

Queen's Chain

Clarification of access to water due

Otago Daily Times, April 8, 1994

Nelson (PA) — Access to waterways as set out in the Resource Management Act will be clarified after a problem highlighted in the Nelson district.

Nelson-Marlborough Fish and Game Council has been battling an interpretation of the Act that it says is restricting public access to local waterways. Manager Mace Ward said the council had been concerned for some time that Nelson district land registrar Maurice Higgs was interpreting the Act differently from Ministry for the Environment staff who wrote the policy. As a result, access to rivers, lakes and coastal areas near subdivisions was being severely restricted, he said.

Mr Ward said the registrar was ruling that when an area of 4 ha or less was subdivided, public access was required only on the land that was subdivided off.

The council had raised its concerns with the ministry, which in turn had approached lands registrar-general Brian Hayes, but nothing had yet been done, Mr Ward said. "It's the council's role to promote public access to waterways and we are seeking to remedy the problem as soon as possible before too many other access areas are restricted," Mr Ward said.

Bills before select committee

The Conservation Amendment Bill No. 2 and Queen's Chain Protection Bill are still before the Planning and Development Select Committee. The report of the working party on the Amendment Bill has been released to everyone who made submissions on the Bills. Further submissions were invited on the working party's recommendations.

Due to changed committee membership, all who made submissions on the Bills have been invited to reappear before the committee with their views on the Bills, and the working party report. During the Parliamentary recess 30 out of 90 persons and groups who wished to be heard appeared before the committee. The Amendment Bill is likely to be split in two, with the controversial marginal strip provisions receiving greater Committee attention.

PANZ understands that DOC officials have put before the committee schedules of alleged difficulties with the current Conservation Act as justification for leases over marginal strips. The Department couldn't, or wouldn't, produce such information for the scrutiny of the Ministerial working party of which PANZ was a member. PANZ correctly predicted in its submission to the select committee that DOC would likely produce 'new' evidence to support leases. We remain determined that the Bill is amended in accordance with the working party's recommendations—that is to drop any suggestion of private occupation over marginal strips. PANZ will advise supporters of any adverse developments.

Resource Management Act failing

Indications from around the country are that since changes to the RMA last year, very few district councils are requiring the establishment of esplanade reserves when private land is subdivided. Compensation requirements are, predictably, deterring most councils. Developers on the shores of the Whangaparaoa Harbour in Northland, have applied to establish 17 small rural blocks with "exclusive frontage to the tidal estuaries", with road access protected by security gates.

Fishing facts

Sunday-Star Times, May 1, 1994

- 38% of people aged 16 and over fish more than once a year—900,000 New Zealanders are regular fishers
- Saltwater is the most popular form of fishing—21% of all fishing is done from boats in saltwater and 21% is done from beaches and rocks
- Freshwater fishing from land accounts for 10% of the sport and 7% is freshwater fishing from boats. Underwater fishing is enjoyed by 6%