

# *Whakapapa*

STATEMENT | 1 MAY 2025

## ***933 Days — A letter from the team at Whakapapa***

Kia ora,

Yesterday, it became official: Whakapapa has been granted a new 10-year concession by the Department of Conservation.

After 933 days of uncertainty, it marks a turning point — not a complete relief, but enough to breathe again.

We're deeply grateful to Whakapapa Holdings Limited (WHL) for backing us through it all. Their belief in this kaupapa — and in us — means everything.

We know there is a huge job to do from here, and so the celebrations are quiet. Considered.

The truth is, the last 933 days have taught us a lot. They've left us somewhat hardened — emotionally threadbare. When you've spent nearly three years wondering whether you'll make it to the next week, celebration doesn't come easily.

But we will certainly try!

Because after 933 days, we're still here. And that, in itself, is worth celebrating.

933 days of uncertainty. Of navigating the unknown. Of doing everything we can to hold the line for a place that means the world to us — and to so many of you.

In that time, we've faced the full weight of what it means to work through limbo. Life plans paused. Budgets rewritten. Forecasts torn up. Meetings that came down to one final call: continue, or close.

*(Outsiders assume this has all been a foregone conclusion — they haven't awaited the genuine 50/50 calls into the evening like we have, again and again.)*

We've watched good people move on.  
We've stayed for reasons that can't always be explained.

We've adapted. And when the company split, we wished Pure Tūroa well and kept going — even though the whānau felt divided.

It wasn't easy. But it never is when you care this much.

Ask our management team how many times they've re-budgeted.  
Ask how many layers of approvals it took to sign off a single can of paint.

Ask our maintenance crew how it feels to work through the dark, the cold, the wind — fixing lifts they weren't sure would even spin again.  
Ask our marketers how much of their effort has gone into simply reminding people we still exist — that we're open — that we're *still here*.

And yet, despite it all — we've delivered.  
We created magic last winter, even with minimal snow.  
We stretched every dollar, innovated behind the scenes, and held tight as a team.

Becoming a standalone ski area has brought sharper focus — we've gained a clearer understanding of our capabilities, and we've become more tactically effective because of it.

The bond we have now — it's unshakable. Built not just on work, but on shared purpose.

We've also carried the quiet weight of knowing we are part of something bigger: the New Zealand ski industry. And we know that the uncertainty in the North Island has had real consequences across the motu.  
That matters to us. Deeply.

We even consulted early — openly — with those who later turned against us. Who voted down our future, and in doing so, impacted our lives for the sake of securing their own "Life."  
Some of them even told us they had a whole team ready to replace us.  
Imagine hearing that — and showing up the next morning anyway.

We've been praised. We've been criticised.  
Told we're heroes. Told we're the problem.  
We've heard the rumours.  
We've shown up anyway.

There *has* been consultation.  
Plenty of it.  
We've been there — in the room, at the table, offering everything we can to find a way forward.

Because this is not just a job to us.  
It's *belonging*.



As Owen Eastwood writes, this is our time in the sun.  
Our chance to leave the jersey in a better place.  
And while this journey has hardened us, it has not taken away our hope.

We still believe.  
We still care.  
We still look up.

We hope for snow.  
We are grateful — for the support, for the patience, and for the chance to keep going.

933 days later, we're still here.  
And we're just getting started.

We are now Whakapapa Holdings 2024 Limited — WHL — a new entity with a new mandate, a clear future, and a determination to restore confidence in this mountain.

As soon as the final gateways are cleared, we'll launch winter passes.  
Yes, it's later than we hoped.  
But it comes with the certainty you all deserve.

It's time to get on with things.

In the meantime, we've been doing the work — expanding maintenance, upgrading snowmaking, preparing the lifts, and sharing updates through our social channels to bring you with us every step of the way.

Whakapapa opens for winter on 30 May.  
We cannot wait to see you here.

Ngā mihi nui,

**Your team at Whakapapa**