

# **Our Special Places and the Year of the Election**



**Election years are the time where we can submit suggestions to our current and hopeful politicians as their ears are open. They are very keen to be relevant to the public and pick up worthwhile causes that will gain votes.**

We at the NZ Kayak Magazine love our bush, coast, rivers and lakes. Tourists come by the millions to have a little taste of what it is like, and that supports many in employment.

A quick search on the top reasons people come to New Zealand will show: Stunning scenery, great friendly people from a wide mix of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, safety, wildlife which is stunning and won't eat you, a new unspoilt country when measured by their own home.

Nowhere in my search could I find that people come to enjoy a "great urban walk around the coast", or "visiting a stream or beach you can't swim in", yet more and more coast is being developed and more and more streams and rivers and lakes are falling to the pressures of pollution.

The issue of how we rezone our coastal land is paramount to protecting the last remaining wilderness destinations for everyone to enjoy. The closer you live to urban areas the more we see the pressure to rezone land behind our beaches and coast from farm to urban. We need to protect the remaining coastal recreational areas before they are all urbanised.

Pollution of water ways through poor farming practice, sedimentation and sewage discharges etc is the norm. Recent media reports have highlighted that many Wellington streams are polluted to high levels and one in particular so polluted that the fresh water snails (the toughest of all stream animals) are now deformed (Wellington Dominion Post 6th May 2017) or beaches so polluted by sewage that the Council has stopped measuring pollution and just permanently closed the beach. (Waitamata Harbour, media April 2017).

So, when kayaking or remembering a favourite trip or reading of other explorations, ask yourself will I be able to come here and enjoy it again next year, will my children be able to enjoy it years to come?

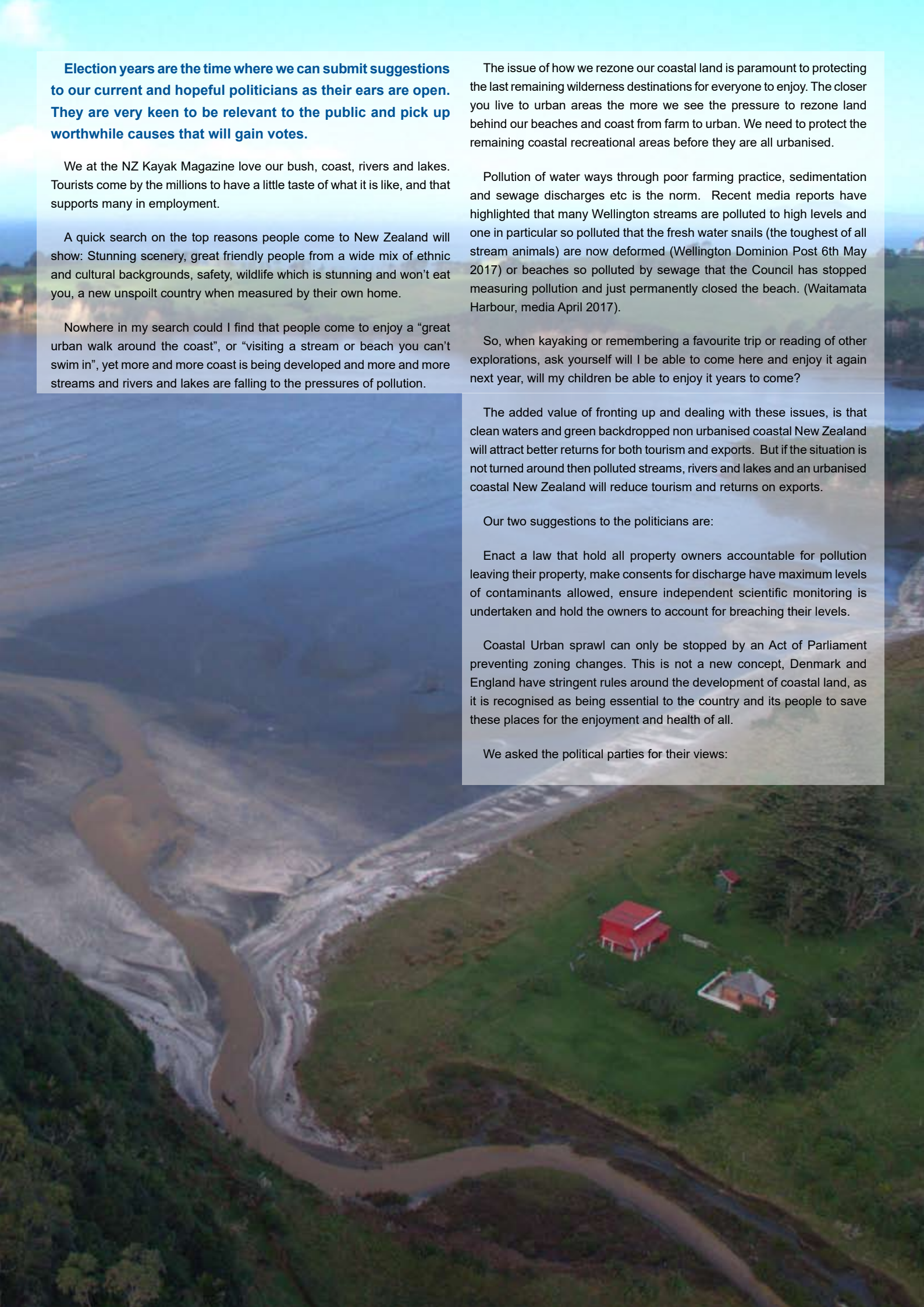
The added value of fronting up and dealing with these issues, is that clean waters and green backdropped non urbanised coastal New Zealand will attract better returns for both tourism and exports. But if the situation is not turned around then polluted streams, rivers and lakes and an urbanised coastal New Zealand will reduce tourism and returns on exports.

Our two suggestions to the politicians are:

Enact a law that hold all property owners accountable for pollution leaving their property, make consents for discharge have maximum levels of contaminants allowed, ensure independent scientific monitoring is undertaken and hold the owners to account for breaching their levels.

Coastal Urban sprawl can only be stopped by an Act of Parliament preventing zoning changes. This is not a new concept, Denmark and England have stringent rules around the development of coastal land, as it is recognised as being essential to the country and its people to save these places for the enjoyment and health of all.

We asked the political parties for their views:



# Andrew Little



**It's a busy, noisy place Parliament. For any MP the demands are many. It ratchets up to a whole new level when you are Leader of the Opposition. Small wonder Labour Leader Andrew Little finds himself thinking of the quiet waters of his beloved Island Bay on some hectic days.**

"I've lived in Island Bay for over 10 years now and we're only five minutes from the beach, it's an easy spot to come down to especially on a good day in summertime and it's such a beautiful area for kayaking."

In Wellington you have to pick your days. But when the seas are calm, for Little there's nothing better.

"It's the classic Rita Angus scene, the fishermen's boats, against Tapu Te Ranga Motu (the island), the beautiful glassy harbour. It's just a magic spot."

"At the end of the day especially when the light's holding up, it's just great to be able to come down, get on the water and just go around the little inlets and coves around this south Wellington coastline, which every time you look at it, it looks different. It's such a great wind-down and exercise as well."

Especially when the winds get up.

"You do get quite big waves off the tip of the island sometimes and surfers will paddle out there so that does make it a little bit exciting, but that's the enjoyment of kayaking."

It's a simple pleasure he can thank a mate for about 20 years ago.

"He was a kayaker and he said come out so we used to hire kayaks and go out into the harbour and head towards Oriental Bay and Evans Bay and paddle around there. One summer we did a seven day trip around the Marlborough Sounds. We took the kayaks across Queen Charlotte Sound to Torea Bay, took a truck over saddle to Kenepuru Sound and paddled out to Pelorus Sound. It was a great way to spend part of summer. It was just a beautiful place to be, magic scenery and little DOC camp grounds we pulled up to at the end of each day."

There's one special memory he holds dear, captured in a treasured photo on display on the book shelf in his Parliament office. He's out on the bay in a kayak, his then three year old son Cam nestled in front.

"We were visiting friends who had a kayak and we all came down to the beach and they said take it out for a ride and I did. Cam said he was keen for a ride so he hopped on and we just paddled around and you can tell by the smile on his face he absolutely loved it. I just love the photo. The look on Cam's face is just one of absolute child's delight."



Great memories, a top spot for a busy man with much on his mind in this year of all years.

"It's just great to get out on the water and look back at this part of the city and just reflect on things and work my way back in."

## David Parker, Labour Environment Spokesperson Says:

Coastal landscapes must be well protected. The New Zealand Coastal Policy statement is forceful, as proven by the Supreme Court decision in the King Salmon case. It needs better implementation at a local level, but we do not support a moratorium.

Access issues are also crucial. Labour proposes banning foreign buyers from buying rural land. We will also resource the Walking Access Commission (which we set up last time in government) to protect and improve public access to rivers, lakes and the sea.

River quality has deteriorated sharply under the current National government. Dairy cow numbers have increased by a million since National took office.

Labour will enforce a truly swimmable standard, without the trickery.

We also need to take better care of our estuaries and coastal waterways. It's time for urgent action. River pollution and sediment loads are now so bad that it's adversely ruining our coastal marine areas. Increased turbidity is blocking light needed for photosynthesis of deeper kelp beds and other seaweed. Sandy bottoms are being clogged with fine sediments harming fish spawning.

We have got to return to Judge Sheppard's National Policy Statement (NPS) that said increases to land use intensity should no longer be a permitted activity. Rules need to be more strictly enforced.

It's a Kiwi birthright to swim in your local river, putting your head under in summer without getting crook.

If your local river and my local river are clean enough to swim in, then all our rivers will be clean. It's not too much to ask.



# Dr Nick Smith

**Thanks for the opportunity to give a little history of my passion for kayaking, and to promote National's values and ideas for ensuring New Zealand continues to succeed both economically and environmentally.**

I built my first kayak out of wood as a 12-year-old. My father was a bridge builder and playing around in rivers throughout the South Island contributed to a wonderful childhood and a long-term interest in, and respect for, our wild and wonderful rivers. In my late teens and 20s I focussed on river kayaking before switching from the adrenaline rush of the rapids to the more mellow joy of sea kayaking.

My favourite kayak adventures have been completing the Coast to Coast with team mate Bill English and some years later kayaking the Cook Strait together.

Marine conservation has been a major focus of my work over the past 20 years, during which I have approved 16 new marine reserves, including in the Subantarctics, Akaroa, Kaikoura, the West Coast, Nelson, the East Coast and Northland. There is no better way to survey such areas than in a sea kayak.

National does not claim to be the greenest party in Parliament but we are the party best able to bring together policies that deliver both a strong economy and improved environmental management. Key long-term

*Caption: Minister Dr Nick Smith kayaking in the Subantarctic Islands in 2014. During the trip he established three new marine reserves covering 435,000 hectares surrounding the Antipodes, Bounty and Campbell Islands from Perseverance Harbour, Campbell Island.  
Photo: Greg Bowker, New Zealand Herald*



environmental targets are our 30% below 2005 emission levels by 2030 Paris Accord goal on climate change, our 90 per cent of rivers and lakes swimmable by 2040 and our Predator Free NZ by 2050.

We have a long list of credible environment achievements. We have lifted New Zealand's renewable electricity from 65 per cent to 85 per cent. We have increased our investment in cleaning up our waterways by sixfold to \$450 million. We have introduced the first national limits on water quality. We have banned shark finning, increased protection for key species like the Maui dolphin and we are in the process of banning microbeads. We are the first government to formally protect surf breaks and have championed the cause of a national network of stunning cycleways.

We recognise the need to protect our coastal environment from inappropriate development and subdivision. That is why we adopted a strengthened National Policy Statement on Coastal Protection. It is the best mechanism for ensuring we protect that which is special while still enabling appropriate coastal development.

National is the party of strong, stable Government. Our "Bluegreen" plan is about growing the economy while ensuring we improve our environment. The election on 23 September is about keeping New Zealand heading in the right direction.

**James Shaw was appointed Green Party Co-leader in 2015 after a meteoric rise up the political ranks. Born and bred in Wellington, James lived and worked overseas, primarily in London, from 1998-2010. After racking up many years of experience in the management consultation and sustainable business fields, he returned home to pursue politics, with the goal of making New Zealand a leader in the high-value, clean-tech global economy. James lives in central Wellington with his wife Annabel. James will Co-lead the Green Party in this year's election campaign, with the aim of changing the government.**

About his favourite kayak trip:

My favourite kayak trip was out on Ohiwa harbour, near Ohope. It was in 2007, and I was back in New Zealand for a summer break, escaping from winter in the UK, where I was living at the time. I was staying with family up there and we all went out on the water together. Ohiwa harbour is absolutely magical – from out on the water you have an amazing view back to land, not to mention being surrounded by crystal clear ocean. For me, being out on the water that day encapsulated everything I love about New Zealand, and everything I am fighting to protect in my role as Co-leader of the Green Party. We need to cherish our oceans, our rivers and our land so that future generations of Kiwis can enjoy them as those before us have.

*1. Would you support a moratorium on rezoning of coastal land until the New Zealand public can have a robust debate on the use of coastlines?*

We can better protect our coast without a moratorium. The RMA should be better implemented. As it stands, preserving the natural character of the coast is a matter of national importance in the RMA. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) guides local authorities in their day to day management of the coastal environment. The NZCPS 2010 has a suite of strong policies around protecting natural character of the coast and adapting to sea level rise. The Green Party would ensure that the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) and the Department of Conservation work with councils to better implement the NZCPS objectives and policies.

We need to do more planning in our marine spaces, such as the Sea Change exercise in the Hauraki Gulf, to identify what areas are important for their seascape and biodiversity values; help decide where marine reserves and marine farms are best sited, and where land management needs to improve to protect estuaries from sediment inflows.

*2./ Would you support a more robust protection plan for our coastline, lakes, rivers and waterways?*

Yes, absolutely. We want councils to do their job in implementing the RMA and preserving the natural character of the coast. As well as that, the Conservation Act gives the Minister and Department of Conservation a statutory responsibility for protecting nature outside the conservation estate. The Green Party would ensure that DoC is funded adequately and uses the RMA to advocate for nature on matters of national importance. This RMA advocacy role would include making submissions on plans and resource consents (eg marine farm applications) to protect the natural character of the coast, outstanding natural features and landscapes and significant habitats of indigenous wildlife. The Green Party would ensure MfE helps councils identify areas vulnerable to coastal erosion, inundation and increased flood risk from rising seas, and works with councils to help coastal communities adapt to sea level rise. This can include protecting natural buffers such as sand dunes and coastal wetlands, and identifying areas where development should be avoided because of coastal hazard risks.



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