



PRESS RELEASE

Mt Ruapehu CEO to move south

Mt Ruapehu, 22 July 2019: After successfully leading the Mt Ruapehu ski areas through a significant period of development, CEO Ross Copland is moving south to take on a new challenge.

Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Chair Murray Gribben says Ross has made an outstanding contribution to the ski areas, which have experienced a period of enhanced profitability, licence renewal of the Turoa ski area, significant infrastructure developments including the new \$25m Sky Waka gondola, and the roll out of a new digital and e-commerce strategy during his 3 year tenure.

“Ross joined us at a time when we were poised for growth with the renewed Whakapapa licence enabling us to kick off our \$100 million investment into the ski areas over the next 10 years,” Gribben says.

“Ross was the right person for the job in helping us to deliver over \$55 million of new infrastructure in what is often a very challenging environment.

“We wish Ross well in his new challenge as CEO of the Remarkables Park Group in Queenstown,” Gribben said.

Copland’s departure opens up the opportunity for someone to lead New Zealand’s two largest and most rapidly growing ski areas, and is sure to attract high-calibre candidates both internationally and within New Zealand. The Board has commenced an international search and expects to be in a position to announce the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer by the end of the financial year.

“Ross will be in his role until 30 September, and will then move to advising and supporting the new CEO so we have a seamless transition and are set up well for further success,” said Gribben.

Copland says he is incredibly privileged to have had the opportunity to lead the team at Ruapehu Alpine Lifts during an important transitional period for the company.

“We have doubled Whakapapa skier days over the past three years, added new lifts, snowmaking and launched Night Skiing. The business is in a great position for a sustainable future with a world class beginner ski offering to match the quality of the upper mountain terrain on both sides of the mountain. The board have articulated a very clear vision and strategy, it’s been a real privilege to work under their exceptional leadership.”

Ross commented that one of the most rewarding aspects of this role has been building a working relationship with tangata whenua through the licence renewal process at Turoa and the major developments at Whakapapa. The position also provided professionally challenging aspects that come with working in such a complex operating environment with the situations that invariably throws up.

“As much as you know there is inherent risk in hosting half a million people a year on the side of an active volcano, you can never fully prepare for some of the things you will face as a leader in this complex environment – you have to react quickly and respond dynamically as things evolve. I have no doubt this vacancy will attract interest from strong leaders ready to guide this awesome team through the next phase of development and continue to build on the momentum.”

Ends.