



tourism
INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION NEW ZEALAND

Submission to

Department of Conservation (DOC)

on

Gazetted Wilderness Areas

14 August 2011

TIA has been an active submitter on CMS plans and as such, we have commented on the issue of concessionaire activity in wilderness areas many times. We congratulate the department on addressing this and other issues which have traditionally been tackled inconsistently (within national parks) and caused concern to a range of users.

TIA feels strongly that:

1. Commercial recreation should be permitted in wilderness areas providing it is of a group size and frequency that meets the outcomes sought from the area.
2. TIA believes that wilderness areas demand a great deal of self-reliance from any recreationist, whether guided or independent. By their very nature, wilderness areas are difficult to access and demanding to explore.
3. The department should encourage people to tramp within their limits and utilise the skills of experienced guides when it is wise to do so. Arguably, the more remote and challenging the trip, the more people should be encouraged to use commercial support. NZ's tourism industry attracts many very capable alpinists who still choose to use guides for trips into places with which they are not familiar. This should also apply to designated wilderness areas.
4. The size and frequency of non-commercial parties entering wilderness areas is not controlled in any way – it is therefore quite possible that a large group may be encountered e.g. a tramping club expedition. In comparison, small, controlled concessionaire groups would have far less impact on other users and the environment and as such should be actively encouraged, rather than excluded.
5. The department is actively fostering commercial activity that is consistent with conservation outcomes. TIA believes well managed commercial activity on any public conservation land, including wilderness areas, is consistent with conservation and also brings significant safety and quality benefits to the experience.
6. Designated wilderness areas can be perceived as the last bastion of the original good keen man or woman. While the purity associated with this image is quite compelling, the reality is quite different. NZ is blessed with an almost endless range of very remote experiences for the totally self sufficient and/or those who spurn contact with commercial clients. The real challenge is to halt the declining number of people accessing our more remote areas; something that won't be assisted by removing one of the access options i.e. commercially supported recreation.
7. The benefits of commercial recreation are many and varied and will apply to concessionaire activity within wilderness areas. These benefits include:
 - a. Providing recreational opportunities for a wider range of visitors than would otherwise be possible
 - b. Communicating appropriate information, behaviour, protocol and conservation messages to their clients
 - c. Generating revenue from concession fees which can contribute towards conservation projects and park management
 - d. Generating foreign exchange earnings

- e. Providing locally-based and national employment opportunities
 - f. Increasing recognition of the area amongst visitors
 - g. Enabling a wider range of people (for example less experienced or less physically able) to safely enjoy the mountains
 - h. Providing a pool of trained guides for search and rescue attempts, and helping out private recreationists in the area, should the need arise
 - i. Imparting conservation values to clients, and encouraging them to become involved in conservation
 - j. Actively managing clients in ways that they may appreciate the natural environment with minimal impact
8. TIA does not favour access being possible in some wilderness areas, and not in others. For all the reasons listed above, we feel very strongly that the departments focus should be firmly on managing outcomes at place; not exacerbating the perception's that non-commercial recreationists have greater rights than those who choose to use commercial expertise.
- All wilderness areas are for people to enjoy, let's ensure the experience they enjoy is compatible with the area and not determined by excluding those who choose to pay their leader, rather than elect one.
9. TIA does not wish to comment at this time on the other two questions related to the use of helicopters by the department and WARO activity.

The department may be interested in a range of comments on both aircraft management and commercial activity in wilderness areas made in earlier TIA submissions. For this reason we have included links to two earlier submissions on the Mt Aspiring National Park plan and West Coast CMS respectively:

In the link below, please refer particularly to point 94 (Dart and Rees Valley) and point 113 The Olivine Wilderness area.

<http://www.tianz.org.nz/content/library/1mountaspiring.pdf>

In the link below, please refer particularly to point 41 and you may be interested to read through to point 46 which touches on aircraft provisions.

<http://www.tianz.org.nz/content/library/DraftWestCoastCMS.pdf>

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. **TIA would like to meet with the department to further discuss this submission.**

Background

Who is the Tourism Industry Association New Zealand (TIA)?

1. TIA has been the lead association that represents the interests of about 1,700 tourism businesses in New Zealand. The Association was first established in 1955 and the businesses TIA represents cover a range of tourism-related activities – hospitality, transport, accommodation, adventure and activities, attractions and retail as well as related tourism services.
2. The primary role of TIA is to be the voice of the tourism industry. This includes working for members on advocacy, policy, communication, events and membership and business services. The TIA team is based in Wellington and led by Chief Executive Tim Cossar.

Value of Tourism

3. As New Zealand's single largest export industry, tourism provides valuable export dollars with much of this money spent in the country's more rural and remote regions. Below is a snapshot of the economic value provided by tourism to the New Zealand economy:
 - Tourism contributes more than 8.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) for New Zealand as well as directly and indirectly employing one in ten New Zealanders.
 - Tourism in New Zealand is a \$61 million per day industry. The New Zealand tourism industry delivers \$26 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$35 million in economic activity every day.
 - Tourism expenditure reached \$22.4 billion for the year ended March 2010. International visitor expenditure accounted for \$9.5 billion or 18.2% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings.

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14 August 2011