



The strange and yet subtle detail of nature is seen in algae at Ketetahi hot springs and the minute native orchid.

therefore the taxpayer, a considerable subsidy annually to service the skiing operation, which is not recovered from parking, concession fees and other charges.

There is nothing new in calls for "improvement". Neither is a healthy fear of them a new phenomena. In 1886 a US Congress report on Yellowstone stipulated that "the park should so far as possible be spared the vandalism of improvement". What makes today's situation so frightful is that although Congress perceived the threat of over development (which it seems many park administrators in New Zealand fail to comprehend) it still failed to stop it. Yellowstone is now besieged by roads crammed with motorcars, on-site accommodation, other facilities and a volume of people that everyone would agree is simply loving the United States largest park to death. Another American park, Grand Canyon National Park, reverberates

to the sound of 274 helicopter and small plane flights a day which destroy hikers' peace and serenity.

During the 1972 Yellowstone centennial celebrations the US Park Services called together a citizen commission to formulate a broad set of management priorities for the next one hundred years. This centennial task force gave highest priority to removing concessions and private vehicles from within the park boundaries. The United States director of national parks is at present supporting moves in Federal Government to exclude airplane and helicopter flights from Grand Canyon. It has taken Americans one hundred years to learn what its Congress already instinctively knew: namely that "improvements" degrade the national park ideal.

Yet dominant voices in New Zealand park management seem to be blithely following down the same circuitous path as

their American counterparts. At a meeting of locals at Taumaranui in the summer of 1985, the chairman of Tongariro park board, Mr Roger Holyoake, listed possible developments which were blocked because of the present development plan. These included heliskiing, a gondola on Whakapapa and even night skiing. He was reported in a local paper as saying "such schemes would involve an enormous spin-off for our area but we haven't got a management plan". While Mr Holyoake was encouraging helicopter concessionaires the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park was threatening to take legal action against helicopters landing on park islands: "Mr Mossman (chief ranger) said that there had been many complaints about the disturbance helicopters caused. Most people came to the park to enjoy the serenity of its islands and reserves. A helicopter carrying four passengers can affect a lot of peo-