

## For Waikato TC Bulletin

### FMC monthly update November 2019... from club and FMC Exec member Alan Grant

Hi all,

The FMC national Executive met in Wellington on 19 October, one of our three face to face meetings held each year, with 16 Exec members and 3 staff attending. It was full day and concluded with a casual BBQ dinner where we presented Shaun Barnett with a gift for his 10 years spent as Editor of FMC's quarterly publication, Backcountry. I have read about Shaun's tramping exploits, seen his photos, and enjoyed his books for about 15 years so it was great to meet him.

The President of NZ Deerstalkers Association Trevor Chappell from Te Awamutu joined us as did Peter Laurenson, the new editor of Backcountry. Of the Exec, there are 8 from the South Island including President Jan Finlayson from Geraldine and VP Tania Seward from Christchurch, 7 from Wellington and Palmerston area and only me from north of Palmy. So it's great that at least someone is representing 60% of the population living in the north.

Updates were provided at the meeting on

- The review of hut and campsite fees on popular Great Walk and second tier walks (like Young Wilken) has progressed with DOC proposing new fees effective from 2020/21 season onwards, i.e. next spring. The review was driven by inconsistencies, a need for some cpi related increases and heavy demand in some areas. Changes proposed range from +54% on Rakiura Stewart Island huts through to a 24% decrease on Heaphy's winter hut fees. I have more info if you are interested and no doubt the DOC website will be updated soon
- Our internal review of the FMC Travel Club is nearly completed with recommendations to be shared shortly.

More recent news has included

- Opportunities to access the northern Kaimanawas have been helped by the Heliseka business securing a lease on the Needle Block in 2018. They are now able to provide access permission.
- Bunk nights in the Moonlight Tops hut on the new Paparoa Great Walk are getting scarce even before it opens on 1<sup>st</sup> December. It is a combined tramping and biking track and many of the bikers are making only one stop at Moonlight, using bunk space there, but leaving spaces in the other two huts. So book early to secure a bed in Moonlight.
- I'm in Auckland this week meeting Auckland Council officers to get an update on their action to counter the impact of Kauri Dieback in their Regional parks, hoping to hear that they can avoid a big number of longterm track closures
- There's a new walk to be enjoyed around Pukekohe township. Called the Five Summits walk and cycle trail, it takes in the local high spots in 21km of track and road walking. It opens this Sunday 11 November as part of the Pukekohe TC's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Recreation Transition, is a new campaign being planned by FMC trying to help our trampers members lower their carbon footprint, in positive ways while we enjoy the hills. Some interesting info that came to light says that the carbon footprint of a hard copy issue of Backcountry magazine is 2g of CO<sub>2</sub>. While a soft copy, with all the energy used to power the internet uses 50g! Quite contrary to my expectation.

If you have any queries on any of this or would like more info, please contact me on 0274 501 530 or at [alan.grant@fmc.org.nz](mailto:alan.grant@fmc.org.nz) There will be more to share next month.

Alan