Building Experience; Delivering Value

Andrew Paterson
High Country Farmer
Matakanui Station, Central Otago

“High Country Perspective”
Public High/Back Country Road – Thomson’s Gorge

- The Thomsons Gorge Road passes through the Northwest corner of Matakanui Station.
- It is a public high altitude road.
- It is a dry weather track, which has a number of fords and 27 gates.
- It features as a gravel public road on GPS guided Navigation systems, i.e. Navman
- Due to a lack of funding the road is poorly maintained during winter and has caught a number of motorists out.
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Options:

- Maintenance during winter – Not practical.
- Improve road to a suitable standard for all year round use – Lack of funding and priority.

- I am pushing the Council for it to be closed to the public during the winter – June to September.
Moutere Disputed Spur Road

- Valley floor gravel road
- School bus route
- Only 7 farms on the 18kms
- Very low volume road
- Was poorly maintained until just recently
- School bus considered not using it, due to the road’s dangerous state, in the winter of 2010
- Locals complained and I approached the Council
- I offered gravel free of charge
- 2.5km was graveled and drains cleared in March 2011
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LOW VOLUME ROADS WORKSHOP 2011
Omakau Bridge
Problems with Present Bridge

• The bridge is too narrow
• Bridge moves violently when heavy traffic goes across
• Higher number of heavy vehicles using the Omakau Bridge
• No pedestrian/cycle ways
• Dangerous
• Holds up emergency services
• No suitable alternative routes
• Damage to Ophir’s Historic Bridge
• Crossing the river under the bridge is not suitable
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Estimated Cost (Opus International Report):

• Repairs to piers (damaged due to scouring by the Manuherikia River) $1 million
• Opus International estimate widening would cost between $700,000 and $900,000
• Therefore to repair and widen would cost between $1.7 million and $1.9 million
• To repair and widen would be a solution that would give a 75 year old bridge new life but with only another estimated 25 years of standard life left.
• To build a new bridge is estimated to cost $1.8 million
Otago Roading Network Snapshot

- 32,000 square km of land - second largest region in NZ
- 203,000 People – 4.8% of national population
- 4.8% of national economic activity in 2010
- Predominately agriculture and other primary industry with a strong tourism industry
- 1,304 km of state highway (managed by NZTA) - 39% sealed
- 9,148 km of local roads (managed by TA’s)
- Land transport in Otago is predominately road-based
- Links cities and towns north of Otago with those in Southland
How Otago roads are funded

• Funding comes from both central government (through the NZTA) and local government
• State Highways are 100% funded by central government
• Central government allocates money from the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) to Otago’s councils
• Central government contributes roughly 55%
• The remaining 45% (on average) is funded by Otago’s councils, almost entirely through rates and therefore ratepayers
Recent changes to national road funding

In 2009:

• The government changed the priorities for national transport investment, to focus on supporting national economic growth and productivity.
• The results are greater funding for parts of the national roading network
• Highly populated areas with high vehicle traffic have received more funding, and lower populated areas with low vehicle traffic have received less
• Rural District councils have received significantly less funding
What this means for rural communities

• Roading is arguably the most important service that councils and government provide to farmers
• Roads are one of the very few council services that farmers use every day, and there are significant economic and social benefits of a safe roading network offering access for isolated rural people to urban areas (and vice versa).
• Roading costs form a significant portion of a farmer’s yearly rates bill - 50%+
• Better roading can only occur with a significant increase in rates
Summary

• The Rural roading network is critical for thriving rural communities, and rural communities are critical for a thriving region.

• Recent changes to the way funding is allocated, and the significant increases we have seen in rates, mean that there is increasing risk of underinvestment in the rural roading network.