

ProGuides Newsletter

12 February 2025



From the Committee

The travel season is in full swing and the weather plays accordingly in most parts of the country. The ProGuides chair has written a submission on the DOC charging proposal with endorsing the idea, however, with some strong recommendations. PG members are now encouraged to have their say. While TEC and TIA welcome a new tourism minister, the introduction of the IVL fee raises the question,

where the money goes. Get also informed about the latest traffic woes and great walks. Enjoy the read.

What to Watch



DOC Matters

As stated in our previous newsletter, the Department of Conservation (DOC) has opened public consultation on [how it manages its land](#). Submissions are due by **28 February 2025**. The Association supports the concept of charging for access to defined areas of conservation land, but has several strong recommendations, amongst them that the charging mechanism must be simple, and there should be clear evidence how the revenue has been applied. [Check out Helen's paper here](#). However, your opinion on the topics are important, too. Please send your feedback to chair@proguides.co.nz

Where does the IVL go

The International Visitor Levy (IVL) increase to \$100 is set to inject an estimated \$229 million annually into tourism and conservation. However, questions are being raised where the additional funding is going. Here are two examples:

Backcountry huts in the South Island

Twenty backcountry huts and some tracks on the South Island will be maintained and improved with \$4.2 million levied on international tourists at the border. The money will largely be spent on building

supplies, while the labour - even highly skilled labour - is done by volunteers, coordinated by the Backcountry Trust. [Click here](#) for more information.

Transit Gondola in Queenstown

Planning's well advanced for two critical Queenstown infrastructure projects — a Southern Lakes base hospital and a \$200million gondola link between the airport in Frankton and the CBD. Both projects will be funded by private interest. But there'd also be hoped-for support from the IVL. [Read more here](#).

Tourism and Sustainability



Recovery still in process

The return of international visitors is still not at levels from before the pandemic. According to Stats NZ, in November 2024 the country was at a 86% recovery compared to the arrivals 2019. A development that concerns TEC CEO Lynda Keene. [Read more about it here](#).

Meaningful Research

[Moana Mark](#) continues to demonstrate how tourism can drive meaningful conservation and scientific research. Partnerships with operators like Whale Watch and Pohatu Penguins are funding critical studies, including sperm whale abundance in Kaikōura, which revealed a record-low of just five individuals last winter.

Neurodiversity in Hospitality

ProGuides NZ and TIA are supporting a thesis project aimed at fostering positive change in the hospitality sector. It is conducted by Auckland University of Technology Master's Student, Vincent van Niekerk. The anonymous survey takes less than 10 minutes. Even better, participants go in the draw to win a \$150 NZD gift voucher for a store of their choice! [Click here for the survey.](#)

Great Walks



Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track

The country's newest Great Walk has already achieved international status in its first summer. The [Hump Ridge Track](#) is now officially open as a Great Walk. The three-day loop traverses subalpine tops, winding around rugged coastline and over historic viaducts in southern Fiordland.

More Loop Walks

From one-and-a-half hour bush walk in the Bay of Plenty, 45-minute return walks in King Country and in the Manawatu to wetland walks in Christchurch or 90-minute loops at Farewell Spit. [Check out the suggestions](#) of travel writer Peter Janssen.

Notes from the Road



New Tourism Minister

Tourism organisations welcome the Hon Louise Upston to her new portfolio. In a statement they said that they look forward to working with the Minister on how to enable tourism that brings wide reaching benefits.



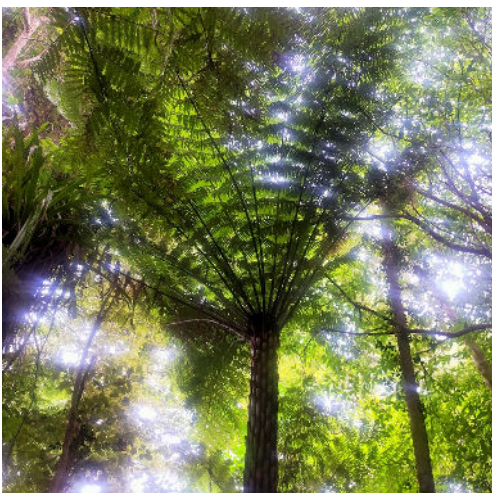
Traffic in Tekapo

The Church of the Good Shepherd in Tekapo informs about significant traffic challenges on Pioneer Drive. If you are guiding or driving in the area, [click here to read their instructions](#).



Temple in South Auckland

If you are interested in viewing the interior of the brand-new Auckland New Zealand Temple, here is your chance as it is open for the public from 27th of Feb to March 22, 2025, excluding Sundays, Address 19-21 Redoubt Road, Manukau, Auckland



AI Trends in Tourism

Take a look into what some of the biggest forecasted AI trends for 2025 are. From using these technologies to propel your business to being vigilant from cyber-attacks –

there's plenty to know. [Check it out here.](#)

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