

## **STAFF REPORT**

**To:** Chairman and Members, Engineering Services Committee

**From:** Transportation Manager, Roger Ashworth

**Reference:**

**Date:** 21 March 2007

**Subject:** **SPECIAL PURPOSE ROADS**

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### **1 PURPOSE**

To advise the committee of recent discussions between Tasman District Council and Department of Conservation (DoC) staff with respect to shared maintenance costs on roads leading to national parks.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

As the committee will be aware for some years the vexed question of who is responsible for road maintenance for roading that leads into national parks has been discussed and debated. Recently we have agreed, in principle, with DoC to increase the amount of shared maintenance funding by \$5,000, ie TDC contribution increased by \$5,000.

It is proposed that this increase of \$5,000 be accommodated within the existing road maintenance budget.

DoC have recently been successful in a funding bid for the Mt Arthur Road and the Wangapeka Road through its Visitor Asset Management System which is a DoC system that provides funding for the maintenance, inspection and replacement of all approved facilities nationally.

There is no question that from both a DoC and TDC perspective that the current funding regime for the Mt Arthur Road and the Wangapeka Road in particular and others are operated on a shoestring budget and we are struggling to meet maintenance requirements for those roads.

The Mt Arthur Road remains by far the busiest access road to Kahurangi despite its fragile state and DoC data indicates that use of the road is increasing. This is consistent with TDC data.

### **3 COMMENT**

In agreeing in principle to the increase in maintenance funding directed towards these roads, we also need not to lose sight of the responsibility of central government and their funding agencies to consider alternative options to what previously may have been funded under special purpose roading. With a stroke of a pen the designation of special purpose roads for the future is no longer an option, however we believe we need to explore other

options that may allow DoC and/or Council to pursue higher subsidy rates if not total subsidy for these roads.

We will be working closely with DoC and Land Transport NZ in trying to acquire additional funding for the roads leading to national parks and will report back to Council in due course on these issues. We are aware that DoC at Ruapehu, for example, successfully attracted 100% subsidy rate for approximately \$400,000 of roading in the Manawatu/Wanganui District. These issues and anomalies need to be explored.

#### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT Council agree in principle to contribute an additional \$5,000 towards shared maintenance costs of roading with DoC in the 2007-2008 financial year.**

Roger Ashworth  
**Transportation Manager**