

5.2. FOREST PARKS;

The Forest Park Concept:

It was early in 1937 that the Federation was asked to support a proposal from the Clubs in the Wellington region to create the Tararua State Forest a National Park as a centennial memorial for the Wellington province. The Executive was very willing to support such a move, it being in line with the Federation's policy to promote the formation of national parks from suitable areas in any part of New Zealand. Secretary, A.E. Galletly, was delegated to attend meetings called by the Clubs to discuss the proposal.

The New Zealand Forest Service and the Lands Department between them administer New Zealand's high country, the former under the Forest Act 1949 for the prevention of uncontrolled depletion of our native forest resources and the preservation of forested high country as water and soil conservation areas. Although it is not specifically a function of the Forest Service to provide for recreation, the 1949 Act did ensure that allowance was made for the recreational use of State Forests. The state forests in the Tararua and Craigieburn Ranges and in the Lake Sumner region were three examples of the high recreational value already being placed upon areas of forest land.

The promotion of a national park for the Tararuas, however, met with some opposition in Government circles. It was fortuitous that Executive member A.P. Thomson was able to influence thinking within both the New Zealand Forest Service and the Federation and in 1953 the Forest Service responded by bringing out a working plan under which the Tararua Ranges would be administered partly for recreation, partly for soil and water conservation, under the title of a 'Forest Park'. Because of the problems of adequate finance for the existing system of national parks and of the administrative transfer of land from one Department to another, the Federation accepted this 'Forest Park' concept for the Tararuas, and a second one was created subsequently in the Craigieburn Range where skiing was a predominant recreational use. The working plan for the newly formed Tararua Forest Park came into operation on 1 January 1954, and the following year the Federation put forward a proposal to the Forest Service that an Advisory Committee be set up to assist in administering the Park. The Forest Service agreed, but restricted the role to recreation only. The following year the Federation invited nominations from clubs which used the area and at the Executive meeting in February 1956 it was reported that the Tararua Forest Park Advisory Committee had been formed. A great deal had been accomplished and clubs using the Tararuas could now look forward to greater co-operation with the New Zealand Forest Service.

Extension of the Forest Park Concept:

After ten years the forest park concept had become widely known and



West Peak and Field Peak — Two prominent features of the Tararua Forest Park, the first in the Forest Park concept. West Peak has now been renamed Bridge Peak to commemorate L.D. Bridge, a long serving member of the Federation's executive.

John Rundle

there were proposals for establishment of a number of other such parks. A forest park based on a working plan having a limited currency was clearly unsatisfactory from a public point of view, if only because any park would cease to exist should the working plan not be renewed before it expired. Consequently in 1964 B.R. Mason, R.W. Burrell and J.N. Jennings waited on the Forest Service requesting that legislation should be brought down to provide for the constitution of forest parks on a permanent basis. They also asked that regulations be brought down to establish advisory committees on a proper basis. The Forests Act was so amended in 1965 and regulations providing for advisory committees appeared in 1969. Unfortunately, neither provided for representation of the Federation as of right, although the Federation was asked to nominate suitable persons and until 1977 its nominations were almost always accepted without question.

Further Forest Parks began to be established, among the first being Craigieburn and North-West Nelson. Coromandel, Lake Sumner and Kaimanawa followed, the latter in response to suggestions that the

Kaimanawa Ranges be included within Tongariro National Park. Further Forest Parks were gazetted until at the time of publication there are eighteen. For most of these, the Federation was asked to provide one or more nominees for the Advisory Committee. These nominees have been:-

Tararua	North-West Nelson
A.J. Heine 1956-58	F.G. Soper 1966-76
A.E. Galletly 1956-65	C.R. Arnold 1981
R. Greenwood	
1956-61	C.H. Blackman 1981
O.T. Jones 1958-65	
R. Lacey 1962-65	Coromandel
J. Boddy 1966-71	R.A. Ussher 1970-80
J. Rundle 1966-76	R. Allott 1970-72, 1974-75
R.C. Jefferys 1966-76	Miss B. Williamson 1973
L. Pither 1971-81	N.J. Lancaster 1976-81
C.E. Shaw 1976-80	Mrs E. McCracken 1981
P. Milsom 1977-81	
Kaimanawa	Kaweka
N. Simpson 1970-77	Mrs M. Davidson 1973-80
V.J. Conley 1978-80	
Kaimanawa/Kaweka	Lake Sumner
G. Thorpe 1981	G.W. McQueen 1970-75
	D.A. Henson 1976-81
Pirongia	Rimutaka/Haurangi
J. Wilson 1973-81	Mrs M.D.L. Fyfe 1976 - 81
Catlins	Ruahine
R.L. Scott 1976-81	T.S. Plowman 1977-81
Craigieburn	Mt. Richmond
W. Carter 1978-81	D. Blunt 1978-81
Pureora	Raukumara
M. Belfield 1980-81	R. Faulkner 1980 - 81
Hanmer	
L. Porter 1981	

Forest Park Administration.

Concern felt at the manner in which plans for future development were

being reviewed, the role of the various Advisory Committees in this development, and the interpretation of this role by the different Conservators, resulted in a deputation by R.W. Burrell and A.J. Heine to the Director-General of Forests to press for an overall co-ordinated policy for Forest Service Conservancies. The right of Federation representation on the advisory committees was also raised once more. A report of this meeting to the annual general meeting in 1970 resulted in a resolution that the Federation formulate a policy on the administration of Forest Parks for submission to the N.Z. Forest Service. The seventeen recommendation report presented to the Executive meeting later that year included such issues as:-

1. Roads for production forestry should be kept to a minimum and that all aspects of Forest Park usage should be considered in making these roads.

2. New Zealand Forest Service should be asked to increase its permanent ranging staff in Forest Parks, setting a reasonable establishment for each park. Conservation depended on adequate staffing, and finance for this was necessary.

3. Road access should be to the boundaries or to a convenient point not far within the park — road access should only be to the boundary of a Forest Park until a complete zoning plan had been drawn up for the park.

4. A few main line walking tracks should be established; the rest should be well disced and the New Zealand Forest Service should accept the responsibility of maintaining the main line tracks, the others by voluntary labour. Tracks in Forest Parks should be planned and maintained by the N.Z. Forest Service in the following categories:-

(a) benched tracks maintained to a high standard;

(b) disced and cleared tracks;

(c) disced and/or poled access routes, although assistance may be obtained from voluntary labour.

5. The Federation strongly supports the principle that a large portion of each Forest Park should be retained as near as possible in a natural state. Zoning to make provision for this would be necessary. When this has been achieved the Federation considers that provision should be made for huts in restricted areas where the need for such buildings could be established.

6. In the interests of public enjoyment of recreation in forests, a critical review should be made of legislation concerning recreational use of water supply catchments.

The seventeen recommendations were sent to clubs, after which they were presented to the Director-General of Forests. Additional parks were established about this time in Coromandel, Rimutaka and Catlins, but conflict between the Advisory Committees and Forest Service implementation continued in some areas. A call for a better administration for the Forest Park system and proposals to enlarge the responsibilities of the New Zealand Forest Service were two issues discussed at a Forestry

Development Conference in 1974 - 75. The Federation was represented by A.J. Heine and L.F. Molloy.

Policy Changes:

When the Forests Amendment Bill was introduced in 1976, the Executive was ready with its submission prepared by L.F. Molloy and Jane Forsyth. A number of matters promoted by Federated Mountain Clubs were in the Bill — better access to open indigenous forest, provision of wilderness areas and better opportunity for comment on management plans for Forest Parks. Later that year the sub-committee produced the draft of a Forest Park policy. This draft was revised later in the light of comments received at a Seminar arranged early in 1977 for the Federation's nominees to Forest Park Advisory Committees. The final Policy document was circulated to clubs for comments and adopted towards the end of the year. Included in the policy was the move to include in the statutory regulations a minimum of one Federation nominee to be appointed to each of the Forest Park Advisory Committees.

The announcement in February 1977 that the Richmond Range had been created a Forest Park was hailed as a successful culmination of several



The Craigieburn Range, part of the Craigieburn Forest Park, the second in the Forest Park system which has considerable skiing interests. *Greig Royle*

years promotion by the Federation. Congratulations were also extended by delegates at the annual general meeting in 1977 to the Executive for its submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee which successfully advocated the involvement of Advisory Committees in all aspects of Park management, not just recreation as previously. However, under the new administrative role, the Minister decided that public nominations would be called for the Advisory Committees so that the Federation would now be forced to compete generally for representation. It was the view of the Minister that the Forest Act now required a balanced administration of all State Forest Parks and for that reason he could not let one group over-ride another. As current Federation policy was to have one nominee on all Forest Park Advisory Committees the annual meeting requested the Executive to keep pressing for this right. In the meantime it was essential that the Federation and its clubs made its nominations to the Committees as soon as applications were called for.

In May 1978, N.Z. Forest Service held an internal Seminar on forest recreation. L.F. Molloy was invited to put the view of the Federation, and other recreational users. This Seminar was an important event in crystallising Forest Service thinking on forest zoning and a new State Forest Zoning Policy was released later that year, which elevated "recreation" to an equal zoning status with "production" and "protection". A draft of new Forest Park regulations was received and commented on by Messrs Heine, Henson and Ussher. These regulations were finalised in the latter part of 1979. A second Seminar on Forest Parks held in February 1980 was declared most successful, with a useful exchange of ideas between the Federation's nominees, the Executive and the Administering officers of the N.Z. Forest Service.

In the year 1981, the system of eighteen Forest Parks provides a large part of the recreational potential of mountain and bush areas throughout the country. As the major user of mountain lands of New Zealand, the Federation has always supported the Forest Park system as being generally complementary to land areas set aside as National Parks. The Federation can rightly claim that discussion, interchange of ideas and advocacy for setting aside various areas with N.Z. Forest Service has improved and strengthened the administrative role for a balanced management of the overall system.

5.3. WILDERNESS:

Attempt at Wilderness Definition:

When in 1958 a letter was received from the Lands Department asking whether the Federation supported a proposal put forward by one of its affiliates that an area in the Olivine Range be declared a "wilderness area" in terms of the Reserves and Domains Act, the discussion at the following Executive meeting attempted to define what was expected of



The Upper Landsborough Valley — proposed as a Wilderness Area since 1960.

Dave Bamford

such an area. The wilderness concept apparently originated in the United State of America where there was an urgent need to restrict overdevelopment. The idea of no hut provision appeared to some to be inconsistent with the Federation's policy of promoting good and safe access to the mountains. The National Parks Act of 1952 made allowance for the creation of wilderness areas within parks, but it became evident that opinions on the wilderness concept required clarification. The question of the Olivine area together with relevant legislation was referred to clubs for their views and for their attitude to Wilderness in general. Consequent discussion on club replies did nothing to clarify the question, except to support the Olivine Wilderness Area, and it appeared that while no one really objected to the general idea, the argument really revolved about the extent and the nature of wilderness. The Executive in July 1959 resolved that in view of the different interpretations placed on the meaning of the term 'wilderness' a sub-committee of A.P. Thomson, R. Rodda and P.C. Gardner investigate the matter.

The subsequent report was adopted by the Executive in time for the annual general meeting in 1960. J.D. Pascoe also provided much of the input for the report. The conclusions of the Wilderness Sub-committee were:-

“1. There is a general and wide-spread desire on the part of trampers and climbers to have some large undeveloped areas in New Zealand set aside as wilderness areas. The primary motivation appears to be the desire to maintain areas wherein trampers and climbers must be entirely dependent on their own resources, preferably for days on end.

“2. This desire is laudable and understandable. It is natural that we should wish to leave for future generations areas which, if no longer completely unexplored, are at least unhutted, untracked and unbridged. By so doing we can as far as possible see that future generations are given the same opportunities to ‘pioneer’ as we have had.

“3. This motivation behind mountaineering proponents of wilderness areas can be considered to some degree a selfish one, but as is evident when the problem is analysed, wilderness means different things to different people. Other sections of the community have their own wilderness needs and it is only right that these as well as the mountaineers’ needs should be met.

“It is felt that as New Zealand is not a large country, the population is growing fast with the recreational needs growing faster still, the ‘mountaineers’ wilderness is a comparatively narrow and exclusive use of recreational land. No country should devote more than a small proportion of its land to such a single purpose usage.

“4. The conclusion is drawn, therefore, that some ‘mountaineers’ wilderness areas are justifiable and desirable, but they should be few in number and as far as possible not at the expense of the wider recreational needs of the public. It follows that in respect to both size and location, they should be most carefully selected.

“5. The purpose of creating wilderness areas is not explicitly stated in the National Parks or the Reserves and Domains Acts. It would appear that the predominant aim is nature protection, i.e. wilderness for plants rather than wilderness for people. In this case the Act does not specifically cater for the wilderness need of mountaineers. Any type of wilderness area should be kept “in a state of nature” which means the preservation of all indigenous plants and indigenous animals in the same ecological balance as occurred before the advent of man. Without such preservation, the wilderness value to humans would be drastically reduced, if not entirely lost. It is suggested that the purpose of wilderness should not be nature protection as such — for this there are other types of preservation sanctuaries or special areas in national parks and state forests. The principle of nature protection in maintaining strict native reserves is in inverse ratio to the legal rights of access to such reserves. If a wilderness area is for recreational use then it automatically loses some of its scientific value as a strict native reserve. It is suggested that if special areas are not considered sufficient the National Parks Act and other relevant Acts, including the Forests Act, should be amended to recognise this ecological point with provision made for a separate

category of reservation, such as 'ecologist scantuary' or 'strict native reserves'.

It appeared to the delegates at that annual meeting that the Federation's views on wilderness held a completely different concept to that in the National Parks Act and it was resolved that these specific conclusions be forwarded to the National Parks Authority. In reply, the Authority considered that adequate legislation already existed to create the form of wilderness area in the sense preferred by the Federation and it was undesirable that separate wilderness and wild areas be defined. The Authority also felt that some facilities would be necessary in the larger wilderness areas to ensure adequate control of noxious animals, but that any huts erected would be of a temporary nature designed to blend with



Mt. Uriah and the head of the Otutu River in the proposed Paparoa Wilderness Area.
Les Molloy

the surroundings and they would be removed as soon as adequate control was achieved. It became apparent to the Executive that the intention of the Act was to operate a wilderness for nature rather than a wilderness for recreation and it felt that the Federation should now press for large 'mountaineers' wilderness areas. However, although the Federation was more in favour of large wilderness areas, it had no objection to small areas also being set aside as had been done in the Tongariro National Park and other areas. Certain questions still remained to be answered, i.e. the desirable number of large wilderness areas and the support for the Olivines area. It was resolved to ask clubs for further comments.

Possible Areas Discussed:

Six roughly defined areas evolved from the replies from the clubs, but the Executive considered that the Federation should confine its recommendations to two major areas, i.e. to 'mountaineers wilderness' in the sense outlined in the report of February 1960, the Olivines as previously outlined and the Landsborough consisting of an area encompassing the Main Divide, Isabel to Mt. Marshman, over Shingle Top to Clarke Junction, up to Monro Peak and thence along the Hooker Range back to the Main Divide. The area to include, if possible, the headwaters of the Jacobs, Mahitahi, Paringa and Moeraki Rivers. An alternative would be an area of Central Westland from Elie de Beaumont along the Maximillian Range to Mt. Cloher, to the Perth/Whataroa Junction, up to Mt. Adams across the Poerua to Mt. Ferguson, to the Adams/Wanganui Forks, up the Lord Range to the Main Divide at Mt. Lord and back along the Main Divide to Elie de Beaumont. The Executive considered that there were no areas large enough or rugged enough in the North Island to meet this true wilderness concept. Perhaps at a later date and once the major wilderness areas had been proclaimed, the Federation could consider making recommendations about smaller areas in the North Island and then in the South Island as well.

Over the next few years the Federation was asked for support on the setting aside of smaller areas in national parks. A deputation to the Minister of Lands in 1966 requested more wilderness to be encouraged and gazetted. The following year, the Executive made a submission on the review of the administration of national parks in which it claimed that the Federation did not oppose the opening up of national parks apart from the policy of establishing special areas within the parks as wilderness areas (reference to 6.1.). A request from the Federation's nominee on the Mt. Cook Board for comments on proposed wilderness led to a conclusion from the Executive that much of the park could be zoned a Natural Environment Area only, as the predominance of huts, which were required for safety reasons, precluded the concept of true wilderness. The headwaters of the Godley was, perhaps, the exception, being one of the few major valleys in the Southern Alps which was not developed. The resolution that the

Godley above the terminal of the glacier be left undeveloped was narrowly adopted. This continuing uncertainty of the wilderness concept within the national park system became apparent when a move was made in 1968 to revoke the West Sabine wilderness of the Nelson Lakes National Park because of the need to hut the Blue Lake area in an attempt to preserve the scenic values by controlling over-use due to camping.

"Mountaineers wilderness" in the Olivines of the new Mt. Aspiring National Park, the Douglas Neve in the new Westland National Park and to a lesser extent in the Urewera National Park were proposed without any definitive action being taken.

Towards a Wilderness Policy:

During the early 1970's, the Federation was pre-occupied with conservation issues like Manapouri and the utilisation of South Island beech forest (reference 6.5). However, there was growing unease at the steady tracking and hutting of West Coast mountain valleys by the New Zealand Forest Service without any positive move towards retaining a wilderness system with input from Federated Mountain Clubs. The situation was analysed in an article "Wilderness Diminishing" by L.F. Molloy in 1976 for the New Zealand Alpine Journal, and then more fully by him in a paper to the "Environment 77" Conference. The Executive reprinted both articles for distribution to Clubs and government agencies to heighten awareness of the problem. It was resolved that the Federation should press for a separate wilderness system which covered both state forest and unoccupied crown land. Molloy was asked to develop the wilderness concept in more detail and discuss it further with the New Zealand Forest Service and the Department of Lands. Following his report to the Executive later that year on options for the preservation of wilderness, the Executive resolved to support the establishment of a "Wilderness Commission" which would vest the management of various wilderness areas in either the New Zealand Forest Service or the Department of Lands, but which would have executive power to weld such areas into a viable wilderness system. The Minister of Lands and Forest was advised accordingly.

The interest of the New Zealand Forest Service in retaining wilderness in the State Forest system was demonstrated in legislation by the 1976 amendment to the Forests Act 1949. In March 1977, a delegation of L.F. Molloy, A.J. Heine and Jane Forsyth met officers of the New Zealand Forest Service who were keen to gazette several wilderness areas within State Forests from details drawn up by the various Conservators. There was broad agreement with the Federation's case for sixteen areas identified through the Recreational Plan (reference 5.2) and in the appendix to Molloy's paper to the "Environment 77" Conference. All the relevant information collected to date, with a discussion on suitable definition of the proposals, was sent out to Clubs with a request for



Lake Henderson and the Domett Range — Tasman Wilderness.

Michael Hollis

comments. The Tasman/Karamea wilderness of approximately 75,000 ha in the N.W. Nelson Forest Park appeared to be uppermost in these proposals.

In June 1978, the Nelson Conservancy invited public comment on the Tasman Mountains proposal. Considerable interest was shown, but submissions were so divided that the Minister of Forests decided in November that year to defer any "decision" for five years. The Executive was disappointed, but such an outcome galvanised the Government agencies, New Zealand Forest Service, Department of Lands and Survey and the National Parks Authority into drafting a joint policy on wilderness as administered under the National Parks, Forests and Reserves Acts.

During 1979 and 1980 the tempo of Federation activity on wilderness increased considerably. A Wilderness sub-committee, convened by D. Henson, was formed to seek club views and then to draft a wilderness policy and strategy for the Federation. At the same time the government agencies sought the Federation's comments through A.J. Heine on their draft wilderness policy. Federation President and sub-committee convenor, D. Henson contributed an article in the "Forest and Bird" Magazine, and L.F. Molloy wrote one for the "New Zealand Journal of Forestry" on the role of State Forests in the New Zealand wilderness system. Subsequently, Molloy was invited to join the government group which published the government wilderness policy as an illustrated poster/brochure late in 1980. This brochure was widely distributed

throughout New Zealand and has increased public interest in, and concern for, the preservation of our remaining areas of wilderness.

As a suitable event to mark the fiftieth year of the Federation, a decision was made in 1980 to host the first New Zealand Wilderness Conference at Lake Rotoiti in August 1981. The Conference is expected to be an important meeting of wilderness managers and users such as mountaineers, hunters and canoeists. The Federation's Wilderness Policy and Strategy for protection of key wilderness areas will be presented and government spokesmen will explain their proposals for the management of these areas.

At the time of publication, the proceedings of a successful conference have been produced with ten suggested wilderness areas included. These are:— Raukumara (Motu) 44,000 ha; Kaimanawa-Kaweka 47,000 ha; Tasman 94,000 ha; Paparoa 36,000 ha; Adams 54,000 ha; Hooker 44,000 ha; Olivine 55,000 ha; Garvies 43,000 ha; Waitutu (complementary to the proposed Preservation Wilderness of Fiordland) and Pegasus 63,000 ha. A Wilderness Advisory Group has also been appointed by Government, J. McConchie and L.F. Molloy representing the Federation.

5.4. ACCESS TO MOUNTAIN LANDS:

Rights of Access:

During the discussion at the annual general meeting in 1936 on the proposed Federation's publication later known as "Safety in the Mountains" it was considered that one of the benefits from a published booklet was to preserve the privilege of crossing private property enjoyed at that time. Although free access to State Forest reserves should be accorded any member of the general public, subject to authorisation by officers of the New Zealand Forest Service, it became apparent during an unofficial discussion with both Forest Service and Lands Department that no rights of access over private property to reserves existed in favour of the public. The Government could take right of way on roads over pastoral runs without compensation if so desired. In consequence the Executive recommended that the present method of obtaining access by consent of the owner be continued and strongly urged the maintenance of a standard of behaviour that would enable a landowner to allow such concessions indefinitely. Any specific difficulties of access should be referred to the Federation and clubs should check the public notices for advertisements related to the closing of public roads which had any bearing on access to tramping or mountaineering areas.

National and Forest Parks:

In a questionnaire survey of recreational users of National and Forest Parks by the Executive in 1966, it was recorded that the main problem was