

RECEIVED
21 APR 2008
THE WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

SUBMISSION ON RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

Section 96 Of The Resource Management Act 1991



THE WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

PH: 0508 8000 118

Fax: (03) 768 7133

TO: THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

PO BOX 66

GREYMOUTH

Copy to:

Meridian Energy Limited
PO Box 2454,

Christchurch.

Applicant: Meridian Energy Ltd

Application Numbers: tick boxes overleaf

Closing Date for Submissions on the Mokihinui Hydro Proposal: (Wednesday 23 April 2008)

(Please print clearly) Title: Mr Mrs Miss Ms (Please circle the appropriate title(s) or write below)

My/Our Full Name(s): Andrew William ENGLAND

Postal address: 87 Blake Street, Greymouth

Wk Ph: 03 768 0472 Hm Ph: 03 768 5678 Cell: 02 768 56782

Wk Fax: 03 768 6293 Hm Fax: — Email: andyengland@xtra.co.nz

I/we support the application numbers ticked on the back of this form (tick one)

I/we oppose the application numbers ticked on the back of this form

The reasons for my/our submission are as follows (*further information attached (tick for yes)*)

[State in summary the nature of your submission, giving reasons]

I oppose the submission for conservation-recreation-
tourism reasons.

Further information attached.

I/we wish the consent authority to make the following decision [Give details, including the nature of any conditions]

Reject all parts of the application


Use the tick boxes below to indicate the resource consent applications your submission concerns.

I/we make my/our submission concerning **all** the resource consent applications below (tick)

My/our submission **only** concerns the resource applications ticked below (tick)

I/we **wish to be heard** in support of my/our submission (tick one)

I/we **DO NOT** wish to be heard and hereby make my/our submission in writing only

Signature(s):  _____

Date: 21-04-08

If this is a joint submission by 2 or more individuals, each individual's signature is required)

I/we have served a copy of my/our submission on Meridian energy Limited as per Section 96(4) of the RMA (tick)

Consent List

Mokihinui River
consents RC07150/1 – RC07150/6

Earthworks and Vegetation
consents RC07150/14 – RC07150/19

Inundation Area
consents RC07150/7 – RC07150/8

General Construction
consents RC07150/20 – RC07150/23

Staging Area
consents RC07150/9 – RC07150/10

Access Roads, Walking Tracks and Recreational
Activities
consents RC07150/24 – RC07150/26

Substation and Transmission
consents RC07150/11 – RC07150/13

**SUBMISSION ON AN APPLICATION FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSENT UNDER SECTION 96 OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991**

To: West Coast Regional Council and Buller District Council

Cc: Meridian Energy Limited

From: Andy ENGLAND

Date: 21 April 2008

Re: RC07150, Mokihinui Hydro Power Scheme

Submitter Contact Details

Name of Party: Andrew William ENGLAND

Contact Phone: 03 7685678h/0472w

Email Address: andyengland@xtra.co.nz

Postal Address: 87 Blake Street, Greymouth

- 1. I oppose the application by Meridian Energy Limited** for the construction of the Mokihinui Hydro Power Scheme as detailed in the resource consent applications numbered RC07150/1 – RC07150/26
- 2. The particular aspect of the application I oppose is:**
The construction of the dam and consequent inundation of the Mokihinui River between Mokihinui Forks and the Welcome Creek road end.
- 3. I make the following submission in opposition to the application:**

a) *Details of Submitter*

I have kayaked whitewater around the world for over 20 years. I moved to the West Coast in 2001 largely because of the region's pristine array of whitewater rivers. I am involved in education at Greymouth High School and Westland Canoe Club, so I see people coming to appreciate the wealth of our natural resource all the time.

b) **Reasons for making submission**

My primary reasons for opposing the proposed hydroelectric scheme are:

- 1.* The West Coast of the South Island has the world's last complete regional set of undammed mountain rivers. This may not have been seen as important yet, but it is the world's last place where a person could travel the length of the coast and every mountain to sea river would be free flowing. I believe that is worth preserving for the world, not just New Zealand. If the Mokihinui is dammed, the whole West Coast loses out on that unique status and all the potential that brings. This is a critical area of overlap between recreation, conservation and tourism that has been neglected by the Applicant.

- II. As a kayaker the Mokihinui River is highly significant to me for both its whitewater and scenic values.
- III. As noted in the Assessment of Environmental Impact document *"Whitewater kayaking and rafting are the most important activities in the gorge"* and *"The most significant effects of the proposal are the change to the rafting and white water opportunities in the catchment"*
- IV. The applicant is incorrect in its assertion that *"The Mokihinui River ...is of no more than regional significance for recreation."*

Further details are given below:

Importance of the Mokihinui River:

The Mokihinui River is uniquely placed for recreation amongst New Zealand's rivers. This is well described by Rutter-Baumann in his submission.

I will elaborate more on my point **bl** above.

The West Coast's geography is clearly defined, with a mountain chain separating lower eastern lands from the steeper west. Rivers on the western side typically start high in the mountains and flow directly and steeply westward.

The West Coast's mountain rivers (rivers flowing from mountains to the sea) currently have several minor hydro-electric power (HEP) schemes but no dams (the Arnold River is a lowland river in its entirety).

Other regions with comparable geography around the world (e.g. Chile, California, Washington State, British Columbia) have all got rivers spoilt by dams. In the USA, dams are now starting to be removed and attempts made at rehabilitation of river valleys as authorities realise the mistake of loss of amenity.

There are many people in the world who care deeply about free flowing rivers: for a region such as the West Coast to have a complete unspoilt collection is very significant. With political will, an international designation such as that of the United Nation's World Heritage status (defined in Article 2 as *"natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view"*) could be achieved. It could not be achieved if the Applicant's proposal for the Mokihinui River goes ahead.

Loss of whitewater amenity on entire River:

- o The lower Mokihinui River will be lost and proposal will result in less usage of the upper Mokihinui River,
- o Under the proposal, the dam on the Mokihinui would flood the beautiful granite gorge and valley most of the way back to Lake Perrine. The grade 3 whitewater would be lost and significant recreational opportunities would go with it.

- Kayaking and canoeing on the class 4 upper Mokihinui River would also be affected due to access difficulties. There is no mitigation proposed for this.

Lack of suitable mitigation:

- The proposed mountain biking track and enhanced walking tracks are not mitigation for the loss of whitewater on the lower river nor do they compensate for the more difficult access to the upper river.
- Meridian Energy Limited suggests the proposed lake will result in alternative opportunities for kayakers. It will not result in an alternative comparable to the lost whitewater and therefore it is not compensatory. It is like offering a flat pavement footpath in place of a mountain track and they saying "it just the same – it's for walking on. Why don't you like it?"

Incorrect assessment of significance of the Mokihinui River for recreation:

- Consultation by the applicant was not sufficiently wide, with only 2 kayakers consulted regarding the whitewater amenity.
- The river is navigated predominantly by kayakers and canoeists from outside of the region.
- The Mokihinui is a very important part of the spectrum of West Coast rivers. The West Coast is renowned internationally for its whitewater rivers and many domestic and international tourists come to the West Coast because of this.

3 I seek that the application be declined in its entirety.

4 I wish to be heard in support of this submission.



Andy England
87 Blake Street
Greymouth

Date 21-09-08

03 7685678