



# New Zealand Trailer Boat Federation Inc.

Representing Moored and Trailered Pleasure Craft Clubs

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6<sup>th</sup> September 2001  
Department of Conservation  
PO Box 668  
GISBORNE  
Attention: Caroline Hart

## Re: te urewera national park management plan draft

### **This is the submission of the New Zealand Trailer Boat Federation Inc.**

The New Zealand Trailer Boat Federation represents approximately 3000 recreational boat users and was formed in 1961. It is a national organisation representing boat clubs New Zealand wide. As such we have a mandate to make submissions to local and central Government on legislation that could be detrimental to what is considered fair and proper. This is such a submission.

Our study of the draft plan revealed that much consideration has been given by the authors to most aspects of maintaining the pristine nature of the area. We congratulate DOC for this and the detail that has been entered into.

We have in the consideration and subsequent preparation of our submission attempted where possible to best maintain an objective attitude. This is despite feeling that there is the very real potential that through DOC's desire to maintain the park, the traditional privileges of the recreational boat user may be taken or partially taken from them.

This submission relates primarily to the draft plan Section 7.1 Introduced Plants subsection 7.1.2 Policy Control of Introduced Aquatic Plants parts 7.1.2 (i) 7.1.2 (j). These are addressed below.

*Objection to Sections 7.1.2 (i) and 7.1.2 (j) are as follows:-*  
The Draft plan subsection 7.1.2 (i) reads as follows:-

To establish bylaws to prevent the use of jet powered boats and other jet powered craft (including jet skis) on Lake Waikaremoana except for management purposes.

Explanation: The Waikaremoana lake is of national significance and it is important to ensure that they remain free from vigorous aquatic introduced plants. Jet powered craft have the potential to trap aquatic plants within the jet unit. There may be sufficient moisture retained within the jet unit for plants to remain viable for long periods, thereby increasing the possibility of transfer of introduced aquatic plants from water bodies containing introduced

aquatic plants into park waters. Boats used for conservation management purposes are operated on the Lake Waikaremoana exclusively so there is no risk of introduced aquatic plant transfer.

The Draft plan subsection 7.1.2 (j) reads as follows:-

To consider the possible future need for stricter controls to reduce the risk of transfer of introduced aquatic plants to the park and if appropriate to establish or undertake actions that may include but are not limited to the following:

- i. closure of some boat ramps to reduce the number of possible points of entry for introduced aquatic plants via boats;
- ii. establishment of bylaws preventing the use of any boats on Lake Waikaremoana.

Explanation: Management of risk of aquatic plant transfer may be successfully achieved through advocacy amongst park users. However, if it is considered necessary, regulatory initiatives and stricter control may be established in the future and the management plan provides for this accordingly. It is important to remember that in many cases prevention of entry of introduced aquatic plants is the only management option that exists. The use of nets is another way that aquatic plants may be introduced into park waters. However, there is minimal use of nets in the park. It is not necessary to establish bylaws for the use of nets as it is an offence to use a net in the park without a permit (S. 60 (4)(a)).

The argument of jet boats allowing the transfer of weed fragments is *possibly* a valid one. While it is tempting to point the finger at these craft for their ability to harbour the noxious weed within their mechanisms like stowaways, this potential should not be viewed out of perspective.

There are several discussion points raised here.

Watercraft have often been blamed for the spreading of aquatic weeds from infested areas. Most boaties will be aware of the signs at ramps around New Zealand's lake warning of this possibility, and I might suggest most either do not travel between lakes or if they do, are conscious of the need to check trailers and motors for entangled weeds. No doubt *some* will not.

Most of the weeds threatening the lakes of New Zealand and in particular those in the area of te urewera national park and Rotorua can spread though fragmentation of the weed though the easily rooting female weed flowers are pollinated by the free floating male flowers.

Fragmentation is caused by any violent activity on the long weed stem. Naturally this can occur through a variety of methods including disturbance by trolled fishing lures, swimmers, boats (including kayak paddles in shallower regions) or violent wave action. The natural environmental effects can not be stopped.

Most jet boaters would do their very best to avoid having the jet units congested by weed and thus steer clear of the likely areas.

From our research of the stated threatening weed species, it appears that for lake Waikaremoana at least, it may be too late already. Possibly this is the secret fear of many DOC scientists.

Banning of watercraft with the potential of spreading weeds is in our opinion too greater action with too little reward and probably too late. The lake already has a nursery stock of noxious weeds that are well established. New species of noxious weed will compete with the native and non-native aquatic plant life already established. Now with *L. major* establishing itself in Rosie bay, it seems that the damage has been done. The debate as to whether or not migrating boats are largely to blame will probably never cease. It will be interesting to see if *L. Waikareiti* has any noxious weed infestation. If it has, it won't be from boats driven between lakes.

If the spread of *L. major* from Rosie Bay is feared as it should be, maybe that particular bay should be closed to all human activity including swimming. This drastic action though could not prevent the fragmentation and spreading of the weed flowers by the strong winds that funnel into that area at times.

As for the spread of other weed species already established in the lake, it seems that more effective measures must be taken.

Former Tuai policeman Mr Lou Dolman has in a recent article relating to this topic suggested that transfer of the weed species has largely been the result of the feeding habits of aquatic bird life in the area. Certainly the possibility exists and it may well be worthwhile performing some analysis on this theory.

The NZTBF main objection to the draft plan is the banning jet boat and jet skis (section 7.1.2 (i)) and the proposal to have at the ready, the option to ban *all* boats on the lake (section 7.1.2 (j)). Obviously, if boats are actually responsible for the importation of weeds to the lake, banning them may have an effect if it's not too late. However we would be very surprised if DOC (and any overseas conservative authority) have any actual hard evidence that points to boats as being significant contributors of weed spread. This is a very easy theory to imagine and boats are an obvious target but is a very difficult theory to prove well enough to justify banning them.

Our suggestions are as follows:-

1. Oppose further sealing of state highway 38 thus restricting through apparent isolation, people who would otherwise travel the roads to the lake. This would slow the increase of human impact on the lake.
2. Install more imaginative signage warning of water weed transference at the ramps in line with section 8.5.2(b) and 7.1.2(f).
3. Undertake a supervised non-recreational culling program of most of the non-native aquatic bird life such as the black swan and grey duck now present in alarming numbers (this would also benefit the competing native duck species).
4. Approach Genesis power with regard to lake level controls and the possible lowering of the *L. Waikaremoana* to stump level where the weed can possibly be knocked back through exposure to air and the sun.

We do not believe that DOC should be empowered to cause the cessation of all or part of recreational boating, nor do we believe that closure of any of the existing boat ramps is an option.

We do not wish clauses 7.1.2(i) or (j) to be part of this draft plan or any subsequent plans. We believe it is too drastic a measure to ban boats in such a beautiful location. The benefit to the NZ recreational boating public must be considered as being part of the

essence of the park and must also be protected vehemently by DOC and not be cast aside due to its modern (non-native) nature.

Please direct all correspondence to the secretary. Contact details above.  
End of Submission