

Election charter focuses on rec fishing

Trout and sea fishing feature strongly in an election charter prepared by the Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of NZ (CORANZ).

Members laid down sixteen issues as top priority. One was that governments should fully recognise the public's right to catch saltwater fish and gather shellfish for sport and/or sustenance. Another was recognition of the 'public ownership' of freshwater and saltwater fish 'with full, equal and proper public access to them'.

"Responses will be later collated and made public," said Andi Cockroft, CORANZ co-chairman of Wellington.

He emphasised CORANZ was strictly apolitical and "politically impartial".

"But there is growing concern at the style and policies of recent governments that were bypassing democracy and eroding the public heritage of the outdoors and environmental quality."

An obsessive pursuit of growth inevitably resulted in exploitation that lacked foresight and a caring for future

generations, he said.

CORANZ's other co-chairman, Bill Benfield of Wairarapa, said CORANZ had a diverse range of outdoor organisations as members, affiliates or kindred liaisons.

"Within CORANZ's ranks are individuals with professional qualifications and blended with lifetimes of practical outdoors experience and a deep appreciation of the environment and ecosystems."

The CORANZ election charter lists sixteen top priority areas to be put under scrutiny leading up to the election. Among them are: firm standards for water (reversing the current degradation of fresh water); full legal recognition of trout, salmon and perch (as well as deer, wapiti, chamois and other big game animals) as valued recreational assets; an end to aerial poisoning with toxins such as 1080 and Brodifacoum; reviewing the Department of Conservation; stricter controls on foreign ownership of New Zealand land; and recognising the Treaty of Waitangi's intent for one integrated society.

-TONY ORMAN