

RUSSELL PROTECTION SOCIETY (INC)

P O Box 154
Russell, Bay of Islands

Submission on Mining in Schedule 4

To: Schedule 4 Stocktake
Ministry of Economic Development
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Pages of submission: 2

We wish to be heard in support of our submission

We oppose all parts of the proposal to stocktake or mine anywhere on Schedule 4 land.

Submission:

1. The economy of historic Russell Township and the Bay of Islands generally is heavily dependent on the tourism industry. The area has marketed itself overseas as an integral part of the “clean green” image that underpins the industry in New Zealand. While this may seem to be a somewhat trite and clichéd slogan, it is nonetheless taken very seriously by our visitors from North America and Europe. Prospecting and mining on our Schedule 4 lands would attract considerable media attention (as it has already) in this country and inevitably overseas. This could have a serious effect on our tourism industry and hence the economy of Russell.
2. The tourism industry is a major earner of foreign currency and will continue in the foreseeable future to be an important factor in addressing our balance of payment problem. The mining industry in NZ will never be a major player in this regard because we simply lack the vast mineral resources that countries such as Australia have. For this reason it would be unwise to jeopardise an industry with proven performance against the faint hope that somehow the mining of Schedule 4 lands will prove to be our economic salvation.
3. The initiative for this review of Schedule 4 appears to be driven by a desire to emulate Australia and the economic benefits that they derive from their mining

industry. However, the New Zealand context is substantially different and our relatively steep topography, high rainfall and fine clay soils create the potential for major impacts from mining activity, something that is largely lacking in the flat, arid outback of Australia. The negative impacts of mining in NZ are not easily mitigated and this adds to the costs while undermining the viability of many operations. In such a situation where the mining company is faced with an uneconomic mine because of strict environmental conditions, there is a tendency to either cut corners or to walk away from the operation. There are already a number of examples of this in New Zealand. The lasting effect of this is to despoil and pollute our pristine landscapes - a commodity that our tourism industry is currently heavily reliant upon.

4. Lastly, any changes to Schedule 4 protection should be tested at the polls, since this initiative was not signalled by the Government at the last election.



Bob Drey
Chairperson
Russell Protection Society
Dated: 26 May 2010

Address for Service: As above