

**Press Release: 25/05/2014**

**Political and Financial Considerations in Conservation Minister's monorail decision.**

Save Fiordland expects the Minister of Conservation's long-awaited decision on the Fiordland monorail to be announced within the week. In December Nick Smith expressed his concern over being exposed to the expensive consequences of thirty kilometres of unfinished or unused monorail and roading through this World Heritage Area. He requested consultants' assessments and departmental advice on the Financial Viability of the concept. These were completed a number of months ago.

This Financial Viability assessment is widely predicted to be the final nail in the coffin for the developer's dream of building the world's longest monorail to his exclusively held hotel site.

Even the least conservation friendly government would balk at the likelihood of picking the tab for a failed private development, especially one in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Conservation and recreational groups have decried both the proposal, and DoC for allowing it to get so far through the concession process. The wider tourism industry has been far from supportive of the concept, considering it both inappropriate and seriously flawed.

In the meantime Save Fiordland's petition to Parliament continues to grow with a further 2,000 signatures being added since it was first presented two months ago. The majority of the latest coming from tourist visitors to the area.

Todd Barclay, National's replacement for Bill English as candidate in Clutha-Southland should be watching closely. Government approval for a private project designed to bypass tourist dependent towns from Kingston to Te Anau would be an unwelcome hospital pass so close to the election.

A Save Fiordland survey of the businesses from these towns gave an overwhelming message that they wished far more support from their elected representative. If Smith says "Yes", the perception of government favouritism for Queenstown over all others would be confirmed.

ENDS

**Save Fiordland Incorporated.**

**Contact:** Bill Jarvie (Chairman) 021 540 821



*It's our World Heritage*