

POLITICAL PARTY RESPONSES TO FMC REMARKABLE OUTDOORS QUESTIONS

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FMC LETTER TO PARTIES

If we vote for you, will you look after our Remarkable Outdoors?

Federated Mountain Clubs is the national association of tramping, climbing and outdoor clubs, with over 20000 members. We've been going (and growing) since 1931, and have always been politically neutral.

We've got a few questions for you, as conservation spokesperson for your party. We want to know if you have policies that will protect and enhance our Outdoors and if your party will speak up for an outdoor life worth living.

If you are able to respond before 5 July, your response will be mentioned in the August edition of Backcountry, FMC's quarterly magazine.

When thinking about our Remarkable Outdoors will you put New Zealanders first?

- Guaranteeing free access to public conservation land.
- Creating a fund to enhance public access and complete the Queen's Chain.
- Ensuring excellent and certain public access when land is sold to overseas interests.
- Requiring DOC to put the recreational interests of locals before tourism.

Will you support an independent and well-funded Department of Conservation?

- Substantially increased DOC funding.
- Removing DOC from the 'natural resources sector' to recognise its protective role.
- Encouraging DOC to legally advocate for nature on private land and in the freshwater and marine environments.

Will you support landmark Outdoor projects that foster national connectivity?

- Ensuring operational funding for New Zealand's Great Rides and continued network extension.
- Recognising Te Araroa as our National Trail and providing operational funding for its sustainability.
- Continuing the DOC Community Fund and encouraging the public to volunteer on public conservation land.

Will you support the vision and milestones of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

- Supporting the vision of Predator Free New Zealand 2050.
- Committing to achievement of the declared PFNZ 2025 goals, including the complete removal of all introduced predators from offshore island nature reserves.
- Continuing to prioritise and increase funding for the Battle for Our Birds campaign.
- Providing increased funding and focus to save our wild kea.

Our Remarkable Outdoors are our birthright. Will you protect them into the future?

- Guaranteeing that specially protected public conservation land will not be sold or swapped.
- Restoring the Nature Heritage Fund to enable further protection of our landscapes and biodiversity.
- Progressing the reclassification of stewardship land.
- Investigating the establishment of a Remarkables National Park.

We look forward to your reply. If you'd like to discuss this with some of our national executive team or would like more information on any of the ideas above, please let us know.

ACT PARTY

ACT's believes in the four P's of smart environmentalism. It is wealthy countries (Prosperity), where people take ownership (Property Rights), people pay the true costs of valuable resources and pollutants alike (Pricing), and communities have opportunities to get out and make a difference (Private Initiative) that make the difference, that have the best records on the environment.

ACT supports private initiative and has a policy to sell Government owned farm Landcorp (valued at \$1.8 billion) and put the proceeds into a community-based environment initiatives, like inland predator free sanctuaries for native wildlife.

ACT supports charging tourists more to access our tracks. Better access pricing would ease congestion and generate revenue that could be put back into protecting the environment.

GREEN PARTY

The Green Party supports all of the FMC's Remarkable Outdoors election priorities unequivocally. It's as simple as that.

I'd like to add some detail to a couple of your questions below.

Thank you for your staunch advocacy for our wild places and outdoor recreation more generally. If elected to Government in September, I look forward to working more closely with you to achieve these outcomes.

Some additional comments:

1. Will you substantially increase DOC funding?

Yes. The Green Party have consistently called for DOC funding to be significantly increased to ensure it has the resources to do the job it's responsible for: to protect and restore our wild spaces and native species, to be a strong advocate for nature, to foster recreation in the great outdoors, and to work co-operatively with all New Zealanders to achieve these outcomes. This will be one of our flagship election policies to be announced in the run up to the election, so watch this space.

2. Will you ensure operational funding for New Zealand's Great Rides and continued network extension?

The Green Party worked closely with the National Government in its first term to turn an unpromising Jobs Summit idea into the 22 Great Rides and 21 Cycle Touring routes that we enjoy today. We'll ensure the on-going viability of the majority of Great Rides and increase the number of on-road cycle touring routes as these offer considerable untapped co-benefits beyond pure recreational use.

3. Will you support the vision and milestones of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

We support the vision and will help fund it via a tourism levy. A \$20 increase on existing border charges for international visitors will generate \$50+ million a year for Predator Free NZ — \$1.5 billion by 2050. This new money will complement significant new resources for DOC's predator control work.

4. The Green Party supports, in principle, a Remarkables National Park. We are, however, committed to a proper in depth investigation, nationwide consultation with the public, and securing agreement from our Treaty partners before we can give it our full support.

LABOUR PARTY

When thinking about our Remarkable Outdoors will you put New Zealanders first?

1. Will you guarantee free access to public conservation land?

a. Yes. Labour strongly believes that conservation land belongs to all New Zealanders, and that they have the right to access it free.

2. Will you create a fund to enhance public access and complete the Queen's Chain?

a. Labour has for many years worked to improve public access to the outdoors – and to waterways and coastline by filling gaps in the Queen's Chain. We will continue to enhance public access through support for the Walking Access Commission and other opportunities as they arise.

3. Will you ensure excellent and certain public access when land is sold to overseas interests?

a. Yes, just like Labour did on numerous occasions when last in government. Achieving public access through Poronui station in 2007 was an outstanding example of what can be achieved, if allowing a land sale to overseas interests is otherwise justified. There have been consistent issues with LINZ not ensuring and enforcing commitments made by purchasers in regards to public access to land. For any overseas purchase, we will insist that public access commitments are honoured.

4. Will you require DOC to put the recreational interests of locals before tourism?

a. DOC's core roles are to protect our unique biodiversity and to provide healthy recreational outdoor opportunities for Kiwis. Public conservation land can also be open for overseas visitors to enjoy, and for tourism to provide economic benefits to the country. However, this should never be at the detriment of services provided to Kiwis.

Will you support an independent and well-funded Department of Conservation?

1. Will you substantially increase DOC funding?

Labour will ensure DOC has the funding it requires to provide its crucial services. Labour will announce further details on DOC funding in due course.

2. Will you remove DOC from the 'natural resources sector' to recognise its protective role?

a. This is something we are willing to consider in government. We do not regard the DOC estate as simply a resource for tourism or other economic development, as the current government seems to.

3. Will you encourage DOC to legally advocate for nature on private land and in the freshwater and marine environments?

a. Yes. Labour believes DOC should always be empowered to advocate strongly and publicly for conservation, a role that the current government has undermined. We raised repeated concerns when the government prevented DOC from advocating on the Ruataniwha dam.

Will you support landmark Outdoor projects that foster national connectivity?

1. Will you ensure operational funding for New Zealand's Great Rides and continued network extension?

a. Labour has no plans to alter any intended funding for the New Zealand Great Rides/Cycle Trail project.

2. Will you recognise Te Araroa as our National Trail and provide operational funding for its sustainability?

a. Labour applauds the huge success of the Te Araroa trail. When last in government, we contributed considerably to the trail's completion, especially by freeing up access through former pastoral lease land in the South Island. Labour will continue to strongly support Te Araroa, and will be open to discussions as to how to ensure its long-term sustainability.

3. Will you continue the DOC Community Fund and encourage the public to volunteer on public conservation land?

a. Labour recognises that volunteer and community-led projects are critical to the protection of New Zealand's environment. Labour has no plans to remove the DOC Community Fund. Labour will ensure that there are adequate budgeted contestable funds to support community-led conservation work.

Will you support the vision and milestones of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

1. Will you support the vision of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

a. Yes. A predator free New Zealand is a highly laudable idea, and a goal that all New Zealanders would aspire to achieve. However, the National government has failed to resource the initiative properly, and relies on technology that does not yet exist.

Labour will promote predator eradication objectives including predator free island sanctuaries and mainland islands. Predators will be eradicated or suppressed on a landscape scale, with or without the use of fences. To achieve this Labour will work with all sectors, including community and recreational groups and tourism interests.

2. Will you commit to achievement of the declared PFNZ 2025 goals, including the complete removal of all introduced predators from offshore island nature reserves?

a. Labour will aim to achieve this. However, we have concerns about the feasibility of the 2025 goals given the funding made available by the current government. The achievability of particular predator eradication goals is something Labour will look at in government, with the advice of DOC, NGOs and community groups.

3. Will you continue to prioritise and increase funding for the Battle for Our Birds campaign?

a. Labour recognises the precarious state that far too many of our native bird species are in, with 80% being in serious or some trouble. Labour will continue to support predator-control initiatives to protect native birds. We want a comprehensive approach to predator control that covers the entire DOC estate, and avoids the need for emergency funding such as has characterised Battle for Our Birds.

4. Will you provide increased funding and focus to save our wild kea?

a. Yes, as above. The kea mountain parrot is a New Zealand icon now in serious trouble. Labour is really concerned about the struggling kea population. Its extinction would be a massive loss to our natural heritage, and must not be allowed to happen.

Our Remarkable Outdoors are our birthright. Will you protect them into the future?

1. Will you guarantee that specially protected public conservation land will not be sold or swapped?

a. Yes. Labour will not sell or swap conservation land that is specially protected under the Conservation Act.

2. Will you restore the Nature Heritage Fund to enable further protection of our landscapes and biodiversity?

a. Labour supports the Nature Heritage Fund and will consider whether it is currently adequately funded. The Fund played a major role in acquiring land for conservation when Labour was last in government, including purchasing St James and other pastoral leases.

3. Will you progress the reclassification of stewardship land?

a. Yes. Labour will undertake a systematic classification of stewardship land, starting with land that has obvious conservation value. Having 30% of DOC land in this limbo status can create practical problems as to whether a development or land swap is appropriate for a particular area of land.

4. Will you investigate the establishment of a Remarkables National Park?

a. The last Labour government created Rakiura National Park, added to existing national parks, and established a network of conservation parks in the South Island high country.

Labour would be open to considering the feasibility of a Remarkables National Park. However, we note that while every other national park in New Zealand consists totally of conservation land, much of the land in the Remarkables proposal does not (it is pastoral lease). This would need to be discussed and resolved.

MAORI PARTY

When thinking about our Remarkable Outdoors will you put New Zealanders first?

1. Will you guarantee free access to public conservation land?

2. Will you create a fund to enhance public access and complete the Queen's Chain?
3. Will you ensure excellent and certain public access when land is sold to overseas interests?
4. Will you require DOC to put the recreational interests of locals before tourism

The Māori Party supports a well-funded, healthy conservation estate that guarantees access for all whānau who seek to use it. We support the involvement of iwi, hapū and whānau as kaitiaki of our taiao in any decision making related to the conservation estate.

Will you support an independent and well-funded Department of Conservation?

1. Will you substantially increase DOC funding?
2. Will you remove DOC from the 'natural resources sector' to recognise its protective role?
3. Will you encourage DOC to legally advocate for nature on private land and in the freshwater and marine environments

The Māori Party supports the Department of Conservation's (DOC) role as a guardian of our nation's most beautiful natural landscapes. We seek to reprioritise funding to see DOC working closer with iwi/hapū to restore their role as kaitiaki of the taiao.

Will you support landmark Outdoor projects that foster national connectivity?

1. Will you ensure operational funding for New Zealand's Great Rides and continued network extension?
2. Will you recognise Te Araroa as our National Trail and provide operational funding for its sustainability?
3. Will you continue the DOC community fund and encourage the public to volunteer on public conservation land?

We support the continued use of our taiao, especially activities which promote healthy whānau and whenua.

Will you support the vision and milestones of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

1. Will you support the vision of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?
2. Will you commit to achievement of the declared PFNZ 2025 goals including the complete removal of all introduced predators from offshore island nature reserves?
3. Will you continue to prioritise and increase funding for the Battle for Our Birds campaign?
4. Will you provide increased funding and focus to save our wild Kea?

The Māori Party supports initiatives which seek to restore the mana and wellbeing of our taiao, including initiatives that support the regeneration of our native bird populations, such as Predator Free 2050. We welcome the opportunity for input by iwi, hapū and whānau to meet not only the aspirations of this initiative, but others that seek to increase the wellbeing of other aspects of our taiao, such as our waterways.

Our Remarkable Outdoors are our birth-right. Will you protect them into the future?

1. Will you guarantee that specially protected public conservation land will not be sold or swapped?

2. Will you restore the National Heritage Fund to enable further protection of our landscapes and biodiversity?
3. Will you progress the reclassification of stewardship land?
4. Will you investigate the establishment of a Remarkables National Park?

The Māori Party supports any initiatives to progress reclassification of stewardship lands and welcomes iwi, hapū and whānau involvement in the reclassification process, as well as the protection of the conservation estate. We acknowledge iwi and hapū as a part of their Treaty settlement may seek to have interests in the conservation estate recognised and we welcome any input they may have toward the protection and management of our natural environment.

NATIONAL PARTY

When thinking about our Remarkable Outdoors will you put New Zealanders first?

Yes, of course, always. This land is our land and National believes all New Zealanders should be able to access and enjoy the outdoors. We are committed to ensuring our conservation estate continues to offer world-class experiences for everyone while maintaining environmental integrity. DOC will continue to charge affordable fees for huts and facilities as it always has.

Through this year's \$76m Budget investment in DOC's facilities, we're helping to deal with the impact of increasing visitor numbers placing strain on our special landscapes, and developing new opportunities for their enjoyment with two new Great Walks, a new network of Great Short and Great Day Walks and an improved online booking system.

The new booking system will allow DOC to introduce differential charging, with overseas visitors paying more for huts and other facilities than New Zealand residents who are already paying for them through their rates and taxes.

It will also ensure a percentage of places in the huts on the Great Walks and other bookable facilities and experiences are reserved specifically for New Zealanders. We are currently working through the details of how this will work in practice for next summer.

We believe this is a fair way to ensure DOC has the resources to keep pace with visitor growth while reinvesting any additional profits into biodiversity protection.

Common practice in many countries, differential charging is user-pays, rather than a blunt-instrument levy on all arrivals into New Zealand who may have no interest in experiencing our public conservation land.

Will you support an independent and well-funded Department of Conservation?

Absolutely, we do already and DOC is both independent and appropriately funded to do its valuable work. Expenditure has grown 20% since 2008, from \$316m in 2008/09 to \$376m in 2017/18. We're spending more on biodiversity protection and recreation than ever before, and there is more work being done than at any time in our history - the fact is DOC is the most effective, efficient and focused it has been in its 30-year history.

In addition to Government funding DOC has leveraged more than \$100m from partnerships over the last six years and we intend to continue to empower DOC to work collaboratively with others who share the vision and want to be included.

It's worth noting that the \$76m in extra money in this year's Budget for visitor infrastructure and tourism included a permanent baseline increase of \$14m per year. DOC's advocacy role has not

diminished and I take that responsibility very seriously, as does Director-General Lou Sanson and his staff.

We work cooperatively across Government with agencies such as the Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry for the Environment and MBIE to achieve gains for conservation of our threatened species and for recreational activities on the DOC estate.

Will you support landmark Outdoor projects that foster national connectivity?

Yes, and as the Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage as well as Conservation it is one of my priorities. Our unique natural landscapes define who we are as New Zealanders and set us apart from any other nation.

As previously mentioned, we're growing the landmark network of nine Great Walks and setting up new opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and our natural world.

Our commitment to the cycle trails is underlined by MBIE's Maintaining the Quality of Great Rides Fund, which will distribute \$8 million in the four years to 2018. The cycle ways have reinvigorated communities like those along the Central Otago Rail Trail or in the Waitaki River valley along the Alps 2 Ocean route.

We will continue to support the DOC Community Fund to help eradicate the annual "dirty dozen" in our War on Weeds, and support other projects such as the excellent work the FMC has done for backcountry huts as part of the Outdoor Recreation Consortium, which I thank you for.

Will you support the visions and milestones of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

Of course we will. It has been our main conservation focus since we launched the policy a year ago. National was the first political party to commit to a date and initial funding of \$27 million to achieve the goal of a Predator Free New Zealand, and we're focused and determined to achieve that vision.

Across the country, communities are uniting behind the vision of Predator Free 2050. As Minister of Conservation and with Prime Minister Bill English I've signed MOUs in Dunedin, in Wellington and in Picton, and more are following.

I announced at May's Threatened Species Summit a team of nine DOC Predator Free Community Rangers and deputies, ready and able to assist communities get started and the board of the new Predator Free 2050 Ltd Crown company will be announcing its first large-scale predator control investment shortly.

DOC is also putting plans in place to achieve the 2025 goals, including eradication of pigs from the Auckland Islands as part of the removal of invasive predators from offshore island nature reserves, an expansion of predator control by one million hectares, proving we can keep 20,000 hectare areas predator free without fences, and development of a breakthrough science solution to eradicate one predator entirely.

We're working across Government through the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge and Predator Free 2050 Ltd to invest in the science we need to make Predator Free happen. We will continue to fund the vital Battle for our Birds operations in response to beech tree seeding or "mast" events which trigger explosions of rat and stoat populations. The last two years have seen more than \$40 million in new funding for Battle for our Birds operations.

Through expanded predator control, including aerial drops of biodegradable, plant-based and water-soluble 1080, we have been able to achieve significant gains for native species. The anti-science brigade continue to oppose 1080 but we will not back away from using it – it remains the most efficient and effective way to suppress predators across large areas of rugged land.

We have secured 20% of kea habitat from predators and intend to keep expanding control through traditional methods, including trapping, to secure the species' future as part of Predator Free 2050. Species such as the rock wren, kaka, mohua and whoio have all shown remarkable success following Battle for our Birds operations.

We will also implement the newly released Threatened Species Strategy, the first of its kind, which sets out our course to manage 500 species for protection by 2025 – a 40% increase on today – and enhance the populations of 150 prioritised species – including kea - through intensive management so they're on the path to recovery by 2025.

Wilding conifer control is another priority in our War on Weeds, with \$16m committed in Budget 2016, carefully targeted to stop the advance that will claim nearly a quarter of our most precious landscapes within 20 years if we did nothing. We're doing this work alongside the Ministry for Primary Industries and an army of thousands of hard-working volunteers.

No one organisation, even one as outstanding as DOC, can do it alone, and we need to welcome help in achieving our shared goals.

Our Remarkable Outdoors are our birth-right. Will you protect them into the future?

We intend to continue work on the reclassification of stewardship land with work in the Mokihinui area of the Buller District and the St James-Poplars area in North Canterbury likely to be the first completed in 2018.

I have read your proposal for a Remarkables National Park with interest, and have written officially to the New Zealand Conservation Authority to ask them to report back on its feasibility. Setting up a national park is never a simple process due to the large number of stakeholders involved, but I hope the NZCA will be able to give valuable expert guidance.

OUTDOORS PARTY

Q1. When thinking about our Remarkable Outdoors will you put New Zealanders first?

- Will you guarantee free access to public conservation land?
- Will you create a fund to enhance public access and complete the Queen's Chain?
- Will you ensure excellent and certain public access when land is sold to overseas interests?
- Will you require DOC to put the recreational interests of locals before tourism?

OUR RESPONSE

We absolutely support free and enduring access to all public conservation land, which includes obligatory public access and easements across and over any private land arising from Tenure Review and when any adjacent land comes under Overseas Investment Office referral.

We support both the retention and beefing up of the Walking Access Commission whom we believe should have responsibility to complete the "Queen's Chain". Under current legislation there are only two triggers to creating public esplanades or strips: Sale to an overseas interest and subdivision. We consider this inadequate and would look to give WAC extended powers to negotiate establishments of the Queen's Chain along all rivers and the foreshore.

Currently the Overseas Investment Office are not even fulfilling their statutory obligations to refer to Fish & Game when overseas interests seek to buy NZ land over the minimum threshold size. We would promote a full public notification and consultation process for all overseas land sales and seek

to ensure that public access opportunities are included as a mandatory component of approving any land sales to foreigners.

We believe the only way DoC can put locals before tourists and tourism enterprises is to impose a quota on the number of tourists and this is a core plank of our Futures Policy. We believe introducing a tourist tax will certainly earn money but do nothing to stem the capacity issue we are facing in the conservation estate. We already have a quota system in place on the Great Walks and it works effectively in National Parks in the USA. It can be introduced incrementally, costs little to administer and will ensure we retain the essence of our outdoors – wilderness, solitude and escape, for the benefit of both Kiwis and tourists. Whilst we can invest in infrastructure to support tourism we cannot build, make or buy our conservation estate – it is finite in volume but infinite in value.

Will you support an independent and well-funded Department of Conservation?

- Will you substantially increase DOC funding?
- Will you remove DOC from the 'natural resources sector' to recognise its protective role?
- Will you encourage DOC to legally advocate for nature on private land and in the freshwater and marine environments?

DoC funding has fallen over 20% in real terms since 2006 whilst tourism numbers have increased over 40% in the corresponding period. Given the conservation estate is the major draw card for tourists (they don't come here to admire our architecture), this means DoC's budget allocation per tourist has fallen from \$193 in 2006 to \$134 in 2016. The Outdoors Party policy is to increase DoC funding substantially but conditional upon additional checks and balances and to ensure this money is spent on the estate, on re-instating rangers and on maintaining and enhancing the tracks, huts and natural resources of the conservation estate.

Regarding "removing DoC from the natural resources sector" we interpret this as meaning that the conservation estate has mineral mining opportunities. The Outdoors Party policy is that our unique outdoors environment has provided food, recreation and social benefit for generations and it should continue to do so, forever, without question, without compromise. There should be no mining or resource exploitation on the conservation estate.

We believe it is the role of regional councils to engage with private land holders and it is their statutory duty to protect our freshwater and coastal environments, something they do pretty badly overall at the moment. Expecting DoC to take on this role is optimistic given their current inability to manage the public conservation estate as-is and it could further excuse regional councils from their environmental obligations.

Will you support landmark Outdoor projects that foster national connectivity?

- Will you ensure operational funding for New Zealand's Great Rides and continued network extension?
- Will you recognise Te Araroa as our National Trail and provide operational funding for its sustainability?
- Will you continue the DOC Community Fund and encourage the public to volunteer on public conservation land?

We support public investment in all outdoor recreation and public land, be it mountain biking, hunting, tramping or fishing. Increased DoC funding should be conditional upon that money being directed to maintain and enhance recreation opportunity.

Te Araroa is our Appalachian Trail and its development, maintenance and management is required now as it is destined to become our great draw card over the next few years. Te Araroa should be balloted to manage and control numbers – too many trampers will put trampers off. We do support national funding and management to help it become entirely track based and with a corresponding hut network. – the most northern Te Araroa hut is way down in Pirongia!

The DoC Community Fund and Community Conservation Partnership Fund are valuable initiatives which we fully support. They are reminiscent of the days when tramping clubs and deer hunters would build their own club huts for the benefit of all. We believe these funding streams should continue.

Will you support the vision and milestones of Predator Free New Zealand 2050?

- Will you support the vision of Predator Free New Zealand 2050.
- Will you commit to achievement of the declared PFNZ 2025 goals, including the complete removal of all introduced predators from offshore island nature reserves.
- Will you continue to prioritise and increase funding for the Battle for Our Birds campaign.
- Will you provide increased funding and focus to save our wild kea.

Aside from the fact that Weka, Kiwi, Powelliphanta, Harriers, Falcons and Moreporks are predators and so we find this term inappropriate, we also find it difficult to support the Predator Free New Zealand 2050 for the following reasons:

- There is no detail available as to what it actually is.
- The funding is inadequate. Nationally, we spend over \$70M per annum on unwanted species control, have been poisoning them for over 50 years and yet they are still here. It is therefore irrational to believe an extra \$7M a year will make any marked difference.
- The focus on possums, rats and stoats seems to ignore a bigger picture. Hedgehogs, feral cats, wasps amongst others, also have an adverse effect on our native fauna and flora yet these threats are excluded from the remit of PFNZ
- The property rights, privacy laws and other complexities of managing unwanted species on private land has yet to be considered.

We, like most people, would welcome eradication of rats and stoats but we believe like many other “wars” on things (drugs, crime, slavery, illegal guns, smuggling, illegal immigrants, fundamentalism, etc) this is not a reality. Rather, the best we can expect is to contain the problem.

So, we worry about the continued use of aerial 1080 as a containment strategy because its effectiveness is predicated on frequent and continual use, everywhere, for ever. It is a broad spectrum toxin and whilst there are numerous peer-reviewed studies on 1080 there is still many gaps in our knowledge in terms of long-term sub-lethal effects, non-target species secondary poisoning and macro-ecosystem effects.

We believe there is a debate yet to be had; the fervent “pro-” and “anti-1080” entrenched views are unhelpful in moving such a debate forward. Do we find it acceptable to drop 1080 into our pristine back country waterways for example, and whether the use of deer repellent will change the views of some are examples of a long overdue conversation.

Our Remarkable Outdoors are our birth-right. Will you protect them into the future?

- Will you guarantee that specially protected public conservation land will not be sold or swapped?

- Will you restore the Nature Heritage Fund to enable further protection of our landscapes and biodiversity?
- Will you progress the reclassification of stewardship land?
- Will you investigate the establishment of a Remarkables National Park?

The NZ Outdoors Party recognises that since the assignation of stewardship land in 1987, very little has changed and so our proposal is, rather than push to assign such land one way or another, amend Section 16/16A of the Conservation Act such that the transfer, sale or exchange of stewardship land is prohibited until all such land has been properly assessed for conservation, and by virtue of the definition, recreational values. The public conservation estate belongs to the people of New Zealand and only in exceptional circumstances should it be given away.

The Nature Heritage Fund is still in existence, albeit has a reduced budget which we would like to see re-instated. We think it is a great idea and should be funded appropriately.

We love the idea of a Remarkables National Park and are fully supportive of this and would gladly instigate and support its establishment.

We thank the FMC for the opportunity to declare our policies and hope the people of New Zealand take out back country and wilderness lands as seriously as we do – to the extent they will consider a vote for us a worthy one.

UNITED FUTURE PARTY

Will you guarantee free access to public conservation land?

Yes

Will you create a fund to enhance public access and complete the queen’s chain?

Yes

Will you ensure excellent and certain public access when land is sold to overseas interests?

Where appropriate, yes

Will you require ODC to put the recreational interests of locals before tourism?

We support a balanced approach where we implement a conservation levy on all who enter the country, with all the revenue going to the DOC so that we can have both tourists and locals enjoy the conservation estate.

Will you sustainably increase DOC funding?

Yes

Will you remove DOC from the ‘natural recourses sector to recognise its protective role?

We don’t have any plan to change the status of the DOC

Will you encourage DOC to legally advocate for nature on private land and in the freshwater marine environments?

Where appropriate, yes

Will you ensure operational funding for New Zealand’s Great Rides and continued network extension?

Yes

Will you recognise Te Araroa as our national trail and provide operational funding for its sustainability?

We are happy to provide funding where needed to provide sustainability

Will you continue the DOC Community Fund and encourage the public to volunteer on public conservation land?

Yes, we think it is very important to get as many people engaged in conservation as possible.

Will you support the vision of a predator free New Zealand by 2015?

Yes

Will you commit to achievement of the declared PFNZ 2025 goals, including the complete removal of all introduced predators from offshore island nature reserves?

Yes

Will you continue to prioritise and increase funding for the battle for our birds campaign?

We will increase funding if necessary to get the best outcomes for the campaign

Will you provide increased funding and focus to save our wild kea?

We are happy to increase funding if appropriate and needed

Will you guarantee and specially protected public conservation land will not be sold or swapped?

Yes

Will you restore the nature heritage fund to enable further protection of our landscapes and biodiversity?

We are open to restoring the fund if appropriate and practical

Will you progress the reclassification of stewardship land?

We will prioritise the reclassification of stewardship land

Will you investigate the establishment of a Remarkables National Park?

We are open to investigating the proposal

THE OPPORTUNITIES PARTY

No response

NEW ZEALAND FIRST

No response