

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): Emma Richardson

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

Further Information

To whom this may concern,

The Mokihinui Hydro Proposal is a sad attempt at generating 'renewable' energy. While the process of hydro-power generation itself is certainly renewable, this proposal will involve such a high degree of environmental damage and degradation so as to render any claims of renewability invalid. Furthermore, Meridian Energy's 'Assessment of Environmental Effects' makes a joke out of the need to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects under the Resource Management Act.

1) Ecological Impacts:

a) damage to terrestrial ecosystems

The construction of the dam and resulting lake will involve the destruction and loss of significant areas of native forest. For example, the loss of lowland forest in the Mokihinui gorge will reduce the amount of habitat available to threatened bird species such as the kakariki, kaka and Great Spotted Kiwi .

Inundation of the gorge will transform the present riverine environment into a flat water lake resulting in the loss of habitat for blue duck. A potential consequence of this destruction is the 'possible loss of five to seven blue ducks' (AEE, p. 102).

In addition, up to 272 hectares of habitat of the snail, *Powelliphanta lignaria unicolorata*, will be lost. This constitutes 5% of the currently known habitat for this species(AEE, p.102).

b) damage to freshwater ecosystems

Variations in river flow, as well as the eighty-five metre high dam, will affect the ability of fish species to migrate up and down the river. This is of particular concern in the case of native species such as the long-finned eel.

Periphytons and invertebrate communities will also be adversely affected.

Further damage is likely in the form of water pollution: both in the lake and downstream.

2) Landscape Impacts

The Mokihinui is presently a scenic wilderness area, which it will no longer be with the advent of an eighty five metre high dam and accompanying infrastructure.

3) The Meridian Energy Myth

Meridian Energy's AEE is no more than an attempt to allay environmental concerns with the notion that all effects are no more than 'minor'. The belief that 'avoid, remedy and mitigate' comes down to timing, translocation and tidying up is simplistic, and does not take into account the wider context of this proposal.

For example, the displacement of native species is, in the opinion of Meridian, a simple matter that can be 'mitigated' by caring actions such as 'assisting juvenile migrant fish and eels upstream over the dam' (AEE, p.94). In the case of birds these 'able fliers' will 'temporarily relocate from the area with no more than minor adverse effects' (AEE, p. 105). Unfortunately for the lizards and invertebrates being 'not so mobile' means there is indeed 'some potential for loss of these species' (AEE, p.105).

I believe that Meridian Energy should seriously re-consider it's plans for this river. Renewable energy can be found elsewhere; the Mokihiui, it's ecosystems and high natural value cannot. The argument that the 'area lost is very small..' and that 'large areas..will remain..' (AEE, p. 102) cannot continue to be tolerated. In a much wider context the removal and destruction of these ecosystems is cumulative: connectivity is disrupted, species are displaced and habitat lost. This damage cannot be undone- ever.

Yours Sincerely,

Emma Richardson
Student in School of Biological Sciences
University of Canterbury