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22 APR 2008

THE WEST COAST

SUBMISSION ON RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

Section 96 Of The Resource Management Act 1991



THE WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

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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): Forest & Bird Golden Bay Branch

Postal address: c/- Secretary, J. Vaughan, Pymong Rd
Fern town Rd 1, Collingwood 7073

Wk Ph: _____ Hm Ph: (03) 524 8072 Cell: _____

Wk Fax: _____ Hm Fax: (03) 524 8075 Email: javn@extra.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]

See attached

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

To decline the proposal in total.

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): *J. H. [Signature]*

Date: 18th April, 2008

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

**To: The West Coast Regional Council,
P.O. Box 66,
Greymouth**

**From: The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, Golden Bay Branch,
C/- Secretary, J. Vaughan,
Puponga Rd.,
Ferntown, R.D. 1,
Collingwood. 7073**

SUBMISSION IN OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED MOKIHINUI HYDRO PROPOSAL

The proposal plans for the construction of a hydro dam and power station 3 km upstream of the township of Seddonville, 40 km north of Westport in the Buller district.

The dam would create a 14 km long and narrow lake reaching back 500m eastwards of Specimen Creek in the Mokihinui Gorge.

The transmission line would traverse 29 km southwards across the Stockton Plateau to a new substation to be located at Cedar Creek in the upper Waimangaroa valley.

We oppose the proposal in full. We wish to see:

- Protection of the Mokihinui Gorge.
- The retention of the 'stewardship land' and higher protected status given to the obvious ecological values Mokihinui Gorge.
- The retention of old growth forest and the gorge in their natural state.

The reason we oppose this proposal is because

- Fourteen kilometres of gorge will disappear in 80 metres of water;
- 330 hectares of river bed and forest will be flooded;
- Biodiversity and habitat will be lost

(The proposed development involves construction of an 85-metre-high dam, which would flood 330 hectares of the river gorge and conservation land and create a 14-kilometre-long lake).

The values we believe that would be lost if this application was granted.

- The Mokihinui is the West Coast's third largest river, draining the vast uplands and mountains of the Lyell, Radiant, Allen, Glasgow and Matiri Ranges.
- The Mokihinui River and the wilderness that surrounds it is so important in terms of what is left of our nation's natural biodiversity that we simply can't afford to lose it under nearly 100 metres of water.
- The gorge is a wilderness treasure, with beech forests, ancient podocarps, and rata.

- The river itself alternates across granite and greywacke boulders, and through deep pools, as it twists and turns through the gorge.
- Living in the river are blue duck (whio), long finned eel (tuna), giant kokopu, and a rich array of other native species.
- Loss of passage to the sea for native fish whose life cycle depend upon it.
- The river and forests clothing the hillsides provide habitat for 16 threatened species. Long-tailed bats, western weka, kereru, and powelliphanta snails inhabit this ecological niche.
- New Zealand's own database of waterbodies of national importance ranks the Mokihinui 7th for its natural values.
- Loss of enjoyment to New Zealanders of wilderness experience including fishing for whitebait. Whitebaiters estimate that loss to be in the vicinity of 8 tonnes per annum.

We have particular concern for the long finned eel, New Zealand's own endemic eel, which is in gradual decline. The Mokihinui is a strong hold for the long finned eel. No mitigation measure exist which can prevent the ultimate loss of viability for this population should this proposal go ahead.

Trustpower agree that at the Cobb Dam in Golden Bay, native fish populations above the dam which were reliant upon access to the sea (which is all of them) to complete their life cycle, were the ultimate sacrifice for the creation of this dam. The Cobb dam was started before World War 2 when these considerations were not so important as they are today because there was plenty of fish life in other rivers. This is no longer the case. New Zealand's unique native fresh water fish populations have been in steady decline due to loss of habitat either through modification of their free passage to the sea or through vegetation clearance and pollution. These days, no matter how vital a renewable, non-polluting source of electricity such as hydro power is to our nation, the losses in a proposal such as this, should it be granted to go ahead, are beyond measure, and for all time. The choice of the Mokihinui River is the wrong choice.

We want Meridian to make public the findings of a report which they commissioned from the environmental research organisation Landcare Research. We understand that the report concluded that the hydro scheme would cause significant environmental harm, and recommended that Meridian look elsewhere for its power generation needs. If this information is correct, it is a conclusion with which we concur.

Yours sincerely,



Jo-Anne Vaughan, Secretary for the Forest and Bird Golden Bay Branch. 18th April, 2008.