



PRESS RELEASE

Sky Waka Gondola cable in place

MT RUAPEHU, 8 JUNE 2019: Another major milestone has been reached in the construction of Mt Ruapehu's Sky Waka Gondola.

The cable that the cabins sit on, has been spliced and is now in place. The splice is the process of weaving the ends of the cable together once the cable is at the right length.

Whakapapa GM Jono Dean says, "Splicing is a specialist job and the cable splicer that worked on the Sky Waka has completed an apprenticeship on smaller lifts across 20 years to be qualified to splice the cable on a lift of this size."

The first gondola cabins are on the line at both the return and drive stations now and the Leitner crew is completing the alignment of both stations.

With winter upon us the construction team is still working hard and trying to keep warm in the cold conditions and snow on site. The second to last concrete pour was completed a couple of days ago, the next step is installing the building cladding, building the ski ramp and finishing electrical work.



The Sky Waka is scheduled to open at the end of the month. It will travel 1.8 km's through one of the North Island's most rugged and spectacular landscapes past waterfalls and snow-laden peaks.

Video available on request.

The new high-speed Sky Waka features fifty Sky Waka gondola cabins with floor to ceiling glass for breathtaking views, internal ski racks, audio and lighting and individual leather seats offering business-class luxury to passengers befitting of the UNESCO Dual World Heritage status of Whakapapa Ski Area. Each cabin accommodates 10 passengers and even the tallest skiers will be able to stand upright in the cabin with more than 2m of internal clearance.

The Sky Waka will run from the Top of the Bruce base area directly to the Knoll Ridge Café. It will transport 2,400 people per hour over the 1.8km in approximately 5 minutes.

As a public benefit entity RAL invests its proceeds back into developing the mountain's facilities and the new gondola forms part of the \$100m reinvestment strategy announced by the RAL board in 2015.

The Sky Waka project has been made possible by a loan from the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF).

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