

Cape Campbell Fishermen Report

I have spoken to Fisheries New Zealand Compliance Officers about the activity around Cape Campbell and further down the coast.

They have conducted considerable observations along the coastal area, it is not the type of information where they can provide any great detail for obvious reasons. General observations of traffic and people's behaviour is acceptable to transfer verbally.

Since the earthquake the area has become very popular with a huge increase in the public going around to view and go fishing. It is very obvious to the Compliance Officers who is local and who is not. Local fishers on their quads use the low tide zone and the same tack and cruise around there. Visitors fishing mostly keep to the same pathway but go in and out to the waters edge trying to find a good spot to set their pots, where the locals go directly to certain locations. The people who use quads to get around there for a look are all over the place, drive around there at any time of the day and are a lot faster and a number of them try to find a high spot to get a better view.

4x4 Utes, SUV's head around there for other purposes, the drivers drive where they think is the best route, not many stay on the same tracks, they try the dunes, they get stuck, they try driving going over large rocks. Like the quad bikes there are the experienced drivers verse the novice, experienced drivers tend to test themselves and have more speed, the novice is slower and not so adventurous.

The two wheeled bikes all seem to be similar that visit the area, its race day is the comment. No area is sacred. Not as many two wheels as there are quad bikes and it is obvious that they go around there for the fun and experience of the area.

As for the general public most wonder around and look at all sorts of things, those with dogs let them run loose, have observed dogs hassling seals the odd one chasing birds, birds are more upset with dogs than they are with quad bikes, Utes, SUV's. Two-wheel bikes tend to scare the birds away due to the noise and speed.

In general fishing compliance is good given the increase in number of fishermen that go to the area, the area is monitored a lot more in the holiday periods and during the summer months. They agree some form of management should be in place to curb some of the poor respect for the area. What they see on busy days is that the local fishermen are a minority that may be impacted on due to the majority that abuse the area.

With what I have heard or taken from my discussion with FNZ Compliance is that the locals are good and respect the area, visitors treat the area differently. I now consider what Roger is trying to achieve may be on the right track, it certainly seems the local

quad bike operators are wanting to protect their access and looking at a way to give the confidence in the how they utilise the area.

One thing that I did get from our discussion, what we have been told by the local quad bike riders has been confirmed by another entity sitting outside our group, FNZ Compliance Officers, we cannot ignore this information.

My thoughts to all this.

I was intrigued how observations bracketed those that use the area. I personally support utilisation with-in environmental limits. If the local fishers/quad bike riders are willing to put a Code of Practice in place, operate to a level of acceptance and sign against it, we need to look at this in a proactive way.

Should the group look at or investigate if a “vehicle concession” type management plan could be designed and administered. When you look at the likes of DoC concessions in to reserves for hunting as one example could a similar type of management be adopted for the use of vehicles that apply to go around Cape Campbell. Walkers would not be affected, any other person or group that would like to view and experience the area could be done by a tourism type vehicle/business arrangement, which would operate with-in limits.

Willie you may be able to put some thought and comment to this.