

## Outdoor Recreation Consortium – Press Release 09/09/2015

The Outdoor Recreation Consortium is welcoming yesterday's announcement today that further funding from the Department of Conservation's Community Conservation Partnership Fund – Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori – will be available to help volunteers maintain huts and tracks.

The Outdoor Recreation Consortium, which is a partnership between Federated Mountain Clubs, the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association and Trail Fund New Zealand, was formed in 2014 to offer the wider outdoors community the best shot of attracting this funding on a national scale.

According to FMC president Robin McNeill, the Outdoor Recreation Consortium is "achieving what it set out to do."

"We have been able to support volunteers up and down the country to undertake hut and track maintenance projects," says McNeill. "Working together, we are also finding that the range of outdoor groups share many more similarities than differences. And, one thing we all share is our passion for the backcountry."

Trail Fund New Zealand president Ben Wilde cites the proliferation of work in the tracks behind Thames as a great example of increased and collaborative activity in a previously neglected trail network – mountain bikers, runners and trampers have accomplished a substantial amount in the past year.

"It's great to see everyone chipping in," says Wilde. "For the first time in a long time, outdoors enthusiasts are getting to play an active role in how recreational opportunities evolve. They're shaping them with their own two hands."

"The Outdoor Recreation Consortium will continue to work with and support those behind these great projects," says New Zealand Deerstalkers Association president Bill O'Leary. "We recognise the existing and enduring commitment to hut and track maintenance of our branches and clubs, as well as that of many other volunteer groups around the country. Without exception, we want to work with these groups and teach others their skills and ethics. This will happen slowly and surely as we continue to develop this project."

If you are interested in finding out more about the Outdoor Recreation Consortium, or applying for funding, please see [www.hutsandtracks.org.nz](http://www.hutsandtracks.org.nz) or email [administrator@fmc.org.nz](mailto:administrator@fmc.org.nz). Applications for the next round of funding should be submitted by the 13<sup>th</sup> of November.