoa submits its support for enhanced monitoring arrangements, especially with regard to public access for Outdoor Recreation. We note that previous monitoring, which has often been outsourced to third parties, has been sub-optimal. Recreation Aotearoa submits that there may be a requirement for LINZ to establish a uniformed operational cadre of staff to carry out this function.

26. Recreation Aotearoa submits that the role and content of Farm Plans could be broadened and universalised. It makes sense that a single Farm Plan is suited to all the relevant regulatory bodies - LTAs, LINZ and DoC. Recreation Aotearoa submits that Farm Plans should include a section on Public Access that is considered on an equal basis to environmental sustainability and economic viability.
27. Recreation Aotearoa submits that there are various mechanisms and incentives that could be put in place to encourage and allow for public access for Outdoor Recreation. Some of these lie in the realm of mitigation and offsetting. Rent discounts are a mechanism that could be applied to establish and preserve public access to and across Crown Pastoral Land.
28. Recreation Aotearoa notes that many public access issues on Crown Pastoral Land centre on unformed legal 'paper' roads. We submit that LINZ has a role to play in conjunction with LTAs and the Walking Access Commission to resolve these issues on a case-by-case basis.
29. Recreation Aotearoa supports the proposal that would allow fees to be charged for discretionary consent applications. This should be on a cost-recovery basis.