



A Red Letter Day

ON 8 DECEMBER 1989 West Otago's Red Hills were formally added to Mt Aspiring National Park – 30 years after the idea was first discussed and 21 years after the first formal proposal that it become a national park.

In that time there have been endless consultations with interest groups, the last of which was in 1987 when the public were asked for their views on whether the 27,000-ha area should become a national park. The answer was a resounding yes from 96 per cent of the 3500 public – many of them Forest and Bird members – who wrote to the Government.

Federated Mountain Clubs, and especially former FMC president Les Molloy, must take much credit for achieving national park status for the Red Hills. Forest and Bird and the Otago Parks and Reserves Board have also played an important role in championing the park proposal.

The major opposition to national park status – mining interests – finally lost heart as they realised public opposition and lack of a market for asbestos (because of its health hazards) would never see mining become a viable option for the area.



The extended Mt Aspiring National Park lies at the heart of the proposed South West or Te Wahipounamu World Heritage area. The World Heritage Committee will evaluate the South West nomination for its international significance later this year. 🦋

Gerard Hutching



Virtually devoid of vegetation thanks to its ultramafic properties, Red Mountain stands in striking contrast to the silver beech-clothed mountains that surround it. The dramatic cut-off point is evident in the gully leading to Simonin Pass. Mt Aspiring is to the right rear. Photo: Geoff Spearpoint

South Pacific Appointment



Abraham Baeanisia

FOREST AND BIRD IS DELIGHTED to announce the recent appointment of Solomon Islander Abraham Baeanisia as its first full time campaigner for Pacific rainforest conservation. He will be employed by Forest and Bird and the Maruia Society under our joint Pacific Rainforest Coalition.

Abraham is currently the Director of the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT), a charitable organisation seeking to educate and inform village people on health, development and environmental issues throughout the Solomons.

His main area of work for 1990 will be to

set up a new sector of SIDT that deals specifically with forestry. This would involve close liaison with village people, providing information and support for forest conservation and the establishment of sustainable community forestry projects. 🦋