

TOKOROA ALPINE CLUB RE SEWAGE SCHEME SUBMISSIONS

This submission relates to the belief of the Tokoroa Alpine Club that Central Government should contribute to the cost of the proposed upgrade to the sewage scheme at Whakapapa on Mt Ruapehu. In particular, reference is made to R6.8 on Page 178 of the draft report of the Productivity Commission.

The Tokoroa Alpine Club was formed in order to provide residents of Tokoroa and surrounding districts with affordable opportunities to take part in alpine activities. The main focus of the Club in recent years has been the operation of a Lodge on Mt Ruapehu to enable Club members and their guests to stay on the mountain and take part in activities such as skiing and tramping. Membership of the Club was initially restricted to residents of the district surrounding Tokoroa but in order to ensure the Club's financial viability, that restriction was removed in recent years. However the Club continues to provide affordable accommodation in the Club's Lodge on the mountain because the Lodge was built and is maintained by volunteers and the Club is administered entirely by volunteers.

The Club has always been willing to pay a fair share of the cost of the sewage scheme on the mountain. When the scheme was first installed the Club, along with other Clubs with Lodges on the mountain, paid a proportion of the cost. It is now proposed by the Department of Conservation that the scheme be upgraded at considerable expense, and it is assumed that the Club, along with other Clubs, will be required to pay a proportion of the cost. It is also assumed that the need for rather upgrade and the cost of an upgraded system have been brought about because the greatly increased number of day visitors, particularly tourists, are putting pressure on the public facilities on the mountain.

The Club believes that it would be unfair for the Club and other Clubs to be required to pay the same proportion of the upgrade cost as the proportion of the original cost.

The Club believes that the remedy would be for the sewage upgrade by the Department of Conservation to be partially funded from the international visitor levy as proposed in R6.8 of the draft report.