



is a similar lease. This decision is expected out before Christmas.

I can only hope that the new ministers of Lands and Conservation will be more realistic towards the Crown's high country's expectations.

High Country meetings are being held to review a number of issues including:

1. Update on Minaret LVT.
2. The Fish & Game case.
3. Future of the High Country Accord going forward.
4. LINZ relationship with high country lessees.
5. Marginal strips.
7. Discretionary consents.
8. Recreational permits.

If you are interested in more information about any of these issues please ring Bob Douglas, Federated Farmers Industry Manager, phone: 0800 327 646.

Robert Borst - North Otago President
Phone: 03 432 4244
Email: borsty@orcon.net.nz



CHRISTMAS CHEER



NORTH OTAGO

FINAL PROVINCIAL MEETING OF THE YEAR

4-6pm, Friday 28 November 2008

**North Otago Club
AMP Building, Tees Street, Oamaru**

ALL WELCOME

Regional Council boundaries

Trees on roads - cut down or landscape

Come and share your ideas and join in a bit of pre-Christmas cheer.



RSVP by 26 November to Bronwyn Wilson

Phone: 0800 327 646 | Email: bwilson@fedfarm.org.nz

CHRISTMAS 2008 NEWSLETTER



NORTH OTAGO



*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year*

END OF YEAR ROUND UP

I would like to take this opportunity to extend to all North Otago members and their families my very good wishes. Both Kim and I hope that you have a happy and safe Christmas with your families.



Life has been pretty busy for us both, but things have quietened down now calving is finished and milk production is in full swing. Like many we wouldn't mind a bit of rain, but not in the weekends please!

PROVINCIAL CHRISTMAS MEETING

I need your direction on how to respond to some local issues that are heating up in our area. For this reason I am aiming that our last provincial meeting of the year is a 'brain storm' around some hot topics. Just to ensure there is a bit of fun as well, the province will provide some Christmas cheer at the end of the meeting (from 5.15pm). It would be good to see you there.

REGIONAL COUNCIL BOUNDARIES – BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT

The three options being discussed are:

- the status quo
- Otago edges north or
- the creation of an entirely new 'central region'.

All three options have big implications for farmers.

I'm keen to hear your thoughts, rural landowners are big ratepayers so it would be a good idea for North Otago province to have a voice in this debate. What side, if any, should we take?

My personal view is that it would be easier if the Waitaki Basin had one council rather than the current situation of being divided between the Otago Regional Council and Environment Canterbury. My farm straddles both and it is sometimes confusing. But which way to swing? I am still undecided.



TREES ALONG ROADS

A second hot issue which has reared up lately is trees growing along road sides. We all have them. Are they such a curse as some would tell us? I know that there is an issue with trees shading roads in winter causing icing, but as far as I know there is no legal requirement with any other trees growing alongside roads.

For this reason I have been surprised by several phone calls, I've recently received, from irate members who tell me that the district council has written to them requesting that they cut their trees. The letter says that if the trees are not cut soon, the council is going to come in and cut them down and send the landowner the bill.



This seems pretty draconian and I have asked Matt Harcombe to look into it for us. I also intend to put this matter onto our provincial agenda so we can decide on our response to Council.

BABY ON THE WAY

By the time you receive this newsletter the stork will have visited Matt Harcombe's house. For those of you who don't know Matt he is Federated Farmers Local Policy South Island Team Leader and has been looking after our RMA interests for many years. I am sure that you join with me in wishing Matt and his wife all the very best.



ISSUES AT NATIONAL COUNCIL

As your provincial president I am a member of the Federation's National Council. Our latest meeting was held on the 18-19 November in Wellington and I will report back to you at our meeting.

ROUND UP OF THE YEAR

It feels like the province hasn't quite hit fifth gear yet. I have the feeling that the industry feels a bit average at the moment and that is putting a damper on things. I am wondering what we can

do about it? I know it has been really tough for some of the industry sections this year. There are a number of positive things coming through, such as lamb and beef returns improving and the dollar is dropping as are interest rates. The horizon is looking brighter.

MEDIA WORKSHOP

Keeping Calm Under Media Fire.

We are planning on hosting an interactive workshop to enhance your communication skills. Guaranteed to be fun and informative. The course will be held in February 2009 and capped to six people. Register your interest contact Ali Undorf-Lay, phone: 0800 327 646 or email: aundorf-lay@fedfarm.org.nz.



This is practical course facilitated in a friendly workshop environment. No previous talent is required just good humour and a bit of courage.

GETTING A TASTE OF IT

I would like to take between five to ten members who think they might like to get a bit more involved in agricultural politics to an Otago provincial meeting and leadership training seminar in early 2009.

If you want to be one of these people, or you know someone who you think might be keen to take part please let me know.

ON THE BOUNDARY

I found a good summary on high country issues in a recent Otago Federated Farmers newsletter. I thought it would be useful to overview the article in our own newsletter and Richard Burdon seems to have a good understanding about what's going on.

Richard wrote; on the high country front, many of our members are facing some pretty critical issues at the moment. They are sitting on tender hooks awaiting the outcome of two more court challenges. The Soldiers decision was a significant win for leasees, so we're hoping that Mt Ida, next door, will also go our way as it