



PRESS RELEASE

Mt Ruapehu on track for great ski season

Mt Ruapehu, 17 July 2020: Kiwis from as far afield as Cape Reinga in the north, stretching to Wellington in the south, have donned their winter woollies and headed to Mt Ruapehu for some snow fun over the school holidays.

RAL CEO Jono Dean says, "We've also seen some South Islanders travelling north for a ski vacation this season. It's truly inspiring considering where we were some 12 weeks ago in the midst of a lockdown.

"COVID-19 has certainly presented Mt Ruapehu – along with a lot of other tourism attractions throughout the country – some huge challenges and we're really happy that we've been able to offer Kiwis some outdoor winter holiday fun along with a welcome boost to the region's local economy."

More than 55,000 visitors have headed to both Whakapapa and Turoa ski fields over the last couple of weeks, a 5 percent increase on 2019 figures.

"It's incredibly promising considering we weren't even sure if we could open for a 2020 season. Our aim is to offer a season that sees both Whakapapa and Turoa ski fields open every day the weather permits, with top to bottom skiing and riding - albeit that not all lifts will operate due to COVID-19 - and we're on track to deliver that," Jono says.

"Numbers to date are certainly more than we expected for this season. We've adopted a conservative approach to our forecasts due to COVID – 19 and have been blown away with the support for skiing, riding and sightseeing in the Central North Island.

"Our team have done a remarkable job managing both ski areas in extraordinarily challenging circumstances and we're so incredibly proud of our people."

Whakapapa ski area's Happy Valley learner slopes and sledding, as well as the Sky Waka, have been busy over the holidays, and Turoa as well since its official opening on Saturday, July 11.

Before heading up the mountain visitors are advised to check the Mt Ruapehu website for the latest updates, snowcams and weather conditions.

ENDS

Tracey Mehrtens
Accento PR
tracey@accento.nz

Jono Dean
RAL
jidean@mtruapehu.com