

PUBLIC LANDS COALITION

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10 June 1991

Secretary,
Planning and Development Select Committee,
Parliament Buildings,
Wellington.

Fax (04) 499 0486

Dear Sir,

SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION ON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BILL
SOP NUMBER 22

Thank you for the opportunity to meet the select committee last Thursday. This was most appreciated.

One of the matters raised by the Committee was the PLC's advocacy of improving public access to public lands at the time of territorial authority approval for subdivision of adjoining private land.

I have had a chance to further consider this aspect.

The PLC's suggestions were tied to an amended clause 5(d) as submitted on 31 May (see below). We see it as a matter of national importance that direction is given to both central and local government to maintain and enhance public access to public lands.

In response to a question from the committee I indicated one method of doing so—namely the laying off of public roads at the time of subdivisional consent for adjoining private lands. This can be seen as little different from requirements to provide reserve contributions, either in land or cash, including the provision of esplanade reserves along river banks or lake shores. If the Committee feels that this is an additional imposition on subdividers, it could recommend an upper limit in total subdivider and developer contributions like that currently provided in Part XX of the Local Government Act 1974. In other words provision of roads for public access, additional to that directly required for access to each subdivision allotment, could be brought within the ambit of reserves contributions.

Mechanisms other than public roads may be appropriate in some situations. Land vested in the authority in lieu of reserves, or easements in favour of a given class or classes of public user could also be taken into account as part of total reserves contributions.

On re-reading Part VIII of the Resource Management Bill I can see no inconsistencies with the above approach, but a detailed check has not been made

The PLC believes that if Clause 5(d) is amended to read—

“The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers, and to unalienated Crown lands and public lands held for conservation, public recreation, and public access purposes.”

And—

The addition of roads and other forms of public access were included as a form of ‘reserves contribution’ then a major advance would be possible in the improvement of public access to often land-locked and inaccessible public lands.

The amendments we advocate would be as momentous a step for the improvement of public rights for New Zealanders as are the “sustainable management” requirements of the Bill. It would be a change for the better that would not go unnoticed by many thousands of outdoor recreationalists.

Yours faithfully,

Bruce Mason,
PLC Researcher.