

Federated Mountain Clubs commits to fight monorail and tunnel

Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand, representing over 15,000 trampers and climbers, today pledged \$15,000 to the Save Fiordland campaign, who are preparing to take legal action should the Minister of Conservation grant concessions for either the Milford Dart tunnel, or Fiordland Experience monorail concession applications.

FMC President, Mr McNeill said that \$15,000 was a lot of money, but these projects struck at the heart of everything the federation stood for. "That these applications haven't already been declined makes a mockery of democracy. If these applications get granted, they will ruin special family tramping areas. Say goodbye to World Heritage recognition. Say goodbye to the backcountry throughout New Zealand at the same time!" he said.

Mr McNeill said he remained optimistic that DOC would not grant the concessions. However, if DOC did do the right thing and decline them the money would likely be needed to fight an appeal by the applicants. "It's a mess either way. We'd sooner go tramping than fight legal battles", he said, "but that's not a choice right now".

Mr McNeill, said that it was critical that the Save Fiordland campaign succeeded and urged New Zealanders to also donate as over \$100,000 may be needed to take a judicial review.

For more information:

Robin McNeill
president@fmc.org.nz
(21) 516 366

SAVE FIORDLAND overwhelmed by commitment of Federated Mountain Clubs, a nationwide recognition of the issues at stake

In accepting a pledge of \$15,000 from Federated Mountain Clubs today, Save Fiordland Chairperson, Daphne Taylor, said that the group was 'absolutely stoked' and wants to thank the members of FMC. "To have a national body such as Federated Mountain Clubs recognising the crucial issues under attack with the processing of the monorail and tunnel concession applications and committing to fight with us, is a very significant step forward in our campaign. The issues at stake are national ones; the precedents being set need to concern us all. This pledge states that plainly."

New Zealanders committed to its special wilderness areas have, in good faith, put a lot of thought and time into helping develop the management documents that govern how we use our public conservation land. Ms Taylor said that the Minister of Conservation and her department must take heed of the intent of such legislation wherever it is applied in New Zealand.

As Save Fiordland moves further in to focussing on the legislation and the flaws in its application in the instance of these two proposals, such support as pledged by FMC is essential, Ms Taylor said. "We intend to prove the worth of such a significant commitment from so many New Zealanders."

For more information:

Save Fiordland Inc.

Daphne Taylor
Chairperson - info@savefiordland.org.nz
021 382 779

Frana Cardno
Spokesperson
027 434 6773