

Water advocacy

The two cartoons (July 29-30) on Conservation Minister Nick Smith trying to persuade Fish and Game NZ to withdraw its advocacy for clean rivers were excellent. Smith's attitude has an ironic ring to it in that as Conservation Minister shouldn't he be an advocate for the environment?

Certainly not for exploitation.

What kind of Conservation Minister would attempt to nullify a campaign for clean rivers and lakes? On reflection, Nick Smith has a spotty record often involving ill-judged interventions.

He expressed dissatisfaction with DOC's submission on Hawke's Bay's proposed Ruataniwha Dam so DOC's submission was cut from 34 pages to two paragraphs. Remember the Bronwyn Pullar ACC shambles where he intervened to lobby for a friend?

Concerns in the latest controversy centre around Smith's alleged attempt to reduce Fish and Game's ability to advocate for freshwater quality. Such a whittling or removal of statutory powers is well within the culture of a government that sacked democratically elected ECan councillors and replaced them with government puppet commissioners.

I also have concerns about corporate oil exploration on public forest park land in the Lewis Pass. Did Nick Smith sign this off?

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