

Election Guide Special

'Public Access'

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Survey of party's' views on access

The following is a comprehensive coverage of political party's policies affecting public rights of access and ownership of New Zealand's outdoors. This is a compilation of manifesto and other printed statements, plus policy statements from candidates during PANZ's grand pre-election tour.

This issue of *Public Access* is designed to assist your decision-making on Election Day and for keeping the politicians honest afterwards! Apologies for any errors or omissions. Our comments and emphasis in italics.

Queen's Chain and waterways



- Coverage is incomplete.
- Most chainages are fixed in position; they do not move with changes of banks and shorelines.
- New proposals in Conservation Amendment Bill (No 2) to reduce width and issue leases and licences over marginal strips, and to vest control of public reserves in private hands.

PANZ Policy Goals

- Actively investigate completion of the Queen's Chain along all of New Zealand's sea shore, and along the banks of all major rivers and lakes.

The Queen's chain consists of publicly owned strips of land along the banks of rivers and lakes, and above the high water mark of the sea. It consists of public roads, marginal strips, esplanade and other reserves.

Approximately 70 per cent of major waterways and the coast have a 'Queen's Chain' along them. This is a unique and internationally envied provision highly valued by generations of New Zealanders. It is widely considered part of our birthright. However it is capable of improvement to ensure that public access is available to all major waterbodies.

Limitations and Concerns—

- Recent statutory restrictions on public access.
- Increasing scope for waivers to the establishment of marginal strips and esplanade reserves.

- Change relevant legislation (Conservation, Resource Management, Local Government Acts) restricting powers of closure to emergency agencies (police, civil defence, fire services) for public order and public safety reasons only.

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Queen's Chain continued...

- Make it a statutory offence for anyone to give or accept any consideration of payment or reward for access to any public waterway.
- Restore public access and recreation as the primary purposes for marginal strips and esplanade reserves.

Conservation Act

- Repeal provisions for private managers over marginal strips (an unnecessary and highly dangerous provision).
- Amend to allow marginal strips wider than 20 metres (pre 1990 this applied).
- Amend to make all marginal strips movable (currently only newly created marginal strips are movable).
- Remove proposals from Amendment Bill for leases and licences over marginal strips.

Resource Management Act

- Review compensation, waiver, and less-than-4-hectare-subdivision- requirement for esplanade reserves.
- Review appropriateness of esplanade strip and access strip provisions, and repeal restrictions on public access under 10th Schedule.



Environment and Conservation Policy

Existing public access to countryside, waterbodies and the conservation estate will be protected and where possible extended.

Media Release 15 September 1993

Alliance would repeal Queen's Chain legislation: The Alliance is totally opposed to legislation being introduced to alter current laws governing the Queen's Chain and is committed to enacting appropriate legislation to protect full public access to this country's waterways.

The Labour Party's plan to introduce a private member's bill into the House to set up guardians of the Queen's Chain, is a piecemeal approach to an issue of tantamount importance. It would go nowhere near far enough and could still allow for the exclusion of public access to our beaches, lakes and rivers. The Alliance is committed to the protection and enhancement of our natural resources and would introduce legislation to overthrow any laws which excluded the public from access to this nation's waterways.

Statements by candidates

Rex Verity, Waitaki. 13/9/93

Commitment to work towards completion of Queen's Chain, and movable strips.

Need to work on current mess (of Queen's Chain) first, then extend extend system over private land, plus negotiated reserves.

Mike Newlove, St Albans. 14/9/93

Will protect existing access to rivers, sea etc.

Will have no hesitation in repealing (offending provisions) in Conservation and Resource Management Acts.

Danna Glendining, Wellington-Karori. 20/9/93

Alliance committed to protection of Queen's Chain.

Will repeal any (provision) that restricts public access.

Committed to movable strips.

Dave Macpherson, Wairarapa. 21/9/93.

Not acceptable to bar access except some emergency and cultural reasons. Personally considers movable strips good, but not yet in Alliance policy.

Hamish MacIntyre MP, Manawatu. 22/9/93

Alliance favours actively investigating the completion of the Queen's Chain, and restoring public access and ownership as the primary purpose; restricting powers of closure to emergency agencies only; all marginal strips becoming movable.

Heather Smith, New Plymouth. 24/9/93

No problem to do survey of Queen's Chain.

Press Release: The Alliance is pledged to protect democratic rights of access to the country's waterways and will enact any necessary legislation. She assured landholders that an Alliance government would not tolerate any abuse of public access rights whether on private or on Crown land. Such rights are a heritage we must pass on intact to the next generation.

Cliff Tait, Hamilton-West. 30/9/93

Alliance will maintain Queen's Chain without exception.

Existing public access will be protected and where possible extended.

Sandra Lee, Auckland Central. 4/10/93

Alliance will extend where possible public access through legislative means; opposes asset sales and abolition of conservation estate.

Judy Bischoff, Franklin. 6/10/93

Totally opposed to changes to principles and status of Queen's Chain. Alliance policy that existing public access to countryside protected and where possible extended.

Dr Keith Ridings, Rotorua. 8/10/93

Alliance will overturn any law that restricts public access.

Pledge towards 100% Queen's Chain coverage.

Graham Smith, Gisborne 12/10/93

Alliance committed to the Queen's Chain.

Do you support leases over marginal strips? No.

Do you favour making it an offence to charge for access to public waterways? Yes.

Derek Holland, Napier 13/10/93

Absolute protection of Queen's Chain—a guarantee.

Do you support any form of leases or licences over marginal strips? No.

Would you make charging for access an offence?

Definitely yes.

Queen's Chain continued...

Prof Jim Flynn, Dunedin North. 21/10/93.

Public access to water guaranteed by absolute protection of Queen's Chain. Alliance will repeal any legislation that will jeopardise the Queen's Chain. Will set up group to look at 100% Queen's Chain coverage where practicable. Agree with movable strips in 99% of cases, but difficulty in equity sum adjustment if strip on boundaries of properties.

Make it illegal to charge for access to public waterways?

No one can claim monopoly.

Do you favour trespass rights over marginal strips? No.



**Queen's Chain
Protection Bill**

John Blincoe has introduced a **Queen's Chain Protection Bill** that, if enacted will—

- Appoint Conservation Boards as Guardians of the Queen's Chain.
- Require the Minister of Conservation to obtain the approval of the Guardians to exercise powers to waive, reduce, exchange, grant easements or appoint managers over marginal strips.
- Authorise the NZ Conservation Authority to investigate how the Queen's Chain might be further protected and extended.

Bill will continue to be Labour policy.

Manifesto

New Zealanders expect ready access to their coast, rivers and lakes. That is the origin of the Queen's Chain, which comprises a number of legal entities — unformed public roads, marginal strips, esplanade reserves and the more recently proposed esplanade strips. About 70 per cent of our coast and major waterways are thus protected, at least on paper.

However, problems of public access, and the discontinuity of the Queen's chain remain issues that must be addressed.

National has changed the rules about completing the missing pieces in the Queen's Chain jigsaw. Some of those changes we endorse. In particular, we see the extension of Labour's movable strip concept having some real practical advantages.

However, the total package of changes proposed by National is unlikely to work. We believe that public access to our nation's waterways will be significantly hindered. That is because National emphasises private property rights, whereas Labour emphasises public access rights.

Labour's policy aim is clear. We view public access as an important principle. Labour will actively investigate ways to complete the Queen's chain along the coast, and along the edge of all major rivers and lakes, as far as practicable.

Labour will closely monitor the new esplanade strip provisions. We will ensure that the management provisions for privately-owned esplanade strips cannot be used to unduly restrict access. Time may prove that esplanade strips have a role outside the subdivision trigger process. Using the concept as an alternative to reserves, however, must not downgrade the right of New Zealanders to have access to their waterways.

Labour believes that minor subdivision over 4 ha ought to be reasonably achieved without compulsory contribution of large amounts of land as reserves. We are unconvinced, however, by National's stance that major subdivisions over 4 ha should never have to contribute esplanade reserves as a condition of subdivision. We will monitor the implementation of the law changes closely in this regard and consult with those affected...

Mike Moore 7 October 1993

Labour is...committed to actively investigating ways of completing the Queen's Chain, as far as practicable, along the coast and the edge of all major rivers and lakes. The Queen's Chain Protection Bill will authorise the New Zealand Conservation Authority to do that work.

Labour believes that these changes (to marginal strips via Conservation Amendment Bill (No 2)), as a whole, are unnecessary and undesirable. They are too general, too wide in their application, and too open to abuse by this or some future Government. That is why Labour is strongly opposed to them.

John Blincoe, Conservation Spokesperson,
6 September 1993.

If elected, Labour will consult with those affected as to whether the Queen's Chain and leasing provisions in the Conservation Amendment Bill can be satisfactorily redrafted. However we reserve the right to scrap them entirely.

Statements by candidates

Jim Sutton, Waitaki. 13/9/93

Nothing wrong with leases and licences to formally recognise existing use of marginal strips; acknowledged leases and licences confer trespass rights.

Should be proactive; can't wait for subdivision and sale of Crown land for creation of Queen's Chain; need suitable agency, DOC doesn't qualify; regional councils possibly.

Labour committed to protecting and extending Queen's Chain but respect legitimate interests of land occupiers.

Labour will not follow British example re fishing and shooting rights.

There are times when the public should be excluded from marginal strips eg., fire risk; leases per se are not good or bad; what their terms are is important.

Ownership irrelevant to creation of public access rights.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 14/9/93

National government went too far on RM Amendment.

Conservation Amendment Bill—Labour strongly opposed to changes to marginal strips; they are unnecessary and undesirable.

There is merit in extending movability.

Approach taken in Queen's Chain Protection Bill will continue to be policy of Labour.

Queen's Chain continued...

Ron Howard, Blenheim. 15/9/93

Labour agrees with 100% Queen's Chain coverage as far as practicable.

RMA—National has gone too far. Labour will monitor closely and reserve right to amend.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 16/9/93

Conservation Amendment Bill too general and too wide in application, too open to abuse by this and future governments; Labour opposed to provisions.

Labour reserves right to scrap entirely leasing of marginal strips.

Geoff Rowling, Tasman. 16/9/93

Supports totally public access to public lands.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 20/9/93

Labour's position on public access—

Must continue to complete Queen's Chain coverage; will actively investigate completion.

RMA: Labour wanted movability provisions for esplanade reserves. Queen's Chain more important than national parks etc.

Rex Gorman (for Peter Teahan) Wairarapa. 21/9/93.

Privatisation of land— need to arrest privatisation. There is a role for public ownership of land; protection through government because private ownership will never provide this. Leases over Queen's Chain thin end of wedge; only the beginning, not the end.

Labour's 1975 Queen's Chain Bill: Need to look at approach again; could it work today? Approach failed in 1975 on political grounds.

Has to be a comprehensive look at public access, Queen's Chain, rivers and streams—Queen's Chain Protection Bill has started ball rolling.

Jill White, Manawatu. 22/9/93

The importance of maintaining public access an unequivocal commitment from Labour.

Will actively investigate extending Queen's Chain as a priority.

RMA—committed to monitor working of esplanade amendments and bring about changes as result of monitoring.

Stephen Wood, Taranaki. 24/9/93.

Conservation Amendment Bill—reduction in width (would be) in line with RMA (but) danger is 3 metre becomes the normal width; 20 metres is not necessary.

Martin Gallagher, Hamilton-West. 30/9/93

Labour absolutely committed to public access and the chain.

Richard Prebble MP, Auckland Central. 4/10/93

Labour wants to extend Queen's Chain: a difference with National.

Labour will actively investigate completion of Queen's Chain as far as practicable.

John Chadwick, Rotorua. 8/10/93

Labour objects to leases and licences over marginal strips.

Gordon Dickson, Tarawera. 8/10/93.

Labour's policy is to work to extend Queen's Chain coverage (Cf Queen's Chain Protection Bill).

Janet Mackey, Gisborne. 12/10/93

Labour policy: not interested in reducing public access to waterways/increasing it a matter of national importance in RMA. 30% short coverage unsatisfactory—goal 100%.

Labour does not see need for leases over marginal strips.

Will actively investigate completion of Queen's Chain; esplanade strips may have a place.

Do you support leases over marginal strips? No.

Do you favour making it an offence to charge for access to waterways? Don't know for Labour Party, but personally yes.

Peter Reynolds, Hawkes Bay. 13/10/93

Supports John Blincoe's Queen's Chain Protection Bill.

If Labour becomes the Government the Queen's Chain Protection Bill will replace Government's Bill (reported on Bay City Radio, Napier 15/10/93).

Geoff Braybrooke MP, Napier. 13/10/93

Do you support any form of leases or licences over marginal strips? No, but somewhere there may be (need).

Conservation Amendment Bill: If change of government to Labour the Bill will die. (Labour policy—Peter Reynolds).

Would you make charging for access an offence? Don't know the answer. Heart says yes, but some Maori already charge on Lake Taupo.

Pete Hodgson MP, Dunedin North. 21/10/93

Labour will actively investigate completion of Queen's Chain.

Labour happy to review powers of closure over Queen's Chain.

Labour happy to receive advice to contrary on managers over marginal strips.

Working party's recommendations—in very substantial agreement.

CI 12—agree to increase in width. Labour want stronger provision (veto power by Conservation Boards).

CI 13—no problem whatsoever on working party recommendations .

CI 14—came to same conclusion as working party; no good reason for leases and licences.

Agrees entirely with working party/no impediment to reaching deal with Labour.

Make it illegal to charge for access to public waterways? Not appropriate for exclusive use. Labour will look at actively completing Queen's Chain. Need to look at ways of doing. If charge must also provide public access?

Do you favour trespass rights over marginal strips? No, no reason for CI 14.

Queen's Chain continued...



Manifesto

- National will maintain public access to coastlines, lakes, streams and waterways.

Statements on Conservation Amend. Bill

Denis Marshall, Minister of Conservation to Cabinet Environment Committee (undated)

Conservation Amendment Bill

Concessions for Recreation, Tourism and Other Purposes.

The intent of the reforms is to remove inconsistencies in provisions between the three Acts (*Conservation, National, Parks, Reserves*), and within both the Conservation and Reserves Acts. These inconsistencies create administrative confusion for staff and applicants for concessions, and reduce the ability of the department to respond efficiently to applicants and generate revenue for the Crown.

Denis Marshall, *Dominion* 17 July 1993

Marshall denies plot to privatise margin strips.

The Conservation Amendment Bill involved no conspiracy to restrict public access to conservation land or public access strips...Mr Marshall said the Bill would enable the Conservation department to appoint runholders as managers of strips and there would be no change to trespass rights.

Robin Gray MP, Clutha. *Taieri Herald* 20 July 1993

However after seeking clarification from Wellington on the issue Mr Gray told the gathering (*at Taieri Mouth*) that the Conservation Amendment Bill sought to guarantee the public's rights once marginal strips in question are put under private control. It is the question of what protection the public will have regarding the marginal strips once they go into private hands.

Bill English MP, Wallace.

Southland Times 24 August 1993

Public access to Southland waterways would be increased under proposed amendments to the Conservation Act, Wallace MP Bill English said.

Farmers were generally good land managers and leasing the marginal strips would increase the accessibility of the waterways...leasing the strips would give grazing rights to the lessee and public access would only be denied in special circumstances, such as during lambing.

Hon Denis Marshall

Reply to Parliamentary Question 15 September 1993

The (Conservation Amendment) Bill will ensure that the public can only be restricted (over marginal strips) where it is necessary for public safety or for the operation of a licensed business...the Government will not allow the public to enter private property..."

Statements by Candidates

Alec Neill MP, Waitaki. 13/9/93.

Supports Queen's Chain on major streams.

Will closely look at movable strips.

No charging for access to waterways (any private or public).

Support private managers over marginal strips (they are natural conservators).

Alec Neill MP, Waitaki. 14/9/93

National Government intention to enhance and extend Queen's Chain.

Must look for solution to allow movable strips.

No right for any New Zealanders to charge for access to water.

Private managers over marginal strips—there are a large number of pastoral lessees who are natural conservators.

Will raise with Minister (of Conservation) the possibility of a government working party to consider extension of Queen's Chain.

Doug Kidd MP, Marlborough. 15/9/93

No one is locked in on Conservation Amendment Bill.

Willing to make sure the Bill does not inhibit access.

Would welcome changes to Bill.

Nick Smith MP, Tasman. 16/9/93

100% committed to public access to Queen's Chain—need a technical council.

In principle committed to movable strip provisions; but could result in up to 70% loss of some private property.

Maori claim settlements: categorical assurance that Queen's Chain will always be set aside.

Would introduce a private members' Bill making it illegal to charge for access to waterbodies, if evidence of a problem.

Working party to put constraints on leasing provision.

Margaret Emerre, Nelson. 16/9/93

Support public access, but need to be practical. Need to rationalise esplanade reserves etc. There are both rights and responsibilities for public access.

Denis Marshall MP, Rangitikei. 20/9/93

Conservation Amendment Bill: Working party (seeking) consensus on principles, criteria. Bill will not go through with opportunities for public access to be diminished; rather take time to get it right.

Clause 14 will stand a lot of modification.

Denis Marshall MP, Rangitikei. 22/9/93

Government has absolute commitment to maintain public access to coasts, rivers and lakes.

Conservation Amendment Bill: working party to obtain a consensus.

Why not drop clauses? Response: an opportunity to enhance public access.

Not going to let working party report back until he is satisfied—don't care how long it will take.

Gray Baldwin, Manawatu. 22/9/93

Don't be threatened by 3 million tourists; incredible money-spinner; increased flexibility (needed) to cater for tourism development on Queen's Chain.

Queen's Chain continued...

Gael Donoghue, Wanganui. 23/9/93

National government has commitment to maintenance and enhancement of public access to coasts, lakes and waterways. Reporting on working party—on evening 15 September achieved agreement on policy: Cl 12 +public process; Cl 13 +final drafting; Cl 14 did not get very far/will refine. Purpose of clauses to maintain and enhance public access. You have my word to maintain and enhance Queen's Chain.

John Armstrong MP, New Plymouth. 24/9/93

Conservation Amendment Bill—undertaking that will not proceed until concerns put to bed. Conservation Amendment Bill won't proceed until fixed. Why is Minister doing this? To bring in line with RMA and (to provide) better access.

Tony Steel MP, Hamilton East. 30/9/93

National trying to get closer to 100% Queen's Chain coverage. No need for 20 metre marginal strip. Public have rights but responsibilities. Conservation Amendment Bill: no way it would go through caucus (if it eroded public rights)—that is an absolute assurance. Re meeting of working party on 15/9/93: no way Bill is going to deny public access— an absolute assurance. Would resign as MP if Bill passed and denied public access. Clauses will be withdrawn completely unless public access will be maintained. The Bill has to be to everyone's satisfaction.

Maurice Williamson MP, Pakuranga. 4/10/93

Conservation Amendment Bill: The legislation will not proceed unless agreement from the (working party) groups on the wording (*named FMC, F&G, F&B, but not PANZ*). National not going to make commitment on extending Queen's Chain.

Bill Birch MP, Maramarua. 6/10/93

Conservation Amendment Bill: Don't want to proceed if there are any ambiguities. Re clause 14 (leases): Not a big deal; could take out; would not support excluding public; select committee has lots of scope.

Alec Neill MP, Waitaki. 8/10/93

Reading Prime Minister's statement: the legislation will not return to the House unless proper protection for all existing Queen's Chain; must increase and enhance the Queen's Chain and this government will do so. Will withdraw clause 13 subject to working party looking (further) at it.

Max Bradford MP, Tarawera. 8/10/93

Free and open access to public lands? Unequivocal guarantee that National will work to enhance by RMA—onus on district councils. Conservation Amendment Bill: no way that national caucus would accept any compromise of public access to the Queen's Chain; the words will say what we mean. Queen's Chain: will do everything possible to enhance public access, given private ownership.

Wayne Kimber MP, Gisborne. 12/10/93

Conservation Amendment Bill: need to do justice to other submissions (before removing clauses). Re charging for access to waterways: commitment by Government to find a solution. Do you support leases over marginal strips? Yes, because we sponsored Bill, But Jim Bolger has stated not our intention to erode public access. Do you favour making it an offence to charge for access to waterways? No practical answer yet.

Hugh Perkins, Dunedin North. 21/10/93.

Make it illegal to charge for access to public waterways? Don't know what National thinks. Do you favour trespass rights over marginal strips? Nothing in Bill will (create such rights); re Cl 14 designed for new rights...



Environment and Conservation Policy

The 'Queen's Chain' concept of public access along the shores of waterways, is recognised as a special, important right bestowed upon all New Zealanders.

New Zealand First will ensure the the 'Queen's Chain' will be retained. Legislation will be introduced to remove the Minister's existing right to alter the width of the 'Queen's Chain'.

Statements by Candidates

Jenny Bloxham, Timaru. 13/9/93
NZF will protect the Queen's Chain.

Tom Harrison, Marlborough. 15/9/93
Queen Victoria's instructions should be ratified.

Dr Ian Shearer, Onehunga. 4/10/93
No argument about the Queen's Chain—part of New Zealand's heritage—no sale of it.

Patra de Coudray, Franklin. 6/10/93.
Absolutely opposed to reducing Queen's Chain.
Public rights will be upheld absolutely.

Eileen Rodriguez, Dunedin North. 21/10/93
NZF committed to protection of Queen's Chain.
Committed to legislate to remove right to diminish width.
Make it illegal to charge for access to public waterways?
Would be preferable to move something in Parliament.

Queen's Chain continued...

...and for some light relief...



**McGillicuddy
Serious Party**
Queen's Chain Policy
by Dominic Worthington



Who is the Queen anyway? While we appreciate that the Queen's Chain is an excellent semi-archaic concept that obviously works well in the modern day we feel it is inappropriately named. Firstly Clan McGillicuddy do not recognise the Queen of England, rather we prefer Bonnie Prince Geoffie, King of Aotearoa-in-waiting. Secondly chain is a hellishly environmentally unsound substance, involving mining and smelting in it's production. Far better to opt for hemp rope.

So what's to be done about the "Prince's Hemp Rope"? Well we feel that it has an essential part to play in bringing peace and harmony to New Zealand. To do this we must extend the definition of a 'Body' of Water to include groups of human beings, which after all are 98% water. Once the McGillicuddy plan for a Great Leap Backwards is implemented and we are all living happily ever after in Post-Nuclear Clans and Tribes then the stretching of the Prince's Hemp Rope (nee Queen's Chain) around these groupings will ensure that that there is no life threatening conflicts, pointless movements of commodities or spread of disease.

Further we should recognise that water comes in solid and gaseous forms which also need protection. So the McGillicuddy Serious Party will put the rope around all ice, steam and clouds. This will ensure sacred status for all mountaintops and prevent jet aircraft from messing up the sky with their trails on a sunny day.

I hope these policies will help to demonstrate that the McGillicuddies will be keeping the Queen's Chain, whoops...Prince's Hemp Rope, in place for the next few centuries at the very least. Any small-time triennial politician that tries to remove it will have to deal with our wrath...

Federated Mountain Clubs' Questionnaire

FMC asked the Alliance and Labour for their view on the Queen's Chain and leasing of conservation land. They replied—

"The principle of public access to all waterways must remain intact. We are therefore totally opposed to the proposals." The Alliance opposes the ability to lease parts of National Parks."



"Labour believes that the changes are unnecessary and undesirable. They are too wide in their application and too open to abuse by this or future governments. Labour is committed to protecting the Queen's chain. We will actively investigate ways of completing the Queen's chain as far as practicable along the coast and the edge of all major rivers and lakes."



'Vote for the Environment' Questionnaire

Will your party—

Amend the Conservation Amendment Bill (No 2) to prevent leasing any part of the Queen's Chain?

Alliance	YES
Labour	YES
National	UNDECIDED
NZ First	YES

Repeal the provisions of the Resource Management Act which exempt subdivisions over 4 hectares from the requirement to create esplanade reserves?

Alliance	UNDECIDED
Labour	UNDECIDED
National	NO
NZ First	YES

Retain in public ownership Crown owned inland waters and the recreational resources therein?

Alliance	YES
Labour	YES
National	YES
NZ First	YES

The Public Estate

Being our national parks, reserves and other conservation areas, fisheries, wildlife, and the sea.

Problems—

- Privatisation pressures from within Government, commercial and other private interests.
- Moves towards divesting public ownership or control to Maori in the absence of hearings, or contrary to findings of fact, by the Waitangi Tribunal.
- Rapidly escalating pressures for public entry charges and restrictions on access.
- Inadequate Government funding for DOC.

PANZ Policy Goals

- Maintain freedom of public entry and access.
- Maintain current protective purposes for national parks and reserves etc.
- Enact the preservation and enhancement of public access to the public estate as a matter of national importance under the Resource Management Act.
- Confine consideration of vesting ownership or control in Maori to those cases which have been validated by findings of fact by the Waitangi Tribunal.
- Consideration of alternatives forms of compensation to that of transferring ownership and control over public lands where claims are proved valid by the Tribunal.
- Remove legislative provisions to create certificates of title over conservation areas, reserves, and national parks; instead maintain a public register of Crown-owned lands.
- Increase state funding for DOC so that it can function without dependence on income from commercial activities or concessionaire fees.



Environment and Conservation Policy

Existing public access to countryside, waterbodies and the conservation estate will be protected and where possible extended.

Tourism Policy

Visitors come to New Zealand primarily to visit our natural resources of lands and waters, flora and fauna. This conservation estate, which covers 30% of the nation, is our greatest resource and must be managed with absolute care to prevent it being destroyed by the very visitors that will come to enjoy it. We must also retain the unique nature of the attractions that generate so much tourist interest rather than blindly copying the tourist attractions and facilities of other countries.

Within this framework we will ensure that the very attractions that visitors come here to appreciate are not themselves placed at risk through overuse or poor management, requiring that we put in place measures that preserve the ecosystem. Any

degradation of the environment by tourism would be a very real disaster, both for the industry and for New Zealanders now and in the future.

Better cooperation of both existing and new developments will provide a sounder base for the industry, and at the same time provide the overview needed to protect and manage the estate in perpetuity and to adhere to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

The initiative between the Tourism Board and the Department of Conservation in drafting a strategy for management of the growth of international visitors to the conservation estate which contains most of the country's significant natural attractions is to be commended.

Key points of Alliance Tourism Policy are—

- The conservation estate will be *managed sustainability, in accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi*.
- The Alliance will continue to fund the Tourism Board at least its present level.
- The public access to conservation land, coast, rivers and lakes will be guaranteed by absolute protection of the 'Queen's Chain'.
- DOC will be given additional funding *to enable it to function alongside the Tourism Board* without being forced to seek commercial revenue.

Statement by Mike Smith, Tourism Spokesperson 17 September 1993

The Alliance recognises the enormous benefit of developing tourism, but *requires our National Parks and Reserves to be developed by local enterprise in partnership with DOC*, and always to maintain the public's right of access to the "Queen's Chain" without exception.

Comment: National parks etc., do not exist for purpose of development, but for preservation of intrinsic values with use consistent with that purpose.

Forestry Policy

Protection, conservation & management of indig. forests—

Wherever possible, public access to these forests for recreation, sport or harvesting of products other than timber will be encouraged, within strict controls for environmental protection and the protection of the enjoyment of other users.

Statements by candidates

Rex Verity, Waitaki. 13/9/93

Concerned about Certificates of Title over the public estate. Alliance view is that public access is not for sale. Tourism— need quality not quantity.

Mike Newlove, St Albans. 14/9/93

Has no policy on Maori claims over public lands, but agrees with PANZ's policy approach.

Danna Glendining, Wellington-Karori. 15/9/93

Treaty of Waitangi: Alliance very committed to the partnership based on Treaty. We have to learn about Treaty and what it means to Maori; very important to debate the Treaty.

Dave Macpherson, Wairarapa. 21/9/93.

Not acceptable to bar access except (for) some emergency and cultural reasons.

Public Estate continued...

Alliance will create fund to rebuild public assets.
Agrees that public access to the public estate should be a matter of national importance in RMA.
Treaty of Waitangi Claims: not happy with settling out of Court; should be alternatives available.

Dr Hamish MacIntyre MP, Manawatu. 22/9/93
Very concerned about DOC as a commercial entrepreneur.

Heather Smith, New Plymouth. 24/9/93
Alliance promises much increased funds for DOC.

Cliff Tait, Hamilton-West. 30/9/93
Will require national park and reserves development in conjunction with DOC.
Existing public access will be protected and where possible extended.

Sandra Lee, Auckland Central. 4/10/93
Alliance will extend where possible public access through legislative means; opposes asset sales and abolition of conservation estate.

Judy Bischoff, Franklin. 6/10/93
Alliance policy that existing public access to countryside protected and where possible extended.

Dr Keith Ridings, Rotorua. 8/10/93
Re Tourism Management Plan:
Parks and reserves should be developed by New Zealanders in partnership with DOC.
Alliance will overturn any law that restricts public access.
No loss of public access in claim settlement? Will take some decades to solve problem.

Graham Smith, Gisborne. 12/10/93
Do you agree with use of public lands for settlement of unproven claims? No, as could be sensible trade-off; generally speaking not national parks.

Derek Holland, Napier. 13/10/93
Tourism Policy— DOC will have funding, *alongside Tourism industry* (to do its job).
Return of public lands to Maori if no proven claim? No. If proven case have to find other means.

Prof Jim Flynn, Dunedin North. 21/10/93.
Alliance accepts that Waitangi Tribunal will decide all cases. Tribunal should be one that makes (judgement); Crown must draw line...
Do not believe that one ethnic group should have privileged access rights.
Role of Waitangi Tribunal or Government to determine validity of claims? Alliance accepts that Waitangi Tribunal will decide all cases.
Would Party agree to handing over conservation areas in absence of favourable findings by Waitangi Tribunal? Should not.
Would Party use other government assets to settle claims? Answer: eg. Stephens Island—would be (prepared to).
Will you increase funding for DOC?
Funding must be enhanced.



Labour's Plan for the Environment
June 1993

Environment Policy

Management and Access Issues Public Access

Maintaining and restoring our natural heritage will be a major challenge, but it will not be enough. We must also ensure that people can enjoy that heritage. Public access rights should be jealously guarded. Cost recoveries by DOC should not be allowed to become a barrier to public entry to these commons.

Nor should too much use be allowed to compromise the very values that people come to see. Nature tourism should not be allowed to destroy the most sought-after parts of the Conservation estate.

Statements by Candidates

Jim Sutton, Waitati. 13/9/93
Ownership irrelevant to creation of public access rights.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 14/9/93
Treaty of Waitangi— Labour has no formal policy (yet).

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 16/9/93
Treaty claims: position as articulated by PANZ about right; made good sense/where it should be.

Geoff Rowling, Tasman. 16/9/93
Supports totally public access to public lands.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 20/9/93
Labour's position on public access—
Cost recoveries by DOC should not become a barrier to public access.
Treaty of Waitangi— DOC estate not as a soft option.

Rex Gorman (for Peter Teahan) Wairarapa. 21/9/93.
Privatisation of land— need to arrest privatisation. There is a role for public ownership of land; protection through government because private ownership will never provide this.

Jill White, Manawatu. 22/9/93
The importance of maintaining public access an unequivocal commitment from Labour.
DOC entrepreneurial role— should not be cost barriers that keep people out; will be very carefully looked at.
Maori claims—obligation to right justified wrongs. Labour does not regard conservation estate as a soft option for righting wrongs.
Freedom of individual to utilise public resources? There are issues of safety and conflict between groups; access is not an absolute.

Public Estate continued...

Stephen Wood, Taranaki. 24/9/93

Treaty claims—unsure if any Labour policy. Doing deals doesn't work; only (legitimate) forum is Waitangi Tribunal.

Martin Gallagher, Hamilton-West. 30/9/93

Claimed Treasury has proposals for charging for access to national parks.

John Chadwick, Rotorua 8/10/93.

No loss of public access in claim settlement? When crown land sells—yes. Where Crown land returns land to Maori ownership, a different situation—cannot give unequivocal assurance.

Janet Mackey, Gisborne. 12/10/93

Do you agree with use of public lands for settlement of unproven claims? No.

Geoff Braybrooke MP, Napier. 13/10/93

Labour caucus has decided that on conservation and other matters select committee with Minister on it will come to (public, away from Wellington) for submissions on proposed Bills before introduction to Parliament.

Return of public lands to Maori if no proven claim? Waitangi Tribunal can only advise; need to judge everything on merits of case.

Comment: Tribunal has two roles: (1) determine findings of fact on claims; (2) make recommendations to government.

Pete Hodgson MP, Dunedin North. 21/10/93.

Role of Waitangi Tribunal or Government to determine validity of claims? I do not think that Tribunal has any other role than recommendatory. No Labour policy.

Comment: as above.

Would Party agree to handing over conservation areas in absence of favourable findings by Waitangi Tribunal? Should not.

Would Party hand over areas such as Caples and Greenstone to Ngai Tahu contrary to findings by Waitangi Tribunal? There will be a three-way division in high country when change of lease. Labour intent on changing Land Act. May well be settlement by way of leases. Leaseholding and freeholding vastly different. If leaseholding then three-way split.

Would Party use other government assets to settle claims? Things wrong that conservation estate not part of agreed claim ought to be part of any settlement.

Labour policy is for access (by 'environmental' groups) to legal aid.

Will you increase funding for DOC? Funding will be returned to level when Labour left office.



National Manifesto '93

Environment Policy

Achievements of first term—

- introduced amendments to the Conservation Act to improve management of the Crown's estate.

Protecting Our Heritage

National will—

- Carefully manage the Crown's conservation estate to ensure it can be enjoyed by future generations of New Zealanders.

Photo caption:

"Attractions like the Abel Tasman National Park are priceless *commercial* assets, but they must be protected".

Maori Development

Progressing Treaty of Waitangi claims: both Maori and Government want to move as quickly as possible beyond a focus on grievance and wrong-doing. The settlement of Treaty claims must be seen as a vehicle for progressing issues of Maori development. The Government reaffirms its commitment to settling all major claims by the turn of the century.

Statements by Candidates

Alec Neill MP, Waitaki. 13/9/93

Crown Estate— tracks should be open to all.
Need for greater signage of access(ways).

Alec Neill MP, Waitaki 14/9/93

Divesting ownership of public lands to Maori—it is essential that there is adequate protection (for the public).
Concerned at any charging by Maori for public access.

Nick Smith MP, Tasman. 16/9/93

Maori claim settlements: categorical assurance that Queen's Chain will always be set aside.

If any proposal to build hotels in public estate I will oppose it.

Denis Marshall MP, Rangitikei. 20/9/93

Treaty of Waitangi: commitment that conservation values should never be diminished (by use of public estate in settlements). Would require an Act if marginal strips had to be foregone in any Treaty settlement.

Mt Hikurangi: both parties equally aggrieved; at an impasse. Some modification will occur on leases over national parks etc. There will be nothing in the Bill that will limit access.

Denis Marshall MP, Rangitikei. 22/9/93

No commitment to vest large areas of public estate in Maori; status of conservation lands must remain. Would not enter into arrangements that deny public access.

Public Estate continued...

Mt Hikurangi deal has been unsatisfactory; a stalemate over that area.

Freedom of individual to utilise public resources? We impose some restrictions on what we can do—with every freedom there comes responsibilities.

Gray Baldwin, Manawatu. 22/9/93

Don't be threatened by 3 million tourists; incredible money-spinner.

Gael Donoghue, Wanganui. 23/9/93

Essential that New Zealanders have access to the outdoors.

Tony Steel MP, Hamilton East. 30/9/93

Treaty Claims: There are no secret deals; only substantiated or proven grievances being used.

Bill Birch MP, Maramarua. 6/10/93

The Milford track position (freely available public use) should apply (in national parks).

Totally opposed to charging for use of tracks.

Max Bradford MP, Tarawera. 8/10/93

Free and open access to public lands? Unequivocal guarantee that National will work to enhance by RMA—onus on district councils.

Maori claims?

Personal position of being totally and utterly opposed to public conservation areas being used for settlement of claims; unrestricted access will be maintained.

No loss of public access in claim settlement?

Public must continue to have public access to that land; also National Party's position.

Wayne Kimber MP, Gisborne. 12/10/93

Treaty claims—personally against free trading of access to public estate.

Do you agree with use of public lands for settlement of unproven claims? No.

Hugh Perkins, Dunedin North. 21/10/93

Would Party agree to handing over conservation areas in absence of favourable findings by Waitangi Tribunal? Would be happy to seek Party position.

Would party use other government assets to settle claims? Would negotiate with anything of commercial value, but think that anything in conservation estate doesn't fit.

Supports public access as it is, and increases where it doesn't cause major problem with economic impacts.

Will you increase funding for DOC? Happy to seek national position.

Don't accept that public ownership is prerequisite for public access.



Jenny Bloxham, Timaru. 13/9/93

PANZ slogan ("Public Access—Public Ownership") could be ours.

NZF will defend right of New Zealanders of free access, and personal freedom's and liberties.

Tom Harrison, Marlborough. 15/9/93

NZF owe no allegiance to the party, but to electors.

Public ownership and control will be retained.

Eileen Rodriguez, Dunedin North. 21/10/93

Would Party agree to handing over conservation areas in absence of favourable findings by Waitangi Tribunal? Would listen to Tribunal.

'Vote for the Environment' Questionnaire

Will your party—

Retain the principle of free pedestrian access across public lands and amend section 26ZN of the Conservation Law Reform Act to include prohibition on access charges?

Alliance	YES
Labour	YES
National	YES
NZ First	YES

Retain in public ownership Crown owned inland waters and the recreational resources therein?

Alliance	YES
Labour	YES
National	YES
NZ First	YES

In the settlement of Treaty claims, ensure that the Crown consults the people of New Zealand, including environmental and recreation groups?

Alliance	YES
Labour	YES
National	YES
NZ First	YES

Public Estate continued...

FMC Questionnaire

Treaty of Waitangi Claims over Public Estate

FMC asked what forms of settlement would be offered to Maori who made claims for conservation lands that had been acquired in breach of the Treaty. FMC listed four possible options ranging from handing ownership to Maori to offering other land or money instead. Labour and the Alliance did not identify which of the options they would be offering. Their comments were:

Alliance

“Where any Maori claimant has succeeded in a claim that includes a property regarded as having conservation and environmental values of exceptional quality, the Crown will negotiate a new arrangement including the use of the Public Works Act.”

Labour

“The conservation estate must not be regarded as a soft option for resolving claims and grievances in the absence of other substantial Crown assets. Any settlements must be acceptable to the public as the Crown’s stakeholders because they are not, resentment is likely to result and fester.”

National

Mr Marshall replied that the option offered would depend on the circumstances and merit of a particular case. He said that Maori ownership, Maori management or offering other land or money might be appropriate and that “there may be other options as well”.

Coastal Policy

“Will you rewrite the National Coastal Policy Statement so that priority is given to the protection of natural coastal areas and the provisions for public access are upgraded”?

Alliance

“An Alliance government will study the issue and if necessary amend the statement “

Labour

“Should the National government’s version fail to provide adequate environmental protection for the Coast we will review it.”

National

“The government will await the recommendations of the board of inquiry that is currently hearing submissions on the statement before considering changes to the draft policy.”

Public Roads

Formed and unformed roads provide the primary and usually only means of public access through the countryside and to public lands and waters.

Problem—

- Widespread obstruction of public rights of passage and lack of requirements for the administering district councils to uphold public rights of use.

PANZ Policy Goal

- Introduction of a statutory duty on district councils to assert and protect public rights of use.



Statements by Candidates

Danna Glendining, Wellington-Karori. 20/9/93

‘Paper’ Roads: (people with concerns) should become decision-makers in district councils.

Dave Macpherson, Wairarapa. 21/9/93

Public Roads: would agree to legislative duty (on district councils to protect public rights).

Graham Smith, Gisborne. 12/10/93

Do you support introducing a statutory duty on district councils to enforce public rights of passage over public roads? (Yes) — (Councils) won’t do it if there is not an obligation.

Derek Holland, Napier. 13/10/93

Would you introduce a statutory duty on district councils to uphold public rights over public roads? Yes, with possible proviso for closure for fire risk.



Rex Gorman (for Peter Teahan) Wairarapa. 21/9/93

Public Roads: should take roads back out of local (government) hands.

Geoff Braybrooke MP, Napier. 13/10/93

Would you introduce a statutory duty on district councils to uphold public rights over public roads? Yes, Labour were starting to before 1990 then got the boot. Law should be strengthened, there is a huge gap in it.

Public Roads continued...



Alec Neill MP, Waitaki. 13/9/93
Need for greater signage of access(ways).

Nick Smith MP, Tasman. 16/9/93
Public Roads: a system of compulsory signage on all unformed public roads needed.

Denis Marshall MP, Rangitikei. 22/9/93
Public Roads—In favour of duty over roads? Best done by voluntary negotiation; best advanced by goodwill in community.

Max Bradford MP, Tarawera. 8/10/93
Public roads: if a problem (with obstruction) will guarantee that select committee will look at it; define the nature of the problem for government.

Wayne Kimber MP, Gisborne. 12/10/93
Do you support introducing a statutory duty on district councils to enforce public rights of passage over public roads? (No)—understand there are obligations to spend money (don't agree that council's should have to for this purpose).

Comment: There are no obligations on Councils to spend money on roads.

Pastoral Leases

These are the largest remaining category of Crown-owned lands outside the conservation estate. There are 2.5 million hectares of high country and mountainous lands under pastoral lease in the South island. This is 10 percent of N Z. It is a huge potential resource for public recreation and enjoyment that should be made more readily available. Currently it is only available at the pleasure of the runholders who hold trespass rights even over ungrazable lands. This is an anachronism that successive Governments have failed to deal with. The only right-of-use that runholders have is grazing; anything else requires Government consent. There are growing pressures for the granting of commercial recreation rights to runholders. If granted these will shut out the general public in favour of the patrons of commercial ventures.

Problem—

- Lack of land tenure reform and provision of public access.

PANZ Policy Goals

- Amend the Land Act as a matter of high priority to allow for comprehensive three-way categorisation and reallocation of land —
 - primarily conservation areas to DOC;
 - improved farmland as freehold;
 - a new leasehold over the balance with provision for overlapping conservation, landscape, recreation values, and grazing (eg., the remaining tall tussock grasslands).
- Provide public rights of access as part of the above process.
- Withhold granting further commercial recreational rights over pastoral leases unless first categorised with provision for secure public access.

Alliance

No manifesto statements.



Environment Policy
South Island High Country

Labour will augment these efforts (Rabbit and Land Management Programme etc.) by rationalising high country leases. This will require a review of the Land Act 1948 to establish tenure and controls that promote ecologically sustainable land use. Practices such as burning off high country tussock must not be permitted where significant conservation values would be compromised.

Statements by Candidates

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 14/9/93
Pastoral leases— Labour approves of three-way split; should review Land Act; cannot be put off any longer.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 16/9/93
Pastoral leases: favour three-way split.

John Blincoe MP, Nelson. 20/9/93
Pastoral leases— Land Act overdue for revision; favour three-way split.

Janet Mackey, Gisborne. 12/10/93
Pastoral leases: Labour will explore provision of public access as condition of renewal of leases.

Pete Hodgson MP, Dunedin North. 21/10/93
Would Party hand over areas such as Caples and Greenstone to Ngai Tahu contrary to findings by Waitangi Tribunal?
There will be a three-way division in high country when change of lease. Labour intent on changing Land Act. May well be settlement by way of leases. Leaseholding and freeholding vastly different. If leaseholding then three-way split.

Pastoral Leases continued...



Alec Neill MP, Waitaki. 13/9/93

Pastoral leases—National looking at three categories; third category (restricted use) being reviewed but no commitment.

FMC Questionnaire

South Island High Country

FMC asked if the party would bring in the proposed 3-way classification of pastoral lease land and allocate land with predominant conservation values to DOC.

Alliance

Yes. Negotiations will be held with all interested groups to address the issue.

Labour

Yes. Support a three way split and intend to review the Land Act "to establish tenure and controls that promote ecologically sustainable land use".

National

Yes. "National fully intends to amend the Land Act to enable land in the high country to be transferred to the Conservation estate for ongoing protection. On the other side of the coin, land with predominant farming value will be able to be freeholded by the current lessee".

Comment: Does not appear to be a commitment to 3-way categorisation, therefore consistent with other responses.

'Vote for the Environment' Questionnaire

Will your party—

Rewrite the Land Act to provide for three-way categorisation of pastoral leases with land with predominant conservation values being protected by the Department of Conservation? Special leases for land with both conservation and farm values should be drawn up.

Alliance UNDECIDED (support in principle)

Labour YES

National NO COMMITMENT

Thanks

PANZ wishes to thank all those brave candidates who were prepared to front-up at public forums, and to Garrick Tremain for permission to use his hilarious cartoon.

Access Tour Great Success

PANZ's pre-election tour of New Zealand by spokesperson Bruce Mason proved an outstanding success.

Bruce addressed 21 meetings between Dunedin and Auckland over a six week period, having already addressed a meeting in Invercargill a month earlier. Approximately 2500 people attended the meetings, as did a large number of politicians eager to proclaim their support for public access, and for the protection of the Queen's Chain in particular.

Besides providing an avenue for airing PANZ's policies, the tour resulted in ear-bashings for politicians when they were told by audiences, in no uncertain terms, to stop meddling with the public birthright and matters of national heritage.

As an on-going tour, access issues got good coverage in the news media, much to the consternation of the Government. The Queen's Chain quickly became an election issue, with the political parties falling over themselves with policies for its protection and enhancement. Other policy areas, for instance on the handling of Maori land claims over public lands, saw significant developments.

In this issue of *Public Access* you have on record the main policy commitments. It will no doubt be necessary to remind the new Government from time to time of its policy position as enunciated during the election campaign, and to ensure that fine words are reflected by positive actions.

The tour would not have been possible were it not for the considerable efforts of many organisers and helpers. PANZ is greatly indebted to them. Special thanks to those who provided accommodation and hospitality for Bruce. PANZ would like to acknowledge the organisational support provided by staff and councillors of Fish and Game Councils throughout the country.

The following resolutions were carried at meetings—

Christchurch 14 September 1993

Amendment to Bill of Rights

"THAT this meeting urge Public Access New Zealand to press for the right of free access to the Queen's Chain, as proclaimed by Queen Victoria, to be included in the Bill of Rights and that Public Access New Zealand petition the Queen for her support to ensure that Queen Victoria's wishes on this matter should be inviolate".

"THAT this meeting requests Public Access New Zealand to consider petitioning the Queen to reject applications for honours sought for those politicians and others who have jeopardised free public access to the Queen's Chain, Esplanades, Marginal Strips or other Public (Crown) Lands".

Masterton 21 September 1993

"THAT this meeting send to the Minister of Conservation the message that Government leave the Queen's Chain alone".

Nelson 16 September 1993

“THAT this meeting conveys its concern regarding the Queen’s Chain to the present and to prospective governments and demands that:

- (a) The Government endorses for all time the right to a ‘Queen’s Chain’ and vigilantly opposes any restrictions to public use of it.
- (b) That a statutory right of access along a strip not less than 20m be granted adjacent to all rivers, lakes and the coast irrespective of land tenure.
- (c) That the public’s right of access over all road reserves be safeguarded by a statutory obligation to be placed on local and government road controlling authorities”.

Wanganui 23 September 1993

“That the meeting fully support public access and public ownership”.

Advice to Minister on Bill

In response to growing public alarm, in mid-September Conservation Minister Denis Marshall appointed a non-government working party to review controversial clauses in the Conservation Amendment Bill. PANZ, as well as Forest and Bird, FMC, Environment and Conservation Organisations (ECO), and the NZ Fish & Game Council reported to the Minister on 26 October on the changes necessary to protect public access to waterways.

The main recommendations from the working party are that:

1. Proposed powers to reduce the width of marginal strips down to 3 metres along river banks (clause 12) should proceed ON THE PROVISIO THAT (1) Government also create the ability to have strips wider than 20 metres to allow practical access along sea shores, lakes and rivers, and (2) the Minister’s existing powers to waive in total marginal strips are constrained, being confined to urban situations where no public benefit would be gained by their creation. In addition it was recommended that all future Ministerial discretions on width reductions and waivers be subject to referral to Conservation Boards and public objection procedures.
2. That clause 13 be amended so that when public reserves are vested under private control without marginal strips being laid off, as proposed by the Bill, proposed vestings be subject to consideration by Conservation Boards who may require public consultation.
3. That clause 14 be deleted from the Bill, removing a proposed ability to issue leases and licences with trespass rights over marginal strips. The working party found that there was no evidence to show that a change to the present law is necessary and most members were unconvinced that such a radically new provision was desirable.

The stated aims of the Government, being to improve public access to beaches, lakes and rivers, would be achieved by the changes recommended for the Bill, working party member Bruce Mason said. “We were heartened by the Prime Minister’s statement that he would not allow the Bill to proceed unless it improves access for New Zealanders. We are of the view that our proposals will achieve that aim”.

There is however a lot of public apprehension that the Government will delay stating its position on changes to the Bill until after the election, Mr Mason said. The fear is that the working party’s recommendations will be liable to be disregarded after November 6.

If public confidence is to be maintained, the Government must state its acceptance of the working party’s recommendations prior to the election, and a commitment to implement them if re-elected, Mr Mason concluded.

Access News

Please send clippings (with date and source) to PANZ

Otago Daily Times

18 October 1993

Peaceful protesters form links to save Queen’s Chain

Children, their mums and dads, a few grandparents, young people and dogs formed a chain on St Kilda beach, Dunedin, yesterday afternoon in a peaceful protest against the Government’s Queen’s Chain legislation.

Organised by Leah McBey, the Alliance candidate for St Kilda, more than 200 people turned out to show their concern about the proposed legislation which could alter rights of access to the Queen’s Chain.

The participants staked out an area of beach, made cardboard chains (which said “vote Leah McBey”) and linked arms to form the chain.

Recently the Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, said he would not allow the legislation to proceed unless it improved access for New Zealanders.

But Ms McBey said yesterday she did not believe Mr Bolger. Even if he did stick to his commitment, she organised the protest to give a “strong indication” that if any government tampered with the Queen’s Chain, or any of the country’s national parks, it would come up against strong public opposition.

One of those taking part, Jim Robinson, of St Kilda, described the legislation as “totally unfair”.

He turned out with his wife, Joy and grandchildren, Belinda Bennett and Kyle Harvey. If the legislation was passed, Mr Robinson feared he might no longer be able to pan for gold in a spot on the West Coast.

The protest was a little different. Although there was the odd placard, those who took part enjoyed the ‘Pog ‘n’ Scroggin’ Bush Band, a parachutist and a sausage sizzle. A beach clean-up followed and everyone who took part was given a toitoi seedling.

Editorial

PUBLIC access to rivers, lakes and coastal waters has always been a right which New Zealanders have taken for granted. And with good reason. Such access is part of the country's history. It was granted through a device known as the Queen's chain — 20-metre wide strips of land set aside next to waterways — so called because it was a gift to the people of New Zealand by Queen Victoria in 1840.

But it was more than that. It was an expression of the egalitarian spirit of the country's European pioneers and a reaction against what they had come from — a country where access to rivers, lakes and streams was denied the ordinary person and was a privilege of the wealthy and high-born.

The Queen's chain has become so accepted that it was thought to be beyond threat. However, that may not be the case. Proposed amendments to the Conservation Act are being considered by a planning and development committee of Parliament which could hinder the long-prized public access. The proposed amendments would give the Conservation Minister Denis Marshall power to reduce the width of new marginal strips from 20 metres to 3 metres and enable him to grant leases and licences over all areas of the Queen's chain when Crown land is privatized. If a marginal strip was leased, the lessee would have trespass rights and could deny public access. In all probability, a lessee could charge for access.

Unquestionably, this is an attack on a traditional right and will undoubtedly be resisted strongly. Already an organization to fight the proposal has been formed and meetings are being held throughout the country. It will be supported not only by those who hold traditional rights dearly, but also by those who rely on public access for their recreation pastimes like fishing and hunting. Organized hunting and fishing groups, powerful lobby groups, have also declared themselves against the proposed amendments.

It can be wondered why the Government, which does not lack political awareness, has meddled with this issue so close to a general election. It knows full well the anger the issue is capable of stirring. If it is genuine in its backing for the amendments, it seems to be lacking in perspicacity, and will deserve all it gets because there will be a political backlash. A wiser option would be for the proposals to be amended as they go through the various stages in the House, and by the Government itself.

It could be argued that the proposals are a tidy-up attempt for legislation which is long out of date. Perhaps. But the public is correct to be concerned. At present, about 70 percent of the country's major waterways and coasts are protected. The Government should concentrate its efforts on raising this figure. That would be more in tune with the public mood.

Young and old net big rises in cost of fishing: on the hook

ANGLERS young and old at Billericay's Lake Meadows can expect massive increases in the price of fishing the lake following the privatisation of its management.

Basildon Council has licensed Angling Enterprises to run three fishing lakes in the district, including Lake Meadows.

But to cover the cost of restocking the waters and improvements, the company has increased prices. That means 11 to 15 year olds with two rods can expect charge increases of nearly 400 per cent for a day's fishing and OAPs with two rods will see rises of nearly 300 per cent. Adult charges will also increase.

The Tory authority decided to hand over management to a private firm because the council was making approximately a £15,000 loss on maintenance of the lakes. Now they will receive a £4,000 fee from Angling Enterprises for the right to manage the three lakes for a year.

RESTOCKING

Angling Enterprises boss, Mr Mick Toomer, told the Gazette he did not think the charge increases were unreasonable but that they simply brought prices at the lakes in line with other lakes in the area.

He said: "There is an awful lot of work that needs to be done on rebuilding the banks and I'm also restocking the waters.

"On top of this I'm paying Basildon Council and two bailiffs to patrol the lakes. All this costs a lot of money."

He added that of the three lakes taken over, Lake Meadows is in the best condition and far more work would be needed on the other two. But he denied that anglers at Billericay would be subsidising those at other lakes.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

Deputy leader of Basildon Council, Mr Malcolm Buckley, also thought the charges reflected going rates and added: "The improvements that are planned for the lakes will be of great benefit to all who fish in them. This firm will be able to provide the expertise and facilities that the council could not."

But leader of Basildon's Labour Group, Cllr John Potter, said: "This decision was not made in the interest of the anglers or the people of the district, it was made in the interest of private enterprise and profit.

"The contract wasn't even put out to tender so we have no way of knowing if it is competitive."

An adult day ticket for two rods will now cost £5 instead of £4.80, 11 to 15 year-olds will pay £3.50 instead of 90p and OAPs will pay £3.50 as opposed to £1.30.

Day charges for those fishing with one rod will be £1 for five to 11-year olds, £2 for 11 to 15-year-olds (both of which groups would have previously paid 65p) and £3 for those over 16 as opposed to the old charge of £2.40.

Season tickets are also to be introduced and a range of discounts for the disabled fishers.

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