

1. My name is Debbie Pascoe.
2. I have lived in the Mangapepeke Valley, Ahititi for 29 years and raised a family there with my husband Tony. Our mokopuna love staying with us. We always take them and other children to explore the valley habitat to the many birds, fish, insects, native flora and fauna.
3. My great grandmother was Hera Stockman. She was also known as Sarah Stockman. I whakapapa to Ngāti Rahiri and Poutama through her. My cultural identity not only comes from her and Poutama iwi but from Mangapepeke itself which is within the Poutama tribal area.
4. My parents were Aile and Jim Marsh. My father was a well renowned 'colour man' and water diviner. He helped people with ailments and illnesses and used his knowledge to heal. His skill in healing and water divining was sort after and took up most of his time. People from all walks of life travelled to him to be healed. He was also a successful horse trainer. His reputation as a equine healer was also sought after and well known.
5. I inherited my fathers' skill but have never actively used it; I settled and lived in a place that already had healing mauri. Everything vibrates at a certain frequency. If you are unwell and take a walk in a natural untouched and unspoiled area, the vibrations from that area (the mauri) will resonate with you and your mauri. To breath oxygen rich clean, fresh, uncontaminated air at the same time is even more beneficial for your health and wellbeing. This is Mangapepeke.
6. We have allowed many people to walk up the valley to soak up and enjoy the peace and naturalness.
7. The Mangapepeke valley has a healing mauri that; until this application and proposal from NZTA, it never occurred to me that it could ever be compromised or destroyed.
8. I have seen significant floods in this valley over the years. My husband and I showed NZTA the photographic record we have of the various valley floor flooding. Yet they have made no reference to it in their reports.
9. I have to question NZTAs' position on climate change and global warming. With CO2 levels increasing world wide and carbon sinks being destroyed regularly, I believe this application is irresponsible and unreasonable on their part. How much CO2 would be released into the atmosphere by destroying the valley, if NZTA were given the go ahead for their application? Forest health and conservation are key in the fight against climate change.
10. The Mangapepeke valley ecosystem comprises animals, plants, fungi, bacteria, fresh water and aquatic life, much of which will not survive if broken down by the human destruction and creation of this road. The reality and stress of this proposal has had a significant impact on us as a family.
11. Tony has developed a heart condition due to the amount of stress this has had on him and has been admitted to hospital three times during this process.
12. NZTAs' dealings with us has been more than unpleasant. I found their behaviour toward us intimidating, confrontational and upsetting.

Conclusion

13. I believe destroying the Mangapepeke valley ecosystem will not enhance it at all. I believe it will create more harm than good and at a very expensive price to us all.

14. I implore NPDC and TRC to not grant this application. For the sake of that environment and everything that lives and thrives within it.
15. I submit that NZTA be required to radically rethink and change its position on upgrading the existing Mt Messenger road. It could be a great road. It would cost less and be less damaging and destructive than their current proposal.
16. I support Tony's invitation to the commissioner to walk up the valley for a closer look at what is there.

Debbie Pascoe

Poem by Debbie Pascoe

Happy Valley

This was a happy valley
Unti NZTA came along

Not only did they want our land
So they could build a road

But told us we would not
Be able to live in our family home

Then went away for two weeks
And back they came again

Another bomb they dropped on us
We want your whole valley land

This place is very special to us
It is our family land

But they just want to
Mitigate iwi land

Dirt and trees they will cut down
And want to put on our land

And plant the valley floor
And covenant it all

They walk around in high vis coats
Around the hills like mountain goats

And spook our stock
Without any care

This stock is our money
To be fair

The bush in this valley
Is the way it is

Only because we care for it
Not like others who don't give a shit

This is our heritage
From years before

It is our life now and future too
Our children and grandchildren too

We love it here
And this is where we want to be