

**"We must closely guard the welfare of our National Parks and Reserves. These should not be regarded as the property of our minister or the government. They belong to the people of today and tomorrow. We must fight for their protection if necessary."**

Fred Vosseler - Inaugural President FMC, 1932



Photo: Ben Wilson



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Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)  
85th Annual Report 2016

**HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2015-16**

**Outdoor Recreation Consortium**

FMC continues to support volunteer hut and track maintenance through the Outdoor Recreation Consortium. The increasing number of clubs and individuals involved has proven our conviction that there is enthusiasm to contribute in this way. With the advantages to be had for engendering club spirit, personal satisfaction, and the backcountry huts and tracks network, long may this continue.

The Outdoor Recreation Consortium, is a partnership between FMC, the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association and Trailfund New Zealand. The Outdoor Recreation Consortium is supported by the DOC Community fund and has received \$1.2 million of funding since its establishment in 2014.

There is a constant stream of stories and photos of great volunteer projects, but some really catch the imagination; like the backcountry skiers that re-discovered Two Mile Hut in the Remarkables in the 1970's and recently led a maintenance project to preserve it for another 100 years, or the Heretaunga Tramping Club's commitment to their Waikamaka Hut and tramping in the Ruahine range.

In 2015, FMC successfully hosted a Huts and Tracks Workshop in Christchurch bringing together volunteers and DOC staff to figure out how to work better and together. In 2016, our 'Pathways to Adventure' workshop will be on the same subject but held near Karangahake Gorge and focus on the Kaimai and Coromandel ranges.

**Health and Safety Legislation**

A positive outcome of the Outdoor Recreation Consortium was the combined stance that the partners were able to make against proposed changes to health and safety law that sought to treat all volunteers like workers and to increase the liability land managers have in regard to recreationalists.

The combined voice of the outdoors community added to the groundswell against these provisions which ultimately proved successful.

**Celebrating Outdoor Recreation - Canyoning**

FMC launched our 'Celebrating Outdoor Recreation' campaign in 2015 to identify and enhance the diverse array of recreational pursuits that member clubs and individuals love doing. The campaign identifies a pursuit annually that, "takes place in the same environment as tramping and shares the ethos of exploration, companionship and appreciation of nature", and makes its development a priority for FMC over a July - June period. The emerging pursuit of canyoning - the sport of chasms and ravines - was identified as the targeted pursuit for 2015/2016.



JD Osborn

Canyoning has had a successful year, with some assistance from FMC. The New Zealand Canyoning Association was formed, a comprehensive canyoning guide and technical manual published, an inaugural canyoning festival run, canyon leader training grants offered and a bolting fund set-up. Encouragingly many of the canyon leader grants were given to members of tramping clubs looking to broaden their horizons and attract new members. The pursuit chosen for 2016/2017 is Adventure Navigation.



Ian Turnbull

**Forgotten Lands**

Behind the scenes FMC's Forgotten Lands campaign continues. The Minister of Conservation has requested priority be given to the reclassification of three specific areas: the Mokihinui, the St James and Te W-hipounamu, while conservation boards have been asked to prioritise the reclassification of conservation areas within their regions. The forthcoming year should see concrete progress.

**Youth Scholarships**

The Youth Scholarship Scheme launched in 2010 continues to flourish with support from the FMC Mountain and Forest Trust. This year six scholarships were granted; it is great to see the emphasis on wilderness travel. Recipients were:

**Caroline Bellamy**, Canterbury University Tramping Club: for a trip traversing the Haast Range and adjoining valley systems in South Westland.

**Sarah Tiong**, NZ Alpine Club (Otago Section): for a trip into the Olivine Ice Plateau via the Forgotten River Col.

**Jarrod Alexander**, NZ Alpine Club (Canterbury Section): for climbing trips based in Fiordland, with particular emphasis on Sinbad Gully and the Darran Mountains.

**Penzy Dinsdale**, Otago University Tramping Club: for an 'all women's traverse' through the Olivines Wilderness from the Hollyford to the Jackson Bay Road.

**Zoe Sagarin**, Taranaki Alpine Club: for a multiday climbing and mentoring trip based on the upper, western slopes of Mt Taranaki (above Kahui Hut).

**Carmen Chan**, Auckland University Tramping Club: for a traverse of the Tararua - the home of tramping.



Ben Wilson

**PRESIDENTS REPORT**

I am honoured to present the 85th Annual Report of the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand.

The Federation is, I believe, at a watershed of sorts: do we carry on with our advocacy at its present level, or should we scale back?

I am proud that, over the last two years in particular, the Federation has accomplished a great deal. But, success has come at a financial cost. This year we have operated at a deficit close to \$50,000. It is only because of accounting adjustments that we didn't have a similar bottom line last year. This is after we have received generous financial support from the Marewhenua Trust and the FMC Mountain & Forest Trust. The Executive deliberately budgeted for such losses because we feel it is critical to advocate as strongly and effectively for our members as we can. Indeed, why else should we exist?

Compared to other NGOs, we operate on a shoestring. Our two part-time staff operate pretty much out of a shoebox from an office. We scrutinise our far from lavish spending. The bulk of our effort is undertaken by volunteers on the Executive and in our wider FMC Whanui. The work done by our staff is demonstrably vital to support our volunteers and service our members.

But, running at such a loss is not sustainable. The last time we increased our club levy (capitation fee) was in 1995, over twenty years ago! Adjusting for inflation, what the ten dollars capitation fee would have bought then now costs fifteen dollars. Our members need to signal if they want the sort of advocacy we have been doing over the last few years to continue, or whether they want to save a few dollars a year instead to buy a latte or, perhaps, two and feel satisfied that their capitation fee need only cover the cost of publishing FMC Bulletin. I assert there is no other option: we can reliably advocate on any issue pertinent to our members only because we can do so without any risk of embarrassing, or compromising funders. Any reliance on industry, or government funding would compromise us. I believe our activities need to continue to expand; we should not retrench and our funding needs to support at least our present level of advocacy.

There have been a number of good consequences arising from our increased advocacy and effort: the media now take us much more seriously and they frequently seek our comments and views, the politicians are keen to engage with us, we have very good rapport with DOC at senior levels, and our raison d'être we generally do obtain good outcomes for our members and other backcountry users. It does not surprise me that we are thus seeing increased interest in nominations to our Executive: success indeed breeds success.

We have had some considerable successes this last year, as the remainder of this 85th Annual Report chronicles. In particular I remain proud of the continued work in rebuilding both huts and tracks, and backcountry culture by the Outdoor Recreation Consortium. In essence we have moved from, "DOC ought to fix their huts for us," to, "It's great that we can help DOC look after our huts". That is no small ideological shift on both DOC's side and ours. Discussions are well underway to explore how we can further increase the utility of the consortium.

I need to single out for special notice the developments for Te Urewera, especially now she is a natural person and no longer a national park. What is happening there is so radical and novel that there are no precedents for us to look to. I am satisfied that the mutual trust between Tuhoe and ourselves continues to strengthen and that our voice is valued: I am confident of good outcomes.

We have again had a hard working, enthusiastic and competent Executive and I need to thank them for their efforts and for their support. In turn the Executive has been well supported by our staff, Jamie Stewart and Gail Abel, and we have all been assisted by our wider FMC Whanui.

This is my last President's Report and I step down from being President confident that the Federation will remain in capable hands and on a sound course. Thank you all for your support.

Robin McNeill



## FINANCE

The full Annual Accounts for the year ending 29th February 2016 are available as a separate booklet or may be downloaded from our website.

FMC budgeted for a deficit of close to \$50,000 and the final result is very close to this. With substantial equity built up over many years the deficit is not currently a problem, but steps are being taken to balance our budget. This is likely to involve a proposal to increase affiliation fees, which would be the first since 1995.

The deficit is caused by several factors, most notably: increasing costs, FMC's desire to do more (particularly where other organisations such as the Mountain Safety Council have stepped back) and the move to a part-time professional staff to supplement the work of our volunteers.

## MEMBERSHIP

Club membership has proven very resilient over the last decade as memberships in many other organised recreation clubs continue to fall. We should not rest on our laurels, though; it is important that we keep welcoming new members and even new clubs that add strength and diversity to the outdoor opportunities available for Kiwis.

FMC has been pleased to welcome, over the last year, affiliation from the New Zealand Rogaining Association, the New Zealand Canyoning Association, the Queenstown Climbing Club, the Expedition Climbing Club, and several other smaller clubs and groups.

Our number of Individual Supporters continues to grow and remains an area FMC sees as an opportunity to strengthen our organisation. FMC advocates broadly on issues that are important to many Kiwis: the right to access our natural places, the freedom to have fun and take risks in the hills and the responsibility for all to care for the natural environment.

The summary of FMC membership as at 28 February 2016 is:

	As at 28 February		
	2014	2015	2016
Affiliated Clubs (Full)	48	47	46
Affiliated Clubs (Partial)	35	36	43
<b>Total Affiliated Clubs</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>89</b>
Club Financial Membership (Full)	6214	6266	6245
Club Financial Membership (Partial)	3069	3035	3180
<b>Total Club Financial Membership</b>	<b>9283</b>	<b>9301</b>	<b>9425</b>
Club Associated Membership	5165	5927	7915
<b>Total Club Membership</b>	<b>14448</b>	<b>15228</b>	<b>17340</b>
Individual Supporter Membership	613	694	745
School & Polytech Membership	1987	1526	2047
Other Associate Membership	471	462	376
<b>Total All Membership</b>	<b>17519</b>	<b>17910</b>	<b>20508</b>

## Membership Services

The FMC Bulletin, circulation 10,700, is our most effective voice, and our bastion of independent outdoor news and views. This year the FMC Bulletin celebrated its 200th issue. The FMC Bulletin was once again edited by Shaun Barnett and featured themes of: backcountry accidents, wilderness, high country parks and our backcountry hut and track network. The FMC Bulletin is supplemented by our website ([www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)), our popular facebook page, [www.facebook.com/FMCNZ](http://www.facebook.com/FMCNZ), followed by over 2200 people, and our monthly email newsletters.

FMC continues to provide a membership card which enables a range of discounts, notably on the Annual Hut Pass, outdoor retailers, travel providers and the Inter-islander ferry.

## North

### The Kaimai Ridgeway

FMC continues to support the Auckland Tramping Club and its allies with their vision to create a multi-day tramping opportunity traversing the Kaimai range. It has been hugely encouraging to see other clubs join this project, such as Waikato Tramping Club with their commitment to tracks to the south and the Manakau Tramping Club, with their adoption of Daly's Clearing Hut and tracks to the north.

The project is now coordinated by the 'Kaimai Ridgeway Trust', with representatives from the tramping and hunting communities.

### Lake Waikareiti Rowboats

The decision by the Te Urewera Board to resuscitate the opportunity to hire rowboats on Lake Waikareiti was a fantastic Christmas surprise. FMC had strongly opposed the decision by DOC to cease hiring rowboats on Lake Waikareiti for safety reasons. FMC had emphasised the fun, memorable and, metaphorically, immersive experiences enjoyed by thousands of people over the last 60 years that justified - indeed required - the continued operation of this service.

The row-boats are available on terms similar to previously, except that an emergency beacon must be hired.

### Saving the Kokako

It has been great to see the Howick Tramping Club finally receiving increasing recognition for their predator control efforts in the Mangatutu Valley over the last 20 years. The Kokako population continues to soar, and the project continues to expand in size and volunteer commitment.

The efforts of the Howick Tramping Club and their many supporters encouraged FMC to undertake a nationwide survey of affiliated clubs to gauge the impact on conservation we are having as a collective. The results unsurprisingly were impressive, with many clubs the centre of local biodiversity conservation efforts. People that enjoy being in nature are more likely to care for it.

## Central

### Putting our Feelers Out

FMC has been trialling a regional email group in our central area, to ensure we have quick and accurate information on the issues that matter to the outdoors community. We now have outdoor leaders connected to this network from Gisborne to New Plymouth. Initial signs suggest this will be a valuable tool into the future.

### The Makaroro River

FMC is watching closely the progress with Forest and Birds legal action regarding the Ruahine Forest Park land swap, conceived to make way for the Ruataniwha dam. FMC supports Forest and Bird's argument in principle and is concerned that the consequence of the High Court decision in February 2016 could be to reduce the protection of all land designated 'specially protected' under the Conservation Act. Conservation gains achieved with such endurance and effort must not be allowed to slip through our fingers.

### Ruahine Access

Public access to the north-western Ruahine range remains a huge concern. Recent turn-over of both DOC and Walking Access Commission staff has not helped. FMC has been assured that resolving these issues remains a priority for DOC, while the Wellington Conservation Board has also pushed for a resolution. The status quo of severely restricted access to the Hikurangi Range the highest ridge in the Ruahine is unacceptable.



Katja Reidel, Wellington T&MC



Jeremy Beckers, Taranaki AC



Gordon Kang, Auckland University TC



Jaz Morris, Otago University TC



Spencer Clubb, Wellington T&MC



Spencer Clubb, Wellington T&MC



David Blunt, Nelson TC

## AROUND THE REGIONS

### Top of the South

#### New Recreational Opportunities

FMC has been strongly supportive of several exciting developments for the outdoors community: on Banks Peninsula the opening of Rod Donald Hut has created a family-friendly tramping opportunity on Christchurch's back-door, in the Buller the Old Ghost Road is a new recreational gateway to Kahurangi National Park and a unique opportunity for backcountry mountain bikers while the recent crowd-funded purchase of Awaroa Beach preserved access to this special place forever and demonstrated that Kiwis are still passionate about outdoor access.

#### Soper Shelter

FMC, through the FMC Mountains and Forest Trust, has been able to support the Golden Bay Alpine and Tramping Club in its construction of Soper Shelter, the replacement to Smokey Drip Hut in the Stanley River. The loop of the Waingaro, Stanley and Anatoki (including Lonely Lake) tells a potent, living story of backcountry history. Expertly restored and maintained huts let you share the bunks of pioneers. As you pass deeper into the hills the legacy of the extractive industries fade and the remote refuges of recreationalists and conservationists provide shelter from the storm.

#### Pike 29

The government is proceeding with plans to develop a Great Walk in the Paparoa National Park. To enable this a Paparoa National Park Management Plan review is underway. FMC is submitting to the review focusing strongly on the continued protection of the intrinsic values of the Paparoa area, the need for the National Park boundaries to be widened and for the importance of a variety of recreational opportunities to be recognised and encouraged.

## South

### Fight for Conservation Plan Integrity

The tourism boom in Central Otago continues to create user conflict in the busiest areas in our mountains. It was expected that after the Ombudsman sent DOC a very clear message on its decision to allow for an expansion of Routeburn guided walks, in direct defiance with the Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan, a decision labelled "nonsense on stilts", that DOC would adopt a more straight-forward approach to decision-making. Unfortunately, this does not seem to have been the case. DOC is now proposing to lift the limits on scenic helicopter landings on the Ngapunatoru Ice Plateau, the top of the Kaipo Wall, from the ten mandated in the Fiordland National Park Management Plan to eighty. The decision is based on a research justification that is reminiscent of how the Japanese justify illegal whaling, and should be rescinded immediately. The prospect of a continuous drone of helicopters for those tramping and climbing in the Pembroke Wilderness Area and Darrans remote zone is intolerable.

### Remarkables Access

After the high-profile campaign against restrictions to public access on the Remarkables road during the construction of the new Remarkables base building, there is now a warm relationship between NZski and the outdoors community. The tar-sealing of much of the road this summer has required further restrictions, but they were reasonable and well-communicated. The improvements of the road also increase the accessibility of this alpine playground in both winter and summer.

### Haast Hollyford "Zombie Highway"

The idle day-dream of the "zombie highway" perhaps will finally be put to its grave in the coming year. The proponents of the proposed highway, which threatens to gouge through the Te Wāhipounamu World Heritage Area, have repeatedly been exposed as lacking substance. FMC, along with many politicians, continues to politely ask for proper costings and assessment of environmental effects, which the proponents have been completely unable to provide.

## FMC 2015 - 2016

### Patrons

Allan Evans QSM  
Arnold Heine ONZM, QSM

### President

Robin McNeill (Invercargill)

### Vice President

David Barnes (Dunedin)

### Executive

Erik Bradshaw (Arrowtown)  
Owen Cox (Kapiti Coast)  
Jan Finlayson (Geraldine)  
Patrick Holland (Nelson)  
Phil Glasson (Kapiti Coast)  
Laura King (Christchurch)  
Rob Mitchell (Auckland)  
Nick Plimmer (Dunedin)  
Tania Seward (Christchurch)  
Lesley Topping (Hamilton)  
Charles Verry (Thames)  
Peter Wilson (Dunedin)

# 2015 PHOTO COMPETITION

## FMC MOUNTAIN & FOREST TRUST

The Trust has had another year of sound management and takes pleasure in being able to provide support to a range of activities related to the Objects of the Trust and FMC. The Trust continues to support the FMC Youth Scholarship program, and remains impressed with excellent expeditions undertaken. This year the Trust has also funded: Outdoor Training New Zealand to assist its establishment; Mark Watson to assist with the publishing of 'Te Ararua'; The Golden Bay Alpine and Tramping Club to construct Soper Shelter in the Stanley River; Daniel Clearwater to assist with the publishing of New Zealand's first Canyoning guidebook; FMC to enable a Wilderness Area mapping project.

In addition, the Oral History Project is now underway. The FMC's patrons were interviewed during 2015 and the results are now with Alexander Turnbull Library. Four more people are scheduled to be interviewed in 2016.

Donations continue to come in steadily and the Trust is grateful to our donors. The Trust recognises particularly FMC Individual Supporters who add a donation to their FMC fee every year to provide support for the Trust.

The Board has moved to a twice yearly grant cycle with applications closing in March and September to enable better budgeting and allocation of the funds at its disposal.

Income	
Donations/ Bequests	\$13,900
Interest	\$27,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,300</b>
Expenses	
Grants and Scholarships	\$21,100
Oral History Project	\$5,000
Administration	\$2,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$28,700</b>

## TRUST DONORS

The Trust thanks all its donors in the last financial year. Their support is vital to the ongoing ability of the Trust to promote Outdoor Recreation in New Zealand.

The following people made donations of \$20 or more:

Peter Aimer	Susan Lane
Warren Allingham	Gerald Leather
Peter Alspach	Glen Macklin
Dr Vanessa Beavis	Don McConchie
Eric Bennett	Mike McConchie
Ronald Bennett	Craig Mountfort
George Booth	Neil Mythen
Helen Burns	John Nankervis
Stanley Camps	Euan Nicol
Jim Costello	Jonathan Ravens
Brian Davis	Neil Reid
Suzanne Derolles	Marcel Robb
Vince Elchholtz	Jim Roberts
David Evans	Alan G Rosoman
David Fenn	Robert Scott
Donna Field	Ken Shierlaw
John Garwood	Ray SImpson
Jenny Harper	Chris West
Arnold Heine	Dave West
Jan Heine	P Wichers
Noel Herman	Glenn Williams
Lorraine Johns	Geoff Wilson

In addition, the Trust received 132 other donations which were either anonymous or under \$20.

One bequest was received during the year from the estate of Ray Burrell:

Bequests have been received in previous years from the estates of:

Brenda Glasson	2013
Ronald Greenwood	2007
Ida Hamilton	2002
Ruth Hessely	2013
Peter Jagger	2011
Henry Millward	2008
Gilbert McCaul	2004
Michael Taylor	2012
Owen Wilkes	2006