



Safari Club International

New Zealand Chapter Inc.

PO Box 11 320
Sockburn, Christchurch 8443
NEW ZEALAND

Email: president@scinz.com

Website: www.scinz.com

24th January 2018

Hon Eugenie Sage
Minister of Conservation,
Parliament Buildings,
Wellington.

Dear Minister,

I would like to introduce the New Zealand Chapter of Safari Club International and myself as President to you. I understand that you have had some interactions in the past with members of our chapter, however this letter is to inform you of the history of the New Zealand Chapter, our achievements and what our aspirations are for the management of New Zealand's deer, tahr, chamois and wild pigs and the conservation of our indigenous species.

Safari Club International

Safari Club International is an organisation based in Tucson, USA, with more than 180 Chapters and over 50,000 members worldwide. Members are conservationists who hunt. There is no irony in this statement because conservation and hunting are not only compatible but are inseparable, especially in the New Zealand context where our hunting resource is based on introduced species. In much of the world including New Zealand, wherever game management is wisely administered, funding derived from sport hunting and fishing does directly finance many worthwhile conservation projects.

Habitat and wildlife must be kept in balance and wisely managed hunting is one of the best ways to accomplish this objective. Hunting (and fishing) is a cherished heritage and pastime in New Zealand with many families including Iwi also relying on the sustained harvesting of wild organic game meat as a primary food source.

As a Chapter of Safari Club International (SCI), the New Zealand Chapter (SCINZ) is in a particularly unique position. No other New Zealand hunting and conservation organisation has an International umbrella available at all times for advice, guidance and when necessary, finance.

Since 1971, SCI and its Chapters have contributed substantial resources to improve or restore habitats, reintroduce indigenous species, propagate and manage resident

species, combat illegal hunting and habitat encroachment, encourage better rules and regulations, and conduct research and surveys.

SCINZ also has its own New Zealand projects and initiatives they are involved in either autonomously or in collaboration with others. These include:

Aorangi Restoration Trust

The Aorangi Restoration Trust consists of a group of likeminded people from a wide variety of backgrounds who have joined together for a common goal. They want to see the Aorangi Ranges and adjoining lands returned to their former glory and they have the will to make that happen. They are supported by many individuals and organizations who also want to see that goal realized, SCINZ is one of those organisations.

The Aorangi Forest Park is a designated recreational hunting area which holds a lot of appeal to hunters and is very well utilised. The goal of the trust is to restore the normal biodiversity of the area to its original state while still allowing for a great hunting experiences. At the beginning of the 20th century, a herd of Windsor blood-lined red deer were liberated in and around the Aorangi Range, and to this day the predominant strain is still very much Windsor based. Hunters are very supportive of the trust initiative and several hunting groups are now joining in and assisting the Trust with pest control. SCINZ is one of these groups and has funded the purchase of a number of predator traps. A local SCINZ member, Wayne Roper, has committed to manage them which includes regular checking and baiting of the traps and generally helping the Trust control the pests. The Trust project is leaping ahead and with groups like SCINZ prepared to help in combating pests, the bird life is thriving along with the general biodiversity which includes manageable numbers of Windsor strain red deer

Lame Duck Hut

The Lame Duck Hut was built in 2008 by members of NZDA West Coast Branch and SCINZ to replace the derelict Lame Duck Hut and is owned by those two organisations. Together we are responsible for the hut repairs and maintenance, however as it is situated on the Karangarua River in the Westland National Park. James Scott donated the helicopter time that was required.

Stan's Hut

SCINZ owns and maintains this hut situated in the lower reaches of the Whataroa river valley which is available for use by all. The restoration and ongoing maintenance of this hut was once again supported strongly by James Scott who donated the required helicopter time.

Wakatipu Whitetail Deer Study

SCINZ have donated \$9000 towards this project by sponsoring a satellite GPS tracking collar for one of the ten deer collared in the trial, as well as sponsoring helicopter flying time. The study is being conducted by Kaylyn Pinney who is completing a PHD on the unique Wakatipu Whitetail deer herd. The study is looking into the population density of the herd and the effects of aerial 1080 operations used for pest control as part of the Department of Conservations Battle for our birds program. The results of the study have been shared with the Department and will be used for the ongoing management of the herd.

Central North Island Sika Foundation Research

SCINZ has contributed significant financial resources to the setup of the Sika Foundations on-line data gathering program. This important program not only allows hunters to contribute to a data base with hunting information on the central North Island sika deer herd, but to also record other general observations of flora and fauna of interest while in the wilderness. Already this data base has yielded the find of a previously unidentified Blue duck population. This information has been shared with the Department.

Management of New Zealand's game animals and the conservation of Indigenous species

SCI provides the bulk of visiting hunters that form the basis of the guided hunting and game estate and trophy deer breeding industries. The Chapter will continue to support these industries and promote New Zealand as a safe, stable, desirable and accessible international hunting destination.

SCINZ and SCI International are very strong supporters of the New Zealand 'Game Animal Council' and have three members of SCINZ currently serving as Councillors. The Chapter will continue with its individual projects however SCINZ sees the Game Animal Council as the overarching body to steer the management of our game species and also our efforts to conserve indigenous species. The Game Animal Council has been recognised as a key opportunity in New Zealand's history to properly manage our game animals by coordinating the recreational and commercial hunting efforts to ensure New Zealand's unique situation with respect to game animals and conservation can be finally realised. SCINZ's desire is to see that all recreational and commercial hunters are adequately trained in safe hunting practices, understand the role of hunting and their responsibilities together with the conservation of indigenous species, and that they have good information on where to hunt and how to hunt successfully. The opportunity that recreational hunters provide for better management of game animals is significant but the current situation is largely uncoordinated. However with the Game Animal Council coordinating efforts the overall harvest of game animals can be increased while also achieving greater conservation outcomes. Recreational hunters would be complemented by a sustainable commercial harvest of game animals while

Hunting Guides and Game Estates would provide the primarily international clients with safe and quality hunting experiences while in New Zealand. Adequate funding of the Game animal Council is vital to allow it to achieve these goals.

SCINZ remains strongly committed to ensuring the future of hunting remains available for all New Zealanders to enjoy and participate in, and its role in the conservation of our indigenous species. We will continue to work with the Game Animal Council and the Department of Conservation on joint initiatives and if we can be of any assistance to you as Minister, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

Mike Knowles
President
Safari Club International - New Zealand Chapter.

CC: Don Hammond, Chair - Game Animal Council
CC:Lou Sanson, Director General – Department of Conservation