



## Samples of letters:

### **Written regarding the Outdoor Recreational vote in the 2011 General Election:**

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To the Editor

Dear Sir,

As a “swinging voter” with no party allegiances I have been pondering over the battles over years on fishing, hunting and environmental issues. It was a bit sobering to realise I've spent 41 years on lobbying politicians, making submissions to Parliamentary select committees and penning articles. My involvement dates back to the “Save Manapouri” campaign about 1969 and when I assess achievements, frankly the victories can be counted on one hand - trout farming (the big victory), channel catfish, grass carp and one or two others.

Significantly, Save Manapouri, trout farming and the sale of public lands to a rich American to exploit the trout fishing and hunting near Te Anau, were big victories helped by the then Labour leader Norman Kirk's personal empathy with the outdoors. Otherwise apart from one or two others (eg channel catfish, grass carp etc) erosion of the Kiwi's outdoor heritage has been undeniable.

The outlook is far from rosy. We are fighting erosion of the public ownership of fish and game, erosion caused by the sale of fishing (and hunting) rights, encroaching pollution that even sees dead trout in rivers such as the Tukituki, warnings about drinking water in rivers and even causing dog deaths, private power companies vying to dam rivers for their own profits, a racially divided country as epitomised by the Marine and Coastal Bill, property rights of sea fisheries given to corporate fishing companies, not forgetting 1080 poison and a continuation of the the anti- big game animal phobia.

And politicians in government are not only deaf but arrogant. It has been a frustrating process with successive governments founded on and dominated by either Labour or National, whose politicians have indulged in arrogance, deceit and deception. In the

background have been career bureaucrats adept at “double speak” and manipulating ministers.

More recently I talked to a National Party stalwart that triggered an idea. The party member said government was nervous the public might learn how to use MMP largely through the party vote. In other words if the public largely realised that the party vote is totally independent of the candidate vote, then governments could not afford to be so arrogant.

The outdoor public sector is large. It has been put at a million, more or less. And there is a feeling that National and Labour are Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dumb.

The Green Party deeply influenced the Clark-led Labour government and now the Maori Party on the current Key-led, National-based government.

Well the Council of Outdoor Recreation Assns of NZ (CORANZ) compiled a charter for political parties and sought party policies. Labour and National did not reply. Of those others, three stood out - United Future, NZ First and Conservative who have Kiwi Party members standing under their banner. Readers may recall Kiwi Leader Larry Baldock, ex-MP, speaking up on issues like 1080, fishing rights and others? I believe the outdoor sector should grasp this opportunity.

Time is running out. With each three-year term, the slide is downward. The party vote is so important. No matter whom you tick for your candidate vote, vote for a minor party with I suggest, ticking one of the three above.

Apart from 1972, we've gained little and have overall lost ground under a succession of Labour and National regimes. In fact, we're on a slippery slope downwards. It's time to be bold.

Tony Orman  
Marlborough

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## LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Sir,

With an election due on November 26, it is the one time every three years when we do a performance assessment on our elected representative in Parliament.

The phrase "elected representatives" has a hollow ring to it these days, has it not? Do they represent the public interest or are they putting representing their commercial and corporate chums and sponsors higher in their priorities?

Often, decision-making is sacrificing clean rivers, access to fishing, public ownership of fish and game and the environment. Many are increasingly seeing "clean and green" as "100% pure" falsehoods.

It is undeniable that this erosion has happened under the two main parties holding the government reins. They are increasingly seen as 'Tweedle-dee' and Tweedle-dumb. The result is the same whichever is in power.

The NZ Federation of Freshwater Anglers at its last AGM debated the need for an election strategy. What eventuated was the need to encourage outdoors New Zealanders to utilise their party vote and vote for a minor party. One attribute of MMP is the "two votes", ie party and candidate.

Strategic use of the party vote by voting for a minor party could be a potent way to deliver a strong rejection of Labour and National's disrespect for the outdoor heritage - if enough do it. I personally see November 26 as a watershed election - critical to the future of New Zealanders' rights, access and freedoms to go trout, salmon or sea fishing.

Please consider this on November 26.

Look at the outdoor policies for minor parties first.

Ken Sims  
Life Member  
NZ Federation Freshwater Anglers

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***Letter to Editor***

I remember one cynical quote from the UK that went like "Democracy consists of choosing your own dictators after they've told you what you think it is you want to hear." Well we've had a number of dictatorial governments since 1984 when Rogernomics came to power. All have been Labour in its right and left wing forms and National.

Looking at the outdoors and the environment both have messed up in fishing and outdoors with privatising fisheries and giving property rights to a public fishery resource, giving priority to company commercial fishing interests, pollution of rivers, regarding deer and Canada geese as pests, privatising pheasant shooting rights by game preserves and the list goes on.

Well is it time to tell Labour and National enough is enough? To my mind the answer is yes!

So my party vote is going to a minor party that believes in the Kiwi outdoor life and right to go fishing and hunting. That comes down to just three - one of NZ First, United Future and Conservative, an interesting new party.

I suggest the 800,000 fishing/hunting/voting public do the same.

Nelson

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Dear Sir

The comments in your last issue about Minister of Fisheries Phil Heatley show I am not alone in the huge disappointment of him as Minister. Here in Marlborough we

have put up with absolute nonsense and bullsh---, from him and his ministry over the blue cod and set net bans. Hugh Shields in your last issue was in the same bullsh--- league as the Ministry of Fisheries and the Minister of Fisheries. There never was a case for bans on blue cod- despite what Mr Shields says - or set nets.

Mr Heatley has as I write this, just lifted on May 2012, the set net ban. He rules that recreational set netters must stay with their nets. Is he going to lay down the rule for commercial and customary set netters? I doubt it because the ban on set netting has only applied to the recreational people. Mr Heatley has again kicked the tax paying recreational public in the guts.

Yeah, it's a funny thing Mr. Heatley, there has never been a dolphin caught in a recreational set net in Marlborough waters. Funny? Not funny ha, ha but funny stupid. At the time of writing this, I reckon iMr Heatley's abusive treatment of the reccy fishing public will be reflected in the voting figures on November 26 for the local Kaikoura electorate. Wait and see.

Blenheim

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### **Pursuit of Profit**

It was an enlightened comment by Dame Anne Salmond (October 13) that "the relentless pursuit of profit is placing so much of what Kiwis value in jeopardy" a view reflected in worldwide demonstrations and in New Zealand, against corporate raider and greed.

One aspect Kiwis value highly suffering from the ruthless greed is the outdoors and traditional freedoms and quality and quantity of resources based around outdoor recreation. Privatisation and commercialisation is impairing not only access but tainting resources such as coasts and rivers with less water and higher pollution levels.

The Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of New Zealand (CORANZ) prepared an election charter, which went to all political parties. After 10 weeks, National, Labour, ACT, Maori and Mana had not replied. However minor parties in NZ First, United Future, Conservative and Greens did with the first three offering constructive comments.

That is of significance for the party vote on November 26.

The charter identified 14 key priority areas with calls for national water standards, better public representation in decision making, an independent Environmental Protection Council, stricter foreign ownership controls, a population policy and policy based on social and environmental instead of just economic.

W Benfield  
Co-chairman  
CORANZ

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## **Letter to Editor**

Dame Anne Salmond's excellent opinion piece (October 13) identified an uneasy and increasing public concern at the undue influence of corporate commercial interests on government policy. One example is fisheries management with a handful of corporate companies favoured over the recreational sector, estimated comprising one million New Zealanders. Is it just coincidence the National Party's president and family are major shareholders in a corporate fishing company?

Another example is the Department of Conservation's switch to business deals to the neglect of conservation and outdoor recreation.

Meanwhile Government policy is based on growth and more growth with total neglect of New Zealand's need for a population policy both in magnitude and geographically. The measure of the nation's progress (GDP) is based solely on economic and exploitation. Urgently needed is a Genuine Progress Indicator based on economic, social and environmental measures.

Dame Salmond's view calls to mind the words of US president J F Kennedy who said "each generation must deal anew with the raiders with the scramble to use public resources for private profit and with the tendency to prefer short run profits to long run necessities."

## **Marlborough**

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NZ's pioneers came to escape the class feudal system of the UK so all in the new colony could afford a modest annual "access fee" by way of a licence whereas in the UK only the wealthy aristocratic upper class can afford the fishing and hunting right fees. But governments' privatisation policies have eroded this.

New Zealanders are increasingly obese. Figures show close to 30% are obese. But SPARC (government) funds mostly international teams and athletes and ignores the public at large. Recent governments show little or no interest in outdoor recreation. But outdoor activity keeps NZers fit.

The public is being increasingly locked out of the outdoors by commercialisation. Governments show little concern. DOC is now doing business deals with corporate sponsors often who are the ones degrading the environment, eg power companies damming rivers.

The outdoors is the major recreation. It's estimated over 1 million NZers go sea fishing, trout fishing, hunting etc., It's a big recreation participant number and a big potential voting block.

MMP thankfully gives options other than Labour and National under whose regimes has seen threats to public access, rivers by way of pollution and dams and bias towards commercial exploitation.

Is it true, the President of National Party is the major shareholder directly and indirectly in Sanford Fisheries, a major corporate fishing company that has been one of the main figures in overfishing of kahawai?

Government has an obligation under Parliamentary law (eg Fisheries Act, Conservation Law Reform Act etc) to foster and safeguard outdoor recreation like fishing but successive National and Labour governments have done little to pay duty to their responsibility.

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