

Fiona Black - Summary Statement for Real Journeys Limited (664) for Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan (pSWALP) Hearing on 13 September 2017

Overview

1. Real Journeys Limited wants to ensure that tourism is appropriately enabled in Southland because of the importance of the tourism industry to the economic wellbeing of Southland.
2. Most of the primary industry submitters have asserted that Agriculture is Southland's main economic driver and that it is becoming increasingly important to the region. Nevertheless alongside Primary production and Primary processing, Education and Tourism are both key sectors in the region's economy.¹ In fact to the year ended December 2016 tourism made up 5.6% of New Zealand's GDP, ahead of dairy's at 3.5%.
3. In employment terms, a recent study estimated that only 40,000 plus people were directly employed in the NZ dairy industry. Whereas tourism directly employed 188,136 people in NZ as at March 2016, about 7.5% of total employment making the Tourism Industry a significant employer.
4. The latest tourism statistics confirm Southland's success as a tourism destination, with visitors spending in the region over the last year more than they have in the past six years. Tourists across the province spent \$625 million, an increase of 9%. Southland-wide guest nights went up 10.4% and visitors spent \$327 million, an increase of 15.1%. There were more than a million guest nights across the Southland region for the year, up to the end of this May.
5. To deliver our tourism products Real Journeys owns 18 passenger vessels, and will take delivery of another passenger vessel later in the year; and we also operate a further five vessels on behalf of other organisations, hence Real Journeys operates one of the largest vessel fleets in New Zealand and has a larger fleet than the RNZ Navy. Ten of these vessels are operated on Southland's inland waterways in particular on Lakes Manapouri and Te Anau in the Fiordland National Park. Accordingly Real Journeys has a particular interest in ensuring vessel operation including their maintenance is provided for within any RMA planning document framework.
6. Moreover Real Journeys operates in several remote locations across the Southland Region and because of this remoteness we must install and maintain infrastructure associated with the provision of freshwater supplies; wastewater treatment and power generation facilities. Consequently we want to ensure such the provision of such infrastructure is appropriately provided for within the pSWALP framework

Specific Proposed Plan Provisions

7. We support Don Moir's of Ralph Moir and Associates suggestion regarding Rule 26 (b) that is the clause amended to read:
 - (i) The discharge does not exceed 14,000 litres per week on a monthly average and that clauses (b) (viii) (1) and (2) be deleted from the Proposed Plan

¹ http://www.venturesouthland.co.nz/Portals/0/Documents/R_14_8_11933.pdf

Submitter No: 664

Submitter Name: Real Journeys

Date Received: 13/9 /17

With respect to rule 26 (b) (vii) (1) for clarity the proposed plan glossary will need to also define bed of a lake, river, and modified watercourse.

8. Real Journeys is opposed to the requirement to collect such detailed water take data on a daily basis, as proposed in Rule 49 (a) (vii) and in Rule 54 (iv); because most of the metres needed to collect this type of data are electronic and such metres do not perform well in the damp Fiordland environment. Nevertheless we do accept that the collection of daily data may have benefit in more arid areas in Southland.
9. As stated in my evidence Real Journeys contends navigational safety provisions should be more widely incorporated into the pSWALP framework. The following activities have the potential to result in navigational hazards; hence we contend the relevant pSWALP rules need to include navigational safety as one of the matters that must be considered: Monitoring and sampling structures; Boat ramps, jetties and wharves; Bridges; Dams and weirs; Moorings and signs; Navigation aids; Whitebait Stands; Alteration and / or extension of structures; Gravel Extraction; and Demolition and /or removal of structures.
10. Real Journeys also has some concerns around the pSWALP framework providing for the bed disturbance activities which are required to maintain access to slipways and boat ramps. Specifically, we contend these activities should be provided for in Rule 66 – Maintenance of Structures. As maintaining vessel access to such infrastructure is essential to the on going operation of our vessels; because vessel shafts, running gear, and sea cocks usually, must be inspected every two years to keep a vessel compliant.

Water Quality

11. As a company with a history of advocating for high environmental standards Real Journeys is concerned that the pSWLP will not arrest the decline in water quality in Southland and we wish to advocate for a pSWLP framework which will improve water quality across the Southland region.
12. Real Journeys also has selfish reasons, for supporting measures to improve water quality in Southland, because headlines highlighting the decline in freshwater quality in New Zealand are not good for the NZ Tourism Industry.