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24 APR 2008

SUBMISSION ON RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

Section 96 Of The Resource Management Act 1991

WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL



THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

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TO: THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

PO BOX 66

GREYMOOUTH

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): TREVOR JAMES

Postal address: _____

Wk Ph: _____ Hm Ph: _____ Cell: _____

Wk Fax: _____ Hm Fax: _____ Email: _____

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]

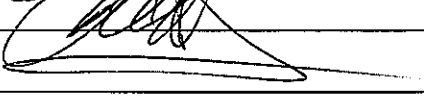
Use the tick boxes below to indicate the resource consent applications your submission concerns.

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: _____

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

Cc: Meridian Energy Limited

From: Trevor James

Date: 22 April 2008

Re: RC07150, Mokihinui Hydro Power Scheme

Submitter Contact Details

Name of Party: Trevor James

Contact Phone: 03 547 2295

Email Address: gwynfaniwa@quicksilver.net.nz

Postal Address: 7e Kakenga Rd, Stoke Nelson

- 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 paddling white-water since 1982. I am a qualified instructor and have been very active in paddling both personally and through in canoe clubs during my twenty-six years of involvement. I have kayaked the Mokihinui River on three occasions. One trip was on the North Branch and main stem from the Johnson creek confluence to the Welcome Creek road end. The other two trips were from the Welcome Creek road end to the mouth.

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 loss of 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 few other rivers with a section of this grade length or beauty)
- 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:

- This river is one of only four rivers on the West Coast that you can travel over multi-days and end up at the sea.
- Affects on recreation. The rapids and the experience of this river is important for kayaking and rafting opportunities.
- Coastal erosion near the river mouth due to curtailing of sediment supply. This will remove coastal wetlands and whitebait spawning grounds.
- Adverse affects on the aquatic ecology – riverine habitat loss in the flooded section and downstream of the dam from un-natural flow regime (mainly from hydro-peaking). This includes affects on whitebait populations.
- Affects on loss of forest and forest ecosystems. The scale of forest loss is unacceptable.
- The adverse effects and cost of the dam removal.
- The Mokihinui River affected by this proposal provides one of the best class 3 to 4 whitewater wilderness trip in New Zealand, it is ideal for advanced learners. The river is also one of a number of rivers on the West Coast that collectively have huge value nationally and internationally. The rivers on the West Coast are very significant to recreation on a world scale.
- 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.
- The North Branch of the Mokihinui is a greater experience when combined with the lower river. 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.

Incorrect assessment of significance of the Mokihinui River for recreation:

- Poor consultation by the applicant – with Nelson Canoe Club not consulted.
- 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.



Trevor James
7e Kakenga Rd, Stoke, Nelson

Date

22/4/08

