

8 April 2024



Fiordland Wapiti Foundation Legal Action

The Game Animal Council is aware of the legal challenge launched by Forest & Bird against the community agreement that is at the heart of the deer management and conservation work undertaken by the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation in Fiordland National Park.

The GAC is not a party to this legal action. However, we are disappointed that Forest & Bird has taken this approach and the resources that will be required from both DOC and the FWF as respondents to the legal process. This is time, money and effort that could and should be going into conservation – managing the internationally-significant wapiti herd, operating an extensive predator trapping network, maintaining huts and tracks, and providing donated meat to charity.

The work the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation does is truly world class, particularly given the rugged and remote nature of the environment it works in, and the outstanding outcomes that are being achieved. All of this is done through funding provided by hunters and at zero cost to the taxpayer.

The GAC is not a respondent and therefore cannot influence or comment on the legal process. However, we will continue to advise the Minister of Hunting & Fishing and liaise with stakeholders to work towards a positive resolution and the continuation of the FWF's work to manage Fiordland's wapiti herd for the benefit of balanced conservation in New Zealand.

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation working to improve the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, communities, commerce and conservation.