

## 5.9 INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

### **Rationale**

Interpretation is an essential management tool which, at a given site or area, serves to:

- Introduce and orientate visitors;
- Identify hazards and risk mitigation measures;
- Enrich visitor experience and enhance visitor understanding of the area and the values it contains;
- Promote public support for management of the area and for conservation in general; and
- Assist in the provision of effective visitor management.

Interpretation and education is provided using many tools and mechanisms such as:

- Interpretive panels;
- Fact sheets and brochures;
- Museum and visitor centre displays;
- Summer programmes;
- Concessionaires; and
- Education programmes provided at education centres.

### **Objectives**

1. To enhance visitor enjoyment through the provision of interpretive facilities and services that will enrich their understanding and knowledge of Fiordland National Park, and its natural and human history.
2. To increase understanding of and support for the Department of Conservation's management of Fiordland National Park.
3. To support the use of the education centres at Deep Cove Hostel and Borland Lodge for conservation education programmes either operated by the Department of Conservation or by other organisations delivering programmes in line with the Department of Conservation's education strategy.
4. To work with, and involve the community and tourism concessionaires in, interpretation and education initiatives.

## Implementation

1. Provide for a visitor information outlet in Te Anau as the main point of first contact with Fiordland National Park for visitors who predominantly stay in the Fiordland region, so as to provide an initial introduction and orientation to Fiordland National Park and directions to other satellite interpretation facilities.
2. Consideration may be given to the development of a Fiordland National Park entrance site within the Eglinton Valley, along State Highway 94 (see section 5.3.9.2).
3. Interpretation facilities and programmes will be provided in accordance with the Southland Conservancy Interpretation Strategy 2002-2007 or its replacement; and Policy 8.2 of the General Policy for National Parks.
4. Ensure consultation is undertaken with papatipu rūnanga and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu over Department interpretation of Maori history and culture, including interpretation concerning pounamu, and ensure that this Ngāi Tahu cultural information is only used with the consent of the papatipu rūnanga and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
5. Effectively communicate accurate, appropriate information and preservation messages to each visitor group, using a range of media.
6. Interpretation facilities will be maintained to a high standard.
7. The recognition of Fiordland National Park as part of Te Wāhipounamu - *South West New Zealand* World Heritage Area should be reflected in interpretation as appropriate, and should have a planned approach, co-ordinated with the other Department managed areas within the World Heritage Area (refer Part Three).
8. Where resources allow, support will be given to non-Department interpretation providers in Fiordland National Park (e.g. Fiordland Museum Trust). Support may be given in the form of training (e.g. commercial operators' training), advice (as solicited) or resource materials (e.g. Interpreting Our Southern Lands resource folder).
9. The ongoing operation of the education centres at Deep Cove Hostel and Borland Lodge will be supported as part of regional commitments to cost-effective conservation education.

10. Historical sites which are actively managed will be the highest priority for historic interpretation (refer to section 4.12 Historic Resource Management).
11. Encourage respect for Ngāi Tahu's association with Mount Tūtoko; educational material will be developed and made available to mountain climbers, the public, concessionaires and users of the area.
12. Ensure as far as reasonably practical that Department information on new panels, signs and visitor publications includes Ngāi Tahu perspectives and references to the significance of the sites or resources to Ngāi Tahu where appropriate, including the use of traditional Ngāi Tahu place names in accordance with the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act.
13. Interpretation provided by concessionaires will be monitored to ensure accurate and appropriate information is being conveyed.

## 5.10 SPORTS FISHING

### **Rationale**

All indigenous fish within Fiordland National Park are to be preserved as far as is practicable, and waters are to be kept as free as possible from introduced species, except as provided for in section 6.6, Whitebait Fishing and section 6.10 Ngāi Tahu Customary Use.

However, the waters of Fiordland National Park are recognised as a valuable recreational asset for anglers and where sports fish are present they may be retained (refer section 4.7).

All fishers or anglers for sports fish within Fiordland National Park must hold licences issued by a Fish and Game Council.

Whitebait fishing is controlled under the Whitebait Fishing Regulations 1994 and the Whitebait Fishing (West Coast) Regulations 1994. All whitebait fishing is prohibited between Puysegur Point and Yates Point. For other rivers in Fiordland National Park recreational whitebaiting using hand-held nets is allowed (see sections 6.6 and 6.10).

Access has a major bearing on fishing opportunities. Easy foot and boat access is available to many parts of Fiordland National Park. Helicopter access can provide quick and easy access for those without the time or physical ability to otherwise get to the more remote but often rewarding streams and rivers of Fiordland National Park. On the other hand, motorised access methods can destroy the experience for the more traditional angler who has made the effort to get to these places by other means. To manage this issue it is proposed, for some parts of Fiordland National Park, to divide the fishing opportunity in time and not allow helicopter access for the first part of the fishing season but to allow it for the second part.

Please note recreational fishing of whitebait is addressed in section 6.6.

### **Objectives**

1. To allow recreational fishing of sports fish only within Fiordland National Park.
2. To recognise and provide for a variety of sports fishing opportunities within Fiordland National Park.

### **Implementation**

1. In order to protect the remote fishing opportunities within Fiordland National Park, concessions for aircraft landings for recreation and tourism activities in Fiordland National Park should include a prohibition on landings below 500 metres (from sea level) on or adjacent to any of the following streams or rivers between 1 November and 1 March as follows:

- a) Tributary streams and rivers feeding the western side of Lake Te Anau, from and including the Glade Burn in the north, to and including the Tutu Burn in the south;
- b) Tributary streams and rivers feeding the Grebe River; and
- c) The Awe Burn.

Refer section 5.5

- 2. Fishing guides may be authorised to operate in Fiordland National Park, subject to the above criteria and concession policies (refer to sections 5.3 and 5.4). Other limitations may be imposed by the New Zealand Fish and Game Council and will need to comply with the relevant Sports Fish and Game Plan.

## 5.11 RECREATIONAL HUNTING OF WILD ANIMALS

### **Rationale**

Fiordland provides excellent hunting opportunities in some of the most challenging, remote and rewarding country in New Zealand. Red deer are present throughout most of Fiordland National Park. There are also opportunities to take pigs, chamois and wapiti-type animals in some areas. Wapiti-type animals in particular are prized by hunters for their trophy value.

Recreational hunting of wild animals is controlled by the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 and all hunters must possess a written permit issued by the Department of Conservation.

Conditions on hunting permits for wild animals generally exclude the use of any firearm except centre-fire rifles and prohibit hunting during the hours of darkness. These policies are designed to ensure safe hunting practices, increase the chance of clean animal kills and limit the potential for poaching of protected bird species.

Dogs are often used for pig hunting. Although the risk to indigenous bird species from dogs is recognised, recreational hunting using dogs is currently the only form of control for pigs in Fiordland National Park and should continue, provided the hunters have permits and the Department of Conservation is advised of the intention to use dogs.

The use of indicator dogs for deer hunting can also pose risk to indigenous bird species. Use of dogs for this purpose is unlikely to be authorised except by special permit for experienced hunters with suitably trained dogs.

### **Objectives**

1. To encourage the recreational hunting of wild animals within Fiordland National Park.

### **Implementation**

1. Hunting of possums using firearms is unlikely to be authorised within Fiordland National Park, except by special permit for experienced hunters with a proven record of effective control and safe firearms practice.
2. Recreational hunting of wild animals (e.g. wapiti-type deer, deer, chamois, goats, and pigs) is allowed throughout Fiordland National Park except in Specially Protected Areas; or in other areas where access has been restricted for preservation management purposes. Hunters will possess a written permit and the use of dogs will be specifically authorised. The use of dogs will only be authorised for hunting in recognised pig hunting areas

where there are no vulnerable ground-dwelling bird species (e.g. penguins, weka, and kiwi). The use of indicator dogs for deer hunting is unlikely to be authorised within Fiordland National Park, except by special permit, in accordance with 56(B) and 56(C) of the National Parks Act 1980 for experienced hunters with suitably trained dogs. Hunting dogs so used will be required to be permanently marked as such.

3. Ballots will be held when necessary (i.e. at times of peak demand) to decide block allocations in the wapiti area, otherwise the area is open.
4. Hunting guides may be authorised to operate in Fiordland National Park, subject to the other provisions of this section, limits in party size as detailed within the Plan and general concession policies (see section 5.4). Guides will be permitted to operate in the wapiti area, with proportional limits on block allocations if desirable.
5. The use of shotguns and rim-fire rifles within Fiordland National Park will not be authorised for recreational hunting except as provided for in 1 and 2 above.
6. Hunting within Fiordland National Park during the hours of darkness will not be authorised except as provided for in 2 above.
7. Encourage, where appropriate, recreational hunters to work collaboratively with the Department of Conservation in gathering information and undertaking conservation programmes within Fiordland National Park.

## 5.12 GAME BIRD HUNTING

### **Rationale**

Game bird hunting is not generally allowed in Fiordland National Park because indigenous birds are protected, the hunting opportunities are poor, dogs are not generally allowed in national parks and it makes the use of shotguns in Fiordland National Park unnecessary (see above). Exceptions have been culls of Canada geese in the Eglinton valley by recreational hunters. A permit from the Department of Conservation and a licence from Fish and Game is required.

### **Objective**

1. To prohibit the hunting of game birds within Fiordland National Park except for Canada geese in the Eglinton Valley or in locations where the control will not impact on indigenous biodiversity or other national park values.

### **Implementation**

1. Hunting of Canada geese in the Eglinton Valley may be undertaken by recreational hunters or as part of a cull. Other game bird hunting is unlikely to be authorised in Fiordland National Park unless expressly authorised for the purpose of the preservation of national park values. Refer to section 4.5.



## 5.13 FILMING

### **Rationale**

Fiordland National Park is a popular area for commercial filming activities ranging from small-scale advertisements to large-scale movies. Commercial filming requires a concession.

It is possible to differentiate between the effects of small-scale and large-scale filming operations. Small-scale operations tend to be short-term (less than one day) and any effects are generally of a temporary nature. They generally include up to 30 people in the party; sometimes more.

Large-scale filming activities have the potential to impact on visitor recreation experiences in a positive and negative way. Many visitors enjoy observing advertisements and films in the making and their final product. However, some of these activities can be large scale and change how a person may enjoy a particular place. These activities may also have effects on other national park values.

It is inappropriate to allow the introduction to Fiordland National Park of animals associated with filming activities in Fiordland National Park.

### **Objective**

1. To allow commercial filming in Fiordland National Park only where the adverse effects on national park values and other users of Fiordland National Park can be minimised.

### **Implementation**

1. Ensure filming permitted within Fiordland National Park is consistent with the following:
  - a) The visitor management settings in section 5.3; and the provisions of sections 5.4, 5.5, 5.6;
  - b) Is restricted to places where access is already existing, or is permitted under the provisions of this plan, in order to minimise effects on other Fiordland National Park users;
  - c) Has minimal adverse impacts on national park values; and
  - d) Where an application for a small-scale operation is received which is inconsistent with sections 5.3-5.6, a concession should be granted only if:
    - i) It does not involve bringing animals to Fiordland National Park into Fiordland National Park;
    - ii) The activity occurs during off-peak periods; and

- iii) The activity is of a short duration.
2. National news media may film in Fiordland National Park at short notice for the purpose of news breaking stories by contacting the appropriate Area Manager and receiving a permit.
  3. Applicants will be required to be aware of the guidelines for filming developed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the Screen Production & Directors Association (2002).
  4. Applicants will be required to comply with the code of practice for filming on public conservation land developed by Film New Zealand and the Department of Conservation.

## 5.14 CAVE AND KARST SYSTEMS

### **Rationale**

Cave and karst systems are generally very fragile and any human traffic will cause some modification of their natural features. Cave management will attempt to minimise the impacts of visitor use. The principal tasks of management are to monitor modifications or damage to determine the level or degree of usage which can be regarded as acceptable, and to perform such remedial works or impose such restrictions as are necessary to ensure protection of the cave systems.

Fiordland National Park contains relatively small areas of karst. Notable are those on the Hunter Mountains, Murchison Mountains and on Mount Luxmore (refer to section 4.2.1)

### **Objectives**

1. To protect the natural ecology, cultural values and scenic values of cave or karst systems within Fiordland National Park.
2. To encourage visitor safety, proper use, and awareness and appreciation of the natural, scientific, scenic and recreational significance of cave and karst systems.

### **Implementation**

1. Access to the Aurora and Te Ana-au system will be controlled under Specially Protected Area status. One concession is considered appropriate for guiding visitors through Te Ana-au cave because of the significant adverse environmental effects and safety concerns likely from more visitors and the necessary infrastructure to support another operator.
2. The Department of Conservation has formulated national Karst Management Guidelines -Policies and Actions (1999) which will guide, and be one of the considerations in the management of cave and karst systems within Fiordland National Park.
3. The following provisions should apply in relation to managing access to cave and karst systems in Fiordland National Park:
  - a) Use of expansion bolts and fixed pitons should not be authorised without a full assessment of effects. Destructive techniques such as chiselling should not be allowed, unless it is demonstrated to be essential for visitor safety and is minor in the Te Ana-au tourist caves only;

- b) Warning signs may be erected in dangerous or hazardous areas. Otherwise signposting will be kept to a minimum inside caves;
- c) Removal of light-induced plant growth in Te Ana-au tourist cave will be encouraged. Clearing methods should have minimal impact on the natural ecology of the cave;
- d) Access to parts of cave systems may be restricted to protect sensitive features; and
- e) Individual caves on Mount Luxmore, or at other locations within Fiordland National Park, may be closed should unrestricted public access prove detrimental to their protection.

Refer also to section 5.3.4.

- 4. Concession access (other than that permitted by Implementation 1 of this section) should be considered only to Luxmore Cave and in limited situations to the Aurora Caves. The following conditions will apply:
  - a) Access to the Aurora Caves will be managed in accordance with section 5.3.4.; and
  - b) Access to the Luxmore Caves will be managed in accordance with the following conditions:
    - i) The guide should be a member of the New Zealand Speleological Society and should have to demonstrate knowledge of conservation ethics associated with caving and approved references provided;
    - ii) Party size should be restricted to seven inclusive of guides for each trip within the caves;
    - iii) The guide will remain with and have control of the party at all times in the caves; and
    - iv) Access to these caves may be declined should monitoring determine an unacceptable level of impact on the natural values of the caves.
- 5. No multi-sport events should be permitted in cave and karst systems within Fiordland National Park.
- 6. Establish a monitoring programme to determine whether there are any effects of access to cave and karst systems within Fiordland National Park. This monitoring will focus on the Luxmore Cave complex, Aurora systems and specific caves in the Borland area.

7. Work with the New Zealand Speleological Society and other interested parties to develop a code of practice for managing the impacts of access to cave and karst systems in Fiordland National Park.

## 5.15 ROCK - CLIMBING AND ABSEILING

### **Rationale**

Rock-climbing and abseiling occurs in a number of areas of Fiordland National Park. In particular the Darran Remote Visitor Setting encourages this type of activity.

The effects of concentrated rock-climbing may include vegetation clearance, heavy use of foot access tracks to and about rock faces and the placement of climbing hardware on rock faces. These are generally restricted to small areas and can be minimised by sensible management.

### **Objective**

1. To allow rock climbing and abseiling within Fiordland National Park at appropriate locations where the impact on natural and cultural values can be managed.

### **Implementation**

1. Support the use of locations for rock climbing and abseiling where the effects on cultural, natural and historical and cultural values are minimal or where those values can be protected by way of co-operation and liaison with users and other interested parties.
2. Where bolts or other permanent hardware are to be placed, all reasonable efforts will be made to minimise their visibility and environmental effect and be sympathetic to the aesthetic qualities of the climbing route. The Department of Conservation will encourage the climbing community to develop a code of practice for the use of bolts and fixed anchors. These tools should only be used in accordance with this best practice.
3. Close areas to bolting or permanent hardware where the effects are considered unacceptable.

Refer also to sections 2.2, 5.3.6.1 and Appendix B.

## 5.16 VISITOR MONITORING

### **Rationale**

Good information on Fiordland National Park use is required to assist with decisions and enable robust management. Visitor monitoring will help the Department of Conservation to ensure effective and efficient resource allocation, diagnose and resolve problems, and refine and direct management to ensure that the environment, and the recreation experience, is not degraded.

Visitor monitoring covers a broad range of activities including counting visitors, analysing use data (such as hut books and campsite envelopes), surveying, interviewing visitors and measuring physical and social impacts. The information obtained allows appropriate recommendations to be made to resolve problems and will help the Department of Conservation to continue to provide quality visitor experiences.

### **Objective**

1. To refine and maintain a visitor monitoring programme.

### **Implementation**

1. The existing visitor monitoring programme will continue to be refined and maintained in accordance with Department procedures, guidelines and best practice.
2. The monitoring programme should cover:
  - a) Visitor use levels;
  - b) Visitor and visit characteristics;
  - c) Visitor experience including satisfaction;
  - d) Visitor motivations for coming to, and expectations of, Fiordland National Park;
  - e) Benefits of visitor use; and
  - f) Biophysical and social impacts.
3. All recreation/ tourism concessionaires operating within Fiordland National Park will be required to provide information on their activity and use levels to the Department of Conservation. Concessionaires may be required to fund monitoring and research associated with their activities (refer section 5.4).
4. Information on visitor numbers will continue to be collected from sources including, but not limited to, track counters, hut books, Great Walks passes and concession activity returns.

5. Biophysical impacts should continue to be monitored at known and anticipated hotspots.
6. An ongoing programme of social research and monitoring, building on research completed to date, will be undertaken to measure impacts and to collect data on:
  - a) Visitor motivation;
  - b) Visitor expectations;
  - c) Visitor satisfaction;
  - d) Visitor experience; and
  - e) Benefits and values of Fiordland National Park visitation/use.
7. A broad range of sites and visitor groups should be monitored, as required, but should include:
  - a) The park's major tracks (the Milford, Routeburn, Kepler, Hollyford, South Coast and Dusky tracks);
  - b) High use sites such as Milford Sound / Piopiotahi, the Milford Road and Doubtful Sound / Patea; and
  - c) Users of remote and Wilderness Areas.

Refer also to sections 5.3.9.1 and 5.3.9.2.
8. There should be an ongoing programme of monitoring of aircraft noise and activity at sites in Fiordland National Park where this is, or could become a concern. Monitoring sites should include, but not be limited to;
  - a) Milford Sound / Piopiotahi (refer also to section 5.5);
  - b) The Milford, Routeburn, Kepler and Hollyford tracks;
  - c) Gertrude Saddle; and
  - d) Wilderness and remote areas (where possible).
9. Where appropriate, impact monitoring programmes will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders.
10. Monitoring should be statistically valid, based on sound experimental design and will follow recognised national and international visitor research methods where appropriate.
11. Liaise with other visitor research agencies to ensure best practice and share information.