

## 5. THE PROMOTION OF SOUND MANAGEMENT IN THE BACK COUNTRY

### 5.1. NATIONAL PARKS:

#### Early Federation Policy:

*"We must guard closely the welfare of our National Parks and Reserves". F. W. Vosseler [1932].*

Since the formation of the Federation, the subject of the preservation and control of our national parks has been prominent in any discussion by the Executive and by delegates of clubs to the annual general meetings. One of the earliest instances was a report to the fourth annual meeting of commercial forest logging in the Egmont National Park. The incoming Executive was asked to set up a sub-committee to draw up a full statement of the Federation's policy with respect to national parks and to approach the Government thereon.

The change to a Labour Government in late 1935 prompted the first of many approaches to government on the need for better protection and uniform control of national parks. In February 1936, the Federation's Reserves Committee, A.P. Harper, F.W. Vosseler, L.O. Hooker and S.A. Wiren, met members of the newly appointed Cabinet. The ministers were "sympathetic". "We agree with your objectives — the National Parks for the people ..." said the Prime Minister, M. J. Savage.

During 1938, the Federation's national parks policy was revised and adopted. The main points were:-

1. The establishment of a National Authority and also of Boards for each Park.
2. The functions of the National Authority should include the direction of Park Boards on matters of general policy and the distribution of finance available for the upkeep and development of parks.
3. The National Authority should include one representative, at least, of the Federation of Mountain Clubs.
4. Park Boards, whether existing or contemplated, should consist of a limited number of persons able and willing to visit the Park frequently, including one representative, at least, of the affiliated clubs who have their headquarters in proximity to the Park.
5. The club representatives should be nominated by the Federation after asking for nominations from the appropriate clubs.



Climbing in the Mt. Aspiring National Park, Mt. Aspiring in the background. The Federation supported the Otago clubs over many years in the promotion of this National Park.

*Les Molloy*

6. Leases or licences of lands reserved as national parks should be granted only by the National Authority; and should in no case be over larger areas than are necessary for the provision of proper accommodation for persons visiting the Park or for the carrying out of such other commercial object as is approved by the National Authority.

7. The Federation is of the opinion that the following principles should be observed in relation to national parks and that either they should be recognised by statute or else power should be conferred on some appropriate authority to make regulations to carry them into effect:

(a) The public should have freedom of entry and access to national parks subject only to reasonable safeguards as the welfare of the parks requires.

(b) Established mountaineering, skiing and tramping clubs should have the right to erect club huts where such are not provided by the park authorities.

(c) Users of the parks should have facilities for camping subject to such regulations as may be necessary for the welfare of the parks.

(d) Native plants and animals should as far as possible be preserved, and introduced plant and animal life should as far as possible be exterminated. Development of the parks for recreation purposes should be undertaken only in conformity with this principle. No rights or privileges should be granted for commercial purposes if they might prove detrimental to the natural features of a park or might unduly restrict the public rights of using the park for recreation.

This policy was set out in a letter to the Minister of Lands, F. Langstone, requesting a personal interview. However, due to various circumstances within Government, such an interview did not take place until well into 1940. The Minister regretted that "there was no chance during the war of making changes in the policy of control and administration of the Parks". The publication in 1976 of the "Origins of the National Parks Act (1952)" by Jane Thomson for the Department of Lands and Survey has an interesting reference to the Federation's letter to the Minister in 1938. "This short letter became an important document: as the first clearly presented statement of a possible policy for the administration of national parks, it lay on the files of the Department of Lands and Survey for many years and with the help of some gentle prompting from its author, A.E. Galletly, the Federation's secretary from 1938 to 1945, was studied by departmental officers when reform was mooted. Though the suggested administrative structure was at first regarded as quite superfluous, the proposed form eventually came to seem desirable, even inevitable, and it would seem that the Federation's proposals became the germ of departmental policy. Such is the influence that a well informed and well organised pressure group can bring to bear on official policy".

Much of the source material for Jane Thomson's publication was derived from the minutes and reports of the Federation as well as from the

Lands and Survey Department. A good summary of the progress on policy in the 1940's is given in the following extracts:-

“The war effectively put a stop to further agitation by the Federation. By the time pressure was resumed in 1944, changes in the Department of Lands and Survey had created a climate much more favourable to reform. In particular the growing influence within the Department of R. Cooper, a parks' enthusiast, altered the relationships between the department and the reformers. It was Cooper who dealt with the letters from the Federation and early in 1944 he accepted an invitation to address a meeting of the Tararua Tramping Club after which A.E. Galletly, on behalf of the Federation, wrote again to the Department reiterating the need for reform. The Department's reply asked for an “up-to-the-minute statement” of the Federation's views. Galletly sent back the Federation's 1938 proposals, with some covering remarks pointing out the inadequacies of the present system of administration either to preserve or to develop national parks: the system was not unified, there was no co-ordination of general policy, and the finance available was inadequate”.

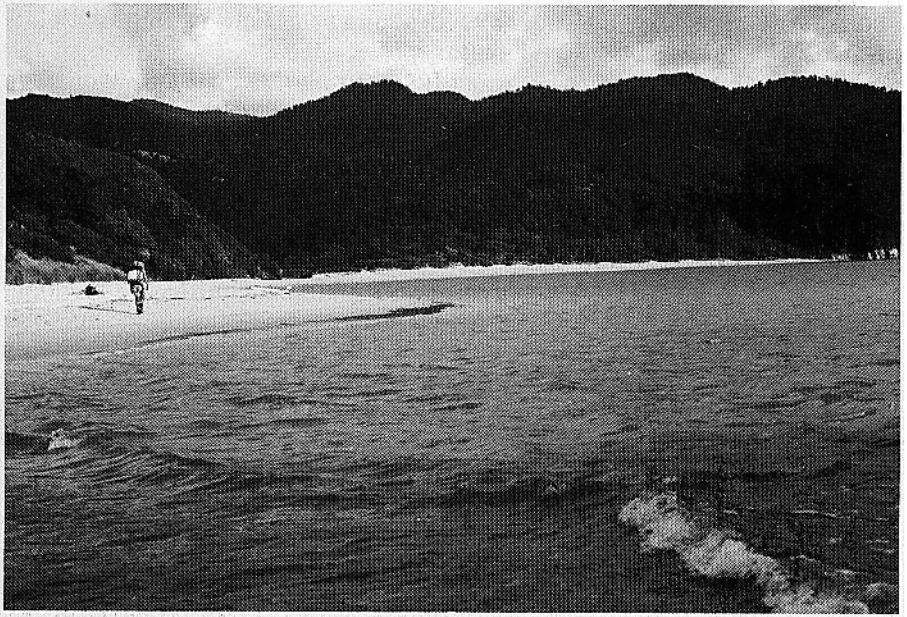
In 1945 Ron Cooper submitted a report to the Tourist Development Committee which adopted the recommendation that a comprehensive overhaul of the national parks administration be carried out along the lines suggested by the Federated Mountain Clubs. Also in that year, the fourteenth annual general meeting in May re-affirmed the Federation's policy on national parks. In 1946 a recommendation was adopted that “the incoming Executive investigate the possibility of working in conjunction with the Forest and Bird Protection Society and thus further our common aims”.

Concurrently with these moves the Federation pressed for nomination as of right on the boards of the existing national parks, even though an earlier suggestion had been given by the Department that “there is no reason why your Federation should not submit a nomination. It is to be understood, of course, that the final selection rests entirely with the Government”. This course of action was in fact successfully taken in the nomination of G.G. Lockwood to the Arthurs Pass National Park Board in 1932 and of R. Syme to the Egmont Board in 1945. In 1948 it was reported that “a recent amendment to the Tongariro National Park Act gave the Federated Mountain Clubs the right to nominate one member to the Board”. N.M. Thomson was appointed as the Federation's nominee.

### **The National Parks Act (1952):**

Ron Cooper of the Lands Department was encouraged by the interest shown by his Director-General, D.M. Greig and “the first steps towards drafting a comprehensive national parks bill were taken early in 1949”.

Aware of this move, the Federation intensified its efforts to arouse public support and its annual report of 1949 received good publicity in the news media. The annual general meeting of that year resolved that the



Torrent Bay, Abel Tasman National Park. Because of the predominant bush and coastline nature of the area, without mountain peaks, a nominee of the Federation to the Board was withheld until 1957. Hugh Barr

Federation should again approach Government for a complete overhaul of the national park administration. The Reserves Sub-committee of A.P. Harper, R. Syme and G.G. Lockwood prepared a submission which was presented to the Minister of Lands by A.P. Harper and N.M. Thomson, with the support of the Secretary of the Royal New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society. They were reported as finding the Minister, C.F. Skinner, both sympathetic and well informed.

It was not until 1949, when the first steps were taken towards drafting a National Parks Bill, that the full impact of the Federation's persistent representations for reform became really apparent. The first draft, and eventually the Bill that was passed in 1952, included the main proposals put forward in 1938 by A.E. Galletly for the Executive, even to the extent of accepting much of the actual wording of policy for the administration and management of national parks.

Hopes raised for legislation that year were dashed by a change of Government. However, the new Minister of Lands, E.B. Corbett, was already a supporter of the national park changes and early in 1950 he approved the distribution of the second draft of the bill for comment. The Executive examined the draft very critically and followed up its written submissions with a successful interview with the Minister. For this

deputation and in particular for A.P. Harper and R. Syme who had been advocating changes in national parks policy since the formation of the Federation, this meeting on 19 June 1950 was an historic occasion. The Minister agreed to several changes to the bill, including the removal of the objectionable clause that gave the Minister power to "direct the Authority" and he assured the deputation that legislation would be passed that year. Again there were the inevitable delays, but the National Parks Bill was passed in October 1952 with the enthusiastic support of both sides of the House.

The passing of the Act provided for the establishment of the National Parks Authority on which one member was appointed on the recommendation of the Federated Mountain Clubs. The Authority was appointed early in 1953 and included N.M. Thomson as the Federation's nominee. Following his untimely death on Ruapehu in October of that year, R. Syme was appointed to the vacancy and remained a member of the Authority until 1974. He was succeeded by A.P. Thomson until May 1980. L.F. Molloy was appointed until March 1981, the remaining life of the Authority under the Act of 1952.

Prior to the passing of the Act there were four National Parks: Tongariro, Egmont, Arthurs Pass and Abel Tasman. The Act added the Sounds Public Reserve as the fifth National Park — Fiordland. The new Boards appointed in 1953 included as of right the nominees of the Federation on the Tongariro and Egmont Boards, and in the case of Tongariro another nominee on the recommendation of the Ski Council of the Federated Mountain Clubs. In the case of all other boards, clause 18/3 provided that "where because of the nature of the Park the Authority considers it desirable that mountain climbers and skiers should have representation on the Board, the Authority shall ensure that of the persons recommended for appointment to the Board, one shall be a person nominated jointly by the Dominion Executive of Federated Mountain Clubs and the Ski Council of that body". The Authority decided this clause should apply to the Arthurs Pass Board but not to Abel Tasman, because the nature of the park provided for trampers rather than climbers and skiers. The interpretation of this clause caused concern at successive annual meetings of the Federation. It was pointed out to the Authority on numerous occasions that the wording of this clause was unrealistic in that the Federation represented trampers and deerstalkers as well as mountaineers and skiers, and hence it should be represented on the Abel Tasman Board, and Urewera when that Board was appointed in 1962. This was successfully achieved for Abel Tasman in 1957, but not until 1977 for Urewera. The appointment of the Fiordland Board was deferred until 1958.

Even while advocating the review of the overall administration of national parks, the Federation was active in promoting additional areas as potential parks. In 1940 the Executive gave support to the Otago Section of

the New Zealand Alpine Club in their advocacy of a national park in Otago, Westland and South Canterbury with maps illustrating the areas under consideration. The suggestion for the Tuhoe area in the Urewera district as a suitable national park was made by the Federation in 1952.

By 1964 a total of ten national parks had been proclaimed:— Mt. Cook, 1954; Urewera, 1955; Nelson Lakes, 1956; Westland, 1960; Aspiring, 1964. All Boards included Federation nominees except for Urewera as referred to previously.

Nominees to the various Boards over the years have been:-

Arthur's Pass	Nelson Lakes
G.G. Lockwood (1933-56)*	E.T. Chittenden (1956-70)
J.C. Montgomery (1956-68)	P.C.F. Holland (1970-80)
P.M. Wyn Williams (1968-71)	Westland
R.W. Cawley (1971-80)	E.W. Newton (1961-64)
* Government Nominee in 1956.	P.G. Graham (1965-68)
Mt Cook	R.C. Western (1969-78)
E.M. Wilson (1956)	J. Strang (1978-80)
A.M. Cookson (1957-74)	Tongariro
G. Harrow (1974-77)	N.M. Thomson (1948-53)
M.F. Mahoney (1977-80)	L.D. Bridge (1953-73)
Fiordland	J.N. Jennings (1973-80)
R. Rodda (1958-65)	Abel Tasman
J.K. Skinner (1965-74)	M.H. Gibbs (1957-77)
C.J. McFarlane (1974-80)	P. Timmings (1977-80)
Egmont	Aspiring
R. Syme (1945-53)	G.N. Ellis (1966-74)
G.J.F. Bourke (1954-59)	R.G. Barrowclough (1974-80)
D.H. Rawson (1959-78)	Urewera
C.R. Latta (1978-80)	A.K. Thompson (1978-80)

Other areas actively considered by the Executive as potential national parks have been:— Stewart Island; Red Hills/Cascade; Landsborough; Mid-southern Alps; Okarito/Waikukupa; Punakaiki/Paparoa; Lewis Pass/Spenser; Tararuas; Whirinaki and Kaimai/Mamaku. The Red Hills and Okarito/Waikukupa are likely to be declared National Park extensions in this fiftieth year of the Federation. Most of the others have been considered to be more suitable as State Forest Parks. Others like Lewis Pass have become National Reserves. The Paparoa/Punakaiki area still remains the most vexacious national park proposal. (The new National Parks and Reserves Authority has more recently initiated investigation of a 28,000 hectare 'Punakaiki National Park')

### **Administration of the Act:**

There can be no doubt that since the Act of 1952 the work of the Authority has been evident in the co-ordination and development of the



Panikere Bluff and Lake Waikaremoana, Urewera National Park. Although the Federation advocated Tuhoe area for Park status in 1952 and gazetted in 1955, a nominee to the Board was withheld until 1977 for a similar reason as that for Abel Tasman National Park.

Hugh Barr

parks system by the individual boards throughout the country. There can be no doubt, also, that the part played by the Federation's nominees to the Authority and the Boards has been beneficial to this development. The Executive has closely followed the work of the Authority and of the Boards through reports from its nominees. Support has been given to the Authority in many issues of conflict such as mineral exploration, hydro-electric power proposals and roading developments. Jurisdiction over national park areas by local authorities, especially with respect to building by-laws in the Tongariro National Park, was an issue in which clubs affiliated to the Federation successfully gave a lead to the Authority and to the Boards.

#### *Administrative Review 1967:*

At a conference of Chairmen of National Park Boards held in July 1965, there was discussion on the need for a review of the organisation and



administration of national parks. This led to the setting up in 1967 of a Working Committee of three senior officers of the Department of Lands and Survey, with an order of reference "To examine the present administration of national parks and to bring down recommendations as to changes that may be desirable". The resulting report was carefully studied by the Federation's Executive. Comments were sent to the National Parks Authority, particularly the Executive's concern at the recommendation to abolish the right of Federation representation on the Authority and on the Boards. Tourist interests argued that it was not enough to run the parks, that they were virtually confined to "the experts, mountaineers, trampers and bird-watchers". Media comments at the time claimed that the real tourist potential of these areas had been barely touched, that there was a lack of intelligent exploitation, and called for a working arrangement between sheer preservation and conservation on the one hand and public freedom on the other. In some ways this review committee foreshadowed the major re-organisation which was to come thirteen years later. However, on this occasion the Federation was instrumental in retaining the status quo.

The Federation has never been opposed to opening up of National Parks, in fact it is one of the strongest advocates for free and unrestricted access. However, it has been concerned about over-development in certain areas. At one stage in the late 1960's, after a spate of road building, the Federation opposed any further roading development within park boundaries in favour of road access to the perimeter only. Also, on a number of occasions, the Federation has been concerned that national park status for an area would lead to over-hutting and over-tracking, even though zoning for wilderness would allow some areas to be set aside for preservation in their natural state where huts and tracks would be prohibited. Development of a park has been advocated, therefore, within limits of compatibility for the benefit of the New Zealand public. The Federation has considered that, unlike the American and English acceptance of commercialism in parks, the average New Zealander preferred to be independent as a family unit in his recreational enjoyment. However, the development of each park has been dependent upon available finance, and the Federation has expressed its concern repeatedly to the Government of the day of the inadequacy of the grant set aside for national parks. This concern has been evident in the sub-committee reports on the needs for proper park development; and in the consequent deputations to successive governments to press for increased allocation of funds for that development.

### **Federation Policy on Administration:**

In an attempt to consolidate the views of Federated Mountain Clubs on national park administration, the Executive called together all nominees to a special meeting in Wellington in 1972 to discuss a policy for the

Federation. The resulting policy document drawn up by R.G. Barrowclough, with the assistance of A.J. Heine and L.F. Molloy, was distributed to nominees and to clubs in 1975. There was some dissension among North Island clubs regarding the principle of minimum development within park boundaries when applied to the intensive recreation areas and club huts already existing in Tongariro. However, the policy gained wide acceptance and in 1978 the Executive resolved that its published policy was a general one covering all parks, although it was conceded that Tongariro has a situation exceptional to the general policy. The policy also included a limit on representation by a nominee to three three year terms, an issue debated several times at the Federation's annual general meetings.

### **The Silver Jubilee Conference:**

Park management plans began to appear in 1978, but the Executive became aware of them almost by chance. The nominees were requested to forward plans and other policy statements in addition to their regular reports so that the Executive could present constructive comments which would in turn be sent back to its nominees. By 1980 most Boards were seeking public input to their draft management plans, a move which had the full support of the Federation.

In the twenty-fifth year following the passing of the Act, the National Parks Authority held a Jubilee Seminar during which a number of speakers expressed views on many aspects of park administration. The Federation was well represented at the Seminar, although there was some disappointment that it was not asked to make an official input by the presentation of a paper. The Executive in July 1978 received a report on the Seminar and heard that one of the working groups had recommended that there be no nominations as of right to national park boards. Because there was no consolidation of the points raised by each of the working groups, any recommendations made were not adopted by the conference as a whole. However, the Executive was sufficiently disturbed by this move to prepare and distribute a report to its nominees on the subject of Federation representation. Nevertheless there was strong support at the Conference for the general view that "the authority/board system be maintained and strengthened".

### **The National Parks Act 1980:**

Early in 1979, following the publication of the Seminar discussions, the Federation was advised of the setting up of a Government Caucus Committee on National Parks with terms of reference "to investigate the present Board and Authority based administrative structure for National Parks and Reserves administered by the Department of Lands and Survey and to recommend any changes considered desirable to meet present day needs". A submission was made by the Federation's President, G.G.



The Southern Alps from Okarito Trig. The significant addition of South Okarito and Waikukupa Forests to the Westland National Park has been sought since 1970's.

*John Johns*

Claridge, at the request of the Caucus Committee, but it became apparent that a submission made by the Department of Lands was being given predominance in the deliberations of the Committee. Any attempt by the Executive to study the Department's submission was refused, such secrecy being strange as all other submissions were available for perusal. Disturbing, also, as the Federation had always promoted a dialogue between the concerned public and the Department of Lands and Survey.

The resulting Caucus Committee report proposed radical changes to the administration of National Parks, placing them under the direct control of the Lands Department with the Boards and the Authority reduced to an advisory role. This proposal to abolish the executive board/authority system came as a complete surprise, especially after the sentiment expressed at the Jubilee Seminar. It ran counter to the majority of submissions. The Committee proposed regional advisory boards and an advisory national authority — their similarity to the current boards and authority was in name only. It was difficult to determine whether the Lands Department or the Minister of Lands, V.S. Young, was the principal advocate for such a change. A major weakness of the change was, of course, that advice need not be taken and that members of the public were unlikely to bother with advisory boards.

The Executive sent a further submission on the report to the Minister of Lands and resolved in March 1980 to forward an open letter to the Prime Minister and to members of the Government Caucus, stating its objections to the report and its findings. The formal resolution was that "the Federation views with grave concern the recommendations of the Caucus Committee report on National Parks and Reserves. We resolve to strongly oppose the proposed removal of the executive functions of the National Parks Authority and National Parks Boards and the transfer of their authority to the Lands and Survey Department. We believe that the Department and the public should continue to work in partnership. We also resolve to strongly oppose any removal of the right of Federated Mountain Clubs to a nominee on individual boards".

A special sub-committee of C.R. Latta, D.A. Henson and H. Barr was set up to pursue these resolutions and a publicity campaign was mounted so that the public would be fully informed of the moves. The Minister of Lands, at his request, addressed the Federation's annual general meeting in 1980, but the fundamental issue remained in dispute — advisory or executive boards; a board which made decisions, or a board which merely advised the decision makers.

The new National Parks Bill was introduced into Parliament in July 1980. After vigorous debate from the Opposition it was sent to the Lands and Agriculture Select Committee to hear submissions. The Executive considered that the Bill was much worse than it feared and that all discussions held with the Department and the Minister appeared to have had little effect. It was not so much a review of administration as one of total change of control. The Executive resolved that it considered the legislation ill-advised and strongly considered that the Bill as a whole should be abandoned and the good points be included in amending legislation to the 1952 Act at the next parliamentary session. It resolved also to make a submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee and to recommend clubs and individuals to do likewise. With the support of kindred organisations and the media a massive protest against the Bill was launched.

About four hundred and fifty submissions were received by the Select Committee, but only about fourteen, mostly from national organisation, including the Federated Mountain Clubs, were heard. It had become evident that the Minister and his departmental advisors had failed to recognise the deep-seated objections to their proposed re-structuring of park administration. To its credit the Parliamentary Lands and Agriculture Select Committee acknowledged the depth and validity of the protest. In reporting the Bill back to Parliament it included many amendments, one being to retain some of the executive functions of the New National Parks and Reserves Authority with greater independence from Ministerial control, although this control was retained over appointments to the Authority and to the Park Boards. L.F. Molloy was the

Federation's nominee to the new ten member Authority, the members of which were announced on 12 March 1981. The Federation was pleased at the conservation/recreation expertise on the new Authority.

The role of the Boards is not clear in the new Act. Although their responsibilities were broadened from the minor role of the initial Bill, control within the Parks will be through management plans, with the Department of Lands having the final say on how the plans will be implemented. It has become apparent that these plans will need to be examined more carefully in the future as they will virtually be the Handbooks of the Boards. One of the most important functions of the new Boards and Authority is to develop a system of representative reserves throughout New Zealand.

The old Boards were replaced by twelve new National Park and Reserve Boards incorporating National Parks and "Reserves of national significance" which came into being on 1 April 1981. Prior to making the decisions on the boundaries of the areas, the Minister sought the opinions of interested groups, including the Federation. Generally the areas appeared to be workable, with the major disagreement of the Nelson/Marlborough area (where one Board is to control two very different National Parks — Nelson Lakes and Abel Tasman); the exclusion of Stewart Island from the Southland Board; and jurisdiction and the failure to create two Boards in Otago. However, the Federation's views on these issues were not accepted by the Minister. Nominations for membership of most of the new Boards were made by the Federation with partial success. Overall, the compositional balance of the new Boards seemed very much in favour of local authorities at the expense of recreational users.

It seems ironic that in this fiftieth year, one of the original objects of the formation of the Federation, the adequate protection of national parks on behalf of user interests by representation on park boards as of right, has been swept aside by the new legislation. The Federation and its member clubs still have the "public" right to make nominations to the new Boards, and it was accepted by the Executive that the issue of nominations "as of right" was secondary to that of advisory boards. The feelings of the Executive were probably summed up in the words of L.F. Molloy, their Authority nominee, in his report to the Federation's annual general meeting in 1981:— "It is a great pity that the introduction of the new legislation was handled so poorly and left such a legacy of suspicion. It is my sincere hope that this sorry period will be eclipsed by a new period of co-operation and partnership between the new National Parks and Reserves Authority, Boards and Department of Lands and Survey".

It remains to be seen how adequate the new Act will be in the development, administration and protection of our national park system for the continued enjoyment of the recreational user.