

HEARING NOTES
Hearing of Submissions Pursuant to section 49 of the Conservation Act 1987
Riverstone Holdings Limited 'Fiordland Link Experience' Monorail Concession
Application April 2012

Background;

The Minister of Conservation's Intention to grant a concession to Riverstone Holdings Limited for the construction and operation of a monorail and mountain bike track through the Snowdon Forest Conservation Area with termini facilities at Te Anau Downs in Fiordland National Park and on Marginal Strip at the Mararoa River was notified for public comment in December 2011.

315 written submissions were received, and 80 people requested to be heard in support of their written submission. Of the 80 people who requested to be heard, 57 attended the hearing (either in person, or over the phone). Hearings were spread over 4 days; 2- 3 and 16 – 17 April 2012. RHL presented their right of reply on the last day of hearings, 17 April 2012.

Submissions were heard by Graeme Ayres acting as the Director of General of Conservation, pursuant to section 49 of the Conservation Act 1987.

The purpose of hearings was to provide an opportunity for those who wished to present their submission in person, or to clarify their written submission, to speak in person to the representative of the Director General of Conservation.
All written submissions will be taken into account by the Minister of Conservation, regardless if people spoke to their submission in person or not.

The purpose of these hearing notes is to assist the Hearing Chair in preparing a summary of submissions (pursuant to s 49 of the Conservation Act 1987). As such the notes below are not a transcript of the proceedings, they are a relatively informal record of comments made by submitters, questions put to submitters (by the Hearing Chair and/or his assistants) and responses made by submitters.

28 May 2012

Monday 2 April 2012 Distinction Hotel – Te Anau
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Graeme Ayres (Chair), Chris Visser, Claire Lenihan (Solicitor), Erin Dunlop (note taking)

9.06am: Introduction by Graeme Ayers – Introduced staff and proposal.

Frana Cardno #290: 9:15am

Personal submission, not submission as District Mayor.

However because she is Mayor of Southland, she is well placed to hear and understand the views of the wider community. Linked to Fiordland for 25 years, is part of soul.

Attended World Heritage conference – Japan and China. It is a privilege to be in World Heritage. Proud to be representing our World Heritage Area in New Zealand, and alongside the DOC, as a partnership.

Concerned the Fiordland National Park Management Plan was reviewed while the Monorail was being explored as a possible transport method, yet this plan does not provide for the monorail.

Grant of a concession would be inconsistent with the above public processes.

Really important to respect the consultative process around the review of National Park Management Plan, and the 'trust' of public that DOC will implement plans formed as a result of consultation processes.

The foresight of predecessors to make the area World Heritage Area, to preserve for future generations should be respected.

DOC is charged with looking after our environments, and I feel let down. This area feeds your soul and I feel upset at what could happen to this wonderful valley and trees.

Use of the area should not unduly affect another visitor's experience, in peace and solitude. We are losing the wilderness and remote areas which have a finite area globally. This is a place where people can get away from it all. Recreation and tourism facilities such as these would deprive people of this privilege.

NZ is one of the few places in the world where these places exist.

Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu and DOC – Deed of Settlement has not been addressed in report. This has significant implications from environmental and commercial perspective and brings into question the robustness of the statutory process.

Grant of the Concession would be a breach of the terms of the Conservation Act and a breach of natural justice. The proposed activity is inconsistent with the purpose for which the application land is held. "The applicant has failed to identify how the application would improve the value of the Fiordland National Park".

The effects of the activities proposed cannot be adequately avoided remedied or mitigated.

The transport can be adequately covered by existing transport routes such as the Milford Road – proposed route does not improve access to Milford Sound.

The activity would destroy the intrinsic values of the Kiwi Burn, Mavora and Upukerora areas.

The application fails to recognise the partnerships between the DOC and existing concession holders, and that this concession could have implications for the operations of existing concessionaires.

Grant of the Concession would be inconsistent with the World Heritage Area principles.

Application lacking significant detail. It contains effects unable to be mitigated. For example replacement of 800yo beach, replacement of important red tussock.

Ad Hoc approach to managing our environment.

Significant effects on tourism to NZ, and jeopardises the reputation of export products.

It is an honour for me to be mayor of this area, and I have an acute awareness of the opposition to this application by locals and residents nearby.

The proposed project is subject to unacceptable environmental degradation, inconsistent with relevant legislation. This could be seen as a precedent for future applications.

Public should have opportunity to submit on an application that has had full description of the activity and assessment of effects, not one that has had light assessment of concerning effects.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on this important application.

No questions.

Daphne Taylor and Bill Gibson #275: 9.30pm

Ditto to what Frana just said.

Daphne – submitting on behalf of herself and Bill.

Brought to Fiordland as a kid. Taught at South Otago High School – take kids to George Sound. Since 1992 permanent resident in Fiordland. 1992 – 2008 operated Fiordland Wilderness Experience, Sea Kayaking.

Have a strong conservation focus. 1992 got involved with Conservation Management Strategy consultation and Regional Coastal Plan. We have always responsibly submitted and got involved with public consultation processes.

Our business was aiming to give clients kiwi experience in NZ wilderness. Operating with minimal impact and within environmental constraints. Our concession allowed us to operate in Fiordland National Park.

We always operated on an understanding that it was a privilege to be operating within the World Heritage Area and with that came responsibilities of looking after the place.

Our Wilderness Areas and Natural World is a privilege left to us by our forebears and we are left in charge of it.

Since sale of business, we've used our spare time to explore further the areas of Southland and Fiordland as kiwis, not commercial operators, tramping, camping, walking, mountain biking, fly fishing.

Upper Whitestone, Upukerora, Mararoa areas are unique recreational areas. We are locals, but we have worked with people of all ages from 10 – 76yo from all parts of NZ and the world. Their reflections of Fiordland help us to shape our appreciation of what we have here.

From a personal recreation background and almost 20years of commercial operating in the area we understand trends and tourism trends. We have seen since the publishing of the Conservation Management Strategy an increase in tourism, and then a decline.

In respect to the monorail, this would not be the only venture to result from such a proposal. We started up a sea kayak company, but we spawned three other kayaking companies as a process, and then other individuals would bring sea kayaking into the sounds. One activity can spawn other similar activities.

The context of application is much greater than its impacts alone.

Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement – must be taken into account given where this proposal intends to operate.

Context – applicants are property developers. Buy things like high country stations then develop and flick off. Worry they will treat this concession similarly. Original owners lose their original focus. New purchasers could do what they will.

Snowden Forest Stewardship Area, Marginal Strips, impacts on Fiordland National Park Management Plan, impacts on Conservation Management Strategy and World Heritage Area.

You have lawyers to interpret those docs and what they mean on that land, it's not up to me to do that – it's up to you and raise concern that this is happening in our back yard and people like us use it as our back yard.

The area that would be most affected by its recreational use would be the marginal strip areas of the rivers concerned. Don't want to be fishing and see a monorail passing by. I don't want construction vehicles for the next how many years, because construction always takes longer than anticipated.

Years of construction, then watching a train going up there in my back yard, I don't want to mountain bike next to a train, I want to mountain bike in the areas that are already there. There are tracks to be used already.

In my written submission I have covered all the documents concerned, and pointed the DOC to the areas they need to consider. I can't see if you work through all 7 of them, how you could even begin to grant this application as it flies in the face of all those documents.

If the environment is to be treated this way, I might as well not live here. This is a special area and we have to maintain that.

For those of us who live and work with the tourist that Fiordland as a whole attracts, it is special to have areas with qualities and unique values, where kiwis can be tourists in their own land.

She read her closing paragraph of written submission.

Questions:

GA: You raised one matter I didn't see in your submission, in respect to Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement.

DT: My reference to that was when one activity spawns other activities and the Deed of Settlement fits into that context.

Sarah McCrum Takaro Lodge #306 9.50am

Have lived 13 years at Takaro Lodge – during that time we effectively manage access to the Upukerora by 4WD track, they come through our property and I take almost all the phone calls.

I know for the last 6 years we have let everyone who asked have access (bar one person who the police were after). People are very grateful to be able to get up there.

I know quite a few hunters have submitted, and overseas visitors, perhaps this shows how much people care about that area.

When I started to look at this, I saw in the DOC report – a paragraph states the area has outstanding beauty, but we don't know what its actual value is.

I asked hunters what their value of the area was, and quite a few people I met, and they say they think about the area more than anything else. Hunters don't necessary shoot animals but they love to visit the area itself.

Fiordland is incredibly special, and Snowden Forest seems to be just added or joined on. It's a bit different, less 'dramatic' than Fiordland, but special and accessible. But it is not an 'add on.' This place is special – is what all visitors say. I won't say it's unique, but what we are looking at protecting here is beauty and peace.

DOC has a responsibility to protect the intrinsic values of the land – values beyond what it is humans value about a place. Beauty and peace is what we are touching on here.

How can we through this documentation get at what are the intrinsic values of this land. This is something so intangible as intrinsic values – I wanted to make a picture of the mountain that is closest to us. Dunton Peak, which would overlook the monorail.

I wanted to put words on the picture this is mountain, bush, river, tussock, creek, and show the picture of what the beauty of the place is but you still wouldn't get it from the picture. I could bring you so many photos of the place and say look this is a beautiful place. It would only show you some of the beauty – a tiny part of what it looks like. I could make you a recording of the birds, the sounds of the birds are amazing in the morning. Multi media presentation to try and show you the beauty of the Snowden Forest but you still won't 'get' it.

And then there is peace – this is what the hunters talk about. Peace and solitude.

How do you capture the peace of a place? There is no way of talking about that or illustrate this to you. I can't bring the value of peace here – you have to be there to experience the peace.

You can't get that from within a vehicle or a monorail.

I think monorails are cool, but it is not a cool way of travelling through a beautiful peaceful place.

Satisfaction rates to Milford Sound via existing road is 90% which is tremendous.

What we have in NZ is unique, and we have a lot of these special areas, and we need to allow people to have access to these special areas.

It is about all visitors making the same level of effort to get to a place like this.

It's different than driving to Milford Sound, but it is a backcountry wilderness experience which you would never get from within a monorail.

It is not a good way to experience that kind of country side – if you want that kind of experience, the road introduces you to pretty much everything you would experience in that kind of environment.

So spectacular that trip to Milford Sound. In a monorail you would have less of a positive experience.

If you would want to open up DOC land to tourists more – I believe we should be opening it up in a way that they can experience the place for what it has to offer – you can't fall asleep if you are there, so you can experience the peace and the beauty of the place.

These types of packages are probably not such large scale and dramatic from marketing point of view, but for the experience they would have had in NZ, the memorable ones would be the ones where you experience the waterfall splashing on your face or the ones that really touch your soul which you need to experience with more than your 5 senses.

DOC has the potential to offer this experience more by granting Concessions carefully, wisely and selectively.

DOC has a great opportunity to open up the wilderness for more human contact I encourage it in this sense.

Questions:

GA: I appreciate the time you put into your submissions.
There are no questions from us. Thank you for your submission and support of it.

SM: Just wanted to check I made my point clear as written in submission, that the invitation for yourselves and the Minister to come and visit the place is a very sincere and serious invitation and I hope it will be accepted.

Ross Cockburn #219: 10.18am

I want to use my written submission.

Brief Background – pioneered Mt Prospect, it had no buildings or trees and it was part of Mararoa Station which Granddad brought in 1916. You had to travel to Riversdale for a vet etc.

We ran home stays for 20 years out at the property. Common thing people left there was that they wish they knew more about Te Anau before they came.

Witnessed late Campbell – Takaro Properties project. Missed opportunity to develop the area.

Our overseas travel has showed you can develop and see nature's wonders.

Has listened to all view points and analysed all aspects of the proposal. I started off opposed to the application. But then thought about it some more.

This could become an icon tourist attraction which could benefit the tourist industry. Could alleviate the congestion at peak bus periods. Could compliment accommodation, construction opportunities for local staff.

Give access to a minute part of our World Heritage Area in a form of an adventure. Mountain bike addition would add to recreational values – route to Te Anau. Don't have to return to where you departed from.

Lake to Lake concept is great – promote Te Anau and surrounds as a destination.

How many New Zealanders don't know where Te Anau is? Opportunity to show commitment to Te Anau, where applicant could contribute to pest plants control etc.

DOC is working on all aspects of application and the Concession fees could go toward weed control which is an issue in the Mararoa district.

It needs to be addressed annually to control weeds and ensure good water quality remains.

I have full faith that DOC through its staff would do what they need to minimise effects and regrowth would minimise effects.

My grandfather had the vision to survey the area and develop the stations.

Te Anau was a one-horse town when I started. Taking advantage of willing NZ investors is key.

My wife Jane and I fully support the proposal if the above points are taken on board.

I have no intention to take part in any discussion at any council meeting (Environment Southland). This is a personal submission due to frustration at lack of foresight being displayed in the past.

This is an ambitious and insightful proposal.

Mark Sutton #185: 10.28am

Emphasise personal submission.

Passionate plea in opposition.

History – 57 years old, Whitestone valley 48 years ago.

I still have vision in my head of what this place was and is still and it's a part of me. I don't know how else to say that its my place in the world and same goes for Upukerora Valley.

Hate the concept of having structures built in these valleys where people recreate for whatever reason – hunt, fish, walking, easy country to access, easy for families. It's not Fiordland, it's in the rain shadow of it.

Meandering river systems is what its all about for me. I don't get why we would want to alter that for future generations.

It's in here (my heart) and I don't know how else to say it.

The loss of going to such valleys for me personally to go fishing and to go there and have a reasonable expectation that it will just be you and your friends for the day and that is important. As a country we are getting less and less of those places.

Intangible thing and that is what we are at risk of losing.

Visual impacts of monorail is so abhorrent that I can't get it what this will mean and the fundamental change to those valley systems of which there are a finite number of.

Loss of backcountry fisheries – entwined in the touchy feely thing, once you've done this you don't go back to it.

Constructing a Monorail is easy – bingo done. But resulting would be a loss for future generations.

I had a real slap to give to DOC – I believe that in writing the stuff they've written, it's from a position that it is going to happen. I thought DOC was meant to look after us.

If I start up my chainsaw and cut down some trees in the park I'll go to jail over it. But this is about deforesting large numbers of trees – how can this be right? Am I dumb? I don't think I'm totally dumb.

How can it as a road, a service road, which conveniently becomes a cycle trail as well be acceptable through this environment? Defies belief.

For DOC people to write in such a manner, I don't know how it got past go for a start.

How can it be for the country's good? If it were a Government decision for the good of the country, fine, but this is for a private company to benefit.

Thank you.

No Questions

Te Anau Community Board #147: 10.36am

Provided written paper to read from.

Ted Loose

Came from North Island in 1971 – contractor and farmer up until last 12-13 years. Last few years in Environment Southland, and Community Board. We had property on East Coast in North Island, but we liked the lifestyle down here.

These areas are readily available and that is what we like about this area that this is the case.

Then went on to read from paper.

Important to acknowledge that we can have these places where people can relax in – more high stress jobs etc, so more important to have these places for people to de-stress in.

Surveys still ongoing and same message – overwhelming satisfaction with Queenstown to Milford Sound trip.

There's nothing in North Island that compares with this.

NZ hard to travel to and expensive so visitor numbers are on the decline. Easier for people in Northern Hemisphere to travel up there.

If the applicant gets under financial pressure – compliance with conditions would be first to fall off the list of jobs to do.

Thank you for time.

No questions.

Christine Poundsford #298: 10.45am

Regular user of Fiordland National Park and other Conservation Areas around Te Anau. I moved down here when finished University – got a job in Invercargill because being closer to Fiordland was an important part of my life.

Use available time to go into park – meaning non Fiordland National Park areas so Takitimu, Snowden Forest etc area just as important – I have a dog.

Going into the “park” quiet, remote, 5 year old daughter I love to go into front-country but I also get away into the backcountry which is so important to me.

There are places where it is suitable for elderly and children to go to but I don't think this place is an appropriate location to improve access through a monorail because it is one of the few places left which offers an easy to get to remote experience .

Won't solve congestion issues or improve transport people to Milford Sound.

Would not improve access for disabled people.

I think the main difference between this experience and the existing experience is who is making the money. Interests of people – New Zealanders and future generations are not in the minds of developers. This project has selfish business interests.

I don't have personal desire to see improved visitor numbers as I don't have commercial business which relies on this, but I see increase numbers not good – I like remoteness.

World Heritage Area – honour for us to be given that status, and we have obligation to protect and preserve to the same standard we have forced to National Park. Although these are not National Park areas, DOC's responsibility to protect these areas should be to the same level being World Heritage Area.

Adverse effects – clearance of native old growth trees, noise impact to wildlife and other users. There would be ongoing effects of maintenance vehicles and biking track. The feeling that there is something just through the valley would change the valley completely.

So many people would find that that feeling of when it is developed is such a personal experience it's hard to put into words.

Maintenance of monorail – cycle track people would stop for toilet breaks (more infrastructure), clearance of forest could lead to more trees falling down later. More damage to other trees during construction with typical weather there is likely to be slips and excess scarring. From within the monorail this won't look so good.

Rivers and streams would be downgraded during construction and potentially after the construction.

The National Parks Act doesn't give power to DOC – so the relevant legislation is Conservation Act.

S25 Conservation Act – this activity would not be lawful because it undermines protection of natural and historic resources on the land.

The Conservation Management Strategy specifies this area should have low impact day use with maximum Concession party size of 12 – this proposal is in breach of this.

No chance of getting a deer within area of monorail even if you were allowed to shoot.

There are things you could do still – tramping, horse back, motorbikes etc, but experience would be so downgraded you wouldn't want to go there because of construction and then constant throughput of visitors coming past.

Mavora Lakes – I love taking visitors and woofers there. Taking Tramping club and MSC courses as it is a safe place to teach beginners navigation and high country skills.

Kiwi Burn Hut relocation would be a big loss for an easy family walk which a feeling of tramping somewhere to get away from it all.

Tramping, hunting, access by 4WD etc, horse riding, always careful to make minimal impact and ensure other users do the same. People are more aware of what is around there – Takaro have made more visitors welcome to the area, and more locals will probably want to make more use of the area because of what is up there.

Whitestone area – monorail would negatively impact. Tramping and horse riding.

Alternative proposed route – private land people will be affected through visual means.

Pig hunting would be different in this area.

Access is not for general public but private access through a business – DOC shouldn't be supporting at expense of general public. Maybe free access to cycle people? But that doesn't compensate for losses.

More opportunities for tourists if we preserve those peaceful quiet places. Irreversible damage. Can't test the monorail and then go back to square one – you have to know that area is lost forever once construction begins.

Questions:

CV: You mentioned you enjoyed hunting, what other things do you do in Snowden?

CP: Motorbike, stayed in army hut, and hunting one at a time. 4WD, horseback into 4WD track. Access route to further tramping in area past Army Hut.

Bernard Sinclair #103: 11.05am

Impact of Monorail on the area.

Before I came to NZ from UK – professional model maker for planners. What I discovered was that to get it to a final stage there would be constant changes made to the design which was a result of things that weren't seen from the beginning. Monorail – at early stages of design and this is likely to change significantly from artist impression of what we see today.

Proposed height “fence height” misleading – excluding carriages is beneath deer fence height. Members of public would be forced to scramble under a small space under the monorail.

Speeds travelling 90km/hr – safety concern. Low height of monorail and high speeds is a concern.

Therefore the likelihood of redesign is high, which would increase visual impact. This would create more impact on corridor.

Tree falls are unpredictable and not mitigatable – and to tree fell the corridor further would be unlawful under the legislation and inconsistent with World Heritage Area.

So in order for all safety concerns to be addressed, the impact on the environment would be far greater than what we see in application today.

Attracted to Te Anau because of the quality of the places surrounding in National Park and Conservation Areas. Wants 2 sons to experience this too.

Questions:

GA: That the monorail would be the height of deer fence – where did you get this information from? How high is a deer fence?

BS: Found out at a public meeting here – that’s what Riverstone Holdings Limited told us at the public meeting. Metre deep, deer fence height, about 2m high, but I don’t think the monorail could be built that height as you would struggle to go underneath it. Whatever way you address this it would have a major effect on the design of the monorail.

Sarah McCrum #259: 11.15am

Repeat the invitation that I opened my submission with – if there is any chance that the people who are making the decisions could visit the area, it would be of enormous value. It is a decision which is much larger than the overall decision and is a serious invitation – including the Minister.

I went to Cambridge University, and studied Law.

You could prove that a raspberry is a calendar through law. I understand now, that some of the legal issues have been raspberries turned into calendars, but I don’t understand why. It is really important as this is a legal decision that we pull ourselves back to the essence of the law. I’m not against progression, private profit and development.

But this proposal is truly not right.

Looked into Conservation Act and legislative tools, read DOC report and saw so many times the Minister would have to be unfettered for in order for this proposal to go ahead.

There are so many reasons to go back to the law and ask if this law is serving the best interest of the country.

17 statements in the relevant laws are – “shalls” – which are involved in this application, without looking at the “shoulds”. The “shalls” are things the minister has to do.

The simple one – 12 people is not 160 people. The application must comply with the Conservation Management Strategy, and future Conservation Management Strategy. The Conservation Management Strategy says no concession in that area can have more than 12 people.

Is a monorail is lower impact than a bus? I can imagine an argument around that. I can’t imagine an argument with whether 12 people are the same as 160 people.

There are so many areas where the application does not fit. There are very simple essential matters. For example the intrinsic values.

We should care also about the law. If DOC and the Minister were seen publically to grant this Concession which would break so many of the Department’s own laws, it would affect the going into the past (the intention for the Purpose for which the Land is held) and going into the future (the protection of this intention for the future) values of this asset.

This issue calls into question the integrity of the Government, the Department and of the Minister, therefore the law of the land and the whole structure that holds our society together.

I could talk to you about mud and weeds – I can see them sprouting in the application area. I could talk about construction but I want to talk to you about the very essence.

Compliance work – John VT catches someone cutting down a tree, and if a family tells him they need to do it in order to feed their family - John would have still said sorry you still can't do this. DOC is struggling to pay for its own staff, but the same argument should apply. DOC should not break the law to feed its own family.

Need to find another way to go feed the DOC family with integrity.

If the Minister would unfetter herself so much that the whole legal system should crumble, it is so unlawful. It breaks the heart of the DOC worker.

All you need to know is that 160 is more than 12, and DOC has already broken the law to come this far.

GA: Your submission is very clear; I don't think we have any more questions Sarah – thank you for your time.

Martin Silva #217: 11.25am

Background – inbound travel agency, small business. From Czech Republic. Moved here because loves NZ nature. Decided to establish travel agency to share this with other tourists.

From this point of view, I'm against monorail or any other development in National Park.

In general National Park and reserves are foundational and in this case World Heritage Area which should be protected in perpetuity.

Once I was told that there was no National Park before Milford Road was built. Milford Road already brings so many tourists to the area.

The issue about how the Snowden and Kiwi Burn are important to locals have already been mentioned. It is a beautiful area. If you would make a highway or monorail through it you would damage it for perpetuity.

Focus that NZ Government is struggling to get money and all kinds of income get considered, this is one sort of development which gathers income through Concession fees.

Once again it would destroy a part of the world which is so far untouched and which is why people come here. This is why I live here and go into the hills. If this proposal goes ahead I might as well go back to Prague. There are already chairlifts, gondolas, and monorails in Europe. I am here because I don't like these things. There are no gondolas, monorails, pristine nature untouched nature.

NZ is getting destroyed over the past 150 years, but lucky that 15% of original rainforest still exists. Why start now when everybody knows that the last virgin habitats should not be lost. Amazon and last places in the world are disappearing. On the West Coast – 100ha virgin podocarp disappeared due to farming.

Tramping as a resident, why should I be persecuted by a private enterprise, on behalf of profit from this monorail. The whole advantage is not valid – it won't be shorter– only mode of transport changing.

People sleep in the most significant scenery. The tourists would sleep on this journey so why should the monorail be built for them at the expense of those who appreciate the areas.

Why not establish National Park entry fee? This would be far more fair for everyone.

I believe many people would agree with me. In NZ this is usually the concept to have free access everywhere. I pay taxes here, and this place is used by overseas tourists who don't pay any taxes.

They pay for an old car and spend \$3-5 dollars per day, and contribute nothing to our economy. I pay tax because they use facilities maintained by DOC.

GA – interrupted to say to speak to other matters raised in submission so as to not run out of time.

MS - Proposed bike track – I myself ride a bicycle. I wouldn't enjoy riding bicycle around something that is passing me at 80km/hr.

A bus on a normal gravel road I wouldn't enjoy that either. Around the mountain circuit would damage the entire area. I wouldn't use the cycle lane.

Real Journeys #228: 11.35am

Fiona Black

Background – tourism industry for 25 years, worked for Real Journeys since 2003. I am now the branch manager.

Experience working and living in Milford Sound and managing visitor numbers when visitors were at their peak around 76,000.

Real Journeys are concerned that Riverstone Holdings Limited application is inconsistent with the Conservation Act and Conservation Management Strategy.

In granting this concession, World Heritage Area status could be compromised.

Proposed removal over 19,000 trees and damage to ecosystem would be contributing to the degradation of the ecosystems, and integrity of this World Heritage Area.

Loss of World Heritage status would be a blow to us all.

Real Journeys has some concerns re tourism aspects of Application:

Size of investment is underpinned by visitor flow to Milford Sound. This is a proposal for tourism product aimed at alleviating issues at Milford Sound.

Real Journeys believe that the time involved to take a day trip to Milford Sound ex Queenstown limits arrivals at Milford Sound. The visitors have to allow time and effort to carry out trip, and this cuts out a significant number of visitors travelling to Milford Sound. Also, the overseas Asian market requires a hot meal at lunch time, so this visitor group will not shift from the mid day peak.

In winter, significant numbers of visitors undertake trip to Milford Sound because main interest is skiing in Queenstown. However if time was shorter, they would carry out a trip in winter.

Real Journeys believe that the option to shorten the day trip would increase the issue at mid day peak. People will just leave Queenstown later, and arrive at the middle of the day. This is from our experience of 'Fly Cruise Fly' option. This is a shorter trip, more people choose 10am time rather than 8 am time. People will only leave early if the activity requires it.

Factors operating other than price: Asian visitor markets except Japanese are not in serious decline at present. This group is expected to increase, including during mid day.

Budget coach tours will continue to use the road and contribute to peak in mid day along with the monorail customers. Budget travel would offer lower price than monorail.

Monorail cannot save as much time as Riverstone are proposing.

Doubtful Sounds experience ex Queenstown involves 6-8 transitions from different vehicles. Monorail would involve 8-10 similar transitions. This takes extra time. Transferring 130 passengers from Cruise boat to Bus takes longer than 15 minutes. Passengers want to take photos and take a toilet break on land, even though the vessels have those facilities.

240 passengers on Monorail would need to be seriously controlled in terminal building.

Riverstone Holdings Limited have underestimated the length of time that would be saved by the monorail experience and the impact that would be created at Milford Sound.

2008 survey results – overall Milford Sound passenger numbers were around 460,000 per annum.

Half NZ visitors surveyed felt this was about right, and 25 percent thought it was too many and 2/3 international visitors felt this was about right.

Overall passenger cruise now is under 420,000 pa and this is likely to decrease over the next 20 years.

The applicant states that the experience would be more varied and a quicker experience. We disagree – the trip that exists now is already very varied along the road.

Views from Lake Te Anau cannot be appreciated from the Downs.

Riverstone Holdings Limited say their 'Fiordland Link' experience is somehow 'novel safe and effective', but this would not change the Milford Sound experience which is already novel, safe and effective so cannot say that the monorail would enhance visitor experience.

Visitor arrivals fluctuate – 1987 stock market crash etc all effect visitor arrivals. Gulf War, Economic Crises, Japanese Earthquakes etc.

We don't need construction of new infrastructure; we need better management of existing use of the MS and existing access.

No questions

Alistair Wilson #169: 11.45am

Object to granting of Concession. Had a flick through other submissions and concur with a lot of the remarks in them. I hope DOC takes it all on board. I hope this project won't be put through.

Riverstone Holdings Limited to have legal control of this strip is not a good thing at all. Application leaves many things unclear, lacks detail in many areas, and scenarios are underestimated and many submitters are opposed. I found it difficult searching through all the appendices. I suspect people would be excluded from the strip under application. Exclusive use would deny other users enjoying the area and there are significant risks if people can't cross to existing hut site.

The scar produced from the monorail would affect the visual experience to all visitors to the area. Risky thing to build the thing – dollar for dollar bond would be required. Wouldn't be an asset so wouldn't have a resale value.

Concern that proposal may not be sustainable in global economic downturn. Won't be available pool of users.

Other subs have pointed out that visitors to MS are trending downward.

\$160,000,000 could blow out – rarely to engineering projects meet timeframes and budgets. Impact on viability of project. If it's completed successfully competition with other opportunities

may out-compete them. \$200 for a day trip is too much, would probably rather go to Stewart Island or Te Papa.

Effects on hunting. I dispute what is written in the Officers Report. This was written by a non-hunter.

The hut, the route through to the deer fence is the nicest route. It is untenable to expect hunters to go the alternate route suggested in the Officers Report. Many trees would be destroyed in the construction of the monorail.

Helicopter logging is not a desirable activity within the National Park.

Written copy of oral submission provided.

No Questions

Bill Jarvie #163: 1pm

Personal submission to reinforce written submission. Proposal can be produced in black and white, and can be difficult for people to work through.

Most important thing is how people feel about the area, and these can't necessarily be put in black and white words. My written submission did talk about black and white terms – effects on natural environment and habitat.

You can't put close to 30km track through there without significant impacts.

Resident since 1982, NZ wildlife service, now employed by Fish and Game. Worked up at Snowden etc in early days and latter days. Tramped from headwaters of Upukerora to Takaro, camped out, fished all the rivers. Upper Whitestone fishing and hunting. Kiwiburn Track. Know those areas well.

Applicant revealed late in the piece they would need to construct a road capable of carrying heavy vehicles.

Felling of bush, will reduce value of area. Extremely old trees irreplaceable. Impacts on natural features – wetlands, forests, grasslands. Industrial construction – 10s of tonnes of concrete and steel. Requirement for track to carry heavy machinery. High standard permanent road for life of the monorail and after – who's going to look after it then.

This is a large enterprise, too little detail in what was available to public. There is an overwhelming volume of material presented and little in the way to speak against the project.

DOC would be failing to uphold statutory obligations if this concession is granted. Legislation and policies put in place to protect this area are being ignored. What does the Minister do with Industrial Construction project against the legislation.

4 Trainsets. 90km/hr. Half hour travel time. If they go in peak of transport period. They would whistle past every 10mins. Would need more trainsets to allow passing each other.

Snowden Forest – valued for quiet and natural atmosphere. The monorail would not be in keeping with this.

No consideration of alternative route – this is one of the requirements the applicant and the OR should have analysed. Similar distance route exists over DOC and private land but this has not been described or considered – and should have been. This option would result in significantly less earthworks and not destroying acreages of forest.

Recreational user – tramped fished and hunted the area with 15year old son.

Despite coming back empty handed, we felt much richer because of the experience of having been there.

Speak on behalf of many friends who don't have confidence to submit or be heard that feel the same - that the experience of simply being in an area such as this is important.

How little land compared to how many hundreds of acres are out there – this was considered in the application. But that's like saying you can scar somebody's face and that would not have a significant effect on that person's face.

Questions:

GA: Alternative route – no direct reference in your written submission.

BJ: In section 5 – the proposed activity...

GA: Can you expand more on where this route may be?

BJ: Mararoa bridge – travels through landcorp land, they are in the business of selling land for commercial activity. There is access past Lake Thomas – brilliant views. Up starting to look across at Fiordland Mountains. Then there's some private land – you are still crossing rivers, but you would have developed farmland either side.

You have State Owned Enterprise land, private land bordering marginal strip, Landcorp's farm, State Owned Enterprise farm. That would move the route significantly away from the Snowden Forest area.

Another route off Mavora Road – this would give them far better views rather than roaring through a tunnel of forest. I haven't seen that being considered and that is mandatory as far as the process is concerned.

Fiona McLoghlin #159: 1.18pm

Not a citizen of NZ – but have to come and speak I am staying up the Upukerora Valley at Takaro Lodge at a peace resort.

I feel very privileged to come and stay in NZ from Northern England Lakes District. Father is a professor in Environmental Management and I have a strong perception of the preservation of greenbelts for the benefit of peoples wellbeing.

Morality of nature being destroyed through this proposal.

Several Issues:

I enjoy to walk there, listen to birds, listen to the river, have picnics and enjoy nature. So much of this in England has been destroyed, and being herded off different modes of transport it is such a privilege to be away from all that.

I came as a holiday maker in desperate need of relaxation and peace. To come here and be able to connect with nature again was so important and is so rare to find.

I appreciate your need to make a tourist destination here. But I think you will find the world will find that NZ is such a treasure as it is especially in the World Heritage Area. This is very important to preserve and this will be more valuable in the future.

Working for the people of NZ – as DOC, I ask that you look carefully at the trust that the people have in you not just by New Zealanders, but also people of the world.

What we really need is to have somewhere where we can relax and have somewhere very peaceful.

Monorails – they are great. I love modern developments. If it could be relocated such as what the last gentlemen mentioned that could be a way round it.

To go through a World Heritage Area is not acceptable.

There's not a clear picture of extent of damage and rehabilitation which has been talked about. Beach trees can take 80-100 years to reach that maturity. We don't have that amount of time.

If it was to not succeed, I don't know how much damage would be able to be repaired.

How much noise? As I was listening to the sound of the river, I was wondering if I would be able to hear this with the sound of the monorail.

This is a high impact project in an area of pristine wilderness and I'd like you to decline the application.

Thank you.

No Questions

Lex/Lynette Lawrence #146 #83: 1.20pm

Lex spoke. Hunting stuff – the last chap's proposed route could stuff up my duck ponds! This is a place I've grown up in and taken my grandkids up to. Blue slip is so unique. A monorail – no bloody need for it.

I took up a trip with my grand daughter and it's got pretty rough, she sung all the way up there. We went up to Hunt Saddle and it was such a neat place to bring a kid. It's rough enough to keep the riff raff out. It doesn't need a train going through there.

If I wanted to take some firewood home, you DOC guys would give me a spanking. But this guy can cut a whole lot of trees down just so he can take a whole lot of Asians through there. Asians were taking photos of sheep the other day along the main road. Big mobs of sheep along the main road.

It's not until you get down to Southland – Jolly's Hill that you get to see the sheep and the deer farms. A lot of people all over the world have never seen that. The people that stay in his B+B always ask about the swedes in his paddock. It's unique. Sheep, trees and swedes – unique.

I don't see a train people have got to get on and off would provide an experience like that. A tree is a tree – no traveller could tell the difference between a beech tree or a pine tree so they don't need to see more of that.

My son sells baleage plastic and this German chap he took him up to the Army Hut and this German guy had the best trip he'd ever had. That was one of the highlights of his trip to NZ. Didn't get a deer but that didn't bother him.

Don't let any bugger spoil it. Its there for my children and their kids.
Choppers annoy me shooting the deer, but a monorail would annoy me more.

I took a bed and a lazy boy up to the hut and it's such a neat place. If you can't take your wife at least you can take your lazy boy. The odd fish up there but the hunting is really good – pretty flat, easy access not hard hunting.

Hopefully DOC will come to their senses and say "hey Bob go back to Pegasus Bay".

No Questions

John Stevenson #134: 1.35pm

Talked to written submission. Against monorail.

No evidence in proposed construction that it could be mitigated to only have minor effects on the Conservation Values in the Snowden Area. Weed control would not mitigate the effects adequately. Applicant is seriously underestimating the disadvantages (adverse effects) to the proposal.

I attended the public meeting and was in awe that the applicant thought this proposal was nothing but a good thing – it was so over the top I thought it was absurd.

The approach they have taken is promising everything - but they will have no way of delivering half of it. Over promising is something to take into consideration in proposal.

Light on specifics and detail of consequences of structure on the values of the Snowden Conservation Area.

You'd have to know where each pylon is to go in order to evaluate the consequences of this activity. A 200m corridor is far too wide to be considered and a good evaluation on the effects on the environment.

The 2 corridors they have proposed at the public meeting they have beautiful pictures of the monorail going through a corridor of trees. It's ludicrous that with the winds here that that will be practical. The corridors would have to be at least 50m back from the track to give enough space to ensure the health and safety aspects would be practical.

In the end these corridors would have to be wider than the applicant has led us to believe. Two of them in the bush edge – it will effect the edge dramatically that I can't see from a visual aspect that this is going to enhance the area at all. (Wind throw). With the windfall – the effects are going to be major.

Monorail would affect my recreational use – tramp and hunt up Kiwiburn and Takaro Road end.

I think DOC has problems with Pest Control – this is an area where hunters can show they can control pests and at such gentle country it is a great place for hunters to learn how to hunt. Local tramping club have started out here as it is very family friendly. This application would take that resource away from local people.

The proposal does not enhance the area – this area would become more important as populations grow. I think these fringe areas would become more important.

This proposal would directly affect recreational opportunities for people looking for wilderness values. Hunting, casual picnicking, scout groups, family tramping – this area has not been realised to its full potential.

This proposal would be facilitating travellers to travel from Queenstown to Te Anau Downs. There are already 2 routes to here. It's not mandatory to have this new access as there is already adequate roading.

With the two corridors for the monorail and the access tracks – windthrow and needing to keep adequate distance form the bush edge to the structures would result in far larger footprint than is being proposed.

I consider the proposal inconsistent with the management plan – quoted no new roads policy in Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

World Heritage Area – 90% World Heritage Area is inaccessible by people except from helicopter.

If people come and see a Disney development when they have come to see a wilderness area then this would be a big disappointment.

Thank you.

No Questions

Des Popham #94: 1.46pm

Object to proposal. Within World Heritage Area – special and highly valued. Proposal contrary to objectives of World Heritage Area. Private venture having significant impact on existing recreational users.

Proposed monorail travels through areas – Kiwi Burn, Upukerora, and Upper Whitestone which are significant access points for recreational users.

Public meeting – after this I was determined project should not succeed. Could become a burden for tax payers.

200,000 passengers per annum are required for the monorail to make a profit, and only 400,000 only travel to Milford – so if the Monorail would pick up these then who's going to miss out on all these travellers?

There are some magnificent trees on the line – I travelled along this line and I was astounded by some of the quality of these trees.

Continued maintenance costs unbearable – wind throw etc. Big trees down all through that forest already. If they going to run 4-6 trips per day they could come across a wind throw quite easily.

The applicant is a developer – behind Pegasus development.

Bike trail and pest control for DOC just carrots – they'll be lost once the project sells off to overseas investors.

We already have bike trails – rail trail, Oreti, are we going to get enough cyclists and who is going to maintain the cycle tracks?

Plan to minimise clearance of areas to about 23ha – I believe this would be a lot more than this.

Clearance corridor would end up being 50m wide to keep wind throw off the monorail.

No idea of ongoing cost of maintenance to keep this thing operative. I hunt in this area 12 times a year. Even though Riverstone Holdings Limited only want a 20m corridor, I bet there'll be a huge exclusion zone from hunting opportunities and this is unacceptable.

Riverstone Holdings Limited told at the public meeting that this would be of huge benefit to Te Anau – if that was the case the proposal should come down the Whitestone. They probably won't go down the Whitestone because there are too many individuals to negotiate with.

Chose the proposed route as ease of negotiating with only 2 land owners – DOC and one private owner.

Issue with Concession Process – Officer's Report provides evidence of Concession approval subject to public consultation and Concession conditions. Uncomfortable with this way that the Department does this as it seems like it is not transparent. Would rather we were consulted earlier on in the process.

I live here as quality of life – hunting and fishing in Snowden Forest. Sons still travel south to travel and enjoy this area with me.

This is a natural place with outstanding recreational and natural value.

Please don't approve this ill conceived proposal.

Questions:

Claire explained the Concession Public Notification Process under the Conservation Act 1987.

Graeme explained the applicant would reply on the last day of hearings.

Alina Suchanski #117: 2.30pm

Background – From Poland in 1982. Lived 25 years in Christchurch then moved to Te Anau in awe of the beauty of the region. Used to travel north because I thought it was too cold down here. Keen trumper, kayaker and beginner cyclist. Love the mountains and done loads of tracks already.

Get a lot of visitors from visitors and friends overseas. International helpers – small block of land and use WOOFERS. They quite often come here not only to work in my garden but to enjoy here what I came here to enjoy.

In relation to one comment made by Riverstone Holdings Limited – alternative route – there is an existing route which they are trying to improve for tourists.

Comments from visitors say they love the existing route. When they came here she couldn't sleep during the trip because she had to take photos. Visitors are very appreciative of the existing route – the deer and sheep too on this route. The route doesn't need improving.

About a week ago – went to Kiwiburn Track. Loved the place the peacefulness, the landscapes. When I was thinking of the adverse effects – noise, visual, natural environment etc, this would absolutely ruin the experience for any trampers who would walk in this area.

There would be significant noise in this area and there would be significant visual effects and significant adverse effects on the environment in terms of trees being cut and new tracks being cut and created.

I recently had the Polish ambassador to visit, and when we were talking about this area they were very impressed by what we have achieved here is the accessibility with minimal disturbance to the environment. They have travelled the world and yet they specifically pointed this out about this area.

So I would like to keep it this way if possible with your help.

Questions:

CV: do you use other parts of the area?

AS: I belong to tramping club here so we go to all parts of Fiordland and we do kayaking trips, cycling trips and last Wednesday we went on a cycling trip along Mararoa River and this proposal would also affect that part.

Thank you.

John Von Tunzelman #82: 3.05pm

Thank you. I first came to Te Anau in early 50s pig hunting at Te Anau Downs. Got to know Henry Creek to Boyd Creek, Dunton Valley and up Upukerora. Weren't many deer in those days but still explored up there. Then went up to Mossburn – rented for 3 years. Had first trip

into Upukerora up to Army Hut for rest and recreational purposes. Been visiting regularly since then.

Visited Snowden as a recreational hunter and in early 60s worked as a deer Culler. Forest Service – Forest Ranger used to go up regularly to talk to neighbouring land owners about many issues such as search and rescue operations etc. Marked tracks from Boyd Creek – Upukerora – Whitestone and Kiwiburn. Also marked tracks from Te Anau Downs to Takaro Holdings.

Forest Service went away from animal control in these areas so there was more recreational development so we then went around into the Kiwiburn and ensured this area was well serviced.

I still visit the area hunting and tramping. I've taken my sons there regularly in Whitestone, Upukerora, Kiwi burn Area. Easy access, neighbours accommodating. Lovely place to be peaceful and quiet etc.

Concern about proposal for monorail – following information the things that concern me is how much it is going to change the area. If you open up Beech forest, e.g. West Arm to Borland with Hydro Scheme, the mature trees will make a lot of growth on light side and lean into towards clearing and over mature and fall in.

Tunnel through Beech trees with minimal cutting is proposed – can't see how this would work, as the trees would fall over the structure creating problems.

A lot of trees would have to come down to open up the area for a monorail. That area would then regenerate with increase in light coming through and a lot of work would need to be carried out to control that growth every year.

Spur tracks going through to construct the structure. What's going to happen to those tracks after construction? Concrete and steel coming so the tracks would have to be built to quite a permanent standard. It's going to take time and change the entire nature of the area. It will be like a herring bone on one side.

What's going to happen to all the vegetation removed? Would it rot away in forest? This forest is a lot dryer than Fiordland and higher fire risk. Fires often burn right down to roots of material underground into mineral layer of soil.

This risk would be difficult to manage, especially with monorail and cycle route is alongside.

Knowing the Upukerora and Whitestone are prone to flooding – you'll see a wad of material come from the forest in the bed of the river. Short duration high intensity rains pick up this material and spread it around. A lot of engineering would have to be implemented to mitigate risk to the monorail track and cycle track.

Changing nature of the area – schools from Southland use this area. Kayaking, white water sports, fishing. Terminus for vehicles bring tourists through from Mararoa etc. The proposal would change the whole nature of those activities and the opportunities for children would be changed forever.

I worked for DOC and I always believed the role of DOC was to preserve these places in a relatively natural condition. Something like this would greatly change the area where loads of children and adults can enjoy the area and learn about outdoor skills, appreciate nature and indigenous forest. This is going to change.

My concerns are those pretty simple things. Something so valuable with the simple pleasures that we have. "Simple pleasures will be lost".

Principles of company – described the beech cutting as a forest tunnel. Travelling at 60km/hr you are not going to see much scenery. It was also suggested that the first trip of the day would be very quick to get people through to Milford Sound.

The first trip should be a very cautious one because if trees have fallen across the rails this could be serious. Dangerous for rescuers too.

Maybe they were looking at a preview run through to assess the safety first thing in the morning?

Upukerora, Whitestone and Kiwiburn are very special places. Not just for me but also for those who come after me – my children, grand children and many more.

Snowden is different to Fiordland. Open mix of tussock grassland and beech forest. These areas are getting smaller and smaller as you start travelling south.

Questions:

GA: Beech trees being light seeking – given that you were running this project what sort of distance would you be seeking in regards to this application.

JVT: I would be looking at tallest trees and going 5m further back than the height of those trees as trees can bounce several metres.

Tunnel through beech forest – you can see this on road through to Takaro. The road to Milford Sound used to have what we called the avenue of the disappearing mountain – an optical illusion. But now that illusion has disappeared because the trees lean in and grow towards the light.

Dead trees along Milford Road you can see that it doesn't even have to be windy for the trees to fall. They have to check these trees on a very regular basis.

Fiordland Outdoor and Recreations Club : 3.20pm

Mary Hill. Strongly object. Club meet in Te Anau to organise tramping kayaking and other expeditions and other people associated with our members. We have more than 40 members along with the people associated with our members. Had a discussion in February reviewed by a sub group.

Effects of proposed activity: No definition of the clear route of the proposed monorail makes it hard for us to consider the actual effects of it – as there is potential for variation for the route. Significant difficulty to assess effects and to object to this activity.

Specific objections:

World Heritage Area – club is keen to see protection of this status of this area.

Snowden could become part of the National Park. It deserves to be. With the monorail this future opportunity to protect the area even further would be lost.

The area has increasingly heavy use by recreational users.

It is important not only to consider the numbers using the area today, but the use by our children and the growth of the region – so this user group is growing particularly in this region.

During and post construction – noise effects not possible to mitigate adverse effects on wildlife and recreational users.

Remote Zone – if monorail goes ahead the Snowden area would no longer be considered to be remote.

Valleys would be ruined forever with the pillars towering every 50m. For such objects to exist and for the passing of the monorail would extremely detract from the user's experience.

Would detract from the sense of enjoyment of actually being out there.

Major impact on mature vegetation. Possible wind tunnel effect. Why would we contemplate doing this for economic gain. Bats and birds would be displaced.

Effects on local users – used heavily by local hunters and trampers.

If we can protect this area it can have potential heavier use. It is an area considered by locals to be exceptional – vegetation that young people can get to and get through very easily. A variety of recreation – tramping, kayaking, cycling etc. This is such a great opportunity for families.

One can access this area with a 2 year old to a 92 year old and have a variety of accessible opportunities and this is a particularly relevant point to raise in the context of the tramping club.

Thinking about our children is relevant for today and for the future.

Used extensively by schools and private families. I had my first introduction to bush skills in this very area.

Proposed bike track – an add on attempt to put something that seems sustainable and environmentally sound in the application and not something that we would support the monorail for providing.

We would not support the bike track for this monorail to happen. Toilets would have to be built too and this increases the impact.

The presentation to the public has changed over time. Started as a time saving travel option to Milford Sound on the video they created.

But when Riverstone Holdings Limited had a public meeting in Te Anau – they said that is no longer the case as the on and offs would not save any time having this extra route available. The new aim was to provide a different experience and that the people would experience a different area. But having trees rushing past you at high speed would not give you a unique experience.

This experience compared with existing route (road to Milford Sound) does not seem to warrant the conservation losses to the proposed monorail area. It makes sense to use the existing route as the monorail does not provide any conservation benefit or tourism benefit.

There are conservation problems and adverse effects of the proposed monorail, plus as the previous speaker says, some significant worries for the safety for the people as we travel down steeper areas, and the risk of trees falling over the rails etc.

Bearing in mind all that, – in a conservation context, the proposed monorail makes no sense whatsoever.

Questions:

GA: in your submission, you refer to Kiwi Burn, and you refer to the loss of this resource to schools and do you think this resource would be lost forever?

Mary: I think the point is made in the visual effects section in that users are accessing the area for that feeling of being away from it all. I would utterly concur with that and taking children there is such a valued opportunity. It would be a huge loss to the area if this opportunity was taken away from the local schools and families.

Ron and Robynne Peacock #227: 4.10pm

This proposal could mean a loss of remoteness and wilderness so close and convenient to Te Anau and Te Anau, which is ever so slowly being noted for it's population so these areas are becoming more special.

There has been an increase in population in Te Anau and these areas are increasingly popular to these people.

When our kids were growing up the Kiwiburn in particular was a safe, handy, remote and special place to go. Benign as far as kids go – nice track to Kiwiburn Confluence.

Experience starts at the Mavora Road – drive into Kiwiburn Bridge – feeling of remoteness. Quite special.

Kids grown up and gone but other people are going to have little kids like that and it will be just as important to them as it was for us.

Scouts camp at Mavora and Mountain bike up head of lake, walking tracks, fishing, Kiwi burn hut and having lunch etc.

Relocation of hut as mitigation is unacceptable as that is pushing back the boundaries of wilderness and that affects such an accessible, safe and scenic resource.

Hunting is good – son and mates used this area extensively while growing up all the way to Whitestone and Upukerora.

Hunting in Upukerora – no matter what happens, when you walk up Upukerora you would have to walk past the structure which would be a visual effect.

Fishing – Impact on the fishery of Whitestone and Upukerora – it's a sensitive fishery and this would affect the fishery through sedimentation during construction. There is nothing else in the Southland region that compares to the fisheries in these two areas – very important for spawning for rainbow trout.

Mavora is also a special fishing area well beyond the hut. Can go there almost always up to Christmas.

No fly zone in Conservation Management Strategy – DOC has recognised the area is important enough for the people who are going in there – wilderness needs to be protected. So the proposal is quite contrary to the Conservation Management Strategy.

The Snowden is wilderness to many people. Te Anau people probably don't see it as a wilderness. But for someone from a city – this is about as wilderness as they would get.

Mountain bike track post construction – we don't need it and it's only a way out of mitigating the actual effect of the activity. It doesn't hold much weight as mitigation.

Post construction – don't know what tourism business is going to be long term wise – once it's there you can't take it away – would cost more than construction and the damage is already done.

World Heritage Area – project could affect this status. This is not a positive for this status.

DOC is concerned about commercial activity and how it affects other people in the area. We have a Concession with DOC for hunting, fishing and tramping, and within that document there's a number of clauses to mitigate the effect on other users of the area. This shows DOC cares about the effects on other users. Upukerora – we are allowed 2 clients plus a guide. And two parties per year. Upper Whitestone – allowed 2 clients plus a guide, 2 times a day, and allowed to do that 5 times a year. Hunting – we are allowed 2 clients plus guide 2 times per day 10 times per year, day access only permitted, no access weekends or stat holidays. Hiking – so restrictive that we don't offer that service because we could affect other

people. This proposal will not bring one extra recreational user to the area – it will have the opposite effect.

No Questions

Tuesday 3 April

9.17am: Introduction by Graeme Ayres – Introduced staff and proposal.

Rose Cunningham #141: 9:20am

On telephone. Chris introduced the panel and the people in the room to Rose. Graeme outlined the process to Rose.

Thank you for opportunity to speak. Quote from Marks – “any club that would have me I wouldn’t want to be a member of”.

If you make it too easy to see Snowden Forest, people won’t appreciate it enough. You have to stop and examine it.

DOC seem required to either have a tunnel or a monorail. Both within World Heritage Area. I oppose both applications for same reasons.

Problem – pristine forest and tussock have no monetary value in itself – it’s priceless. Only monetary values are if we exploit it for tourism. Best things in life are free. Every square km of natural ecosystem is very precious. Carbon sequestration.

Primeval landscapes destroyed rapidly all over the world. Must not surrender to the almighty dollar.

Pristine landscapes that Riverstone Holdings Limited is asking to destroy irreversible a section of primeval forest for the tourism industry. Particularly mass tourist industry.

The majesty of Milford herself is compromised by the increase in visitors. So the applicants would look at more areas in future to destroy. Open up other areas to exploit. There will be flow on effects.

Every advance of mass tourism industry limits the freedom on New Zealanders. It’s just happened in Stewart Island – the 3 day walk (Rakiura Circuit) is now a great walk so you can’t just drop in on one of the huts when the weather is right.

One has to pay high prices to stay in the huts for the best known tracks. Locals can’t wait anymore for the good whether to walk these tracks.

The only way to appreciate forest or tussock is by putting your own feet near it and walking through it. Not by sitting down with a lid over your head.

Why sacrifice a swathe of Snowden forest for some tourists to drive through it.

There is existing access from Queenstown to Te Anau Downs. The memory of tourist’s trip to Milford Sound would turn into some sort of Disneyland experience – it won’t be the scenery anymore that people remember.

I’m a tourist – spent 3 months in South America travelling by bus. The bits I remember were the bits I travelled on my own two feet.

It’s like prostituting the Snowden forest for a lesser experience. I think I’ve said most of what I want to say in written submission.

That’s all I have to say.

Questions:

CV: Are you a user of the Snowden Forest, and where do you live?

RC: I live in Dunedin. I have never been through the Snowden Forest. We were great friends of Murray Gunn, and great friends of David Miller at paradise. All our family holidays have either been at Paradise or the Hollyford. We have always gone past the Mavora, Kiwi Burn area and been aware of it being there.

GA – Rose thank you for taking the time. We don't have any more questions you have been very clear in putting forward your views.

Gerrit Oudt #87: 9.30am

Asked why panel were all from DOC who are opposed to the people who are opposing this application.

I'm a user of the Snowden Area – I've used upper Upukerora for hunting and fishing for over 20 years. Hunted upper area – remote area. Hunted up the area which DOC proposes to mow down going up the Kiwi Burn. Up Mt Echo and the Upper Upukerora which is a good area to walk through peacefully and not hear a train whistling by.

The monorail and the mountain bike track will restrict our use for hunters and fisherman of that area. The people on the monorail won't want to see us gutting deer near the track, but we will be excluded from a zone probably.

We take a lot of time to prepare to go into that environment to enjoy the area with no body else there. Making this more accessible would let other users just wander in there with no effort.

The proposal will ruin the forest with the ability for everyone to access it so easily. We like to go there and be alone and this will be destroyed with the increased accessibility.

Stumped why DOC would propose an activity like this that would destroy it for the users of the day.

I'm surprised I don't come across more people up there – in the Dunton particularly. It's just so remote.

Other friends, hunters and fisherman are all opposed. Our kids won't see the magnificent trees that would be destroyed.

The intro of didymo in the Mararoa has destroyed the river and its values – that was introduced by tourism.

You are introducing more issues to our recreational sports areas.

We would access this area in a limited time for example leaving late Friday Night – 3 hours drive from Invercargill. I believe that most users are responsible – there will always be an element of irresponsible people but how does that compare with a train going through there.

Idyllic settings – was in there about a month ago there was no noise but the birds, river and driving rain. We don't want to hear a train and the ability of other people to use that track that is going to be a cycle track. It's just going to allow more people to be in that area. People should only be able to get into there if they make an effort to get into that type of setting.

We wouldn't be allowed to cut down natives on our own land, so why should these guys be able to cut down all of these trees.

There are already fantastic tracks around the place, and these would go straight into the route of the proposed Monorail.

I like to be out there in that environment. It's also the safety – this (hunting) could be a danger to the monorail. Hunting on your own, bullets can travel far.

I've been staying in at the hut from Friday through to Sunday and not seen anyone in winter.

Trampers come through from Mavora or Windon that wander through that area. Various people utilise that area yet I've only met 2 or 3 people up there in all the years I've been up there using that hut.

All you (DOC) are offering is to create more issues. I'm stumped why you are supporting it.

Questions:

GA: Would you describe yourself as a typical user of that area?

GO: Yes I probably would. The Upukerora is better than the Longwoods as there are less people – you are on your own. It's close enough if you need help but far enough that you can get away from people.

I was in there straight after that big flood a year ago which decimated the track, yet we made it to the hut from the DOC gate – we were determined to get to that place so that we can hunt and fish and surprisingly there is no body there (Army Hut) even though there is loads in the hut book.

It's not often you see others but I know of a lot of people who use that area.

Speaking with them briefly they can't believe DOC is proposing this to go ahead.

Tourists can access this area if they want, but it is nice to keep it hard so that it is only the determined people that can access the remote parts.

What about toilets and excrement on the track?

The local users seem to be sacrificed through this process.

David Boniface #89: 9.40am

I come from different angle to the last speaker. I look more at feasibility and bigger picture. I've been involved in civil engineering projects – asset manager and project advisor around the area.

Over time there will be a need for better and safer access to Milford Sound.

Bigger picture – does this proposal satisfy long term need?

I don't think it does – gaps in proposal around risk management and overall plan.

Strong advocate for safe access to Milford Sound, strong advocate of private development of infrastructure and assets. Tourism should be involved in developing infrastructure. We have an established route into Milford Sound – if there is \$200,000,000 floating around, why not focus on this existing corridor?

There is a wonderful opportunity for a collaborative approach for the needs in to Milford Sound and for improving existing access. For example park and ride – why can't monorail be a part of that long term vision?

Fundamentally no business case for this proposal – fair wish on developer that the numbers will appear from somewhere and they will divert people into the activity.

Tourism trends show the opposite – economic benefit is not justified.

Cost of building in Fiordland – there is not sufficient contingency to cover all the challenges of engineering along this route.

DOC should be careful to make sure there is a positive economic effect for this developer otherwise there could be a liability for DOC.

Does Riverstone Holdings Limited want to sell this Concession off – this is not their core business.

Currently – some operators are offering round trips to Milford Sound, including the boat trip on the Sound for around \$200 – that's the competition.

Essentially 50% current numbers progress from TA to MS. The rest that would be left to travel from Queenstown – how many of them would choose this as their preferred mode of travel?

Engineering – I love the idea of travelling through a monorail. But this isn't the right place. The actual proposal and impact is grossly understated. Essentially all we have are conceptual drawings. We don't have maximum gradients for the road (not a track) it's a construction road for construction vehicles.

To think you could confine the activity to a 3m wide track is not realistic. It would not be sufficient to transport the sort of equipment in that would be needed to construct and maintain it.

Minimum grades need to be properly engineered – undulating terrain. Numbers put in the proposal are the minimum best guess – cut and fill and batter slopes are not wide enough – 3 or 4 metres would not be enough on the steeper terrain. Why does there need to be a track separate from the monorail itself. Why not put them in the same corridor.

Winning material to build the track – where is this coming from – river gravels – would have a considerable impact. Spur roads from track to monorail – would not be able to be maintained to 3m – need passing lanes, turning bays etc.

Implications are grossly understated. River crossings – for monorail or road / track. This is high intensity rainfall area – consideration of hydraulic requirements huge influence and this hasn't been addressed in any respect at all. There would have to be substantial river protection works.

Developer hasn't gone far enough in terms of mitigating financial and engineering risk. Need to give project feasibility in those areas.

Travel savings – time taken to get 160 people off the catamaran, on the monorail, off the monorail onto the bus – no time savings over and above what's there now.

Carving another transport corridor and sacrificing values of Snowden Forest area doesn't add up when there is an existing corridor which still needs improvement – particularly from Knobs Flat.

If there is private investment available – focus on existing corridor and support the agencies that exist to make it better and safer.

This is a serious business – but in my mind we don't have the right balance required for the long terms interest for this area.

Questions:

GA: Are you a tramper – active within Snowden Area.

DB: I'm a fly fisherman – in Upukerora, tramped in Fiordland and maintained tracks in Milford. Have been involved with designing lighthouses and the microwave system to Milford Sound. River protection work in Milford. I understand the constraints from an engineering perspective.

Montgomery and Watson list the 250 risks they identify. But any progression of the Concession without the assessment of these risks would be foolhardy.

GA: I am not an excavator driver – you make comment you would want to use a 20t digger as opposed to a 12t digger?

DB: They are about the same size machine (track width) but they give you more ability to shift more material. Just a matter of engine power.

Venture Southland #289: 10.25am

Steve Canny

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My submission is self explanatory – opposed. Application should be declined because inconsistent with purpose for which land is held.

Potential adverse effects have not been identified or adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated. Activity can reasonably be undertaken outside of World Heritage Area and National Park. Applicant has credible history, but difficult to assess if the applicant has ability to carry out the work.

Scope of engineering not scoped, costs are not understood. Therefore very difficult for decision maker to assess these things in report.

Venture Southland - economic and tourism agency – seek and support projects that have an enduring benefit to southern NZ and NZ as a whole. Enhanced stewardship – essentially our position on this project is that there isn't a demonstrated need for this activity.

Passes through World Heritage Area – major components housed on World Heritage Area – suggests you would have to have something more than “nice to do” not a central piece of infrastructure with a strong need. Has to add value to adjoining lands and National Park as a whole.

Question remains that given the swathe of vegetation to be removed, many of which trees are mature and incredible difficult to reinstate or mitigate, upon which the mitigations of which to be negotiated is very unclear. How can applicant truly offset these effects.

Purpose for which land is held – read out this section of Conservation Act.
Section 25 Cons Act – Stewardship Area... The Conservation Act requires that the natural and historic resources are protected.

Documentation supporting the Snowden Kiwi burn area is based on Conservation Management Strategy and sections that focus on this area have followed key messages. Ensure that recreation does not cause damage to Historic and Natural Values. Recreation developments conform with the Outdoor Recreational Objectives etc.

Have the recreational users been involved with the planning of this route and structure – if not why not?

Key thing is – even though it's not National Park, it's held for specific purposes which are very clear.

Any form of transport facility to be constructed is not consistent with this purpose.

Route – decision been made to identify a 200m envelope to operate within.

The area isn't impenetrable, it could be possible to define a route and identify side cuts, soil stability, a whole range of information. This information is missing.

There are steep gradients. How the monorail would impinge on Flora and Fauna is unclear. Natural fall through wind events has not been stated. None of these things have been understood, assessed and therefore makes it difficult to make a sound decisions.

Mitigation of removal of 800 year old forest?

While in images we see lovely view of monorail, but reality of this type of bush is it is very difficult to avoid windfall and mitigate this in bush edge environments such as Borland Road etc.

Images should show a wide swathe of bush and a monorail structure. Absence of tall trees would be the norm as opposed to the images which have been presented by applicant.

Concern that info provided doesn't clearly articulate the extent to which this work would impinge on our natural environment – so those submitting don't understand the full effects, therefore it restricts their ability to submit on those particular issues.

1976 Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement; implications of positive decision around this type of application and this consultation should have been scoped in the Officer's Report. There was no reference in the application either.

Questions the robustness of the Officer's Report.

Fiordland National Park Management Plan was prepared during the period of the development of the Monorail Proposal. Further development as a transport plan quote – address issues of congestion at Milford Sound section 5.3.9.2. Milford Road Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

Proposal for rail through Snowden Area should demonstrate the necessity for the project. Are there any options outside the National Park or World Heritage Area – certainly.

Increasing demand? No the demand has diminished significantly and this could contribute to congestion at Milford Sound.

In terms of Ngai Tahu Agreement – our concern is that if the Minister allows this project to go ahead, there is potential for the Minister to allow a further project like this to go ahead in the greenstone area.

This matter should have been considered in the Officer's Report.

There are 5 different transport applications on the books – less than in the past – up to 13 at times.

Reality is that not too many of them would be viable if any. Outside of this Concession process, it seem to make sense to look rationally at this application and some of the effects outside of the National Park.

World Heritage Area – clearly there has been a request to review this with UNESCO and put it on the "at risk list".

Most of these "at risk World Heritage Areas" are in developing countries where they need land for vital needs such as food. This could damage New Zealand's reputation.

Red tussock was mentioned in the review report. These particular features are at threat with this proposal – it's not a leap of logic to consider that UNESCO may review this status on the Snowden and Fiordland Area.

For example the Elbe Valley – loss of World Heritage Status because of a bridge led to a 10% reduction in visitors to the area.

If we have a 10% reduction on tourism there would be around 200-300million less revenue from tourism in NZ.

There needs to be a very good reason for developing activities such as these, much stronger than a “nice to do” activity.

There is no justification for affecting the public right to be using this land, and the land itself.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Venture Southland etc.

Questions:

GA: On Page 7 of your submission – “therefore if the Minister Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu can be granted a permit for similar...” In verbal you mentioned potential for a permit.

SC: The reason I added potential, is that the Minister’s intentions are clear in terms of that agreement. Ngai Tahu may not necessarily agree to take out that advice.

CL: What’s your understanding of who owns that land?

SC: Part of it may be owned by Ngai Tahu but remainder is National Park and World Heritage Area.

CL: I think that this clause relates to the land that Ngai Tahu owns, not part of the land that other people own.

SC: It’s not that clear in the agreement.

CL: We will consider this

SC: In order to submit on an application and to understand the full extent of the application it really needed to be in the Officer’s Report – we researched this topic thoroughly and came across this agreement and it was actually per chance that we found it. But the public should really be aware of this from the Officer’s Report.

GA: When you are referring to World Heritage Area – you talk about degradation of status by way of access are you aware of any similar means of transport in World Heritage Area internationally?

SC: Existing infrastructure is taken into consideration and is considered as part of the report for UNESCO – pre-existing infrastructure would be fully understood. I’m unaware of any recent development that has occurred within World Heritage Area internationally.

Jillian Whitfield #191: 10.50am

Strongly opposed to application.

I now understand the sequence of proceedings for the process. However I am concerned that the land involved is Conservation Land with World Heritage Area status so I don’t think I should have to say anything else.

If we have to comply with the law as to how you accept their application and how you listen to us, I hope you listen to the law in terms of how you grant this concession.

Pristine and precious conservation areas. I thin it’s critical for DOC to oppose this application to restore people’s faith that DOC will do what it is there to do.

Private investors – primary aim is to make money. There will be destruction and disruption during construction. The quantity of trees destroyed would be totally unacceptable. The tree edge effect of beech trees falling in on tracks.

I was in there when a whirly went through, I wasn't in the eye of it and there were branches hurtling around all around me, and I imagine what would happen if you were on a monorail track. I was told that was quite common but it was really scary.

The pollution into waterways – concerned it is unavoidable and immitigable.

Stress to wildlife and birds – particularly mohua, long tailed bats and kaka. They don't have to be endangered in order to be protected. Visual impact in forest and open land. Intrusion into the tranquillity and remoteness that people expect to see and go looking for in this sort of area.

Locals and overseas visitors use this area as well as school groups.

Proposed removal of Kiwi Burn hut is also of concern.

Noise pollution – monorail wouldn't be totally silent. Silent area such as this any sort of noise sounds worse and there would probably be some vibration.

I don't believe proposal would add to congestion at Milford Sound, it would increase congestion to all day congestion and that would kill the very reason that people go to Milford Sound. It's already a bit less remote and tranquil than it was so this could kill the goose that laid the golden egg.

The amount of traffic in this area would destroy it for the users of this area.

Fuel emissions – road and traffic.

All above affecting the experience of the people going into this remote and tranquil area.

40 buses a day proposed on top of existing traffic.

Riverstone Holdings Limited claim their experience would allow visitors to travel at their own pace. They also state that the current Milford Sound access has gone stale. She has never heard any visitors she has had stating that the experience had gone stale for them.

Unimpressed that this would be an advantage for the aged and infirm. If they are going to get on and off 5 different kinds of vehicles, nobody who it infirm would want this number of transfers. That would be far too onerous to anyone. There are other ways which would be more comfortable.

Finance – Riverstone Holdings Limited have waved a financial carrot at DOC – DOC would gain money from Riverstone Holdings Limited through the fees and cycle track.

What could eventuate if any unforeseen problems arise and the Riverstone Holdings Limited would want to on sell the project to somebody else if the project is incomplete.

Other appealing activities – what next do we want in the area? Do we want a Ferris wheel at Milford Sound? It is not that sort of area where we would want these sorts of experiences.

At the Invercargill public meeting the applicant stated they could help DOC to develop other similar activities.

I have enjoyed many happy experiences in Fiordland, but if I never get to go there, I still wouldn't want an experience like this spoilt for the generations behind me.

Listen to the local people in Te Anau – as they habitually visit the area and are extremely proud and protective of the area. Those people should get full consideration.

Excellent points put forward by submitters in Te Anau yesterday.

I urge you to deny this application which is inappropriate and illegal.

Questions:

CV: Asked if she uses the area.

JW: I have used the area of the Snowden with tramping. The area was so unspoiled that I really enjoyed that experience and went tramping alone.

GA: Your submission states that the application was unlawful.

CL: I ask that you elaborate on what bit of the application you think is unlawful.

JW: What the restrictions are on commercial activity in the area. These applications shouldn't involve more than a certain number of people and I understand there are parts of the act that preclude new roads to be constructed in the area.

CL: cutting down of trees was brought up yesterday, if it is unlawful to chop down trees without the authority of the Minister. But if the Minister authorises it then that makes it lawful. The Minister can authorise things to happen.

JW: It seems very convenient.

GA: You mentioned a question to the applicant you said you weren't quite sure what the applicant meant by allowing the tourists to travel at their own pace.

John perhaps you can provide some clarification that visitors travelling at their own pace what that actually means.

JB (John Beattie – Riverstone Holdings): When you buy a ticket you won't have a numbered seat you just have the ability to occupy a seat and you can get on and off as the case may be. You can take the trip as a number of segments at your own pace.

GA: So I could chose Departure time for any mode of transport.

Please note the Department was not present at any of the meeting Riverstone Holdings Limited held. The submitter states was told that DOC would support subsequent applications such as these.

JB: The answer to astonishment is that in relation to the cycle track we have given to DOC a commitment that once construction is over and the development of the cycle track occurs there will be maintenance required for that track and we would use equipment needed to maintain that track. We have entered into and agreed with DOC that we would be responsible for activities along that track. That can potentially raise potential for sub concessionaires to operate along that track.

DOC may yet require those people to be actively managed by us because DOC would be leaving us up to manage the day to day activities along that track. I apologise that we left the impression that we would influence what would happen along the entire corridor.

Paul and Lynley King #110: 11.15am

I'm a physics and outdoor education teacher at Southland Girls. My wife is on a fellowship working in conservation with the Department. Been working in education and conservation for past 30 years.

Family and school groups over 30 groups rafting, kayaking and tramping.
Adverse effects on significant natural values – flora and fauna.

Impossible to mitigate loss of old growth trees – 1000s of year old – end of last ice age. There would be adverse effects on long tailed bat, kaka, mohua.

The applicant is under impression that destruction of this type of environment is mitigatable.

People want to come to these areas because they are free of development.

Riverstone Holdings Limited is not interested in introducing people to back country – but to propel them through at high speed.

Conservation Land – purpose explained. Proposal is inconsistent with this.

Swingbridge area (Kiwiburn) has been important for families and school groups for rafting kayaking and tramping.

I have taken 6000 girls from our school alone up here. Tramping, rafting and kayaking in relatively unmodified area. This activity would destroy this experience for 1000s of southlanders.

Construction noise, sedimentation and runoff would affect the Kiwi Burn and Mararoa Rivers. Fiordland Link would encourage future development in the area.

Electrical supplies, carparks and roads. Te Anau Downs would turn into a bus and car park.

Quote: Joni Mitchell – “Don't you know what you've got till it's gone, paved paradise, and put in a parking lot”...

Questions:

GA: The area is used by families, are there other alternative areas that could be used by families?

Paul: I think that if you look at the whole area there are some fantastic major tramps. But this is one of the more basic tramps where you could actually take a family. Year 10 groups can handle it – easy to get to, easy walking, difficult to get lost.

It looks to me that they would then be walking along the edge of a monorail. The tramp would start where there is a terminus. The airbrushed pictures look innocuous but I can see this would be a very big development at the Kiwi Burn and the bush would not be unmodified.

That would detract from the experience of being in an untouched environment.
I don't think people would get the same outdoor experience along a monorail track.

CV: Kiwi Burn Terminus is not at the swingbridge, the location that's proposed; how does that effect the users?

Paul: You will be seeing the monorail as soon as you cross the river. Running giant 4WD vehicles up and down the valley would also raise dust into the valley which would detract visually.

Chaz Forsyth #62: 11.25am

On phone.

Much of proposed route already exists with foot traffic. Pristine nature is qualified. This is an appearance that DOC could be selling off its lower grade environment for money making schemes.

Proposals like these continue to chip away at backcountry resource. Non-tourists get deprived of their values such as hunting, tramping, birdwatching etc. Are we in danger of speeding tourists through a remote area when they are injected into a crowded area?

Questions:

GA: Did you want to keep going in relation to the other 8 points in your submission?

Chaz: Looking at the literature some of the route not finalised – engineering obstructions I think.

Just looking at the map there appear to be 1 or 2 areas where an orange band was indicating the route but there seems to be some decisions around the route which is up in the air.

Social impacts.

There is a loss. I don't think it will achieve what it sets out to achieve.

GA: At top of pg 2 on your submission – you make mention of the tunnel?

Chaz: That was an error in copy and pasting. Delete that paragraph then.

CV: Are you are recreational user of the Snowden Conservation Area?

Chaz: Haven't been there on foot – I am a frequent user of Mavora lakes and Boyd Creek. Fishing and recreational hunting.

Dave Kennedy #279: 11.40am

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard. I have had a life long interest in National Parks and Conservation Areas. I am the Green Party Invercargill Spokesperson. Mountaineering instructor for Mountain Safety Council.

National Parks and Conservation Areas are set aside for all New Zealanders. Few New Zealanders would benefit from this proposal. Monorail would seriously impact on users of this area during construction particularly.

Do not need alternative access to Milford Sound – this does not meet the test.

Doesn't fit with the purpose for Conservation Areas – Section 17. Contrary to the values for which the World Heritage Area was created.

320ha clearance is substantial – internationally we are rapidly losing vegetation so losing this is a concern.

Reference to the Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement – could allow for 2 similar concessions to go ahead.

Can't imagine Mountain Bikers to want to cycle alongside a monorail.

Documented shift in the way DOC manages its estate. There was a huge public outcry against the mining of Schedule 4 Land. This is another huge public outcry against proposals such as these.

Questions:

GA: You query the figure of 320ha total vegetation clearance?

Dave: Got it from the proposal, I added up the areas they stated they would remove, and I think it was including the removal on private land too.

GA: Asked John Beattie if he could tell us the total area.

John: 32.3 hectares, not 320 hectares (decimal in the wrong place?).

Dave: Been up the Kiwi Burn when younger but passionate that these areas need to be set aside in the state that they were originally set aside for.

CL: Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement – point 6 of written submission. What's your understanding on the status of land which this alternative development may go ahead?

Dave: Ngai tahu have a proposal to carry out activity in the Greenstone Valley. And there is a general concern that an application like this would push something like that along.

CL: The Greenstone proposal would require Resource Consent but not a Concession as it is on Ngai Tahu owned land.

Fish and Game Southland #131 and Fish and Game Otago: 12.40pm

Jacob Smyth

Employed for Resource Management Act issues, and environmental management issues. Statutory manager of sports fish and game in Southland Region.

4.2 and 4.3 of my submission described the setting.

4.14 – Dunton swamp area is deemed as internationally Significant Wetland Area.

Upukerora, Whitestone – mixed rainbow and brown trout fisheries. Unusual and unique. Different to other catchments – and also are within Backcountry access. These can be driven to as opposed to having to use boats to get there.

Mararoa – brown and rainbow. 1-3kg class. Medium to large class. Chinook salmon make up the rest of the sports fish. Spawning from Waiau and Mararoa.

Angling usage has declined as the reduction in the fisheries too. Affected by hydro schemes. Annual spawning survey – 90km stretch. Some fishing pressure.

Whitestone – Rainbow and Browns up to 3km. Surveys in upper 1988. Resident for several years before being caught. Recruitment from other rivers.

Fish move between lakes and the water bodies themselves. Ron Peacock was saying he thought 50% resident and 50% migratory fish.

Brown and Rainbows are 1.5-3kg. Upukerora and Whitestone do allow for spawning.

Angling regulations are centred around spawning seasons.

Water clarity is high in these areas.

Mararoa, Whitestone and Upukerora are recognised in the Officer's Report and the Conservation Management Strategy as significant fisheries.

Angler usage – 4.29

Recreational users and commercial guides. We undertake national angling surveys and the most recent 2007 – 2008. Angling usage is measured from the headwaters to the confluence with the next river.

Southland backcountry fisheries usage for Mararoa – is more than 450 angler days. This is explained by the dependence on users to report their use.

5 – Fish and Game is opposed because of effects on environment and the adverse effects on the amenity values for backcountry fisheries.

Maintenance and quality of fisheries is result of maintenance of water quality in natural state.

Earthworks – 5.4

Access road has to be provided with standard width to allow for construction vehicles. The proposed 3m wide road is not specified if it would be gravelled and where that gravel would come from.

Existing tracks are probably more routes apart from Kiwi Burn which is formed track. Great walks are wider in nature but would not be classified as a maintenance track.

Mountain bike track would probably be in addition to 3m wide maintenance track, with a 5m wide bulldozed track including water tables and batter slopes.

Storm water runoff is a concern.

Fundamental concern – activities of earthworks and vegetation clearance. Upper Upukerora has high water quality – low sediment in water, in tact tight forest canopy contributes to this.

Rather than fish blind, fishermen like to sight the fish first so water clarity is really important to Fish and Game.

The Officers Report emphasises the importance of mitigating sedimentation in water. Construction and storm events and ongoing vehicular access could contribute to this. Anticipated 30 month work window for construction – there are key periods for spawning and angling – 1 Oct – end of April. March / April is the ROAR so this is an important time. 5.8 – physical environment provides scenic angling setting. Fish and Game is concerned with maintaining backcountry settings for fishing rather than pasture lands. Back country fisheries are limited in number and highly valued by anglers.

A number of initiatives. Upukerora and Mararoa have no limitations on them for fishermen. Better than average catch rates.

Remote location distance from built up areas.
Mararoa is slightly less remote than the Upukerora and the Whitestone.

Overall peace and solitude of the experience is something that anglers seek. This is something that Fish and Game vouch for.

Upukerora and Mararoa have diverse landscapes. Beech forest, native scrub, river terraces with varying slopes and peaks of Dunton Range.

Clearance, access road, spur roads, structure itself, toilets etc would introduce built up facilities in a largely unmodified environment. There is a small amount of 4WD damage around Army Hut but apart from that there is not much.

The Officer's Report lacks geotechnical report in terms of erosion, stability of road etc. The estimates do seem to be conservative in terms of vegetation removal required for construction (In the Officer's Report).

Box effect creating spurs.

Armouring, culverts, bridges etc would have to go where none of this currently exists. Weeds introduced in meantime.

Significant change in upper Mararoa and Upukerora valleys.
People self-reliant and need moderate to high level fitness.
This is an outstanding natural environment which should be protected.
Proximity of access road would detract from the area.

5.18 – description of route and in summary the monorail will require crossing of Mararoa on 1 occasion, Upukerora on 3 occasions and Whitestone too.

Lots of crossings throughout duration of the route.
Lots of infrastructure introduced where none currently exists.
Dunton swamp is the gateway to the Upukerora River Valley. The applicant isn't proposing to go into central Snowden Area, but for people to access that central Snowden Area, they would need to pass by 4km of this structure to access this part.

Fish and Game thinks insufficient consideration has been given to the usage of the Whitestone, Upukerora and Mararoa Rivers.

Access Road to be used for Mountain Bikers – unclear about numbers of users and new class of users.

Upukerora is relatively flat, and has never known many people to be interested in biking up here.

Visitors susceptible to crowding and changes in remote environment. The fact that no numbers on Mountain Bike track is a concern.

Residual effects of this proposal includes displacement of existing users, loss of forest habitat, and loss of bluff hill scenic reserve, and the visual of structure in open areas.

Planning instruments – Conservation Management Strategy
Implementation 6, 7, 9.
Limiting aircraft. Kiwiburn Track maintain in accordance with natural setting.
No further development of tracks.
Limits concessions to 12 in valley and 7 in more remote ranges. Excluding public holidays and weekends.

Would not be low impact and there is no proposal for Concession to be limited to a weekday.

The intent is to limit Concession parties to take into account low impact recreation values in the area. Remote areas for opportunities for low impact recreation.

A lot of the application does not traverse remote zone but it does go near to the structure.

Monorail fails to address 6,7,9 of Conservation Management Strategy.

Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement – section 8 of Submission.

DOC are required to charge Concession fees – as applicant has stated DOC would benefit from.

It's difficult to anticipate how much DOC would end up having to pay towards the compensation package offered.

Consideration needs to be taken to financial bond.
It shouldn't fall onto DOC or Tax Payer if the activity does not proceed.

Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement – Section 8 of Sub. 5.3 and 5.3.1. These are triggered by a Concession being granted in the Snowden Area.

There is an area owned by Ngai Tahu in the Greenstone, but the route could end up transiting through the Fiordland National Park. The application is insufficient in so far that any information regarding this is not included.

Greenstone is also managed as a backcountry fishery.

In summary – proposal does not provide for sustainable management of Snowden Forest Area. Impacts on fisheries.

Proposal is contrary to the applicable sections of the Conservation Management Strategy and fails to meet the tests of Section 17U Conservation Act.

Their (Fish and Game) views are contrary to the Officer's Report recommendation to the Decision Maker.

Questions:

GA: Has Fish and Game been involved with any other project developments similar to this proposal?

JS: We are involved with the Oreti Cycle Trail – and the Resource Consent process but apart from that we haven't been involved with any monorail application.

CL: Any consent that the Minister might give in relation to that land owned by Ngai Tahu is only in relation to that land that Ngai Tahu own. The Deed does not relate to any land administered by DOC. They would need a separate Concession from the DOC for that land.

JS: Triggering of those clauses if this concession is granted brings about concern around future development proposals. We don't know at this stage what may or may not happen. If these triggers are triggered, there needs to be some sort of address to what would be done with this.

Louise O'Callahan #209: 1.25pm

Lay person member of public which enjoys the outdoors – has a disability – “*I am one of the infirm*”.

I have been to Riverstone Holdings Limited's presentation and explored lots of argument – economic prosperity and benefits. I see the legislation there to protect these places for me and my nieces.

Mavora is here for the families and there would be significant effects that cannot be mitigated.

DOC identified significant adverse effects. But the mitigation measures are not adequate. The Cycleway is not needed – there is already another one going through.

The monorail and cycle track does not warrant the compromise of these outstanding natural values.

OPUS stated the Milford Road is 7m. This is a transport route – the proposal is like a main highway going through a backcountry area.

With my disability I can travel through a 7m corridor and see all the beech trees and would passively look out the window of a bus. There are no additional benefits for travelling on the Monorail.

The area is used by loads of Southland People.

Some people she met at the Kiwiburn Hut hadn't even heard of this proposal.

This proposal is not going to benefit at all the infirm and the elderly – there are too many transfers and I would prefer to be on a coach.

8 minutes times 9, “*sheep herding*” like experience. That’s quite a physical challenge for a disabled person. You might get prodded if you are in a wheelchair.

Is this travel time accurate in the proposed activity?

At Mavora seen a family with a baby. Access and affordability for families – these are cheaper option to great walks. Close to Invercargill. Remoteness is key. A through route changes the experience.

Minister cannot adequately assess the impacts of this proposal – no specific route details. Cannot adequately mitigate the effects.

Re-routing the Kiwi Burn Track doesn’t retain the quality of the experience of the existing route, hut site and tussock lands – therefore does not mitigate the effects on this resource. Loss of well being for Southlanders.

Not Consistent with the National Parks Act or Fiordland National Park Management Plan, or the Conservation Management Strategy. Could be carried out outside of Conservation Area. This is in a site which has maximum impact on other recreational users.

If it was outside of the Conservation Area could really focus on engaging the locals.

The Monorail proposal is a passive experience and all the little kids in the hut book at the Kiwi Burn - there is a loss for these kids.

The presence of the terminal building in itself just changes the whole values of the park. The existing route (to Milford Sound) is said to be one of the most beautiful drives in the world – 90% satisfaction rate.

It doesn’t enhance the tourist ability to engage with the environment any more than existing transport routes.

Access for elderly, disabled – the area already does cater for this group and it’s a myth that this new monorail would provide for these people.

Travel time proposed – I dispute that.

Mass herding of tourists. This can be done elsewhere than within this park. I feel the legislation is there to protect my well being and this is enshrined in the value that kiwis believe that is enshrined in the Conservation Act.

We shouldn’t have to clumsily try to interpret this. I appreciate the work Fish and Game do to voice this a lot more than what people like me can say.

(She wrote the hut book comments on toilet paper so to illustrate the vast variation of users in the hut – kids, families and couples.)

Questions:

GA: We appreciate your submission.

LO: There are only a few areas that have such a diverse range of use almost more than other areas for age group, engagement and user groups.

Glenn Dean #151: 1.40pm

Individual with no financial interest. I haven't protested since 1981. I am a keen outdoors man. I personally use this area with my family and am familiar with the area.

I thought the proposal to grant this activity was a test to see if the public would stand up for the rights of this place.

DOC personnel should be concerned with this proposal. How do we know that the person making this decision could have a hidden agenda?

Reduced travel time is misleading as only from Lake to Te Anau Downs.

Mountain Biking stated that it is increasing in demand.

We can't refer to the changes that occur at Mavora Lake and other places outside of where the activity is directly.

Bribery to put a monorail through Public Conservation Land. This is a World Heritage Area. Accessible to locals and families. Not a minor intrusion – 22ha. Visual noise and intrusion to what is currently accessible to the middle of nowhere. Upuk and Whitestone – major intrusion.

Precedent setting – opening the door to timber, mines, quarries, etc. Gondola up Luxmore? What if the company cross financial difficulties and not finish the construction. If overseas investors come in.

Chunk of this wilderness is already available to many users. Please keep it this way – I'm not a lawyer but surely this application is in contrast to the purpose for which this land is originally held for.

I think you underestimate the local people from Southland's objection to this.

Questions:

CV: What use to you make of the area?

GD: 7 times the last two years for kayaking, school camps, fishing tramping. I lived in Te Anau for a year and a half until a year ago so used this area heaps.

Jacob Smyth #186: 1.48pm

This is my personal submission. Popular area for fishing, hunting and Canada geese shooting. Hunting is allowed throughout the year without restrictions. Walking in tracks – marked and routes. Mararoa to Kiwiburn. 15 Mile Upukerora – Whitestone.

I am 34 years old. 2008 settled in Southland with wife.

I first visited Snowden Forest for 3 days in 2009 during the ROAR. Returned on 5 at least occasions bush stalking red deer. I have introduced hunting companions to this area .

Takaro Lodge are complementary to access through there place to the Public Conservation Land. I would like to thank them for doing so.

Special place to me. Been drawn to it for peace and solitude and recreational opportunities it does provide.

Unmodified Upukerora and Whitestone valleys provide backcountry recreational opportunities.

The presence of game animals is the icing on the cake – particularly red deer.

An area where I would like my children to experience. My personal view is that this is an intrusion on a highly valued recreational area. Conservation estate should be maintained for conservation purposes.

The intention to grant this Concession is the gateway for the applicant to proceed. This should be reconsidered due to the effect on recreational users. Tabled some photos of his use of the area (hunting).

Alternatives are provided elsewhere for transport of tourists from Queenstown to Milford Sound. From Queenstown to Milford – there are roads. These could be accommodated in Te Anau or could look at air transport and could possibly go through Landcorp land instead of Conservation Land.

Self reliance in the backcountry. I haven't been back much since my daughter was born but I would like to take her there when she is old enough.

Although this won't intrude on the central Snowden Area I would have to walk past 4km of this structure in order to access this area.

DOC has quoted a report on visitor perception – recreation, solitude is important.

This is Public Conservation Land – for benefit of all New Zealanders. The applicant stated that disabled people could access the area through the use of this monorail.

Do the aspirations of disabled people want to take mechanised modes of transport. Research has shown that disabled do not support mechanised modes of transport through wilderness.

That benefit is quite disingenuous.

Conservation Management Strategy – recreational use and values, part 6.2 Donald Charteris camp near the bush line. Other trampers use the track infrequently. Hunting is a predominant use of the Snowden Forest.

Clarify that the Oreti doesn't come into the landscape area. But there is a cycleway proposed for this area.

Public accountability and value.

Paragraph 8 in my submission – Officer's Report fails to report on what will be left for existing recreational users hunters, fishermen etc.

Vague reference on 121 about ongoing management implications for DOC to legally prohibit some kinds of activities in areas of Public Conservation Land.

This raises huge concern – what are these restrictions going to be on existing users and what is the OR talking about putting on in the future?

Red deer – centrefire rifles. Route is bisecting the heart of the Snowden Forest Area. This has an impact on hunting throughout the whole area. There is no detail in the app or OR about the effects on hunting in this area in relation to the monorail and the cycle trail.

A centre fire bullet can travel several kilometres.

This is a major concern if I may continue hunting in this area.

The proposal will affect the existing recreational experiences in the area, it is inconsistent with the Conservation Management Strategy, Conservation Act and the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

GA: Thank you for the amount of effort you have put into your submission.

Tom and Wendy Holder #175: 2.05pm

Wendy.

Thank you. I'm just going to read my written submission.

Strongly opposed. Adverse effects tramping and hunting. Kiwi Burn hut is accessible to most people. Located on edge of tussock valley of existing charm of yesteryear. Surrounded by the sounds and touch of pure NZ wilderness.

Never encountered another person when out exploring in this area – even when cars in carpark. Husband went hunting and I went and sat by stream. Magic of feeling cocooned by the sun and the bush – solitude. The closest to get to heaven on this planet.

Scar of monorail track, road, displacement of plants and animals and other recreational users – hunters, fisherman.

The monorail would be an eyesore. Introduction of pests etc along the way.

What policy does this proposal fall under?

Lots of kiwi kids and youth groups have enjoyed this experience. Monorail would add nothing to the experience of the tourist. Experience involves all of the senses, not sitting on the inside of a monorail.

Once these values have been lost they will be lost forever. Not justified to lose these values to get tourists from Queenstown to Milford Sound quicker.

Perfectly good alternative access. No need for access through this. How many more of these proposals will DOC consider? Tom and I employ DOC to stand for these values.

I have been in the grand Canyon – no impact rafting down this area and 1000s of people each year, so it is possible to have access for lots of people without significant structures.

Questions:

WH: What policy does this fall under?

GA: You queried "*what...under?*". The answer to this is set out in the Officer's Report.

WH: Women fight for their children and I am going to fight for my children against this proposal.

Southland District Council #240: 2.10pm

Wayne Heerdeegen

Southland District Council is the major territorial authority north of Milford to Antarctica. Familiar with Concession applications and supporting local trusts.

Council has applied for Concessions and are aware of the legislation required to be tested against. DOC has gone outside the legislative requirements to allow for both this application and the tunnel.

DOC has put in a reasonable amount of consideration for how effects can be mitigated but as a member of the public we do not know how adequate this will be as the effects are unclear at present.

Pest corridor from this tunnel. Cycle Trail as a mitigation measure, it is also a pest tunnel. Would there be some strong pest control need for this corridor?

Concern that application is scant and incomplete – difficult to make a decision.

Conservation Act, National Parks Act and Fiordland National Park Management Plan have been ignored. The application is inconsistent with the National Parks Act and has not been considered at all in the Officer's Report.

Fiordland National Park Management Plan should be considered in this application process. Limited information that we have – the DOC report to consider the legislative tests is limited.

Are you testing things with a lower range of tests for applications such as these.

Southland District Council seeks that this application be declined on this basis.

Questions:

GA: Fiordland National Park Management Plan – what part of the proposal are you relate to.

WH: I'm aware that there are parts of the proposal that aren't in the National Park but DOC must make consideration to the National Park Management Plan.

There are parts that are within the Fiordland National Park and should be tested against those legislative frameworks.

Wendy and Warrick Day #118: 2.21pm

Wendy

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to my submission. Concerns to be heard; I want to speak for average NZ families who feel the same as us.

DOC land – this proposal has no benefit to New Zealanders or tourists. It has to be solely about money.

It would do to point out potential tourists would probably take 4 hours including transfers.

Development would affect outstanding flora and fauna, freedom and solitude of Fiordland hunter.

Ecologically – best representation of beech trees to be seen.

These landscapes are essential to therapeutic value – heal the soul and contribute to well being. As well as ecological value.

We have an opportunity here to create a point of difference to our overseas counterpart.

Fearful for what will be left for our children if this mass tourism is allowed for in our Public Conservation Land.

Infrastructure issues – locals will not want to or be able to utilise this area any longer.

DOC is meant to be engaging locals in their environment. Snowden forest is currently very accessible. This area is crucial to start off the kids to experience nature such as these.

Southern border is where monorail will run and this is an area of high use. People would have to cross the monorail line to access the recreational area.

Why does DOC get to destroy this opportunity for private commercial gain?

Riverstone Holdings Limited assures us the monorail is silent – but this is hamstringing of local users.

Park essence is challenged.

Unknowns – it is not easy to put right this type of unknown.

Potential adverse effects – DOC believes these can be mitigated to an acceptable level but how?

No route has been finalised. Personal nature experiences have been put at stake with this proposal. DOC has a mandate to protect these places for our future generations. I hope DOC prioritises the future as well as the present.

We are running out of outstanding natural environments to take our children too so don't please remove this one.

Questions:

CV: what sort of things do you do in the Snowden?

WD: Mavora Kiwi Burn area we frequently visit because there is no great drama to getting there and going in there.

CV: At what stage would you take them to Snowden?

WD: Kiwi burn would be achievable for them now, and we are trying to introduce them to other more remote areas as they get older. We are running out of places where it is suitable to take a family.

Jenny Campbell #187: 2.56pm

Gave mihi o te reo.

Ngai Tahu Iwi.

Concerns around Conservation Area – set aside for everybody in perpetuity.

Concerned that proposal goes through Conservation Land – particularly for Tangata whenua. We accept that this land will be there for future generations. Need to have more areas like this.

I don't expect people in other countries to change things for my benefit so we shouldn't do that for them.

Getting tourists as fast as possible to one spot – journey along the way is really significant.

The journey to Milford Sound along the Eglington is a significant part of the journey.

I am a Mossburn resident so Kiwi Burn is a local walk with visitors, high school students – I am also a biology teacher at Northern Southland College.

Boating, walking. Shortness of walk to Kiwiburn – 2-3 hours. Flat for grandchildren. Appreciation for vegetation and trees.

Students – 4th form, new to tramping. First experience into bush for one girl – got blisters and we had to stop for her. She got disheartened but then when we made it to the hut she got a sense of accomplishment at reaching the hut.

That was a special time for her and I hope it didn't put her off the start of her tramping career.

Students don't always get those experiences and opportunities so this is an important resource for many schools locally.

Gravel road – people who want to get involved go there whereas people who just want to park up and look out window don't go there.

Beech doesn't have much undergrowth. Huge area for fungi – colleague photographs fungi and started a career as a royal photographic society in Brittan here in the Kiwiburn.

Interviewed some Scientists from Massey who were looking at Hymenoptera in the area. One of the beetles they were researching was potentially a new species. Important to remember there are smaller creatures that are affected such as invertebrates.

Spiritual and intrinsic value of Mavora and Kiwi Burn is what NZers appreciate. Significant to have a monorail going through that area and families would not be able to enjoy that area when there is motorised transport going through the area, including roads and infrastructure.

This proposal cuts across Conservation values.

Roads and infrastructure would increase pest corridors.

Damage could not be mitigated from what is in proposal at the moment.

Proposal is inconsistent with purpose for which the land is held. Managing the tourists – more people thinking they could get to Milford Sound quickly, and could lead to more congestion.

My family have lived at Knobs Flat for number of years and have been to Milford Sound when buses have arrived there, and this is not about what Milford Sound is about. Sacred area and we need to protect that.

Wants to decline this proposal – large scale constructions not what our Conservation Estate is about.

“The Earth is Closing in on us” – quote read out.
“*May your food basket and my food basket be sufficient for everyone*”.

Thank you.

GA: we appreciate your input - thank you.

FMC (David Barnes) #267: 3.40pm

Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club – David Barnes #140: 3.20pm

Going to speak to both Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club and Federated Mountain Club's submissions at the same time.

Federated Mountain Club – national body for national tramping and mountaineering clubs. Advocating for access and protection of places they love.

Mavora and Snowden visited extensively since the 60s. National Parks board allowed independent walkers of freedom walkers in 1965.

Planning aspects of DOC report are of concern:

1. Recreational values

Wider Wakatipu area is at risk of being diminished through the flow on changes such as hard surface tracks. There aren't many remote wilderness environments left.

Great Walks – Routeburn 1947 there was one bridge, then rapidly this has developed to hard surface. Same with Greenstone. So this has rapidly turned into something similar to Routeburn. Same with Humpridge, Kepler etc.

Remote trampers are being marginalised.

This is more benign than other areas in Fiordland. Kiwi Burn is popular place for people beginning out in the outdoors – no hazards such as rivers, weather is better than Fiordland. Character of this area would be altered forever.

Tracked and untracked terrain. Kiwi Burn to Boyd Creek – Snowden Peak to Dunstan Peak.

The Monorail and construction would be audible from these peaks and detract from the user group experience to the point where they will be displaced.

Someone can make a buck out of turning Public Conservation Land into a theme park.

2. Risks around failure of the project or when owner shuts up shop
Risk to integrity of Public Conservation Land and the Public purse.
We are getting more used to this – Pike River, Rena, South Canterbury Finance.
Bond provisions should include comprehensive rehabilitation. This should be done by qualified valuer.

Lending procedures – indemnities and guarantees.
This still won't replace the deforestation and effects on Mohua and other endangered species.

3. Complete failure of applicant and the Officer's Report to acknowledge the Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement with any rail or railroad.
The Minister is not able to withhold the ability for Ngai Tahu to build a gondola in the Greenstone.

What are those proposed developments – you don't know, we don't know, Ngai Tahu probably don't know.

Nobody knows these details so the application should be declined.
Only tells half the story. How can Minister grant this project when she has no idea of what Ngai Tahu may put an application into in future.

Any possible routes from Greenstone must cross the Fiordland National Park.

Gondola, Greenstone Monorail road – construction contrary to the Fiordland National Park Management Plan and General Policy National Parks.

Snowdon is regionally significant. Those other potential projects, are on their own substantially less likely to proceed if plans were adhered to, yet you are happy to tick of the triggers to allow for this to happen.

Potential effects of the proposed activity and ability to avoid, mitigate or remedy is only been assessed to half of the potential effects.

The application is an incomplete application.

Questions:

CL: you are right to raise points in relation to the Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement and these will be taken into consideration. The Deed is quite clear that it relates to the Greenstone Land that is owned by Ngai Tahu. If a similar development was to be carried out by Ngai Tahu the Minister couldn't oppose that activity on that private land.

However if the proposal happened to cross Public Conservation Land then the Deed would not apply to that land.

DB: The submitter raised the point that the Ngai Tahu land is Freehold land so the Minister can't have any say in it anyway.

The Minister is being asked to fly blind in granting the Concession not knowing the proposed Ngai Tahu development.

GA: In the Federated Mountain Clubs submission – it was mentioned that the proposed Easement is too wide – 300m. It is 200m wide (300m in parts).

DB: My understanding is that the applicants get to pick their route within that width strip. They are giving a non-specific alignment for their route.

CV: How often to Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club use the Snowden Area?

DB: Every year to 2 years and a lot of trips are carried out separate to the club.

CL: Point 19 of Federated Mountain Club's submission – point about term – 49 years would exclude the area from the National Parks Act. Could be confused with the Resource Management Act?

DB: I don't know sorry, I couldn't comment on that part.

Forest and Bird #272: 3.50pm

Written Notes provided

Power point presentation.

Reading from written submission from paragraph 13.

Snowdon State Forest was involved in a Protected Natural Area criteria assessment in 1988 and three areas were identified as significant wetland areas.

Nationally significant ecological area as stated in DOC technical advice.

Quite different values to Fiordland forests.

The Officer's Report goes into good detail for edge effects and amount of vegetation to be removed. We don't know really how many trees will be cleared but it will be an awful lot. But this didn't include the spur roads.

Wildlands noted that isolated stands appeared not to be mapped. Plot data is unreliable and route is not clear so it is very difficult to quantify the volume of forest to be removed.

The survey Wildlands supplied noted the assessment carried out by the applicant was inadequate. Wildlands also raise concern around the assessment of effects particularly for the cycle route.

Officer's Report and the Wildlands report both concurred that the proposal for rehabilitation was inappropriate.

Tussock Grasslands

Potential adverse residual effects could be worse in tussock land than in forest as stated in Officer's Report and the MP report.

Cycle trail travels through more weed species than in the tussock wetland. Not a weedy place naturally – there are some exotics but it is not very dominant.

Where is the proposed gravel source going to come from – this isn't clear where that source would come from. Huge input with respect to weeds.

Weed problem is likely to be an effect in perpetuity – as stated in the Officer's Report p81.

Direct Vegetation Transfer of tussock lands – using Meridian and Trustpower as examples – the ones that survived had very limited cover and the spacing was much greater than original grassland and in no way was a cover re-established.

Sir Alan commented that he doubted the practicality of red tussock Direct Vegetation Transfer.

Long tailed bats - Insufficient surveying for bats in vicinity of biking track and monorail route.

Edge effects are significant on bat roost populations.
Habitat destruction is not immitigable for this species.
Cavities are quite specific to bat habitat – have to have specific dimensions and thermal characteristics to enable rearing of young.

The practicality of mitigations suggested are really impractical.

Unlikely the RHL would be able to carry out the mitigation for this species adequately.

Compensation

Needs to be public consultation on what is adequate in terms of compensation. This hasn't occurred.

It is so inconsistent with the CMS so cannot see how it is even considered.

Ian Turnbull Evidence

Ian Turnbull talked to his written submission and power point slide

Monday 16 April

Tim Ritchie and Sherrill Passau #242: 9:15am

On telephone. Multiple inconsistencies with Conservation Act.

Concession should not be granted by the Minister, in particular there's been insufficient information presented by the applicant for the Minister to make an informed decision.

To operate within a 200m corridor – the Department is unable to assess the total amount of effects within this corridor, therefore there is insufficient information for the Minister to consider the effects.

17u – avoid, remedy, mitigate – how can you remedy the removal of this much beech forest and red tussock lands.

17u(4) – There is alternative access to Milford Sound already. Constructing a monorail through virgin Conservation estate is inconsistent with this section of Act.

FNPMP – If Te Anau Downs to be developed as Transport node, the applicant needs to assess the impact of this in terms of congestion at Milford etc – wider analysis required.

1.6 Conservation Act – Manage the Land in order to protect natural and historic resources. Bulldozing bush and monorail through virgin beech forest contradicts this purpose.

NP Act – proposal to develop the Te Anau end of Monorail within FNP and with requirement to transport visitors to Milford Sound – could compound congestion at Milford Sound.

FNPMP – Milford sound is already open to congestion and this proposal could contribute to this congestion and therefore the effects of Monorail on Milford Sound Congestion must be considered in this application.

Minister obliged to behold to the above points raised.
Granting this concession would set a worrying precedent for other groups to go ahead and propose suitable destructive development within the Conservation Estate.

Questions:

GA: How much use do you make of that area yourself?

TR: I haven't been there, I have been in Mavora Area, and Lake Te Anau area. I haven't been into the Snowden area but that's beside the point. The directive is there to preserve the Conservation Estate for its intrinsic value and worth, so that is the relevant point I am making.

GA: Fair enough.

Alan Mark #53: 9.30am

Phone Call.

Involved in the early establishment of WHA for Forest and Bird and in particular Snowden Forest – integral part of Fiordland Area.

Knows the area reasonably well – all the way to Dale Flats in Bog Pine etc.

Conservation Authority expressed concern that Stewardship Area was seen as low caste Conservation Land.

Snowden Cons Area Large and relatively undisturbed – and it is very important. It is within the WHA and my role was in actively promoting this area to the WHA status.

Direct effect of monorail has been specified in terms of forest and grassland – 67ha could be affected including edge effects which would increase this footprint.

The time saved travelling this route would be marginal. 10minutes transition time would be understated. 20min to 30 min would be more realistic.

DOC says 45min would be saved in travel time, we could add 10min to each transition time, which would reduce the time saved to 15min.

From an economic perspective an investment to get people from A to B, there will be a lot of idle time.

Questions the viability of proposal in terms of time saved, amount of impact and the value of the transport being sitting idle a lot of the time.

Impact on grasslands – tussock hair grass – nationally endangered plants. Katherine Dickenson and I published a paper on these grasses. Precarious status in NZ, particularly in the North. Its role in the south is extremely important as it seems to be coping down here. This species is extremely threatened by this proposal.

Direct transfer of tussock grassland (was involved with Mahinerangi Wind Farm, Whitehill Area for Meridian) has had direct experience with the above.

The result ended up a pathetic example of an effort to recreate a tussock grassland. Very hard to successfully transplant tussock grasslands.

The storage of the Vegetation Direct Transfer material has not been clarified in the report and proposal – this needs to be properly evaluated.

Fire risk in grasslands is high – maximum traffic will be in summer when risk is highest. This needs to be addressed in report. Critical issue.

The applicant prefers open areas, DOC prefers forested areas – hard to know what the real impact will be.

Profile sketch – 5.1 and 5.2 of application – cross section of two corridors through forest. 2.5m wide in a clearing of forest up to 7m wide, it is difficult to get an appreciation for the view the tourists would get travelling at 75km/hr.

Worried the width of corridor could become larger as they come across problems with design etc.

Question:

AM: Tussock issues, the rare species and the size of the corridor, the numbers of trees to be removed etc are my main concerns relating to the Conservation Act.

GA: You talked about significant impact. Is that during construction and post construction?

AM: Both – particularly during. Removal of wood from forest, ongoing maintenance and impact – windthrow really needs to be considered. The company is aware of this but not sure what they will do if there is major windthrow on the track.

Edge effects increase vulnerability of the forest to windthrow.

Post construction the main impact is from wind and snow. Along margins with tunnelling. Interference to natural forest edge which is normally streamlined for wind effects.

GA: Last paragraph page 1 you refer to the 200m corridor and 300m locally. What did you mean by locally?

AM: There were places where the applicant thought they would need 300m in some places.

CV: That was in particular at Bluff Slip for stability issues.

Trish Fraser #177: 10.15am

Phone call. Chris introduced the room. Graeme explained the process.

I'm opposed to monorail being built.

Annoyed at quote in media about people who were for the proposal would not make submissions and it was only for people opposed to the proposal.

It is annoying because the people who are against the proposal are getting tired from all the submissions and when quotes like that come out it is very disheartening.

DOC is a commercial department now, and it seems to be more about making money. The reason why we have NPs and Conservation areas is to protect these places, not make money from it.

The monorail through the Snowden would cause adverse effects, noise pollution, destruction of flora and fauna and these effects cannot be mitigated.

Design specs cannot be approved at this stage – when they do, do we get a chance to submit on these designs?

GA: If decision was approved, detail would be worked between the applicant and the Department.

TF: So we are making submissions on unknowns.

GA: you can only make submission on the information available.

TF: So surely this is unfair for submitters that we can only submit on insufficient information.

The proposal would affect the peace and quiet – even if on Scenic Flight – your experience would be adversely affected. Mt Cook and Mt Earnslaw – I can't climb up there, but I don't expect a main highway to be built up there to make it more accessible.

Activities such as these would encourage people less to get out and enjoy these areas recreationally, and could contribute to national obesity issues. Monorail would not advantage anybody except the developers.

GA: Thank you Trish for your time.

No questions:

Richard Reeve #171: 10.25am

Phone call. Chris introduced the room. Graeme introduced process.

Strongly opposed to the proposal.

Reasons:

Area concerned is an alternative remote access route into East Fiordland.

I've walked it a few times and know the country very well.

Not only are the innate intrinsic conservation values important to consider, but the land has significant amenity value too.

WHA – high conservation status. Can't see how there could be anything but a net conservation loss from what RHL are seeking.

Remind the panel of NZs status as a signatory to the protection of the WHA and the obligations under the Conservation Act.

Describe my own experience of tramping in area:

Walked from Mararoa terminus area into the Kiwi Burn into the Whitestone and into Upukerora. Great mistake to understate that area as having not significant conservation values.

Questions:

GA: In your clause 12 of submission you refer to Buller Electricity.

RV: During the Buller Electricity hearing it was raised that economic concerns are fundamentally irrelevant. The panel could involve extrinsic concerns in terms of public recreational value – under 17U(4) structures and facilities but not in terms of economy or social impacts.

The Monorail could not in any way provide for any activity that is not already available through the Eglington.

Mischief test – to see if this activity is genuinely distinct.

CL: Economic and social concerns are irrelevant with Buller case. How is this relevant to Monorail.

RR: Tourism. Speed of shuttling tourists between Qtown and TA these considerations are fundamentally irrelevant.

The applicant's promotion of the project they are advertising it as a faster way of getting to Te Anau. The proposal is to shuttle people from Queenstown to Te Anau.

Those grounds are fundamentally irrelevant in terms of the Conservation Act.
To include these would be a mistake of Law.

CL: Can you point in the report to where these points were raised in the Officers Report?

RR: The term tourism appears 37 times.
The granting of this proposal would not result in any conservation gain, and would not equate to maintaining the Purpose for Which the Land is Held.

John Robinson #121: 10.45am

On Phone.

Backcountry skiers – in summer we do a lot of tramping. Myself and wife tramp in Snowden Forest and love the area. It is also a great place for families. Opposed to proposal.

Construction of proposed structure – will adversely affect the recreational landscape and values of Snowden Forest.

What I hold there is some of the ecology and landscapes and tramping opportunities in the areas. The wonderful bog along the beech edge would be impacted by the monorail.

The Upuk itself is a wonderful resource – picturesque area with open grass valleys as described in DOC pamphlet. Advertised as a suitable place for families on DOC website.

Qualities of remoteness – these values area getting harder and harder to find.
These tramping experiences are becoming rare in NZ.
That demonstrates the recreational value this area holds.

The proposal would adversely affect these values for recreational trampers not to mention the ecological disaster – none of the effects of which should be considered minor nor can they be mitigated.

CMS – inconsistent with that in terms of constructing roads – Pg 297. There was an intent to turn into Conservation Park.

Considering any likely proposal, where any such proposals are considered the remote values cannot be adversely affected – this area has remote values and these values would be severely affected but this proposed activity.

Pg 308 – to provide and maintain Central Snowden Area for low impact remote experiences. Users are required to be self reliant. Trampers like that – to be able to camp instead of staying in a hut. That sort of recreation is affordable. However it is not affordable for many groups to walk great walks and this is the type of rec experience NZers like.

This area does have remote qualities – Pg 309; objective is to maintain the remoteness of the area. Aircraft is limited to emergency and management purposes only. Surely the Monorail would far exceed this impact with all the destruction.

Land transport in wider area will be assessed as in when necessary and walkway route alone Mararoa River. The intent should be that there shouldn't be any adverse effects.

This application should never have got to this stage – should have been declined in first 30 days and avoided this huge effort having to go into the project.

My question relates to we have seen discussion there is a chance in the Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement that in Section 5.2 and 5.1 it allows for provision for construction of a gondola in the Greenstone valley.

What is your opinion on the relevance of this in regards to this proposal.

Questions:

GA: We have noted this and it is relevant. You have not raised this in your written submission.

CL: The Department has noted this.

John: I hope this area can stay preserved for future generations and families.

GA: Thank you John.

Warwick and Hueline Massey #311: 10.55am

Phone Call.

Chris introduced everyone and apologised for missing her appointment last hearing.

Graeme introduced.

Speaking on behalf of self and husband.
Both read more since written submission.

1. Te Anau Downs proposal sits on the edge of the FNP not within it. But this would still contribute to introducing 1000s more visitors to FNP. The effects of this increase should be considered.
2. Detrimental effects of intrusion into Snowden Forest would be considerable. Overseas and NZ visitors want a remote, simple and natural experience and this place offers such an experience. The structure route would go straight through this area. Passes over the land that has a marked route on a map on DOC website. The Monorail would take precedence over a route that has been established for many years.
3. Family and friends have enjoyed many tracks in the South and recommended these to others. We have not walked the route proposed, but it doesn't take much to imagine what it would be like. This type of light beech forest is a joy to tramp in and is very accessible to younger and older members of the outdoor community. It is unacceptable to have intrusion of a monorail in the destructive manner proposed by the developers through this area.
4. Pristine environment at 90km/hr does not do the area's values justice. Would set a precedent. Commercial exploitation of this type of area is inappropriate.
5. To open up this area for sake of Tourists who want a faster experience should not take place of those wanting a more challenging experience. There are easy walks in the area this market group could use instead.
6. Corridor would encourage weed invasion. The restoration of the area would take longer than in other warmer climates.
7. Milford Sound area is already at capacity. The fact that more visitors could get there quicker could degrade the area.

This proposal ought to be refused consent in its entirety.

No questions.

Mick Abbott #282: 1pm

In person. Graeme introduced the process.

Focus on assessments on forest removal and applicant's submission.

Concern the applicant has a number of errors at cross purposes.
Assessment by Department that effects of forest removal is minor – there is a lot more than has been assessed by Department.

Mitchell data was included by the applicant and the veg and Habitat Plan state at cross purposes. Different areas of vegetation loss.

Amount of forest clearance in memorandum has been recalculated to state 3m wide clearance but in the application the applicant stated 2.2m wide structure.

Applicants proposal stated wind more than 3m high is going to move 270km/hr, but this was not discussed further although it is a huge risk, especially in such a narrow tunnel.

6m width is very narrow.

The track itself shows the impact of the construction track increases the amount of forest clearance, and the table shows that the monorail clearance has decreased.

Need clarification on what is being approved by the Department – is it the later documents i.e. 6m width, or the earlier 2.2m width?

Assessment not complete.

Officers report – p77 numbers of trees removed would be a worst case scenario. But from the applicant's assessment, it would seem that the tree removal could be a lot worse than that, especially given there was 20 pages of assessment undertaken before assessing this removal as being no more than minor.

The area of impact – 20 – 25ha is being removed, and the area the applicant would support for Operation Ark is already on existing forest. So it is not actually resulting in conservation net gain.

Construction track could go within 10m of monorail, but operational noise effects on wildlife would go to 10-20m.

Those things are important to realise and assess and should be assessed within the 200m corridor.

Areas of impact would seem to be underestimated and should be considered a significant impact. Doing predator control in lieu of these impacts is not mitigating the effects of the proposed activity.

Mountain bike linking is an adjunct to the application. The applicant's tourism report shows there is doubt in the feasibility of this biking track. This hasn't been clearly thought through again in terms of route and width of track.

Minute 2 – the last major road through PCL the Borland Road. A 7m corridor going all the way from here to Bluff is more than minor, so how can this proposal be considered to be minor. 20,000 trees is an underestimation of how many trees would be lost through this project.

There would need to be retrospective measurements to show that what was proposed is achieved, and if this is not achieved then other mitigation measures would need to be included.

Questions:

GA: What are your qualifications in this area?

MA: Doctorate in landscape architecture and Lincoln based on how to improve recreational perception and was involved in lecturing design at Otago University and the NZAC. This is an area which I feel I have expertise.

CV: how familiar are you with this area?

MA: I took kids up to Kiwi Hut and it was a wonderful first trip for the kids. 5 year old and 4 year old.

GA: thank you for raising inconsistencies with some of the figures, we will have a look at that.

Thank you for coming along.

Philip and Joce Sanford #81: 1.18pm

Orthodontist.

Come from perspective that NP are sacrosanct. They belong to NZ, not developers and not to tourism.

Tourists should be invited on our terms, and if they don't like it they can lump it. Many of the tourists like natural experiences. They don't like to go on train or whatever.

This thing is going to be bigger than what is proposed. It is totally unacceptable. It's a natural area that should be left alone.

The NP original concept was from a Maori chief – we need to get it right. We need to keep these areas for our grandchildren and their grandchildren.

Many people in the community have tried to get more protection within these protected areas.

SWNZWHA – legislation protecting this must be adhered to.

A monorail would fail to preserve the integrity of this area. This area shouldn't be changed for a monorail.

Building 2 roads – one for cycle track one for monorail. The cycle track is an afterthought. There are lots of cycle tracks in NZ. There are more than adequate routes to Te Anau and Milford Sound.

I live in Queenstown and Invercargill and I drive that road once a week.

One of the things I notice is that tourists are taking loads of pictures of the Dome, around Te Anau, and lots of different places. The trip is not boring – it is different to a lot of NZ. There is no need for further access from Qtown to Te Anau.

CMS – Party size have been restricted to 12 in this area. Is this right? That Concessions have been restricted to 12 in this area?

Insufficient detail. Would support previous submitter's comments.

Ecological effects – deforestation.
29km of track goes through NP or Forest Park.

GA: corrected him that there is no NP and that it goes through Conservation Area.

Sorry – Conservation Area.

Mitigation in forms of pest control. How successful has the Department been with pest control on the mainland? I believe we have to try to control these pests but our ability to control them is very limited. How much money can they pour into this and how are they going to have the technology to do it? I doubt their ability to carry out this task.

Pest control not adequate mitigation.

There are plenty of other areas that aren't PCL that they could locate their monorail. Shouldn't use public land for this purpose.

No questions.

Southland Conservation Board #157: 3.20pm

Robin McNeil

We did provide advice early on to the Department but feel this didn't get taken on by the Department which is why we decided to submit.

Disappointing that not more weight gets given to Conservation Boards in applications such as these.

The sum is much greater than the parts of this application in terms of effects. And this hasn't really been considered in the wider context in the report.

There are a number of areas in the report about the required statements in terms of the CMS. CMS are the fundamental backbones as to how we manage our PCL.

The community gets very deeply involved with how we should democratically provide for our management of PCL. Who are we managing the lands for?

CMS attempt to provide this definition of who we manage PCL for. A good plan is that everything moves smoothly and issues are reduced.

To come up with a Decision which is inconsistent with the CMS is really going across a lot of well debated views of the community which should be given more weighting.

This is not helicopters, Milford Sound – it is traditional kiwi back country experience.

Is the information sufficient: 17u(2)(a)
This application is nowhere near complete.

All way through report it states "*if there was more information*", or "*if RHL was to provide further information*".

There is no actual recognition as to whether the cycle way would meet beginner, advanced, elite tourists. Without knowing that how can we understand what the benefits are.

So how can we assess if the proposal is aligned with the views of the public.

Monorail route not well defined – lack of information says you have no idea how steep the route may get. It seems to me that this could exceed a 9% gradient. This is about twice what a monorail should competently operate on. The monorail could get around it by switchbacks going backwards and forwards across the valley, particularly the Kiwi Burn. Huge effects on users of this area.

We can't work out what the effects are going to be here.

Wildlands report – agree with this, without a detailed route design states there is insufficient information to assess the effects. How can any decision maker have enough understanding to make a sound decision from this lack of information.

NTDOS – how do we interpret that? With any activity going through the Snowden Forest, then NT can do anything to the same scale in the Greenstone.

When the CMS was prepared, NT were publically discussing building a gondola. So what we could expect from this is a road up the Greenstone, and then NT would only have to apply for a Concession for adjoining area such as Lake Monk.

This was well known at the time of the CMS review. We can't guess what NT might be thinking or not thinking, but unless you've got a back to back agreement with NT you have no idea what the effects might be in the Greenstone and Caples. One inter alia affects the other – so need to take the effects into consideration with the proposed activity in the Snowden Forest.

There is no possible way this monorail could go ahead without a back to back agreement with NT in terms of what will be proposed in Greenstone Caples.

This is sufficient to decline this application.

Officers Report largely accepts RHL's assessment of effects. We are talking about a section of forest the size of Bluff Hill. These are sig sizes of land. The place is unique. Where is the mitigation going to come from?

Offsets are very dangerous things to contend with – trading wetlands for forests etc. Giving the Mohua a break in the Eglinton doesn't make sense as mitigation either.

RHL has not provided an Assessment of effects for the cycle link. Recreational aspects have not been considered.

The number of the technical reports that have been dismissed, so it gives the feeling that there has been some arrangement between consultants. Surely we have to take a precautionary view. If one consultant says one thing, and another says another thing, we need to take a further analysis of these statements to get a more detailed analysis.

Bush edge effects would be more than minor – especially with big forest and wetlands. Not straightforward to deal with.

Visual Landscape – difficult to assess the effects. If there is no final route and it is difficult to assess the effects of the structure, then it is not acceptable to state that the effects would be no more than minor.

What happens if the proposal will be harder than it is planned? I'm an engineer so I know projects don't always work out as they were planned.

It is much harder to build this thing than what is already known.

Contradictions for use of area – walk to Kiwi Burn hut is regionally significant. I am a member of the NZAC, editor for Moirs Guide book and this is the place families come to learn bush craft, schools have camp up here, compass courses, handy to Mavora Lakes so can link to outdoor curriculum.

Southland families are important. Waihopai families will not have fun at Puseygur Point. Snowden Areas fantastically suit families and schools.

Can you mitigate this effect? No – this cannot be found anywhere else. If you look around the Takitimu etc these areas are already used so can't be used as mitigation.

Kiwi Burn Hut – gets sun, creek coming down beside it, close to Kiwi Burn Bridge. The proposed location would not get the sun, would not have a creek and would be further from bridge – poor cousin type thing.

Deer Stalkers Assoc have a lodge up the road. When I go tramping in the area I normally go past the hut and go camping. I think this would be true for quite a few hunters and trampers so the number of users could be seriously underestimated.

There needs to be a lot more research done to figure out who uses our back country and how – this information is lacking by the Department.

People go walking along the Waihopai walk here near Invercargill – it's handy. You don't drive up the Mavora road to have a similar experience to the Waihopai Walkway. You go there to have a more remote experience so it needs to be managed for that purpose.

Height gain for proposed cycle way of at least 395m altitude.

Nowhere in OR states if this is realistic and what level of experience you would need to cycle this. There is no toilets, picnics, amenities etc for these cyclists – one is left to believe that this is an afterthought which has not been planned or researched in terms of demand.

Walking up a hill at 700m is a good day outing, and biking this would be even harder.

That's the essence of our submission – we think the application is far from complete. One has the feeling it is being rushed.

Reading the information it seemed that if the monorail didn't go ahead quickly a tunnel might be built before it.

Inconsistent with the CMS – none of the effects can be remedied, mitigated or avoided.

Would be left with a mess which would be very difficult to clean up.

Questions:

CL: In terms of Ngai Tahu Deed Of Settlement – what do you understand about the land status of the area where the equivalent of a monorail would be built by NT.

Well it would be on the flats in the Greenstone valley where NT own it and manage it as though it is PCL. That's my understanding and there is ROW for trampers.

CL: What do you understand they might need to build that additional monorail in terms of consent from the Minister.

RM: I got a copy from the Deed of Covenant and the Minister cannot withhold consent.... We are talking about ecological and tramping values and hunting values which would be impacted by both within the NT land.

It would be very difficult to prevent a gondola or monorail in the Greenstone going over to Lake Monk if this monorail goes ahead.
Difficult to decline a Concession.

CL: I think the applicant will have something to say in their reply tomorrow if you want to hear that and this will be considered by the Minister.

GA: Statement in regards to Milford Road.

RM: That was a construction effort at the time – there was the psyche at the time that development at Milford itself such as a fertiliser factory for nitrates could be considered.

We have had the Manapouri petition – this went through well before the people really realised there is value to be had in wilderness places.

One helicopter landing, one tourist offends no body. There are several fiords in Fiordland but once you have seen one do you need to see them all?

At Te Papa you work through the layers. But only if you are really interested would you go to the basement and see the Taonga down there.

But there are surface layers to the tourist experience – Milford Sound once seen, do you have to see Doubtful sound, George Sound, Dagg Sound etc.

We do need to share these places so there is somewhere for everyone to enjoy. To say one Wilderness area is more important than others is nonsense.

CV: Where you involved with the creation of the current CMS?

RM: No I'm not that old....

CV: you mentioned helicopter landings are inconsistent with the CMS. But the CMS acknowledged that at the time of CMS review there was a similar activity being considered.

RM: They originally put in an application for a very low impact low maintenance proposal which would be a tunnel through the trees at the time the CMS was reviewed. So the construction technique was a lot less impact.

When the CMS was reviewed back in 1999, I would think Andy and Phil wrote what they did because they thought the activity could be built relatively low impact. Phil and Andy would have had no idea the activity would be at this larger scale.

What was envisaged back in 1988, 1989 was vastly different to what is being proposed now.

Dave Harris #109: 4.05pm

My voice is a little bit weak so I apologise if you can't hear me.

I am opposed to the application. This area is a unique are which is very easy to access and the last thing we need is for a monorail to go through here.

Kiwi Burn hut is very close to civilisation but very close to the remote wilderness environment. This is suitable for families. The proposal to move the hut further away and the proposed location would mean the new route would have to go through pretty tough terrain.

It is important to get our younger generation out into the Wilderness and we need to preserve such utilities as these.

A track going down into Whitestone and Upuk, which I haven't tramped myself, but I am sure this area is much harder going by looking at the map. To take paying passengers going through here, and displacing users of the park existing seems wrong.

Construction – this is going to be a major problem. You can move the monorail sections themselves but you are going to have to build foundations – concrete trucks etc. The road would have to withstand that sort of traffic.

The country – it can rain quite hard. So this track is not going to be simple. Cycle way would be a lot more simple to construct.

Forest clearing – if you clear the absolute minimum number of forest, the visitors would only see a tunnel of trees therefore they will have to clear a lot more forest to get a decent experience for the visitors.

Edge effects – take trees down, lose more trees. This damage could spread causing damage to forest and the rail.

Noise – I suspect the ambient noise currently would be under 30dB out there. Each time you half the noise you double the distance you can hear it from.

But with the noise of the monorail, this means the distance you could hear it from would also increase how far you can hear it from.

Fishing in the Whitestone river. Helicopters are a real turn off in terms of remote experience. Haven't seen good consultation – with user groups such as Fish and Game, Fishing Clubs, Tramping Clubs. OUTC was consulted with but not Southland Tramping Club.

If the Concession is granted – a bond should be sufficient to remove the whole intrusion if the venture goes bankrupt. A great big monstrosity through the wilderness to be removed – tax payer doesn't want to pay for this.

Pushing recreational user aside for the commercial user – unacceptable.

This monorail is not something we need – not a renewable resource. Once areas like these are destroyed we cannot get them back.

Saturdays paper – quote about only people against the proposal would submit. I know a lot of people against the submission who didn't submit so I don't agree with this statement.

CV: there is some mention of the noise analysis of the proposed activity.

DH: Ok but even an increase to 40dB would be very intrusive in this area. I am an engineer so have some knowledge of noise intrusion.

Gordon Mather #46: 4.13pm

Private individual submission, however strong connections with outdoor recreational groups and conservation movement.

Corner of Fiordland which is part of WHA. That status is not given lightly by UNESCO.

Significance on a global scale. It has significance which goes beyond our local scale. Proposals which have such huge impact have national significance.

These sorts of things are not well funded in general, and we inevitable discover things that we didn't know about this area. For all we know this area has a large genetic diversity of material which needs to be preserved.

Many threatened and endangered species. Many could be yet to be discovered.

Economic hardship comes and goes, but extinction lasts forever. To grant something before we completely understand the impacts is a danger to lose things we are unaware of.

Need to treat this area with a little bit more respect I suspect. Wildlife systems and ecological values need to be preserved.

People who go into the area have to take some effort to get there. Many National Parks worldwide are similar where access is very difficult and if you wish to go further you need to get a shuttle. United States Authorities control visitor numbers to special areas.

In some areas in NZ visitor numbers are degrading the visitor experience.

Ease of access or increasing the visitor experience is driving this application. But it is one of those things in life you need to accept that some areas are harder for certain people to access. The very thing that is attractive about the area is likely to be destroyed by this proposed development.

I have a much wider concern and sense of unease that there seems to be a significant shift in the Department from a sense of preserving what we have, maintaining species viability, keeping Conservation Estate in good hands for future generations to an economic model designed to exploit the estate.

I think there is danger in that, it concerns me that the Conservation Act is quite clear there is a duty to preserve and conserve in natural state in perpetuity and to entertain projects of this scale is really in contrast to that mandate.

Inevitably the people who propose these sorts of developments see benefits for themselves, except for Concession fees for the Department. Those fees do not seem significant enough to outweigh the effects on the PCL.

Could provide benefit to Concessionaires, could have economic effect on surrounding community.

We have to be more vigorous and outstanding about our values of areas of prime Conservation Estate. We do not have a responsibility to provide motorised access to all areas of beauty – and in fact DOC should be preserving such places in their own right.

There still needs to be places which are harder to get to and have minimal evidence of human impact.

The proposal that is in front of us in balance does not meet the criteria by adding to the betterment of this area. I think it is another degrading experience that would chip away at this wonderful corner of the country.

Questions:

CV: What's your background.

GM: I have degrees in ecology, botany audiology. Practice as an audiologist. Early work as botanist in Coppermine Island – Poor Knights Group, worked with Alan Mark on Manapouri Scheme where I cut my teeth.

Thank you for your submission,

Tuesday 17 April

Te Araroa Trust - #234: 9:05am

Michael Pullar

The proposed Monorail route would have a direct impact on Te Araroa walkway route as it passes down the Mararoa River towards Kiwi Burn Confluence.

The proposed Te Araroa Walkway would follow existing Kiwi Burn track and continues as a rough poled route down river bank of Mararoa instead of crossing the Kiwi Burn Track bridge at the confluence.

There is an MOU between Te Araroa Trust and DOC for this route. Trampers prefer to exit at Kiwi Burn access swing bridge and travel down road rather than travel down river bank.

A revised line of proposed route for Te Araroa would follow the true right bank of the Mararoa river.

Specifics of the monorail route within the 200m wide corridor are not important, because no matter where it is it will have significant impact.

An underpass would be necessary to allow both Te Araroa and the Monorail to co-exist.

Location of new hut – would affect current users of existing hut. The loop track walkers would be displaced and the new location is too far off the Te Araroa route to be of use to this project. An alternative site needs to be found that suits both user groups – hopefully closer to river rather than as far away as you can get for the Kiwi Burn hut site.

This would be a real step for mitigating the effects of Hut site. The Officers Report does not address affects on Te Araroa.

Even with building an underpass, there are no real mitigation measures for effects on Te Araroa users as they will have to approach and see the structure. This will be an intrusion on the user's experience. Should be compensation to Te Araroa – national charitable project – could compensate to allow for further development for this charitable trust.

Subject to additional conditions that safeguard Te Araroa interests within the MOU between DOC and the Trust.

Questions:

GA: Confirm proposed location of hut being too far.

MP: Ideally it should be on the existing route. Current hut is around a KM off hut. I would prefer it to be substantially closer – within 100m hopefully.

I have looked at alternative sites. If you continue down Kiwi Burn confluence there are spots down there. There are some clearings on the loop track. There will be issues in terms of a lot of people on site near the car park. Need to be careful that it is not over run by day users.

Want something to suit everyone rather than just loop track users.

Most visitors currently exit at swing bridge, but the Te Araroa Route could sort out some flow of trampers down the river.

CV: Is it feasible to find a site that would be suitable for Te Araroa walkers and Loop Track Walkers?

MP: Yes.

GA: Compensation – are you aware of any other arrangements Te Araroa Trust has like this nationally?

MP: There's been aspects of overseas offers of consent. I cannot recall a Concession of this nature whereby we have had to address this type of impact on our project.

CV: MOU – are you aware where this is made?

MP: 2003 – the Chief Executive, was made at national level with DOC and there is a further one which goes into more detail.

GA: Yes I am aware of these documents and the details surrounding these.

Thank you for your submission.

Catherine Stewart #220: 9.30am

Phone call.

Chris introduced the room to Catherine. Graeme introduced the hearing process.

Reading from written submission.

Lives in Tauranga with a background in Tourism as a travel broker. Ports of call in NZ, Australia and Pacific Islands. Show cased NZ to overseas visitors. Many trips to Milford Sound. Visited Mavora Lakes – it is an area of outstanding beauty.

Opposed to proposed Monorail and associated parallel roads through Snowden Forest and into Te Anau Downs.

Clearing of old growth Beach Forest and rare tussock grasslands and disturbance of habitat is unacceptable.

Crossing of 13 streams in heavy rainfall area. 68ha of wildlife rich forest. 19,500 old growth trees approximately would be destroyed.

Long tailed bat – critically endangered species. Mohua, kaka, and other species in area.

Considerable earthworks is required in the construction of this project. Significant noise. Delivering concrete.

WHA – NP Act.
Preservation is in the National Interest.

Project would be inconsistent with the purpose for protecting natural and historical values of the area.

Has had firsthand experience taking people to this area and listening to their feedback. Monorail would look inappropriate in this type of setting.

Private Lease is inappropriate – Public Conservation Land.

Shifting Kiwi Burn Hut.
For people with time restraints they can fly from Qtown to Milford Sound and don't need this as a short cut.

Questions:

GA: You mention the proposal conflicts with the NP Act. Which part of application do you see is conflicting with the NP Act.

CS: I don't have the legislation in front of me so can't answer this.

GA: The NP Act refers to the part of the development at Te Anau Downs only. Are you aware of that?

CS: Yes.

Thank you for your submission and taking the time to be heard.

CS: It's not the same as being there but thank you for the time.

Bruce Gulley #223: 9.40am

On phone.

Chris introduced the room and Graeme introduced the process.

Graeme highlighted first bullet point in Submission. Corrected Bruce that the project does not traverse two National Parks, but one Conservation Area and terminates at FNP.

Two issues to highlight:

Noise – I work in Occupational Health and Safety and noise is one of my skill areas. Page 2 of my submission I mention that in Kahurangi National Park we heard noise source about the time the Government was proposing to mine in National Parks. We got to Salisbury Hut where DOC had a small generator running. This noise transmitted across the valley from Balloon Hut.

I was upset with amount of noise I was hearing and this would be one of my major issues with this proposal. The noise effects would be quite significant.

I tramped the Rees Dart the beginning of last month and the noise of the jet boats you can hear for quite some time before and after they pass.

If this application is granted, you need some very strong mitigation around noise containment and noise management.

If you stand by your lawn mower which is 2 or 3 years old, it would be running at approximately 80dB. This is where you have to start wearing hearing protection.

50-60dB at a construction site you will really need to wear hearing protection from a large distance away.

Mavora Lakes is a prized fishing area and the noise would adversely affect those fishermen.

What happens at the end of the 60 years? What happens to the Monorail? Is somebody responsible for taking it away?

Article in North and South commented that there is less than a million dollars raised through Concessions per annum. I would like to think that if we are agreeing to this proposal that RHL would be paying a lot of money to DOC for the privilege to do so.

Questions:

CV: Being a noise expert, in your experience would it be feasible to put those types of controls in place in this type of environment?

BG: Generator – yes you put a box around it. But no matter what they put in there with Machinery it is hard to mitigate. One way is better machinery – quieter machinery. I'm not sure about diggers as they operate at about 95dB. After half an hour of exposure to this noise you will get damage to your hearing.

I can't see how you can reduce the impact of this type of noise generation.

CV: I'm also interested in your comments about the generator at Salisbury. What noise do you think was being generated from the generator?

BG: About 90dB.

Thanks for your time and letting me be heard.
Thank you for your time.

Finished 9.50am

Geoffrey Thomson #287: 10.15am

With Anderson Lloyd – Marie Baker.

Handed out Written Evidence to support written submission.

Graeme – I believe you are familiar with hearing rules.

Marie – yes thank you.

Marie read from written evidence provided

Geoffrey Thomson then provided his evidence of why the proposal will not have any positive benefits for tourism or visitor's experiences of the Conservation Estate.

Geoffrey read from written evidence attached.

Further stated that the trucks used in construction would operate at around 75dB. In a peaceful area noise travels a lot further away than in a built up area with background noise.

Questions:

CL: Marie at paragraph 1.7 you mention the proposal would tarnish NZ's 100% pure brand and impact on NZ's tourism industry, next step I wonder why the Minister should consider this under the Conservation Act.

MB: If the benefits for this proposal to tourism are to be considered in this process, then you need to do a full assessment of tourism effects. For example enabling tourism within the PCL, there needs to be adequate assessment of effects.

If tourism is taken into account by Decision Makers, then there needs to be a full assessment of effects both adverse and positive.

CL: In your submission, can you point to where you raised about the NTDOC ?

MB: Sue Maturin asked me to comment on behalf of Forest and Bird today.

CL: It is something the Minister would take into account.

Council of Outdoor Recreations Associations of NZ Inc (Hugh Barr) #58: 11.20am

On phone call.

Chris explained the room to Hugh. Graeme introduced the process.

Hugh is familiar with proceedings with hearings.

CORA has 10,000 members approximately. We are important group in terms of Outdoor recreation.

In terms of this proposal we are very concerned – going across PCL, primarily Snowden Forest which is protected by Conservation Act and WHA.

Conservation Land set aside for ecosystems and outdoor recreation. Not set aside for development.

Public tourist access to Milford Sound – road already exists, so no compelling case that this access is required.

Snowden Forest is known in CMS for walking and remote public recreation. This is in opposition with the proposed Monorail.

This zoning has been around since days of Forest Service due to the attributes of the area for being able to hunt and fish in this area.

Public roads already exist. People don't use the road going through to the Mararoa proves that people prefer to use the main road going around Mossburn etc.

Clearing approx 90ha vegetation and impacts on recreation values is a more than minor effect.

Counter to CGP 2005 – which talks about use of vehicles and public transport.

Private Monorail Proposal doesn't satisfy section 9.5.a of CGP.

We are very much against this proposal – it isn't consistent with the ROS zoning for Snowden Forest, and we are concerned it has very little merit – if the proposal is granted – that it is likely to go broke. Can't see how it can be economically viable.

DOC seems to have changed its policies to allow this to go ahead so DOC must charge a very significant bond to clean up the Monorail if the applicant does go broke.

Any questions?

Questions:

GA: 90ha of vegetation – are you averaging out a 300m wide strip over 29km?

HB: That's right.

GA: There is only one area which would be 300m and this would bring us back to 22ha.

HB: Okay that's fine thanks for correcting that.

GA: Thank you for your time putting together this submission.

HB: Thank you.

Finished 11.27am

Robin and Susan McNeill #232: 11.35am

This submission is on behalf of my wife Susan and I.

I want to talk mainly on effects.
Section 62 lands.

I've been editor of Moirs Guide South since 1992.
But I've also had a lot to do around the Kiwi Burn area, shot first deer, took my dog into there, have just about drowned my colleagues from work rafting in the Mararoa.

Tramping club – river crossing.
Have cycled up the Von River on an old 5 speed so shouldn't need to be mechanised to get up there.

There are photographs of this area in Moirs Guide from 1995 and there are even photos of proposed alternative hut site in Kiwi Burn Area.

The mitigation proposed is like picking the eyes out of the PCL and move it somewhere else – this is like picking the eyes out of the Mona Lisa and moving them somewhere else.

The whole of this application is greater than the sum of the parts.

This area offers a wilderness hunting tramping experience.

People don't walk along motorways for the same reason.

Kiwi Burn Hut being moved from present site – it is in a sunny location, convenient for families or inexperienced trampers.

The route from Kiwi Burn over to Upukerora is a great trip for families. This trip is not replaceable.

The cycle way proposed – ups and downs. The cycleway is for a small elite. A family would not be able to use this cycle way. The material would be such that it is good for trucks. The gradients aren't going to suit a family – too much climbing.

9% gradient of track. 4-5% gradient is about the limit for a monorail track. Any more than this you would need cogs and we don't want one of these in this area.

You can't mitigate effects of the monorail without knowing the exact route of this proposal.

I cannot express the disappointment and emotion I would feel if this goes ahead, ruining this area. It almost brings me to tears now as I speak.

The section 62 Land is pretty important. Basically it's managed such natural and historical values to be protected.

That's an area we need to be quite clear about.

FMC were concerned that there needed to be some campaign to protect Section 62 Land, Kevin O'Connor gave me reassurance that we shouldn't worry because Section 62 Land is already protected enough and FMC don't need to worry about this.

I have to concur with this view, and that the OR takes a different view from this.

There is no suitable mitigation for this for ecology, trampers or natural values.

This proposal should mitigate what happens within the affected area, not creating benefits somewhere else. This area cannot be replaced by another place as the values within this area are unique and cannot be mitigated.

That is my submission short and sweet as I know other technical aspects have been covered by other submitters.

GA: Thank you Robin.

Glenys Dickson #291: 11.47am

It's quite disappointing for me to be here to speak in support of my submission, for which the Department has given the approval in principal for.

DOC has many dedicated staff, and work hard to protect these areas, along with volunteers.

I believe it must be quite disappointing for them that the application has got to this stage.

Respect has probably been lost, and people like to trust a process and I'm sure they have started to feel that the process is not just.

CA states that Minister shall not grant application for structure or facility...

This activity is carried out already on existing road, and by aircraft, without the need for a monorail track and construction track to be constructed.

The CMS provides for ROS settings where group sizes should not exceed 12 people per group.

To allow this to happen in pristine area, and displace hunters, trampers, horse-riders and picnickers is wrong as people come here from other countries where they want to get away from this type of development.

Threats to Long tailed bat, mohua and kaka.

Large number of trees to be cleared. Bat roosts in trees could be lost as stated in OR – “*could be catastrophic*”.

Contrary to the purpose for which the land is held.

Invasion of pests and wind fall. Quoted from DOC report on corridors.

Stage 3 through Snowden Forest – concerns around destruction to Flora and Fauna and crossing 3 pristine rivers.

Applicant spelt Snowden Forest incorrectly in their glossy pamphlet.

I request that this application is declined as it contradicts the CMS, and the CA.

Questions:

GA: thanks very much for taking the time to speak to your submission.

Adjourned at 11.53am until 12.40pm where we will hear applicant's response.

Riverstone Holdings right of reply.

Power point presentation – hard copy provided to Department and attendees at hearing.

Paul Beverly.

Paul acknowledged the effort submitters put into the process – some very valid and important points were raised.

Also acknowledged the important work carried out throughout the officer's report. The reply would be based around why they feel the report is adequate.

RHL may provide some context for example around the engineering issues that were raised by the submitters.

RHL will not recreate the application but just provide some background to how the design was developed.

Bob Robertson (Chairman of RHL) also present to provide some context to the project.

Bob Robertson:

Submitters and media portray the Fiordland Link Experience a certain way. But the experience was not intended to be a link to Milford Sound.

Want to create an experience for international tourists and NZers who cannot get outdoors as much, through NZ backcountry.

Using the numbers that go through to Milford Sound anyway to benefit the cruise businesses out there.

Is a keen hunter and fisherman, has been award winner for Riparian Planting and management. Strongly feels RHL will make a strong effort to mitigate the effects and minimise environmental impact where possible.

RHL believe the Fiordland Link Experience can be accommodated in a reasonably environmental way that can also be created for our tourists.

A lot of countries are developing attractions and NZ is being left behind.

A road facilitates people to see things and creating infrastructure around the road allows people to see a place they otherwise may not be able to.

How do we get people an experience that gets people up close and personal with native bush and nature without sacrificing the values in that area?

Many tourism things we talk about are unsustainable from an economic perspective but here we need to be talking about 1,000,000 tourists to make this experience sustainable.

Need to meet tourist expectations for this modern age.

Originally the monorail was going through Fiordland National Park. So 7-8 years of process went out the window when we moved the proposed route out of FNP, and then moved it again out of the Remote Area too.

Going across the ground – you don't have to touch the ground. You can put pillar in every 20m. I call that low impact.

We can create the monorail without an access track. We brought that in because we could see that being a second long term advantage turning into a cycle way. We don't need to have that track. We could make it less substantial more alike a walking track or bob cat track.

The proposal itself would not need to modify the land.

The Monorail would be electric using sustainable energy via the closest power source – Mossburn Windfarm.

Pneumatic tyres on the concrete track are extremely quiet. The loudest noise I have ridden on with similar technology the loudest noise is the door opening. This is quite loud but that is the loudest noise.

Harmonic acceleration has some noise but relatively quiet.

Method of transport with very low impact. Could allow for 1,000,000 people to use it. If we can get large numbers of tourists to enjoy an experience in a place like this so they can talk to their friends back home so they come to NZ rather than Mexico or America or Europe.

Sustainable infrastructure to suit this need.

Benefit to Te Anau:

When we come to the way we operate, Te Anau is going to be a major beneficiary to how we bring tourists into NZ. We would sell the experience before they leave their home country. That way Te Anau would be on the map before they leave.

We must promote NZ as part of this process, Queenstown and Te Anau which is the destination and all the associated tours from Te Anau e.g.. The Glow worm caves.

Monorail track would convert eventually into a biking track which we would fund then subsequently look to maintain as some sort of benefit that could be derived. Could become a tourist attraction in itself – maybe as part of the 4 lakes ride?

Could form a connector track to Te Anau. The region could receive benefits similar to the Otago Rail Trail.

The whole process of the Monorail is quite big business. There are large dollars involved and in terms of being able to promote NZ and Te Anau, a lot of money can get tied up in the construction itself, rather than into the promotion of the activity.

3million per year promotion for this project and the area is what RHL propose to put towards promotion material.

John Beattie:

Nothing we have heard has challenged the basis upon how we see the way the Officer's Report has been assembled.

I would like to respond to a number of themes which have appeared throughout the submissions.

I would like to alert the panel that after touching on those issues, that we will investigate further with our experts.

World Class piece of infrastructure which links to Milford Sound using that user group that are already going through to the area.

Education – real opportunity to educate visitors and travellers while aboard their experience. We intend to use that opportunity.

That way we can spread our philosophy for the importance of stewardship, kaitiakitanga and conservation.

Could open the eyes of tourists visiting this area. Education around the cultural history of the Land, the natural history of the area – including extinctions. A lot of it would be about attempts made to prevent further extinction e.g. our contribution to Operation Ark.

We are committed to making sure the revenue brought to bear can be contributed toward mainland island conservation work – we are happy to be put to test on this.

Section 6C Conservation Act, we would show commitment to education.

Preserve and Protect – It's important to recognise that in Section 6, the role of tourism in this process and enjoyment in recreation. All of these things are part of what it is we are proposing.

I'm aware that in 1996, Part 3B was introduced to provide a broader perspective onto what conservation means. This proposal is exactly what this change in the Act was providing for, when Part 3B came into effect.

Part 3B:

Careful in respect for part 3b throughout the development of this project.

We have taken many years of consultation with DOC, experts and the public to develop this.

NP legislation, CMS, WHA, NGDOS and general approval processes that goes with a project of this size and consequence.

The submitters have been selective in what they have chosen to highlight.

Introduced a bit of RHL and who they are – refer to hand out page 3 for details.

Riverstone has requiring authority status under S167 of the RMA – as raised by Fish and Game. The Minister for the Environment has to be satisfied the applicant is likely to carry out all responsibilities of a requiring authority under the RMA and give proper regard to the interest of those affected and to the interests of the environment.

Not relevant under the Conservation Act however raises the power RHL have under the RMA.

Bob received an award for excellence in riparian management from Fish and Game in rivers around Wanaka.

Other Conservation involvement can be viewed on Page 5 of handout.

Dr Turnbull who gave tectonic evidence during the hearing, when he was aware that the parentage of Riverstone and Pegasus were largely the same he had some higher regard to the sort of respect RHL give to these types of projects.

Focus on the management plans – always looking at ways to improve application.
The 3 and a half days of the hearing process we have looked at as a way to define further how we can refine our application.

Wetlands have become a huge focus in Southland Conservancy, and we made changes to proposal early on in process to avoid impacts on wetlands.

We are committed to finding a suitable location for Kiwi Burn Hut.

We'll listen to DOC and a proposal for where the hut currently sits is based on recommendations made by DOC and when people like Michael Pullar from Te Araroa Trust make suggestions, we are committed to working with these people to define a location that works for all parties.

No co-mingling with existing user group at swing bridge area, as the monorail would follow riparian margins instead.

Construction service track – came out of audit activities that the Department had called for in response to our proposal. We had to convene our specialists and went down the two track route, and then out of that a mountain bike track arose. We are still committed to laying the beams as we originally planned, but what we have done is asked our engineering advisors and determined we could have a more productive project by constructing a construction track for activities such as forest removal.

We proposed this to meet advice from DOC that we would need to remove all vegetation and slash removed – especially when removing trees as big as 60dbh.

After 3 and a half days of hearings, we see a case for a community liaison group to be developed. For instance John Von Tunzelman – highly impressed with his contribution and Robin McNeill. These are the sort of people we would like to draw on and contribute their abundant knowledge to improve our proposal to meet more their concerns and needs.

This could go hand in hand with management plan.

We employ top tier experts in consultation so we are operating with global best practice with detail in the management plans and adherence to conditions specified by DOC.

The applicant owns the Fiordland National Park Lodge at Te Anau Downs, which is held under a Lease. So they already know about the implications of a lease in NP. This area is the only part where the proposal traverses National Park.

In terms of WHA – it's naïve to think that DOC would have considered this application if the WHA status would be under threat. DOC is not in the business of compromising WHA status.

Daintree Rainforest in Northern Queensland is a WHA that has a gondola through it.

Fiordland Link is not about rushing people to Milford Sound, but increasing traffic to Fiordland generally.

It relies on Milford Sound visitor flow to financially underpin the investment involved.

Statistics show that although visitor numbers have fallen at Milford Sound since 2006, but during the same period visitor numbers have grown in Fiordland in general. Refer to hand out for details.

This is the opportunity we see – increase in visitor numbers to Fiordland.

The long round trip to Milford Sound and back is tired – have a lot of feedback to support this.

Want to restore the Milford Sound numbers and the reputation of the trip to Milford Sound.

Not only would RHL Contribute \$3million per annum towards promotion of the area and the activity, but would employ locals during the construction period.

Have to look at the overall CMS to understand its purpose. One submitter identified 8 breaches of the CMS. This is a serious and irresponsible allegation. Suggests that that submitter should have sought legal advice prior to publically stating that.

CMS – the section explaining that the central area of the Snowden Forest area is a remote area to be maintained for remote, low impact recreation from high use and extensive facilities.

Refer to hand out for details.

Argues that the proposed route for monorail would be properly surveyed and marked out for approval by DOC. Therefore the effects could be adequately mitigated once that has been carried out.

RHL also argue that DOC has acted lawfully and RHL have worked very hard in order to keep the proposal within the laws and plans.

Questions:

GA: I didn't get your comment in regards to Kiwi Burn hut

JB: It will not be moved it would be upgraded and kept where it is – it would be a day facility hut where it would be used by day walkers and bikers, and the new location would be for other users.

GA: Are the methodologies you using, is best practices being held on similar land to what we are dealing with here?

JB: If the answer is that we would operate within a wider envelope then yes, many times.

Louise Taylor – Mitchell Partnerships Limited:

Read from supplied hand out.

Application first lodged in 2006. DOC required external consultants to review that process which was completed in 2007. This review was quite critical in how much was required from an engineering perspective.

Mitchell Partnerships contracted in in 2008 to review the technical reporting and to test if they were robust and achievable.

RHL response to first audit was to bring in an expert team. All of specialists brought in have done various degrees of field work, and the research was not desk top research at all.

Specialist Team:

Will Parker – engineer, Stephen Brown – landscape architect, Gary – ecological assessments, NIWA – water assessments, and many other experts were employed in the audit of the application.

Application has been accused of not being clear.

Page 9-16 of Officer's report nicely describes this.

RHL took on comments received by Southland Conservation Board such as amending the Kiwi Burn Terminus location.

December 2010 – 2011, this was a busy time between RHL and DOC. Updated management plans and conditions were submitted by RHL to DOC during this time. Many issues were worked through in a collaborative manner, in which the report has been written in a robust manner.

Snowden Forest, FNP and WHA.

The only place where the proposal would traverse FNP it would be after the rail leaves Te Anau Downs Station and goes into Te Anau Downs within the FNP where the terminus building would be constructed.

Addressed in Section 2.2 on Page 7 of application, and Page 21 of Departments report.

CMS – Submitters have raised that the Department is operating unlawfully. Pages 40-48 of Officer's Report addresses this appropriately.

Section 17D Conservation Act quoted.

Implementation 1, 6 and 7 of Section 4.4 CMS are particularly relevant to consider in terms of Recreation Tourism Concessions.

Restriction on party size and weekend use, is not relevant outside of Central Snowden Remote area and Snowden Mountains.

Maintain Central Remote Snowden Area where users are required to be self reliant. Monorail only traverses Back Country Walk in or Back Country 4x4 area, not within the remote area.

Restrictions on hunting and tramping:

There are a number of mitigation measures on hunting and tramping parties.

Avoiding the overlay at Kiwi Burn Bridge was a mitigating measure.

Access to Army Hut would be maintained.

Existing parts of the Kiwi Burn and Whitestone Track that would come close to the Monorail would be upgraded and improved.

The existing hut would be upgrade to be used for day users and biking users.

The final infrastructure would be the only limit to the use of the area – would only be a small corridor of Monorail itself and access would only be limited during construction.

Hunting controls are in place on hunting permits not concession – no fire zone within 500m of Great Walk huts for example, and there could be a similar rule applied to hunting permits in relation to the monorail.

The new terminus location completely avoids the Kiwi Burn Track.

Adaptive Management:

Wide term, used for many management situations. Allows for the management to be changed during its life to allow for good management to occur if unforeseen issues arise etc.

Couldn't think of any project they have done in last 16 years where an adaptive management plan has not been used. This is best practice for how these bigger projects are developed.

From planning point of view, understand that there needs to be stringent management conditions.

Implementation protocol – guide relationship between Riverstone and the Department. It's like an MOU between the two parties to protect the integrity of the construction, final design and specifications.

Recreational Users Management Plan – RHL would provide facilities and access to users of the park during construction when access may be restricted.

Vegetation and Habitat Management Plan – select route plan, translocation of species, weed and pest control as required and total amount of vegetation removal not to be exceeded.

Operational Management Plan – maintenance and use of the project.

A project liaison person would be a critical role in implementation of the Concession conditions and Concession Activity. Employed by the Department but funded by RHL.

Refer to appendix 1 of Officer's Report for the details of extra Concession Conditions for RHL should the Minister grant the Concession.

Page 149 of Officer's Report:

Conditions – project liaison advisor plays an important role.

Condition 2 – implementation protocol.

Section 3 Page 151 – Construction specifications and plans. Headings here that a full audit requirement prior to any construction commencing is required.

Condition 5 – final location of route, selection criteria. Ecological criteria will be used in selection of route.

Condition 6 – limitations on areas to be disturbed.

Gary is confident that clearance would be much less than what is stipulated in the conditions.

Construction Management Plan – there are requirements for content, requirements e.g. 11.1 on page 157 states about noise and lighting during construction.

Conditions specify ongoing monitoring and reporting.

Condition 32 – Page 166, refers to Rehabilitation Monitoring Programme which would need to be given effect to.

There are reporting requirements prior to each stage of the development i.e. design finalisation, construction, operation.

DOC maintains complete control throughout this project.

GA: How do you proposed to link the various plans?

There is always the challenge that they need to be workable and for Department staff to ensure they are being given effect to over the long term. But what we have tried to do is put them in chronological order. The Construction management plan is very much around construction activities. Revegetation would have a little bit of overlap with the construction plan and post construction.

This would mean flora and fauna effects would all be in place prior to and post construction.

Recreation plan would be carried out throughout the whole process.

There are linkages between plans and they can be cross referenced.

Will Parker – Principal Civil and Structural Engineer (Opus),

Tramper and Mountain Runner. 25 years experience. Worked in NZ and oversees during that time. Based in Christchurch.

Involved in this process since 2008. Walked through the route twice, and had many site visits. Probing and looking for cuttings, signs of stability, and surface surveys.

Reference to geological maps and we have also looked at the route on the ground – important to recognise that we have cross referenced with what is on the ground.

Grade of about 6% around the area where the proposed route climbs up from the Kiwi Burn Hut. Some of these monorails can climb up to 10% but we have kept within the range of 6%. Would run slower – around 60km / hr going up the hill but this is a trade-off between less gradient and faster travel.

Avoiding the Dunton Swamp area of the Upukerora.

Construction approach was developed in conjunction with an environmental specialist and HEB Construction.

Construction track was introduced to ensure we had a reliable method of constructing the structure.

With construction there is always a bit you don't have control over ie you don't know what is really going to happen until you start digging.

The monorail would need to stick to a constant alignment for rails, but the construction track can weave around important ecological or geological features.

The monorail can span 20m and could rehabilitate back as you go once the monorail is constructed. The spur roads link the construction road to the monorail.

Seismic loads – there are a lot of forces coming from vehicle itself, but what he have done here is that the seismic ground acceleration generated from the short fault lines present around here would not be that significant compared with the Alpine Fault – these are the sorts of considerations we have worked with in our assessment of effects.

The super structure – the running surface and the beams would be similar to bridge technology using a launching gantries method.

Confident that construction can occur in line with the Vegetation Plan.

Gary Bramley – Mitchell Partnerships Limited

Terrestrial ecologist. 13 years postdoctoral experience. Removal of pests is most experience in north island.

Carried our ecological surveys with Ruth Bartlett and Rhys Buckingham involved with mining and hydro projects and biodiversity offsetting and within this project.

Involved with this project from 2009.

Liaised with Will in an advisory role, walked route in both directions and the cycle trail where departs from construction trail. Flew over it twice. Spend about 20 days in field in Autumn and Spring.

Route has been changed to avoid certain features such as Dunton Swamp.

Values identified by his report have been accepted and adequately reflected in the conditions, and no submitters have raised any that were not already assessed in his report.

Louise talked about stringent conditions placed on ecological management.

Mostly mountain beach forest with small stems. Open understory.

Mixed Beach Forest with smaller mountain beach and open understory.

Mixed silver and red beech.

Proposed clearance areas – estimates are based on plots which were centred around measuring abundance. The final route design would affect these estimations.

Estimates of extent and volume were an effort to quantify the scale of proposal and the volume that would be affected. Based on 10m x 10m plots. These were spaced systematically. He sampled 9 20m x 20m plots when went back in Spring.

So altogether he got a good sample for the different mixes of beech forest.

The ecological criteria intended to reduce the volumes cleared and the surveys prior to construction would help determine this is implemented.

Determined that the effects of putting the construction track and monorail directly parallel with each other would have greater impacts than two separate tracks because the opening would be much larger with them closer together creating greater gap and corridor.

Edge Effects – abrupt transition from grassland into the forest.

Kiwi burn has classic example of mammalian browse and immediate line between swamp and forest edge.

Not so much shrubby vegetation growing on the edge. Has used the calculation of twice the height of trees plus some and doesn't feel they have underestimated the edge effects.

Milford Road – you can see the shading illustrates nicely canopy closure.

Henry Creek Campground – 3m wide, again consistent canopy cover. No evidence that any edge effects from wind or having to clear the trees either side for road maintenance.

Upukerora 4WD track – large red and silver beech growing either side of 3m track. No evidence of pronounced edge effects or trees requiring additional clearance. Could be some root disturbance but monorail would be careful to avoid roots through construction.

If roads are managed correctly, there is no reason why the closed canopy should cause problems in high winds.

Cycle track – boundary between private land and PCL already has a bulldozed fenceline and this would not require much further vegetation clearance.

Henry Creek track – already received use from motorbikes and is mostly broom. So no vegetation clearance required here.

Effects on bats – Consulted Colin O'Donald and Rhys Buckingham.

Two critical periods for bats – April – December and December to February.

Can minimise effects prior to vegetation clearance using bat boxes to detect roosts.

This is similar approach to wind farm and other similar developments in bat habitat.

Bat populations generally appear to be declining quite fast, and this is likely to be caused by pest predation. I would argue that carrying out adequate pest control would be an adequate mitigation measure for impacts on bats.

Pest control and other management could offset some of the effects of this project.

Rehabilitation – Vegetation Direct transfer.

Planting would be a challenge due to deer browse – mammal control would be proposed by him.

VDT is preferred method for rehabilitation as soil is transferred too. Was involved with VDT at Stockton Mine. Found tussock very successfully transferred here. At Whitehall they only direct transferred 200mm square clumps of tussock.

The VDT he is talking about is using specially designed digger bucket, also lifting soil substrate crucial in establishing in new location.

Showed some very successful methods used at Stockton – see attached handout.

Manuka can start to invade transfer – skills of operator and soils transferred would mitigate this effect. But because at Snowden there is no mining taking place, he argues that woody species would not be able to easily colonise red tussock transfers in this area.

We probably have one of the world's best practice examples at Stockton for VDT, as other mines throughout the world rehab back to pasture.

Amount of rainfall is crucial for successful transfer – and Snowden area has adequate annual rainfall.

Weed and Pest Control:

Once you disturb an area, can get weed invasion.

What we proposed is standard best practice for minimising weed transfer – weed hygiene (for machinery etc).

Stringent condition in Concession for monthly inspections for weed control.

The main challenge would be control of exotic grasses – not so much the woody species and shrubs.

Exotic grasses are already present here so it will be a challenge to keep them down.

If density of the native grasses is dense enough could out-compete the pest plants. We propose a 0% weed infestation along this corridor.

It's likely that that the red deer population is very high here and when he was there there was a mouse infestation (mast year).

Best control is already needed in this area, so we need to determine if we would focus on pest control solely within the monorail corridor or a more effective target area.

Management plans are a robust way of achieving a robust outcome.

Adaptive management means you can take the best at the time and change your management plan as these come along i.e. new poisons and trap technology.

That experience comes from large scale projects such as Cyprus Mine and down to smaller scale projects such as farmers managing what happens on their own private land.

One of the things that have struck him is how introduced mammals are degrading our ecosystems. We have the opportunity here to potentially improve this area through the proposed compensation.

GA: How does the applicant intend with Beech growing towards the light

Similar route inspections as Downer EDI – walk the route on an annual basis with DOC representative, and identify trees that are likely to be a problem and trim them appropriately. I propose this may need to occur 6monthly to yearly.

GA: did you come across any clearings that illustrated the effects on windthrow.

Yes but the clearing was about 30-40m and a quite tall mountain beech had fallen down. The tree was a lot taller than surrounding trees. It was hard to know whether it was a recent fall or an old fall. There was one or two that had come down due to wind in the last wee while.

GA: Was there any survey work done on invertebrates.

No – one of the indicators for invertebrates are the vegetation types present. There has not been a lot of invertebrate surveys carried out in this area so it is likely that there may be some new species. We haven't done this survey work at this point.

Paul Beverley, Buddle Findley Legal Matters

Pointed out the concept that where an expert makes a claim and this is challenged, that it cannot be lawfully considered unless that person making the challenge is adequately qualified to make that claim.

A number of submissions pointed out that this recommendation would be unlawful in regards to the Departmental report.

Paul argues it is not unlawful.

Definition of Conservation – providing for appreciation and recreational enjoyment is equal importance to natural and historical preservation.

Section 6C refers to enhancing people's awareness and education of conservation.

Fostering of resources to cater for tourism which is provided for in the Conservation Act.

Commercial activities on Conservation Land. There is discretion that would need to be exercised to assess if this application is inconsistent with the Purpose for which the Land is held.

Referred to definition of preservation – "*where practicable*" as in 17U.
The Act is not about a lock up of the resources.

CMS – important to emphasise the CMS cannot fetter the Minister's discretion.
This project is unique in that the CMS has expressly contemplated an application for the monorail. It is very difficult to sustain argument that this is inconsistent with the CMS as it was contemplated upon review of the CMS.

Recommendation to the Minister:
Where we are at moment, is that the Minister has indicated an intention to Grant Concession. This recommendation was based on a sound understanding of the legislation and the effects addressed in the report.

I submit that there is nothing raised in the submissions that should change the view of this report and nothing was raised to overturn the views that have been developed by the Department to date.

World Heritage Status has been raised and concern raised. WH status in this area is an international obligation between NZ as a state and the international community. This has not been incorporated into NZ legislation. It is a relevant consideration, but the focus must be on the Conservation Act, not the obligations to UNESCO.

I urge you caution around this consideration.

Mr Beattie raised that there is no evidence that the project would lead to any review of the World Heritage Status.

Part of the Greenstone Valley was vested into Ngai Tahu interest.
What the clause says is that if the Minister permits this development, then she must not withhold consent on this deed of covenant.

This must not be taken into account in regards to considering this application. That is a contractual relationship between the Department and Ngai Tahu. The Department has no ability to take into account matters arising outside of PCL during a Concession application process.

The alternative would be to give it very little weight. We have no confidence that Greenstone development would proceed due to all the other permissions that would be required as a result of that application.

This has been a very detailed application using top tier experts, a lot of Departmental expertise involved and very little expert evidence has refuted any of this expert information contributing to the application.

In response to legal submissions made this morning, there is an important note to make about those is that the footnotes were not referenced to experts which criticised our expert advice.

My understanding was that Sue Maturin was not making expert recommendations but was submitting personally.

I would just like to point out that that legal evidence relating to effects was not backed by expert evidence.

Idea that this area should only be preserved for the people that currently use this area. The legislation does not imply this. There is a need to consider this application in the wider context of Southland and Lower South island. This area is a lower level of conservation protection however it is still very important.

If this was going to happen anywhere, then a Stewardship Area would be the place where it should happen.

WHA is not a pristine area with nothing happening in it.

We would follow up with more detail to this later.

A lot of submissions talked about how their experience would be destroyed. This needs to be looked at with greater detail as to what degree their experience would be destroyed.

John Beattie:

Acknowledged the effort for the submitters and to also say we did expect that volume and tenor received by the submitters.

Thank you to each of the submitters, and we will in response to each and every one contemplate all of those submissions.

With the extended consultation process we have taken a view that we need to improve what we have made a submission on. So we will adopt some of the views that were raised through the submissions to improve our application.

Wellington Botanical Society indicated that although they were opposed to the application but if it was granted they would ask a few conditions be considered. RHL would like to work constructively with such suggestions from submitters.

Some of the issues raised were not strictly capable of being considered under the Concessions Process however it was still good that they were raised.

If business and conservation cannot work together to allow something like this to happen, then NZ is in a dire state. Tourism can contribute to conservation in a way that it wouldn't otherwise happen.

Looking at doing something with low impact to back country on a totally acceptable basis and to many more people and avoids the inference that it should remain locked up for the fortunate few.

Graeme Ayres Close:

A recommendation would be made as a result of these hearings to the Minister's Delegate who hasn't been confirmed yet. The applicant may be asked to supply comment. The draft comment would not be circulated to other submitters.

The submitters may request a copy of the final recommendation to the Minister once the decision has been made.

Graeme thanked the submitters and acknowledged the emotion involved and the challenge of extending the courtesies that have been exchanged between people in the room.

It is obvious that this area is very special to all people and this is heartening.

Didn't give a timeframe at this stage, and this will go up on the DOC Website once we have a timeline.

We would also attempt to notify the submitters.

We now formally close the hearing.

Thank you.

Closed 4.17pm