



Officers 2017

President	Nigel Parry	Conservation South	Doug Rankin
Vice President	Robin Rutter Bauman	Conservation North	Isaac Bain
Safety	Ashley Cheeseman	Communications	Carey Lintott
Membership	Justin Venable	Treasurer	Marnie Fornusek
Webmaster	Jonathan Hunt	Access	James Rae
Patron	Hugh Canard		

Annual Report - 30 September 2017

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1. President's Report

The last year has been a very busy one, a year of change both within Whitewater NZ and in the wider community with an ever growing concern about the state of our rivers. In many ways it is heartening that the average kiwi cares as much as we do, that the river is seen as something intrinsic to our way of life and sense of place.

Working to prevent the hydro scheme progressing on the Waitaha has been our highest priority and biggest lift this year. The Waitaha is not paddled often, but represents the pinnacle of the sport and is located in an outstandingly beautiful, wild environment. The myopic development of projects in the 1960s are long gone and we must put every effort into preserving what is left of our wild rivers. It was a genuine pleasure working with the West Coast whitewater community and other passionate, committed individuals in putting together what has been widely recognised as an intelligent campaign, that is yet to run its full course.

Being Wellington based, it has been an eye opener to discover the vast number of organisations lobbying central Government to influence the policy that has a direct bearing on how we enjoy whitewater. There seems to be an NGO for every facet of recreation, most of whom are loosely aligned with our values. There are also numerous, well resourced, commercial organisations and Government Agencies that are advocating for the things we are pushing back on – irrigation,

hydro, RMA law reform etc. So it is all the more important that we remain proactive and engaged in forming the policy that has the potential to impact our sport.

I am continually amazed by what the whitewater community is able to achieve. What we lack in resources we make up in sheer passion, hard work and a healthy dollop of smarts. We continue to work closely with Forest and Bird (F&B), Federated Mountain Clubs (FMC), Fish & Game (F&G) and any other organisation that can help our cause. We also have relationships with those we inevitably share the river with – hydro companies, farmers, regional councils, iwi as well as central government agencies such as DOC and MFE, whom we seem to be engaged in a manner more akin to a slow motion, 22 round, WWF match.

Whitewater NZ is a member of the Land and Water Forum (LAWF) and last year I took over the role from Hugh Canard, who has done an excellent job representing us for the prior 7 years. LAWF has done a lot of good work in providing guidance to the Government on the policy we need to best manage land and water in a sustainable way, with most emphasis on water quality. However the Government has been lax, and cherry picked the consensus driven recommendations. As a community, we spend proportionally more time upstream in the cleaner, steeper gradient white water, but we also have to put up with some poor quality water in a number of our favoured rivers. It was unfortunate that the Minister for the Environment launched a half-baked National Policy Statement in June this year, resulting in the departure from LAWF by FMC and F&B, and lead Whitewater NZ to review its membership. The shortcomings in the draft NPS were substantial, and a number of the contentious issues were addressed in the final version released a few weeks ago. So a step in the right direction, but the targets are too soft to make the environmental improvement the country should be aiming for. The future role of LAWF will become clearer after the election and our current preference is to remain and lobby from inside the tent.

At the 2017 AGM a new constitution will be tabled. The intent is to clarify a few points and provide a clearer view of purpose vs process. It also provides for a board tasked with ensuring all of the functional areas are managed and executed well, rather than individuals being elected to do a specific function. This should provide us with more flexibility and hopefully a larger pool of people and skills in the whitewater community that we can call upon to lead projects and help get things done.

There has been a tremendous effort put in by a small number of people both on and off the exec for many years, and I'd like to thank all of you that have put in your own effort, time and money over the last year. I would also like to acknowledge the outgoing members of the current exec for their dedication and hard work. Thank you and please take a bow. Your contribution is very much appreciated and will have a lasting impact on our community.

2. Membership

Regional Ambassadors

This year Whitewater NZ has established a network of Regional Ambassadors to cover 18 regions around the country. Our collaborative objectives are growing our reach and connection with the

paddling community, and leveraging the wide knowledge, relationships and expertise that exists in the whitewater community. The role of the Regional Ambassadors is to engage with and represent the whitewater community on local conservation, safety and access issues. The generous individuals that have agreed to be Ambassadors are greatly appreciated, and we look forward to continued evolution and development of these roles.

Individual Membership

Another area for attention over the next 12 months is engaging the non-club paddler. There is a large number of people that enjoy whitewater paddle sports with groups of friends and are supportive of our work, but are not members of a club or WWNZ. This is something we'd like to address, and get more people registered as members. This strengthens both our mandate and weight of collective voice when working on policy, conservation and access matters. It also helps fund the direct costs of our work. So if you're reading this and feel inclined to do your bit to support our collective cause, please take a mo and follow this link: [Love your work WWNZ!](#)

Packrafting

Packrafting is growing rapidly as a sport, and shares much in common with kayaking. Under the proposed new constitution, our focus is widening to Whitewater paddlesports, to accommodate the variety of craft that we take to the rivers. WWNZ is working with Federated Mountain Clubs to support the rapidly emerging packrafting scene. We have drafted a Memorandum of Understanding with a burgeoning NZ Packrafting Association (NZPRA) to provide logistical, admin and support in general as they grow membership and capability. Once NZPRA are fully up and running, the intent is that they will operate as an independent association. If you are interested in walking in to remote rivers with a "kayak" that weighs 20kg less than your creek boat, you might be inclined to check it all out on Facebook [Packrafting NZ](#)

3. 2017 Conservation report

a) Waitaha River and the fate of the Morgan Gorge

The Department of Conservation's (DOC) decision to grant in principle a concession to Westpower to develop a hydro scheme on the Morgan Gorge on the Waitaha River on the West Coast south of Ross is a biggest issue for WWNZ this year. Our shared concern and has resulted in numerous articles in the press and TV on the intrusion of a manifestly inappropriate industrial development in the pristine conservation estate. Whitewater NZ has led a multi-faceted campaign (e.g. www.wildriver.nz) to turn a very poor decision in principle around and conserve the outstanding wild, scenic and kayaking values of this majestic river.

On 5-8 December a DOC Panel considered submissions at a public hearing on the matter in Hokitika. Over 3,200 submissions were received, most in opposition to the proposal. Whitewater NZ presented a case highlighting the unlawful nature of the decision, deficiencies in the DOC process, and expert paddler's testimony as to the value of the Waitaha, and in particular the outstanding natural and kayaking values of the Morgan Gorge. Many other organisations and individual submitters supported our stance and publicity drive, including Forest and Bird and Federated Mountain Clubs. No final decision has been made and we have little doubt that the

Government are loathe to approve such a controversial decision immediately prior to an election, lest they lose their jobs over it.

In the expectation that DOC have not changed their stance, ourselves, F&B and FMC have written to the Minister of Conservation ([letter to the Minister Maggie Barry can be found here](#)) asking her to ensure that DOC does not grant the concession. She has not assured us that she will. We have also written to various political parties asking them for their stance on the river and whether they would support reversing the decision to proceed with this unneeded scheme and conserve the internationally outstanding Morgan Gorge. Labour and the Greens have provided encouraging responses.

Feel free to write a letter to your local MP and candidates, every bit of pressure and visibility helps. The more attention we can generate, the more likely the fate of Waitaha gets the positive attention this beautiful, wild river deserves. For more info see the [Waitaha River Facebook group](#). Whitewater NZ would like to thank and acknowledge all those that have supported this campaign to date.

<http://wildriver.nz/videos/2016/11/9/waitaha-river-aorakimt-cook-of-rivers>

b) Ngaruroro Water Conservation Order (WCO) Application

Submissions have just closed on a WCO application we have made with four co-applicants (Ngati Hori ki Kohupatiki, Jet Boating New Zealand, Forest and Bird, and Fish and Game) for the Ngaruroro River in Hawkes Bay. The application was made late in December 2015. A Special Tribunal has been appointed and a Hearing will be held in November this year.

Our interests are in the preserving the upper catchment above Whanawhana, and the application includes this plus the lower river out to the sea. That has created some tension with local extractive interests in the Hawkes Bay. We are currently preparing evidence for our case to support the order to present to the Special Tribunal Hearing.

c) Kayaking values in regional land and water plans

We are actively working to achieve appropriate recognition of kayaking values and resources recognised in regional land and water plans. After Water Conservation Orders this is really the next level of river recognition and protection that it would be really desirable to achieve right throughout the country. Regional Councils often lack knowledge of local whitewater resources and/or are reluctant to explicitly plan for them, given the pressures from extractive users. We have been involved in some Zone Committee processes in the Canterbury region, but we are yet to see the fruits of that work. Once we have a scaleable construct, this will form the template for our work in the other regions. Again, this will take time and persistence.

d) River development stocktake

For at least the past 118 years (Okere Falls power station built 1899) commercial development has been affecting the free and peaceful enjoyment of New Zealand's rivers by recreational

users. We have initiated a project to stocktake all development (dams, intakes, mining, dredging, etc) that affects whitewater users. The purpose of this stocktake is so that data can be used as an advocacy tool, evidence in new developments, and to ensure we are well informed when resource consents come up for renewal. As the Patron has pointed out in his report, data is key to our ability to influence decisions.

e) Kaituna River Document submissions

The Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority has begun the process of creating a new management document for the Kaituna River, to supersede BOPRC's 2009 strategy document. We submitted on a pre-draft version of the document and our suggestions appear to have been taken on-board for the draft version. We have since submitted on the draft version, and called for our individual and club members to also submit. The final document is expected to be released sometime in 2017.

f) Reclassification of Stewardship Land

When the Department of Conservation was established in 1987, more than 10% of New Zealand, much of it with high conservation value, was placed into the temporary classification of stewardship land, which lack the level of protection afforded to other areas managed under the Conservation Act or the National Parks Act. Stewardship land is vulnerable to prospective developers particularly through the mechanism of "land swaps", where conservation areas are traded for private land if a net benefit is perceived.

In response to the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's review of Stewardship Land throughout New Zealand, the DOC has begun the long overdue process of re-classifying Stewardship Land into more appropriately classified conservation status. DOC have started with two large blocks in the South Island (St James & Mokihinui), and expect to reclassify all other areas over the next 5 years.

We have begun a scoping study to identify key areas of stewardship land throughout New Zealand and assign values to these areas. More detailed, regional reports will need to be produced and we welcome engagement by members in regards to their values for these Stewardship areas.

The importance of this work has been recently exemplified by the Ruataniwha case, and the proposed Waitaha Scheme - both of which involved stewardship land. This will be a key issue for the continued conservation and access of our rivers into the future.

g) Rangitata

In September 2016 Whitewater N, and six Canterbury river groups made a joint submission in opposition to a proposal by Rangitata Diversion Race Management Limited (RDRML) to remove 10 cumecs from the Rangitata River at flows above 150 cumecs (they also sought consents for a large storage facility).

The Rangitata River is protected by a Water Conservation Order but applications for water in flows above 110 cumecs are supposed to be covered by the regional plan (the plan is silent on the issue). Whitewater NZ opposes the consent is because it will lessen the flood flows that produce big white water in the run from Klondyke to the Arundel Bridge. We are also concerned about the potential precedent for a river which should be protected by a Water Conservation Order. Water for irrigation is a political hot potato and the hearing, which was to be held in March this year, has now be placed on hold to after the election. RDRML are cognisant of the sensitivity of their proposal but are committed to providing for their shareholders (the farmers who get the water) and have a strong desire to be seen as 'a good corporate citizen.

RDRML have proposed building a small whitewater course adjacent to the storage pond outlet. The proposal for this course is light on detail (RDRML want to have input from expert users before firming up plans) and in the spirit of the collaborative processes of Canterbury Water Management Strategy we are engaging with RDRML to try to work out if it represents a reasonable and practical mitigation plan. The key to a whitewater course being used is the experience it offers and we can see this at Tekapo as the course features have been improved. It is important that we aren't lumbered with something that is unused and members who want to be included in discussions on mitigation should email vice-president@rivers.org.nz.

4. Access

Releases

This year has seen a number of releases with Genesis and Trustpower being the two companies we whom we have had the most dealings. The Wairoa and Tongariro releases continue to remain popular with 2017 ushering in the return of three Tongariro Access 10 release per annum. Currently there is a rahui on the area adjacent to Access 14 and 13, which also impacts the Waihohonu River. We worked with Genesis and iwi and conducted a members survey to find a resolution for the releases planned for mid September. In the end, members preferred option was taken to proceed with two Access 10 releases on the 16th and 17th of September.

Attendance at the Waikarataheke releases has been much improved mainly due to AUCC, VUCC and Hawke's Bay club support. Stronger support from BoP paddlers would help us keep the releases on this unique river draining the mighty Lake Waikaremoana. Certainly a round trip through Waikaremoana, a magic place in it's own right, and back home from either the north or the south provides a lot of river options. It is well worth the effort making a long weekend out of it and planning the release into your calendar. The next release is scheduled for 25 and 26 November.

Whakapapa Access

Access to the get in and dam on the Whakapapa (and also the get out for the Whakapapaiti and Whakapapanui) has had some challenges recently, and people are reminded that it is essential for Health and Safety compliance to call the farm manager as noted on the sign on the deer gate across the road for access permission (Bryan 027 403 3292). Access is unlikely to be a problem if

the manager is called, but you will be turned away if permission is not obtained first, to cross what is a Landcorp farm.

Mangahao

After last years successful release there an expectation that Mangahao releases had been restored for good. A group from WWNZ and local paddlers met with the owner (Trustpower) and operator (King Country Energy) in February and despite best intentions, the planned release on 18th March this year failed. Putting it mildly, the recreational release history on this scheme is poor. However, we remain engaged with the new owner Trustpower and will continue dialogue to ensure they honour the intent of the consent and provide a permanent fix to the bypass gate. The current forecast is for releases to be restored around May 2019.

Tekapo

The Tekapo whitewater course has been a real success as a result of a lot of dedication and hard work from the trust that looks after the facility, led superbly by Sarge Hoffman.

Releases were very well patronised, with reported attendances exceeding 1000 paddler days for the first time. Canoe Slalom NZ (CSNZ) utilised the course for two a training camps, and a NZ Junior Freestyle kayak training camp was ran at the course in late Jan 17. These camps were attended by some of the world's top athletes and coaches. Feedback was superb, with comments ranging from "the best play / training waves in the southern hemisphere", "Awesome venue for training and racing", and "world class and fantastic water". This past season has again seen significant works done at the course as part of the Tekapo Canoe Course Enhancement Project. The list of course improvements is a case study in getting-shit-done;

- Rebuild Coffor Dam at course Entry **Done**
- Repair and Stabilize Discharge area and reshape plunge pool drop. **Done**
- Concrete holed areas in the course and smooth rough areas. **Done / Ongoing**
- Immediate Eddy Development for Nationals 2016. **Done**
- Paint Control Gates **Done / Ongoing**
- Control Shed - Replace Glass panes **Done**
- Spouting replaced
- Repair Rabbit damaged lower walls **Done**
- Re Roof and re wall **Done**
- Bridge Repair decks rewire railing nuts. **Done**
- Investigate Vehicle Bridge and Barrier
- Signage Straighten up main Sign **Done/ No Camping and cautionary wire signs done/ Ongoing** gate and information history / development signs
- Weed Control **Done / Ongoing**
- Tree Control **Done / Ongoing**
- Top play wave improvement 2016 / 17 season **Done**
- Paint Changing Shed

- Long Term Improvements:
- Creation of more play waves and eddies **Done / Ongoing**

- Develop Islands to make second pool flow 2016 / 17 season
- Facilities Improvements eg Building **The trust has recently purchased of 20 foot Container, Generator, Concrete Mixer and Barrow.**
- Benching for Eddies **Done** / Ongoing
- Second Bridge at bottom of Pats Peril Review Options
- Area Development, Tree Planting, Green Area not viable, Enclosed RFS BBQ boxes
- Develop walk and viewing areas. **Done** / Ongoing
- Changing Facilities. **Done**
- Relocatable Launch Slide / Ramp
- Road Bridge over the control structure – Have a preliminary design. - Under viability investigation / costing
- Course Gate Shutters – Have a preliminary design. - Under viability cost consideration

Access to Wilderness Areas and National Parks

For many years there have been concerns regarding equity of access for kayakers into Wilderness Areas and National Parks under DOC management. Whilst we respect and support the concept of carefully restricted flight access in our Conservation areas, access for whitewater paddle sports must be given due recognition. Our access requirements are modest both in nature and frequency, and have in some cases been enjoyed for decades before being removed without consultation or analysis. Restoring access will take time to resolve, but the reality of our very limited impact, duration and frequency should be recognised under the principles of the Conservation and National Parks Acts.

Isaac Bain has done a great job creating an online interactive map that allows people to search for the boundaries of the Wilderness areas and view them on a topographic or satellite base layer. This work is really valued; Wilderness Areas are the most heavily restricted designation of Conservation Estate, but also have the least publically available information.

<http://isaacbain.co.nz/wilderness-areas/#6/-40.866/170.793>

There is a DOC program of planned reviews of the management plans that cover all conservation areas within DOC's mandate, and WWNZ is providing input on each of these in order to ensure we have appropriate access to valued whitewater rivers in the conservation estate. This work is cyclical and ongoing, with a hump in review activity over 2017 to 2019.

5. Safety

Unlike last year, we are glad to report that there have not been any fatalities this year involving kayaking. However, there were two fairly high profile stories that made the mainstream media.

The first was an incident on the Tauranga Taupo River.

“A kayaker ran the 25m Tauranga Taupo Falls, landing badly, ending up unconscious and submerged. His companion in the pool below the falls retrieved him and successfully administered CPR. The two kayakers continued downriver, eventually stopping in darkness to

light a fire. The uninjured kayaker walked approx. 5km on forestry roads before cell phone reception enabled contact with emergency services. The injured kayaker was extracted by helicopter winch around 3am.

- *The team was experienced and had run the waterfall previously.*
- *Late start to trip (~3:30pm) meant nightfall before extraction.*
- *CPR was successfully applied.*
- *The group did not have a PLB, so rescue was delayed.*
- *Location of the uninjured kayaker was assisted by their head torch, and the riverside fire helped locate the injured kayaker”*

There is some timely learning in this incident for all of us; the gear we carry, the size of the crew, the timing of the run and how prepared the team is to respond to any adverse incident. We need to keep working at minimising the risks, particularly as we get more experienced, skilled and familiar with certain rivers we adventure on. Reinforcing and promoting that all kayakers should undertake a deliberate thinking/planning approach so heuristics have less of an influence on the outcome.

Our job is to try and reinforce good practice, create awareness around heuristics through our social media, newsletter and club channels.

The second was more a message to the public concerning a flooded Hunua Falls decent.

“General Manager Parks, Sports and Recreation Mace Ward is concerned at the message this sends to others. “The Hunua Falls is a popular and picturesque place visited by more than 120,000 people each year. Unfortunately, some visitors insist on doing some very stupid things and this is one of them. We would like to categorically remind people that kayaking or jumping off the Hunua Falls is not permitted and is an extremely risky thing to do”.

The second story highlighted where the sport is going with extremely experienced and talented kayakers pushing the limits and making this instantly viewable on social media. This allows mainstream media to make public comment in a matter of minutes or hours. We are seeing the public and/or risk adverse authorities making judgement and comment without seeking expert advice first. I believe this is due to the perception that they need to make immediate comment on the dangers and risks. This may be due to the new Health and Safety laws and the misunderstanding that regional Government could be held responsible in areas under their management, or to discourage others from undertaking the same activity. However private kayaking trips are not subject to the Health and Safety at Work Act. WWNZ will continue advocating for access to rivers. As paddlers, we need to ensure we make good decisions before committing to a challenging section of river. Together we can prevent uninformed, subjective opinion from restricting the development of our sport.

Safety and Rescue Training

For the fourth year in a row we have had no additional funding from Water Safety NZ (WSNZ) to subsidise safety and rescue courses. WWNZ will need to consider this reality and decide if it's a desirable avenue for future funding. The previous officer for two consecutive applications received a WSNZ report in their follow up that whitewater kayaking / swift water rescue does not target their priority areas for drowning prevention, and so has limited reach to their target audience. So the big question is do we pursue something that may or may not ever be successful in the current funding market? One option is to partner up with NZOIA who we have a Memorandum of Understanding with and see if there is merit in submitting a joint application for funding.

Wairoa River (BOP) debris

There is significant in-stream debris in the Wairoa River that poses a risk to river users throughout the upper section. This debris consists of large pieces of rebar that are underwater during recreational releases, but become exposed when the water recedes. We have teamed up with AUCC to map and photograph the location of these hazards, in anticipation of commencing negotiations with the appropriate authority to have this removed. WWNZ expresses thanks to AUCC for their assistance.

Plantation Trees in Rivers

Once again and similar to the last 12 months, we have seen contact made from forestry companies notifying WWNZ that they are conducting their operations adjacent to sections of whitewater resource. Pfolson Forestry who were operating on Rangitaiki/Whaeo river were upfront, communicative and easy to work with.

We also had an incident where a bulldozer had reportedly pushed a tree into the Wairoa River in the pool below the bottom waterfall. Peter Buell, BOP Harbourmaster/Manager, Bay of Plenty Regional Council investigated and followed up with WWNZ.

This is going to be one of our greatest safety challenges for future. We must continue engaging with Forestry/logging organisations and regional councils so they realise the danger of fallen trees in our kayaking rivers. We need advocacy and engagement with these groups so they take all measures to prevent trees from falling in the rivers, particularly when logging. And we need to build relationships so they feel comfortable to contact us when a tree becomes an issue; a common understanding to ensure no future fatalities is needed.

With this mind WWNZ is pursuing a meeting with the Kaituna stakeholders (BOPRC, Forestry, River users) to remove the fallen trees from the lower reaches of the Kaituna River. Hopefully this will include a prevention strategy for the future. The Edgecumbe flooding disaster has put this meeting on the backburner. WWNZ will continue pushing for the meeting to occur. We are asking BOPRC to drop the river level. With the lake levels being high for most of winter it is unlikely that BOPRC will drop the river levels until the lake is at a more desirable level. However it is unclear if BOPRC are motivated to drop river levels at all?

6. Website

Another task that has been in need of our attention is our web site rivers.org.nz Whitewater NZ has funded a project to update the website and work has been continuing throughout the last year. At the time of writing, this project is approximately three-quarters complete, and may well be complete by the time of the 2017 AGM. The migration is moving around 10,000 user accounts, 2,000 files, 800 events, 200 articles, 700 stories, 300 sections, and 3,000 comments.

The updated website will include an API (Application Programming Interface) that should help make rivers.org.nz data on river sections available to a variety of applications and external uses (other apps etc).

Progress can be followed at <https://github.com/kayakr/rivers.org.nz/wiki>. If you have any questions, get in touch at webmaster@rivers.org.nz

7. 2017 Treasurer's Report

The following report should be read in association with the accounts that will be tabled at the AGM and covers the financial year from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

This year we had a loss of \$855 which was down from last year's loss of \$2678. Total expenses increased by \$789 and income increased by \$3012.

Income

Total annual subscriptions decreased by \$310 this year. Individual memberships increased from \$480 to \$660, Family memberships increased from \$50 to \$100, Associates remained at \$30 and Club memberships were down from \$6,190 to \$5,650. Sales of the Whanganui River Guide were down from \$580 to \$274. Whanganui River Guide sales are generally from individuals via the website but we did have a bulk discounted orders from Taumaranui –Site Visitor Centre (\$90). There was an increase of General Donations; up from \$1,650 to \$3,730. \$2,015 of this was a donation from To a Tee as a credit note for some of the work on the Waitaha video. Interest income increased from \$1,412 to \$2,560. The term deposit that matured on the 20 May 2016 (with interest of \$1,539.54) was reinvested for a further 12 months. The new term deposit (maturing 20 May 2017) was changed to compounding quarterly so interest of \$932 from three of the quarters is included. The rest is from the 025 bank account.

Expenses

The Conservation Portfolio increased from \$2,617 to \$8,842. The conservation expenses are made up of:

- \$3,586 - \$5,601 less \$2,015 donation for the production of the Waitaha Video by To a Tee Ltd.
- \$1,500 A fifth share to the Catalyst Group around the Ngaruroro River Water Conservation Order. Whitewater NZ shares the Catalyst Group costs with Fish and Game, Jet Boat NZ, Forest & Bird and Operation Patiki Ngati Hori.
- \$200 contribution to the WCO application on the 38 West Coast Rivers

- \$2,587 reimbursed costs for stationery, phone and internet costs for the conservation portfolio.

Internet and hosting costs were down from \$4,339 to \$1,953 as last year included \$2,480 for work on the Rivers website. There was a slight increase in Accounting & Audit fees from \$934 to \$989 which is due to an increase of Xero's monthly fees part way through the previous year. Bank fees also increased from \$86 to \$101; bank fees are Paypal fees and debit card fees used to pay monthly Google Services. The General expenses of \$388 are for August 2016 AGM expenses. Postage is the PO Box (\$190) and stamps. Travel expenses for the executive travel are down from \$1,683 to \$725. The reasons for these low costs are that not all the executive are able to attend the face to face meetings and may not apply for reimbursement of their travel costs when they do attend. Travel costs – other were nil in 2017 as no clubs applied for reimbursement of costs for the 2016 AGM. Whanganui River Guide costs were for printing of more copies of the guide.

Financial Position and Movement in Equity

There was a decrease of \$3,405 from \$52,884 to \$49,479 in the bank accounts. Accounts receivable of \$929 have all since been paid. The prepaid expense is for the Post Box for the 2017/18 year. For current liabilities, the Accounts Payable of \$230 is for the review of the accounts and the unpaid expense claims of \$1,042 that relate to the 2017 year but claimed after March. All have since been paid.

Overall Whitewater NZ's equity has decreased from \$50,180 to \$49,325 as at 31 March 2017. The 2017 year end accounts presented at the 2017 AGM have been reviewed and approved by Zane Colville.

8. Patron's Report

Patrons never did reports but I foolishly wrote a long one, and now a Patron's report is expected. I will confine myself to some gratuitous advice for the wider membership, who probably won't know me or will read this, and the incoming Executive, who possibly might.

Role of the Patron

There is no job description and one needs to question why we have such a position. The Patron before me was Clive Olsen and although I had heard a little of him, I only met him once when he turned up to an AGM which was held in Christchurch. This quiet man sat and observed the proceedings all day and then introduced himself to me. No-one in the room knew him and I had been on the Exec for at least 10 years. He ran the first descents of all the rivers you can name east and south of the Alps, starting in canvas canoes and home-made fibreglass kayaks later. He was surprised to hear we all wore helmets.

I was desperate to hear and record his stories, but I was frantic as chair of the AGM – 250 people attended in those days, and I promised to get in touch. Clive died just a few months later, and I had moved to the Abel Tasman, and it is one of my regrets that I didn't get to see him again. The idea of a Patron seems to be a throwback to when having the Queen or the Duke of Edinburgh or

Ed Hillary on your letterhead showed the organisation was of substance and prestige. We could be the Royal Whitewater Association of New Zealand. Would that help? Well it's 2017 and I'll come back to this theme in a moment.

It's not prestige, so it must be something else. I think it's being the repository of institutional knowledge. Current Execs can ask for advice when they see fit, and they don't have to take it.

What Use is Institutional Knowledge?

I have tried to be that person who has been involved in the affairs of the Association through some turbulent times, made mistakes, done some things well, and now wants to sit back and see the sport and the organisation succeed. The challenges we faced in the 1980 and 90s were different. The Moscow Olympic boycott was the start of a scary amount of attention, with our phones being tapped and SIS spooks parked outside at night. The Exec came under a lot of pressure to not attend, but we did. Then the LA Olympic successes meant all was forgiven.

Funding was a constant disruption for those of us weekend whitewater paddlers. As a simple kayaker you haven't lived until you've been locked in your office by the Serious Fraud Office and been accused of stealing \$400,000. It was the CEO of the Sports Foundation not me who went to prison. You can see why we formed WWNZ.

The Present

Now the challenges are different. Water management around agricultural and urban contamination is one of the top political issues in the upcoming election, and the Department of Conservation is more likely to be our adversary than our protector. Litigation on water takes is now being displaced by a time-consuming need to be sitting around the table in every catchment. The need is to move from legal adversarial skill sets to social collaborative skill sets. To paraphrase President Roosevelt though, we still need to keep our adversarial litigious skills well-honed in the cupboard and be prepared to get aggrieved and aggressive when needed. The Waitaha is an example. I'm not advocating a return to the past, but there are some lessons to be learned.

- The production of the NZCA River Guides and subsequent guides were very instrumental in both developing the sport, and in building credibility with regional planners.
- The river assessments of the Egarrs, John MacKay and NZRCA set the stage for most of the gains (with Fish & Game of course) in obtaining Water Conservation Orders.
- We developed the safety and skills curricula that established NZOIA and subsequent instruction standards.
- The national association NZCA>NZRCA was focussed on supporting clubs. Call it "hub and spoke". National exec officers supported local paddlers to fight for access and for releases, and occasionally bigger issues like WCOs and hydro dams.

I think we let local takes for irrigation and the inevitable decline in water quality slip through our fingers because we didn't move in the right circles at rurally dominated regional councils. That has definitely changed now with the number of paddlers on committees in the dry regions.

The Future

I think the major challenge for us as kayakers is to improve our networking. We need friends in high and low places, and the more of them and the greater the diversity the better. We cannot rely on turning up to a contested hearing with a cogent case and expect anything except disappointment. This applies to access, flow releases and for major takes or dams. We need be known, trusted and responsible, but not weak on principle. Kayakers need to be prepared to sit around the table in every catchment and be trusted by iwi, farmers and council staff to represent our interests but be equally prepared to listen to others' interests.

By doing this we recruit a whole community of people who are prepared to listen to us and to work together to try and accommodate our needs. Fail to work in this fashion, and we are seen as selfish.

I think WWNZ needs to grasp the whole potential of cyberspace more effectively so that we build our river networks and stories into a compelling whole. If 8% of all 16yrs + people in Canterbury kayak more than twice a year, that's around 30,000 people just in this region. Reaching them is a challenge that can only be met by the internet, social media and whatever comes along next.

We need to reach them all, generate content, get the eyeballs, get the clicks, control both, and get a fair share of the income that the giants of YouTube and FaceBook are creaming – all from our content. Every kayaking video posted on FB or YT is money going to those who don't need it, or worse, will use it to build dams, or even dairy farms. Or buy up our high country!

Part of the above mission is to capture data. Data is the ace in the hole for future conservation battles. Data will kill anecdote and "feelings" and even passion, stone cold dead in contested hearings. Data plus Passion plus Networks will win. We all have devices that we consult every time we paddle and many times in between. That's where the data lies, and that's where the money we need to employ advocates and specialists lies. It's not rocket surgery to understand that, but that's what we need to do, and do well. Don't ask me how. I'm 75. What's your excuse?

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