

## Intention to grant a concession to NZSki Ltd: 35128-SKI

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### Introduction

1. The New Zealand Recreation (NZRA) is a registered charity and the organisation responsible for providing leadership, advocacy and professional development opportunities for those involved in the broader recreation sector. We work at an agency, industry and professional level to build capability, develop partnerships, and equip individuals and organisations with the skills they need to deliver high quality recreation experiences that engage participants.
2. The New Zealand Recreation Association's membership includes recreation policy makers, territorial local authorities, voluntary organisations, regional sports trusts, outdoor recreation businesses, and others involved in the delivery of recreation in New Zealand.
3. Our role is to champion high-quality recreation for the benefit of New Zealand.
4. Our vision is that in 2020 New Zealand has a strong recreation industry that meets the needs of current and future participants, so that through recreation, New Zealanders are active, healthy, and connected
5. The New Zealand Recreation Association believes recreation is vital to New Zealand society. Recreation is not just about enjoyment. It is about being healthy, engaged and stimulated, having fun, and interacting with others, whether through outdoor recreation, community recreation, or aquatic and facility-based recreation.
6. Recreation is a major contributor to the physical and mental health of individuals, and to the resilience of our communities. 90 per cent of New Zealanders believe being active keeps them physically fit and healthy, and helps relieve stress.

7. A thriving recreation industry can also help our nation prosper socially and economically. Sport and active recreation contributes \$4.9 billion or 2.3% to our annual GDP, and the sector employs more than 53,000 New Zealanders. The nation's recreation values and opportunities are fundamental to the nation's tourism industry. Approximately 50% of international visitors to New Zealand participate in one form of outdoor recreation or another.
8. Recreation is part of what it is to be a New Zealander. Many of us are members of clubs and groups that enjoy recreation for fun, health and social reasons. 84% of New Zealanders believe sport and physical activity bring people together and create a sense of belonging.
9. For individuals, recreation contributes to physical and mental wellbeing and provides an opportunity to meet new people. People define themselves and their communities through their recreation opportunities. Recreation fosters community cohesion and resilience, and supports the integration of diverse ethnic and other social groups. 74% of New Zealanders agree that sport and physical activity help build vibrant and stimulating communities.
10. Investment in recreation generates tourism opportunities and supports regional development by encouraging skilled professionals and migrants to consider business options in and beyond the main centres, and in areas which offer quality lifestyle and family options.
11. Research shows that recreation makes a significant contribution to social resilience. It allows individuals to thrive, and to connect with each other. This, in turn, makes communities stronger. A society in which people are active and healthy is also more economically sound.
12. Physical inactivity is associated with loss of productivity, health costs, as well as associated costs such as pain and suffering. Healthier, happier individuals are more likely to do well in other areas of their lives, whether it is in social or professional situations. This has a positive flow-on effect for communities and society as a whole.
13. Greater understanding of these benefits and their downstream impacts, along with awareness of how laws and regulations can influence recreation delivery, are key to ensuring that New Zealand's recreation opportunities remain among the world's best.

#### **Comments on the ski field concession.**

14. Snowsports are the 15th most popular form of Active Recreation for New Zealanders, with 6.2 % of the population (205,000 people) participating in that activity at least once every 12 months. More New Zealanders participate in Snowsports than Netball (5.7%), Cricket (5.3%), Hunting (5%) or Rugby Union (3.6%).

15. NZRA is pleased to note that NZ Ski hosts approximately 1500 participants a day, on average throughout the ski season. The majority of these participants are understood to be active for 6 or 7 hours each day.
16. NZRA is pleased to note that Mt Hutt has the longest ski season of all skifield in New Zealand, typically opening between 100-110 days per annum, excluding days on which it is closed due to adverse weather.
17. NZRA understands that the Mt Hutt skifield has a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 63%, indicative of a very high level of participants satisfaction. NZRA commends NZ Ski for its efforts to survey at least 1% of all visitors on a daily basis.
18. NZRA commends NZSki for offering free ski passes to children under the age of 10. This offering provides many children and families a low-cost opportunity to be introduced to snowsports.
19. Similarly, NZRA commends NZSki for developing and supporting its Skiing for Schools programme, which activates 15,000 school-aged children on a school ski trip each year on an affordable basis.
20. NZRA notes that NZSki has made significant strides at Mt Hutt to make snowsports more egalitarian and affordable. The most notable of these is the reduction in price of a seasons pass to a fraction of the price it was previously. This is in the context of Sport NZ having identified that cost/affordability is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest barrier for New Zealanders to participate in a new sport or recreation (26.9%)
21. NZRA commends NZSki for facilitating and supporting recreational use of the Mt Hutt Ski field by non-skiers. The annual 'Peak-to-Pub' multisport event is one example. NZRA agrees with the Notified Concession Officer's Report to Decision Maker that "Recreational opportunities are also available to non-skier visitors who are able to take advantage of rapid access via the ski field road to an elevated alpine environment in a pristine state, that would otherwise be inaccessible..."
22. NZRA believes that approval of the proposed concession is consistent with Section 25 of the Conservation Act (1987) as it pertains to the use of Stewardship areas and Conservation Parks.
23. NZRA believes that approval of the proposed concession is consistent with Conservation General Policy (May 2005) and the Canterbury (Waitaha) Conservation Management Strategy 2016.

