

# RUAPEHU

*Mountain Clubs Association*

## **RMCA November Newsletter**

Kia ora,

Wow, what a season! The 2025 season delivered the snow and the rebuilding of the connections on the mountain. The RMCA extends its thanks to Travis Donnoghue, Steve Manunui, Phil Lemalu, Chris Bashford and all of the team from Whakapapa Ski Field. We have enjoyed a fantastic season.

### **Tongariro National Park Fires**

The devastation of nearly 3,000 hectares of the National Park is currently disrupting access to the Tongariro Alpine Crossing and the Maungatopopo track. The RMCA attended the hui held this week. Attendees included Iwi, DoC, Ski Field operators, FENZ, Tourism operators and Civil Defence.

DoC is making good progress on the assessment of the damage. The fire has reduced parts of the park to ash, destroyed some infrastructure, and poses a long-term threat of invasive weeds (gorse and broom) and wilding pines re-establishing themselves. The RMCA has expressed a keen desire to work with DoC on the restoration and recovery of the TNP over the period of the 10 year restorative rahui.

DoC wishes to thank the clubs that offered accommodation to displaced residents and volunteer fire fighters from outside of the region. These clubs offered accommodation in Ohakune with no expectation of remuneration. Thank you, **Ruapehu Ski Club, Aorangi Ski Club, Tongariro Ski Club and Havelock Ski Club** for demonstrating aroha to ensure volunteers had a place to sleep.

Collaboration with DoC and Iwi remains a key pillar for the RMCA and member clubs in the next 10 years.

### **RMCA AGM 2025**

Thank you to all who joined the meeting. There were more than 30 attendees, and more attendees joined online. High winds on the day saw us relocate the AGM from KRC to Happy Valley Bistro. We were delighted to have Steve Mananui (WHL) join us and share the highlights and challenges of the season. Steve also shared the plans and the vision for WHL operations over the next 10 years. After the AGM, we celebrated the life of our former RMCA president of Phill Thomas. Phill had passed away just a few weeks before the AGM.

On behalf of the RMCA, we warmly welcome Gordon Horsley from Whanganui Ski Club to the RMCA council. We are lucky to have Gordon join the team. Gordon has a love for the mountain and boundless energy to work with clubs and our key stakeholders on the mountain.

The minutes of the AGM are on the RMCA website.

### **RMCA 2026**

The RMCA actively engages in representing clubs with our key stakeholders DoC, WHL and Pure Turoa. The key challenge facing clubs is membership. The RMCA is committed to helping clubs rebuild memberships over the coming seasons. The clubs are visible to all who visit the mountain, but it isn't clear what the clubs are and what belonging to a club offers. In 2026 the RMCA plans to deliver:

- A map of Clubs on the Whakapapa Ski Field. With a QR code linking to the RMCA website.
- The map of clubs will be displayed in the KRC, Lorenz's, Happy Valley Bistro in the 2026 season
- Facilitate a Club Open Day(s)
- Facilitate clubbies apres ski events
- Work closely with Chris Bashforth (WHL) with member sponsored accommodation for school groups.

- Develop a Mountain Safety Academy. Partnering with key stakeholders WHL, RARO and DoC to deliver a programme on Avalanche Risks, Volcanology, Meteorology and Manaakitanga on the Mountain.

### **Firewood Lifts 2026**

The RMCA is keen to facilitate a group deal for clubs getting firewood delivered by helicopter in 2026. Can clubs please share when they are planning on a firewood lift in 2026. Please email: [secretary@rmca.org.nz](mailto:secretary@rmca.org.nz)

### **Kings Birthday Weekend 2026**

Put the date in the diary for a club event on the mountain. Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026. We are planning to combine the preseason club work parties with a clubbies event of a mountain clean up, followed by a car boot party in Carpark 1.

Hei konā mai

Debbie Evans

Chairperson