



**OUTDOOR RECREATION  
ON THE WEST COAST:  
a conservation plan**







# OUTDOOR RECREATION ON THE WEST COAST

## A CONSERVATION PLAN

compiled and written by

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Front Cover: The neves - crossing Bracken Snowfield  
with Mt. Evans behind.

*Geoff Spearpoint*

Inside Front Cover: The tussock grasslands and  
fellfields - Northern Olivine Range and  
Cascade Valley from Red Hills Range,  
South Westland.

*Les Molloy*



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# FOREWORD

The publication of the first volume of the Recreational Plan marks a new departure for the Federated Mountain Clubs of N.Z. which has previously confined its publication endeavours largely to technical and safety matters such as the two editions of the Land Search and Rescue Manual and the several editions of Safety in the Mountains. In recent years there has been a realisation that the mountain and bush lands in which we seek our recreation are not finite, and are subjected to increasing pressure from many directions.

It is now evident that our outdoor recreational resource needs to be carefully assessed and, if possible, those parts of it that need legal protection identified. The Federation has recognised that the whole basis of mountain recreation rests on the availability of suitable land. Also it is one of the few bodies that can take the initiative on a national level in identifying the recreational areas that need conservation and in advocating their protection before the appropriate authorities.

I would like to express my gratitude to Les Molloy and the other members of the Federation who have given so freely of their leisure time to complete this first volume. It is fitting that it should be devoted to the West Coast region which contains the greatest resource of undeveloped mountain and forest land in New Zealand.

GRAEME CLARIDGE  
PRESIDENT, FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF N.Z.

# PREFACE

This "plan" for the conservation of New Zealand's outdoor recreational resources grew out of an approach to FMC by the Land Use Advisory Council (LUAC) in June 1973. LUAC was concerned that recreation should receive proper consideration as a land use and so it approached FMC for its views on a broad zoning of the New Zealand outdoors into categories of recreational activity. The approach was fortuitous since it coincided with an increasing concern by the FMC executive at the growing exploitation of our heritage of mountains, lakes, rivers, forests and coastlines so dear to members of the 90 or so constituent clubs of the Federation.

The "recreational plan", as it was soon called, had modest beginnings assisted by a small team of dedicated individuals in many parts of the country and an initial grant of \$500 (for field expenses) from a Mobil Environmental Grant. The outline of a New Zealand-wide zoning is detailed in a small (16p) companion booklet "An outline for an assessment of the recreational value of the New Zealand outdoors" (Dec. 1976). The approach had to be simple - a "broad-brush" exercise to identify quickly the extent and whereabouts of the different categories of outdoor recreation.

The strength of the exercise lies in the detailed field knowledge of the members of the regional committees who drew up the zonings. While, as overall co-ordinator of the "recreational plan", I attempted to impose objective zoning standards, it must be accepted that subjective individual values have influenced the final mosaic of zones. No apology is necessary - the "plan" is simply the expression of the values that a diverse group of mountaineers, trampers, hunters and nature lovers (plus a few canoeists and cavers) places upon the wild lands that have given them so many pleasant recreational experiences. Their wish as

users is that these recreational values should be retained, or even enhanced, through responsible management in future years. In places the text is critical of agencies and existing management strategies. For almost 50 years FMC have shown that they are always prepared to contribute ideas and to have dialogue with the managers of our outdoor recreation resources. Any such criticisms are not made lightly and are made in a spirit of co-operation, only to highlight a situation which deserves attention by the administering authorities.

This volume on outdoor recreation in the West Coast is the first of six volumes scheduled to eventually cover all New Zealand. Information and ideas have been gleaned from several individuals and literature sources. However, most of the views expressed are necessarily my own, formed during a long recreational association with the mountains and forests of the West Coast. In some cases the text is the considered view or policy of FMC; in most cases, however it is my interpretation of their views and would be endorsed by the Federation in a general way only insofar as FMC is prepared to publish the document as a contribution towards improving the future management of the remarkable West Coast outdoors.

This West Coast volume devotes five chapters to South Westland and five chapters to "North Westland" (i.e. that part of the West Coast north of Hokitika). For a change, South Westland is dealt with before North Westland, with chapters 2 - 5, and 7 - 10 each progressing a stage further north. Chapters 1 and 6 are more general, dealing with concepts and conflicts affecting outdoor recreation in South and North Westland respectively.

## Acknowledgments:

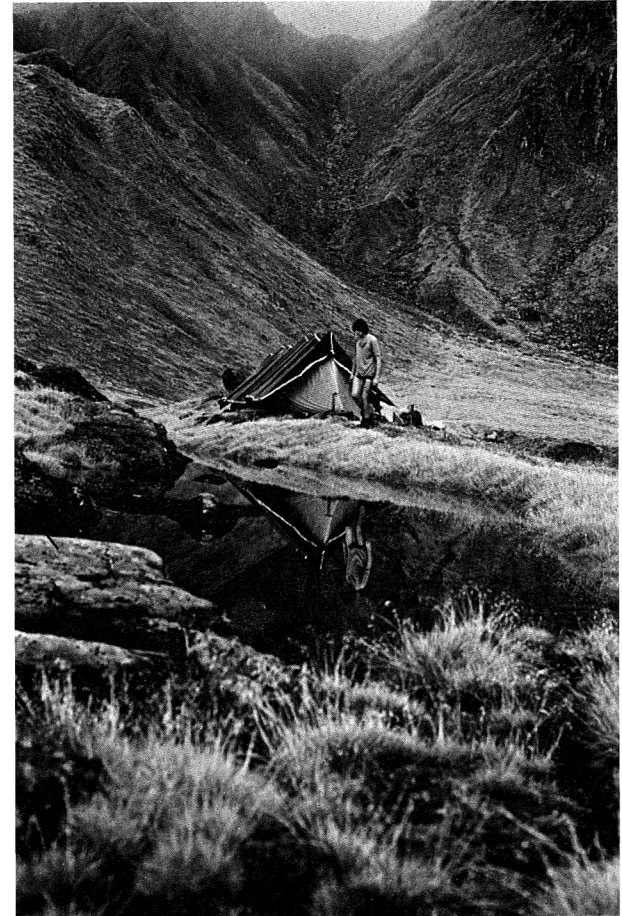
There are many friends to whom I am grateful for the assistance that they so readily provided in attaining publication of this first volume:

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To any other who has assisted I express my sincere thanks.

LES MOLLOY

CONVENOR, FMC RECREATIONAL PLAN



Sub-alpine camp above Eblis Gorge, Adams Valley.

*Les Molloy*