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SUBMISSION ON RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

Section 96 Of The Resource Management Act 1991

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL



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): Robin John Rutter - Baumann

Postal address: 7 Enso Place, Waikaku Beach

Wk Ph: 03 3131806 Hm Ph: 03 3122238 Cell: 027 2096101

Wk Fax: 033132601 Hm Fax: — Email: robjrb@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]

See attached submission

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

Decide the proposal in its entirety - see attached submission


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: 21/4/08

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: Robin Rutter-Baumann

Date: 20 April 2008

Re: RC07150, Mokihinui Hydro Power Scheme

Submitter Contact Details

Name of Party: Robin Rutter-Baumann

Contact Phone: 027-2026101

Email Address: robinrb@xtra.co.nz

Postal Address: PO Box 383, Rangiora

- 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 been a kayaker since 1978. I have competed, instructed and paddled recreationally during my thirty years of involvement. I kayaked the Mokihinui River on 3 occasions, the first time at April 2000 the most recent in January 2006. All trips were from the Johnson creek confluence to the Welcome Creek road end, therefore encompassing the entire section affected by this proposal.

b) Reasons for making submission

My primary reasons for opposing the proposed hydroelectric scheme are:

- As a kayaker the Mokihinui River has high significance me for both its whitewater and scenic values.
- 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”*
- The proposed scheme will result in the in loss off a section of river which is navigable by the majority of kayakers and canoeists the type

of which is not available elsewhere on the West Coast (i.e. there are no other rivers with a section of this grade length or beauty)

- The proposed scheme will negatively impact upon the access to the upper section of the river which is a section I value highly.
- The applicant does not propose suitable mitigation for the removal of the white water or the negative effects on access to the upper river.
- The applicant is incorrect in its assertion that *"The Mokihinui Riveris of no more than regional significance for recreation."*

Further details are given below:

Importance of the Mokihinui River:

- Personally I think the section of the Mokihinui affected by this proposal provides the best class 3 to 4 whitewater wilderness trip in New Zealand, it is ideal for advanced learners
- River environments as beautiful as the Mokihinui are not accessible to the majority of kayakers as they are not capable of navigating or portaging the rapids present in them.
- The ability to portage the rapids (even at higher flows) means that the river provides a significant development opportunity for kayakers and canoeists. Many other class 4 rivers do not offer the opportunity to inspect or easily portage the major rapids, so the presence of a class 4 rapid may limit the run to those capable of running at that level.
- The Mokihinui main stem gorge is therefore one of the few wilderness river trips within the scope of the vast majority of kayakers and canoeists who would be insufficiently skilled to paddle the more abundant Grade 4 high gradient wilderness rivers elsewhere in the South Island.

Loss of whitewater amenity on entire River:

- The lower Mokihinui River will be lost and proposal will result in less usage of the upper Mokihinui River,
- 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.
- The North Branch of the Mokihinui is a greater experience because of the lower river. My first trip was when the North Branch was low and the South branch in flood with a party of 7. The result was 5 hours of technical

"creeking" followed by "big water" grade 4 rapids at the forks and a good 3 hour run down to the end. Seven years later 4 of the 7 kayakers on the trip told me the Mokihinui is a highlight of their paddling careers. They both dread and desire doing it again - the dread coming from the sense of exposure an 8-12 hour river trip gives. The loss of the lower river would diminish the opportunity for this level of wilderness experience.

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. I have navigated it with 12 different people none of whom live on the West Coast.
- 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.



Robin Rutter-Baumann
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Ph 027 2096101

Date 21/4/07