

# New Zealand Canoeing

98.2

## News

### AGM date and venue

The Annual General Meeting for the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association will be held on Saturday 11 July 1998, in Wellington.

The meeting will run from 9:00am to 5:00pm in Meeting Room 1, Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre, Kilbirnie Crescent, Kilbirnie, Wellington. Refreshments will be available but BYO lunch. A creche is available at the centre.

Minutes of the last AGM have been mailed to all member clubs, along with the 1995/96 and 1996/97 accounts. The minutes and accounts are available to Individual Members on request.

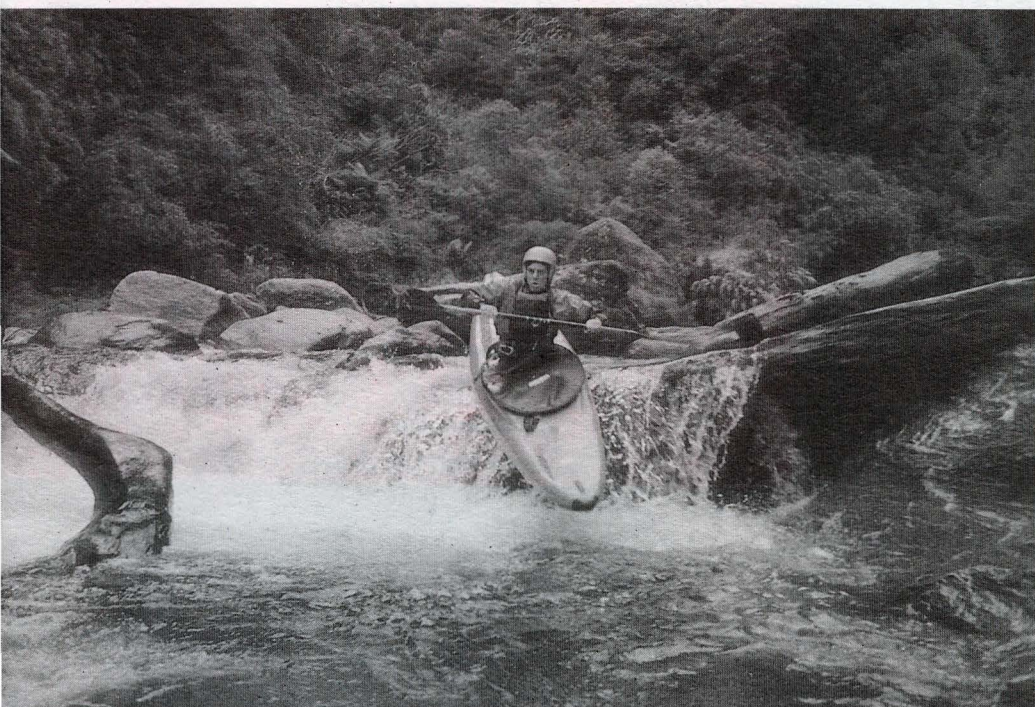
The AGM is where NZRCA policy is reviewed and goals for the coming year are established. Also, most of the committee positions will be up for election, so it is an ideal time for motivated kayakers to get involved with the activities of the association, particularly in the areas of conservation, access, safety and education, and in the supporting roles of newsletter editor, communications and membership.

After the AGM, delegates can enjoy dinner in Wellington, followed by a whitewater slide show at the Band Rotunda, Oriental Parade at 8pm.

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*Justin Randall runs a drop on the Manakaiaua River. See "Three go mad in South Westland," page 14. Photo: Paul Macey.*



## About NZ Canoeing

New Zealand Canoeing is the official newsletter of the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association (NZRCA) Inc. NZ Canoeing is published quarterly and distributed free to over 1,000 members of the NZRCA throughout New Zealand/Aotearoa.

The views expressed in New Zealand Canoeing are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Executive of the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association.

NZ Canoeing welcomes advertising from organisations associated with recreational canoeing. Please contact us for our advertising rates, and find out how to show your products and services to kayakers around NZ.

Thanks to Geoff Price, Justin Randall, Janette Kear, Paul Macey, Hugh Canard, Mark Planner, Mike Savory, Ritz Wood, Fiona Mackay and Andy Hollings for their contributions to this issue of NZ Canoeing. May the rivers flow for you!

Contributions of articles, trip reports, classified advertisements, and letters for publication are gratefully received.

Please send items to:  
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2 Kruse Place  
Christchurch 5  
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kayaks@extra.co.nz

The deadline for material for the Spring newsletter is 29 August 1998.

All map references are to NZMS Infomap 260 Topographical series.

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as at 31 May 1998

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Janette Kear (see above)

## Changes

Welcome to Mark Planner, our new Safety Officer.

Note that most positions will be up for re-election at the AGM.



# New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association Inc.

*Our purpose is to preserve New Zealand's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.*

## Conservation

preserve NZ's rivers and lakes

- Maintain national river database
- Monitor threats to resources
- Provide information on river conservation
- Technical advice to local groups
- Work with government agencies, iwi and other river users
- Initiate or support legal action

## Access

ensure public access

- Ensure public access to whitewater rivers
- Preserve rights of public passage on waterways
- Negotiate recreational releases with dam operators
- Collect data on river usage
- Support local access initiative

## Safety

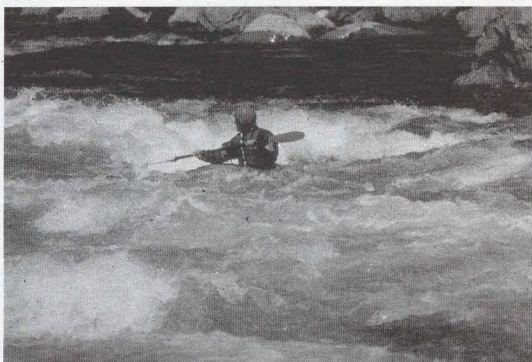
promote safe, enjoyable canoeing

- Facilitate the provision of independent advice
- Maintain incident database
- Maintain uniform national grading system
- Publish and promote safety code
- Maintain kayak river safety and competency syllabi and approve course providers

## Education

foster the kayaking community

- Publish information on rivers, safety, techniques and equipment through a regular newsletter and web site
- Provide information on and liaison with clubs and education providers
- Preserve NZ's canoeing heritage
- Award canoeist of the year
- Fundraising
- Kayak tests
- River racing certificate



## Annual Canoeist of the Year Trophy

The 23<sup>rd</sup> award of this trophy will be voted upon at the NZRCA Annual General Meeting on 11 July 1998. The award is for the individual (or team) who has made an outstanding achievement or contribution in the area of recreational canoeing. For example, someone who works for the advancement of canoeing in New Zealand, promotes conservation or safe canoeing, is active in a club, demonstrates outstanding ability in any branch of canoeing, or demonstrates leadership ability.

Nominations from NZRCA members must be sent to the NZRCA, 2 Kruse Place, Christchurch 5 by 29 June 1998. Please supply in writing full details and supporting evidence.

The recipient of the 1997 Canoeist of the Year Trophy was Graham Charles (refer NZ Canoeing, Summer 1997).

## OSH clarifies coverage for recreational users

In March, an amendment to the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, was passed to clarify the duties of farmers, land owners and recreational users. The Health and Safety in Employment Amendment Bill was put forward to clear up confusion over the liability of rural landowners for people who used their land for recreational purposes. Farmers were worried that they might be held liable for injuries to people who used their land for hunting, climbing or kayaking.

The amendment to Section 16 of the Act, which covers all places of work, will now mean that farmers and landowners only have a 'duty to warn' visitors, who they have given permission to be on their properties, of any out of the ordinary, significant

*Continued on page 4.*



hazards that may cause them serious harm during their visit.

"The message that we want to deliver to farmers is that they no longer need to fear prosecution if a recreational visitor is injured and a warning had been given," said Brenda Ratcliff, OSH Strategic Policy Manager. "Consequently, they do not need to shut their properties to recreational visitors," Ms Ratcliff said.

"Under this amendment, farmers and other occupiers only have to warn authorised visitors of dangerous work which the visitors would not normally expect to find, such as major construction work. If the visitors are subsequently harmed by that hazard, the farmer has no liability."

"The amendment makes it clear that farmers and occupiers are not responsible for harm caused by natural hazards such as cliffs or rivers, and have no responsibility for the safety of trespassers or those without permission to be on the property or work site," said Ms Ratcliff.

For more information, try  
[www.osh.dol.govt.nz](http://www.osh.dol.govt.nz).

## New Zealand paddler in US accident

West Coast paddler Bruce Barnes, with many New Zealand first descents under his belt, was seriously injured paddling the legendary Dry Meadow Creek in California. Dry Meadow Creek is a tributary of the Kern River and has a section called the "Tea Cups", in which the river pours over a series of waterfalls. It appears Bruce paddled one waterfall too many, dropping 25m onto rocks. He was evacuated and is now recovering in NZ.

*[I'd like to wish Bruce all the best for a speedy recovery. You and the family are in our thoughts. - Jon]*

For pictures of Dry Meadow Creek, see

<http://ww2.privatei.com/~tjon/drymed.htm>.

## Tekapo slalom site development update

Ian Russell of Christchurch reports that Works Consultancy have machinery on site, and have excavated the bulk of material for the course. Over half of the concrete for the intake structure and weir has been poured, and the road from Tekapo village to the slalom site has been improved. The current aim is to have the work 90% complete by the end of June, to be followed by flow trials and a possible grand opening event around the beginning of the next paddling season. Ian mentioned that if people get keen, and depending on flow negotiations with ECNZ, the site could provide ideal preparation for the 1999 Rodeo World Championships and the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

## MSA releases report

The Maritime Safety Authority have issued a brief, factual report on the downing of Matt Daly on the Roaring Meg section of the Kawarau river on February 8. The report states that Matt was an experienced kayaker, using appropriate equipment, who capsized in an area where the eddy lines are strong. The MSA report is available from the MSA or the NZRCA.

## NRZCA announces new membership options

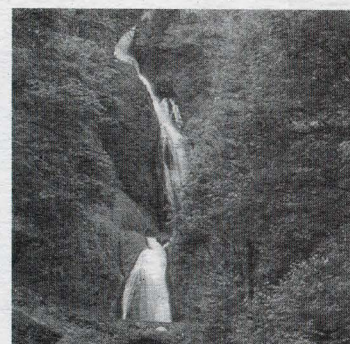
The NZRCA has revised its membership options, creating three main membership classes: Individual Membership, Club Membership and Associate Membership. Refer to the article on page 5 for more information.

## Bio-Bio dam still in standoff

*Based on a report from Nando.net & The Christian Science Monitor*

The mighty Bio-Bio river in central Chile is regarded as one of the world's best whitewater runs. Plans to harness the Bio-Bio with as many as six dams have been on energy maps since Chile's 1973-90 dictatorship. One dam was completed in 1996 and is operating downstream from where the much larger Ralco dam is set to be running by 2002. Upon completion, Ralco will supply almost one-fifth of the energy needs for central Chile, including Santiago, where energy demand is doubling every decade.

However, the development (by power company Endesa) of a major 570-megawatt hydroelectric dam has been blocked by a number of Pehuenche Indian families, whose land will be flooded by the resulting reservoir. The standoff between Endesa and a handful of Pehuenche Indians is feeding a boiling controversy pitting Indian rights activists, environmentalists, alternative-energy advocates, and ecotourism promoters against the giant Endesa. On Endesa's side are government officials - including Chilean President Eduardo Frei, himself a hydraulic engineer - and businessmen who see projects like the Bio-Bio dam as indispensable elements in Chile's impressive economic growth. Last March, a technical review board of Chile's National Environmental Commission recommended against the Ralco project. But then the commission's director was fired, and in June, the board's negative decision was reversed. ¶





## New Membership options

The NZRCA has introduced three main classes for membership: Individual, Club and Associate. Note that these classes replace the old 'affiliation' terminology.

### Individual Membership

Individuals may join for \$30 for a year's membership, receiving four issues of 'NZ Canoeing' and voting rights at the AGM. This is designed to suit individuals outside the club system, who nevertheless wish to support the work of the NZRCA (especially in Access and Conservation).

### Club Membership

Clubs may join any number of members for \$10 for a year's membership per member (or by quarter), receiving up to four issues of 'NZ Canoeing' per member and voting rights in proportion to their current paid membership. The lower membership fee is intended as recognition of the valuable role clubs play in the New Zealand recreational canoeing community. Members who join through a club can choose to receive 'NZ Canoeing' via the club or mailed direct (for an additional postage fee).

Clubs may mix and match Subscription durations and Mailing options to suit their requirements, though it is obviously easier for your hard-working NZRCA Executive if all members of a club can agree on the same duration and mailing options! We recommend clubs make suitable adjustments to their membership processes and forms so that their members are aware of NZRCA membership (and the need to pass mailing list information to the NZRCA for the Mail Direct option).

### Associate Membership

Associate members may join for \$30 for a year's membership, receiving four issues of 'NZ Canoeing' (plus \$10 per additional newsletter subscription) but do not have voting rights. This membership class is recommended for canoe-related organisations such as outfitters, outdoor centres, Government departments and clubs that do not wish to join any members (for example, flatwater racing clubs).

## Letters

### Keep Up The Good Work

*On behalf of Kupe Canoe Club, congratulations on the NZRCA newsletter. It is a great read, and obviously the result of a significant effort on the part of all of those involved. Keep up the good work, it is very much appreciated.*

David Alderton  
President, Kupe Canoe Club

### More congratulations

*Congratulations to the NZRCA for producing a great newsletter. It has been far too long since we had not only an entertaining and informative special interest journal, but also a record of our activities. All those AGM's and Exec meetings and hours on the word processor writing constitutions is finally starting to deliver the payoff.*

*Recreational canoeists have now got a focussed representational body and we can concentrate on those issues that truly*

## Classifieds

### For Sale

\* Sisson Delpin II  
With rudder, orange deck, white hull. Good condition. Ideal Coast-to-coast beginner's kayak. Inexpensive, only \$350.

\* Kayak: Andrew Martin Arrow  
Fiberglass, good condition. \$1,100.

Phone Jeff on (03) 473 6544 or email: jeff.walford@stonebow.otago.ac.nz.

*Remember: free classifieds for members!*

*interest us and affect our enjoyment of the sport. Hours on the river, in the pub and on those long drives are great for bonding but do not save rivers and give us the unity of purpose that is essential in a modern democracy to ensure that our opinions matter and our desires are fulfilled.*

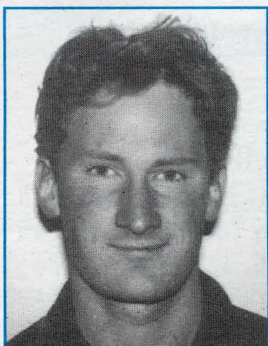
*Advances in skill, technology and sheer bloody nerve have seen all sorts of obscure rivers and creeks echoing to the sound of plastic on rock. Rivers which have hitherto only been a gleam in a hydro engineer's eye or a funny little tributary of a well-loved river are being discovered and explored by a new generation of paddlers.*

*In the past we have reacted to events in the wider community and I see healthy signs that we are acting to take the initiative on important conservation issues.*

*It is an ecological truth that if you want to preserve a species you first protect its habitat. Our habitat is the free flowing rivers of New Zealand. Let's start protecting our habitat.*

Hugh Canard  
Atawhai, Nelson





## Annual Report to Members

*Paul Macey, NZRCA President*

From 1998, the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association will publish an annual report to members. This report describes the status of the association, the accomplishments over the previous year, and current issues. The aim is to pass on information regarding

the NZRCA in an abbreviated form; the annual report is a summarised version of what is presented at the AGM.

### President's Report

The NZRCA is almost a year old, and a great deal has been achieved since the 1997 AGM. I really acknowledge the clubs who remained members over the last four years, and I hope that these clubs can now appreciate the results of their support.

I believe that the NZRCA now has the structure to be an effective and active national body for many years to come. For several years up to 1997, the Association lost members and had little communication with clubs. There were still people doing the conservation, access, safety and instruction work, but the association itself was weak. Now, we have a strong association and we are communicating with our members, and we are also getting more work done, in particular in the conservation area.

Much has been achieved over the last year in terms of conservation, access, safety and education. The construction of the Tekapo slalom site is one thing that I am very pleased with, as I remember walking around a barren, rocky piece of land several years ago. At the time, it had already been five years in the process, and it looked like it would not ever happen because not enough money was available. However, through a few people's dogged persistence and effort, it is finally under way (and ahead of schedule!).

The completion of the Association accounts is another milestone. We suffered through not having a Treasurer for two years, and again, a lot of work was required to bring the financial management of the Association back in order.

However, there are five key achievements that relate to the NZRCA as an organisation, and I see these as having a powerful long-term impact:

1. Defining the mission, and specific areas of focus of the NZRCA;
2. Restructuring the Executive;
3. Restructuring the membership;
4. Publishing a quarterly newsletter that is sent to all members;
5. Developing a web site as a resource for all paddlers, members, and people active in conservation.

I believe that these five achievements will ensure that the NZRCA continues to exist for years to come, and becomes a stronger and stronger voice for paddlers.

### 1. Mission, and focus of the NZRCA

In October last year, the NZRCA Executive met in Christchurch and discussed what the newly-named NZRCA should do. We decided that we needed some-

thing in writing to guide the actions of the NZRCA. The result of this discussion was a mission statement, a number of key areas of interest, and general plans within each of these areas. The NZRCA now has principles to work by, and areas to work in. Even in the last six months, the Executive has used these principles in making decisions and choosing what action to take. I personally believe that these will guide the NZRCA for years to come.

### 2. Restructuring the Executive

Once the mission and focus in 1. was written, it was natural to restructure the Executive. We now have an Access Officer and an Education Officer. In addition, we are proposing a Membership Officer, a Communications Officer, a Newsletter Editor, and possibly a Web Editor. Another successful action was having both a North Island and a South Island Conservation Officer, and we are considering whether these two positions should be added to the Executive.

### 3. Restructuring the membership

The NZRCA is effectively an association of clubs. There has always been a membership category for individuals, but it has not been used. As of this AGM, we are ready to accept individuals as members. We have also renamed the "affiliation" to "membership" to reflect a more member-focussed organisation. From this AGM, we are taking memberships at any time of year, and clubs have the flexibility to join any number of people throughout the year.

### 4. Newsletter

The newsletter has been very popular, and by sending a copy for every member, it becomes a tangible benefit for belonging to the NZRCA. Because we are committed that all members receive their newsletter, we are now offering the option of mailing it directly to members.

### 5. Web site

As I write this, several people are



developing an extensive web site for the NZRCA. I believe that the World Wide Web will become a more and more effective vehicle for the NZRCA's work. The web site will be of interest to paddlers, with plenty of river descriptions, stories, history and photos. Ever since I first joined the NZRCA (then called the NZCA) Executive, I passionately believed that we needed to record the history of our rivers—which rivers have been paddled, who did the first descents, and stories of early trips. I see the web as a perfect tool for recording and publishing such information. It will also have information relating to conservation, such as what rivers are under threat, and their level of protection. Another use will be the exchange of information between Executive members and other people working to protect our rivers.

I am completing my term as President, and after three years, I am not standing for re-election. However, I am committed to seeing the new association operating powerfully. Part of the reason I am not standing for President is so that I can support whoever gets elected, over the next six months. I also have several projects that I want to take on, in particular around membership and the web site.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge some people, people who have become great friends over the last three years. Those people are the NZCA and NZRCA Executive members, past and present. From 1995, when I was first elected as President, there was a core of people who kept doing the work to protect rivers, manage instruction and safety courses, and negotiate river flows. Since then, the Executive has expanded, but there is still a huge level of commitment required. My achievements as President have always been through the work of others, and I am very grateful to the executive members.

Thank you for the opportunity of leading the NZRCA over the last three years. I look forward to seeing you on a river!

Happy paddling  
*Paul Macey*



## Financial Report

*Fiona Mackay, NZRCA Treasurer*

The accounts for the 1997/98 financial year are currently being prepared. Clubs will have recently received a copy of the accounts for the 1995/96 year and 1996/97 years. These show that the NZRCA has been operating at a loss in the past few years. There are several reasons for this. The main reason has been

due to the formation of the NZ Canoe Federation and the resulting split of the NZ Canoeing Association into different groups. The NZRCA has held onto money for the different portfolios such as Sea Kayaking and Polo until the relevant association is ready to take the money. That meant we effectively had money in our accounts which wasn't ours to spend which has now been given to the appropriate groups.

There has also been a drop in income received from funding groups such as the Hillary Commission, NZ Sports Foundation and Water Safety New Zealand.

One reason for this is that we are no longer an organisation based on a competitive sport, so no longer qualify for competition-oriented funding. Another reason is that people have been focusing on other important issues such as the formation and development of the NZRCA. This has meant that all possible funding applications have not necessarily been made.

In the past year the NZRCA has also seen an increase in expenditure as we try to fill our role in promoting the interests of recreational kayakers in New Zealand. The most dramatic change you will have noticed is the newsletter. This is seen as a way of promoting the NZRCA's interests to members and the public. Members of the Executive are looking for sources of sponsorship for the newsletter which will reduce the financial cost to the organisation. We have also continued to spend money in the areas of conservation, safety, instruction and access in the interests of members. The Executive is currently looking at ways of meeting these costs without substantial increases in the subscription cost to members.

We are now starting to build an accurate picture of the financial state of the NZRCA. It is a slow process as there are some complicated issues relating to the formation of the NZCF. There has also been a lack of financial organisation in recent years. However, with an active Treasurer things are improving. I'm learning fast about the process of organising accounts for an organisation such as the NZRCA—but I was a kayaker and engineering student before I delved into the world of accounting. As a result the learning curve is steep and results aren't always instant. The 1997/98 accounts should be finished by the time you receive this newsletter. An auditor has also been arranged to look at the past three years accounts. In the mean time happy kayaking. ¶



## Conservation

Andy Hollings, NZRCA Conservation Officer (North)

In the past two issues of NZ Canoeing (Summer 1997 and Autumn 1998) Maree Baker has looked at how regional councils use the Resource Management Act (RMA) to control activities relating to water. Monitoring the state of the environment is a large component of this because it is hard to establish with certainty what effect activities might have or are having unless baseline levels are established. Some councils are already quite advanced in this and have developed large databases of physical and biotic features of water quality and river flow characteristics to identify changes over time and space.

As Maree pointed out the amenity of rivers is one of the pivotal characteristics of rivers for canoeists. This is because any proposal ('activity' in RMA jargon) which affects the flow regime (height of "fresh" and duration) in a river must show that its effects on amenity values can be avoided, remedied or mitigated. There are many examples in New Zealand where flow regimes are managed to preserve the canoeing amenity values, albeit in an altered state.

These include:

- *controlled releases for paddling activities.* This may result in congestion at these times and removes the opportunity when water is not released. The Tongariro, Pukaki, Waiau and Mangahao releases are examples.
- *the provision of alternative activities on the same waterway.* The Tekapo site is an example although it is release dependent.
- *the provision of alternative activities in other waterways.* This is not common in New Zealand but the attempt to provide an artificial site off-river at the failed lower-Rangitaiki scheme is an example.
- *active river management to maintain activities.* This includes digging swimming holes that fill due to altered flow regimes, lowering channels to maintain flow velocity and placing obstacles for eddies. Work at the Mangahao slalom site has augmented a natural site.

Amenity values have been debated extensively in the Environment Court (Planning Tribunal), Ministry for the Environment and elsewhere. What exactly constitutes recreational values for rivers is established to some extent by precedent but needs constant updating as use patterns change. The NZRCA has even commissioned their own surveys of rivers to assess specific characteristics and use patterns for whitewater canoeing.

In the future it is inevitable that legal debate will centre not only on how many people canoe a particular river or river section but aesthetic quality and social aspects, i.e. what makes it unique. To many canoeists this is often intangible or not easily defined. The features that make the experience of a canoeing unique are not only the instream flow features of gradient, length and degree of difficulty but location, river bank features, remoteness, access and degree of naturalness.

It follows that being able to measure these features is a vital part of NZRCA and member clubs making a strong case at water conservation hearings and consent hearings. The Ministry for the Environment (MFE) which oversees the RMA has asked some councils to provide in their district plans a definition of what amenity values actually means in local context. The MFE says there is no reason

why amenity values cannot be used as a basis for placing controls on activities but councils should provide in their district plans a definition of what amenity values actually mean in local context. They state that applicants need certainty, guidance and consistency as well as councils knowing what needs to be monitored.

So how can NZRCA or councils measure what local amenity values are? Surveys are useful to measure spatial (numbers and distribution) effects at rivers but they also need to give an indication of how values change with time. This allows the method to be recognised in the RMA forum and applied, perhaps nationally. The national river survey of NZRCA, when formalised, will allow key sections of a river to be identified for specific paddling features, in effect a snapshot for future reference. Matching this to social features of the experience allows a comprehensive picture of amenity.

The social science field of recreation science has developed tools to survey not only how much use an area gets but how much enjoyment or satisfaction relative to peoples' expectations is present. This is now accepted as a fair measure of impact if it changes significantly due to any management action. By asking the right questions it is possible to build a picture of how crowding, isolation and degree of naturalness affect the canoeing experience.

These studies are quite advanced in the USA for rivers like the Colorado, and rivers of the Northwest. In New Zealand they have been used to establish features of the wilderness fishing and hiking experience for individuals and groups in the Greenstone/Caples and Routeburn. Convincing universities to undertake or commission some primary research in this area may provide a link to complete the picture of the people



aspect of amenity. This will help NZRCA to establish if the common mitigation measures above do really achieve their purpose and promote a clearer vision for canoeing.

## Water Conservation Orders

*Geoff Price, Whitewater Canoe Club Conservation Officer*

A national strategy for Water Conservation Orders is being formulated by the NZRCA, to protect rivers that are of greatest importance to kayakers. The first stage is to compile a list of granted Water Conservation Orders, to show what is currently protected.

Water Conservation Orders exist in two forms: National Water Conservation Orders granted under section 20D of the former Water and Soil Conservation Act 1967, and Water Conservation Orders granted under section 214 of the Resource Management Act 1991. The following table shows a complete list of granted Water Conservation Orders, plus pending applications:

### National Water Conservation Orders

River	Status	Reference
Motu River	Granted 7 February 1984	1984/20
Rakaia River	Granted 10 October 1988	1988/241
Lake Wairarapa	Granted 6 March 1989	1989/51
Manganui-a-te-ao River	Granted 6 March 1989	1989/52
Lake Ellesmere	Granted 2 July 1990	1990/155
Ahuriri River	Granted 2 July 1990	1990/156
Grey River	Granted 22 July 1991	1990/133

### Water Conservation Orders

River	Status	Reference
Rangitikei River	Granted 15 February 1993	1993/15
Kawarau River	Granted 17 March 1997	1997/38
Mataura River	Granted 7 July 1997	1997/126
Buller River	Tribunal Decision C32/96	application
Mohaka River	Tribunal Decision W20/92	application
Motueka / Riwaka Rivers	WCO being redrafted	application
Wanganui River	Pending Waitangi Tribunal	application

There are currently ten granted Water Conservation Orders (WCO's) and four applications. It should be noted that only parts of the rivers in this list are protected, rather than the whole river. Also, some WCO's also include tributary rivers, for example, the Shotover River is included in the Kawarau River WCO.

The status of the four applications deserves comment:

**Buller River:** A tribunal hearing was held in 1995, and the tribunal's report was released 31 May 1996. However, the Buller River WCO has still not been gazetted. The tribunal judge was not satisfied that there was sufficient evidence to support a WCO over some waters. The tribunal's report was not conclusive, and left it to the minister (Simon Upton) to decide. The minister has requested the parties to provide sufficient evidence to justify the inclusion of doubtful waters, and only those that were not contested.

**Mohaka River:** The WCO application has been delayed by a Waitangi Treaty claim for 5-6 years.

**Motueka River:** The application for a WCO was made by the Fish and Game Council, and two pre-hearing meetings were held in Motueka last year. Negotiations between Fish and Game Council and farmers are in progress regarding water taken for irrigation.

**Wanganui River:** The application for a WCO has been delayed by a Waitangi Treaty claim, and is on hold pending a Waitangi Tribunal decision.

The second stage is to identify rivers that are of national importance from the river survey data. A list of the top twenty rivers has been compiled by Jonathan Hunt from the river survey database. The river survey was undertaken in 1990-1991, and so the data is reasonably old.

The table over the page shows a list of the top 20 rivers from the 1991 survey, ranked in order of their importance (score out of 5), with comments on their conservation status.

*Continued on page 10.*



## Twenty most important rivers and their conservation status

Rank	River	Importance	Status
1	Motu	4.85	WCO 1984/20
2	Karamea	4.58	Within Kahurangi National Park
3	Landsborough	4.57	Within Kahurangi National Park
4	Mohaka	4.54	WCO application
5	Kawarau	4.43	WCO 1997/38
6	Shotover	4.43	Part of WCO 1997/38
7	Buller	4.41	WCO application, granting pending
8	Rangitikei	4.30	WCO 1993/15
9	Clarence	4.26	No protection
10	Taieri	4.25	No protection
11	Whakapapa	4.24	No protection
12	Hollyford	4.21	Within Fiordland National Park
13	Tongariro	4.18	No protection
14	Wairoa	4.17	No protection
15	Rangitaiki	4.15	No protection
16	Ngaruroro	4.11	No protection
17	Grey	4.09	WCO 1991/133
18	Rangitata	4.08	No protection
19	Waikato	4.07	No protection
20	Hurunui	3.93	No protection

The top eight rivers all have protection under Water Conservation Orders, or by being within national parks. Although, it should be noted that the Buller River WCO has not been granted, and outstanding issues need to be resolved so this can be granted as soon as possible. There are other rivers not in this list that were only kayaked infrequently at the time of the survey, but have increased in importance since, and may well deserve a top 20 ranking now.

Effort will now be focussed on identifying other rivers that are of national importance, but are not protected by Water Conservation Orders or by other means. Water Conservation Orders may be sought for these. The river survey data shows that the Clarence River (in 1991) was of top priority. Some of the rivers identified by the survey as ranking high in importance, are of regional importance only, such as the Taieri and Hurunui Rivers, and are not necessarily of national importance.

The Clarence River is of national importance, and is currently threatened by a possible hydro dam. Marlborough Electric have confirmed that investigations are being undertaken on generating hydro-electric power from the Clarence, but advise that these are at a preliminary stage. They have already purchased land in the area. The Clarence River warrants a Water Conservation Order to protect it, and an application needs to be made soon. ¶

## Threat to the RMA

*Ritz Wood*

*(Excerpt from "Conservation News," Forest and Bird Society.)*

In 1991 the Resource Management Act was introduced after extensive public debate. This Act introduced the objective of sustainable management into environmental planning laws. The Act has served New Zealand well and many controversial issues have been resolved satisfactorily through negotiation and discussion.

However, the Act, as intended by Parliament, is impacting on those businesses and landowners whose activities cause significant environmental damage. Those who seek to drain wetlands, build subdevelopments on riverbanks or fragile coastal peninsulars etc. have occasionally been declined or had conditions placed on their developments. These people have embarked on a well funded campaign to weaken the RMA. Environment Minister Simon Upton is reviewing the Act. Owen McShane, a business consultant who strongly opposes the Act, was commissioned by Upton.

The McShane report calls for a major gutting of the principles of the RMA such as removing the need to consider future generations and removing the provisions for the protection of amenity, landscape and intrinsic values. These are core elements of the RMA. Upton had instructed him not to review the purpose of the Act, but this was ignored.

McShane also proposes that public participation be limited or eliminated in certain areas and that subdivision controls be removed from the Act. This would suit property developers but threatens the natural values of the margins of lakes, rivers and coasts. (For example, this could result in applicants being granted subdivision rights but then being refused land use



consent. Obviously the time to assess the impacts is at the subdivision stage.)

Copies of the McShane report are available from the Ministry for the Environment, PO Box 10-362, Wellington. Fax: (04) 471 0195. Please send a letter to the Ministry asking the Government to reject the McShane report and uphold the environmental provisions of the RMA. Submissions close on 30 June.

## Access

### Wairoa River resource consent

On behalf of a number Auckland canoe clubs, Adrian Davis has made a submission to the Auckland Regional Council regarding a resource consent being sought by Watercare Services Ltd. for continued operation of the dams on the Wairoa River and Cosseys Creek.

The submission made the points that the Wairoa is the only river close to Auckland that provides whitewater up to class II-III, or IV in flood. Conditions were requested so that a minimum flow (4cu at Cosseys Creek) will be available, and that four hour releases be made on various weekends (approx. 15) throughout the year.

### Waipori Working Bee

As reported in the Otago Canoe & Kayak Club newsletter for May, a keen bunch spent a day at the slalom site repairing wires, adding new wires to create additional gate combinations and working on riverbank protection. Their efforts are bound to be appreciated by local paddlers.

### Recreational Water Releases

*Mike Savory, NZRCA Access Officer*

One of the best reasons for supporting a national organisation for recreational whitewater paddlers is

that we then have a combined voice on issues that concern us. As a representative of the NZRCA an individual or club can achieve much more. Here is some news on three areas where water rights issues affect canoeists.

### Waikaremoana

When ECNZ was initially formed as a state-owned enterprise, it was given until 2001 to re-apply for all of the water rights it had (now called consents under the RMA). The applications for the resource consents that will allow the Waikaremoana Power Scheme to continue to operate were lodged last month. These consents are being applied for under the terms of the RMA and require the applicant to "mitigate, remedy or avoid" adverse impacts of the activities. Rob Worlledge has been representing Hawkes Bay Canoe Club and the NZRCA on a working party, which has been looking into the issues over the last few years.

Part of the final outcome for the canoeists is that we get a section of whitewater back. The section of the Waikaretaheke river, from the spillway at Lake Whakamarino to the power station at Piripaua is usually a dry river bed. Under the proposed conditions canoeists will get flow, on both days of three weekends, down this section of river. The run, of about 6km, is fast and continuous grade III with one grade IV. The first half of the run is in bush. Also on the consent are six scheduled releases for the slalom course below Piripaua which means the section down from here to the bridge will be paddable.

Thanks very much to Rob and the others in HBCC who put in hours of work to see this through.

### Tekapo

The consents for Tekapo have been reviewed this year as part of the plan to get the artificial whitewater course completed (see report on page 4). It is

*Continued on page 12*



*Wade Bishop on the Mangahao, a few years back. Refer item on page 12. Photo: Mike Savory.*



planned to agree a fixed schedule for future releases on the Tekapo (e.g. first and third weekends of November to January). If you have any comments on this please contact Mike Savory phone 04 475 9702 or msavory@actrix.gen.nz.

### Pukaki

Currently the consent we have for this river is for two days of flow at 140 cumecs. Over the last few years we have taken these as one day of flow starting at 140 cumecs, then ramping up to 270 cumecs. We have the opportunity to review this as well. Comments to Mike as for the Tekapo.

### Mangahao

The consent for the Mangahao is also up for review at present. What is your experience of the river on the release days? Do you think there should be a third day during the year? Are there too many people on the river? How many times a year would you personally do the river, if it was flowing? What do you think of the river level that is released? Comments to Mike as for the Tekapo. ¶

## The Hallelujah Chorus to the River Safety Courses

*(otherwise known as "A Day in the Life of the Mangahao")*

*Ritz Wood*

When the other group splits their boat nose:

*Praise be the River Safety course for we knoweth the value of carrying duct tape.*

When Paul Tryon gets broached, swims out and his boat disappears underwater:

*Praise be the River Safety course for we knoweth how to pendulum on throwlines.*

When someone has to stand in cold water over crotch-deep for long periods of time:

*Praise be the River Safety course graduate who is in the Dry Suit.*

When I'm sitting vertically pinned in the Mangahao, knowing there's airspace, but a cliff beside you, so you have to get out by yourself:

*Praise be the River Safety Course for I knoweth what this is and what to do.*

When Esther swims and we have a person, boat, and paddle to collect:

*Praise be the River Safety course, for we knoweth she's collected first.*

When her paddle disappears into a hole mid-current:

*Praise be the River Safety course, for we knoweth to throw throwbags.*

When we are overdue off the river:

*Praise be the River Safety course, for our kayaker /shuttle driver knoweth what to do.*

HALLELUJAH !!

Go get yourself on a course if you haven't been on one - or it was a long time ago. ¶



## Safety

*Mark Planner, NZRCA Safety Officer*

Further to Robin Baumann's article regarding accidents and incidents, I've listed a few things to consider for when things do go wrong on the river:

- Know the take-out and escape routes. This is particularly important for sections with dangerous downstream features (Access 14 with Tree Trunk Gorge, Dogleg with Nevis Bluff).
- How good are your CPR skills? Could you give CPR to an unconscious person on the deck of your boat? In rough water? On the deck of a play boat?
- How good is your rescue knife/saw? Have you ever tried it on rope, wood or plastic/HTP?
- Do you always carry rescue gear, even on easy rivers that you've paddled heaps of times before?
- Can you confirm that additional help has been requested? Delays or misunderstandings when calling for assistance could have serious consequences.
- A good habit for rescuers is to look at your watch when possible, in order to keep a mental timeline of the incident. This helps when assessing the seriousness of the situation (ie. time in water, time underwater), when giving a history to paramedics, and (should things go badly wrong) when dealing with police or coroner's enquiries at a later date.

(Thanks to Mick Hopkinson for his help with this article.) ¶





## Education

*Janette Kear, NZRCA Education Officer*

### Education report for 1997/98

Education and Safety worked closely together this year. A short article entitled "Kayaking deaths possible," aimed at raising awareness of expected high rainfalls, and the dangers of being unprepared when "pushing the limits," appeared in the November 1997 edition of *Wilderness*.

Increased liaison with NZOIA occurred both through personal contacts and Janette's attendance at the NZOIA Level 2's and Assessors meeting in December 1997.

Although more effort could have been put into promoting River Safety and Rescue courses, several River Safety courses did occur, either through clubs or kayak businesses. Janette trialled a trip leaders training evening with the Whitewater Canoe Club and plans to make the format available to NZRCA members.

#### Trip Leaders Training Evening

Following on from the 1997 NZCA/NZRCA AGM, where Max Grant raised concerns that the NZRCA needed to provide more guidance at the 'club instructor and leader' level, I developed a format for raising club members skills and confidence in the trip leader role. The three hour session was loosely based on a format I use in teaching swimming instructors—a good example of cross-fertilisation from other disciplines. Another purpose of the evening was to launch the Whitewater Canoe Club's Safety Manual.

Fifteen participants gathered in a room suitable for teaching purposes (ie. it had a whiteboard, tables and chairs and a projection screen). Everyone introduced themselves, then were asked to stand in a line, grouping themselves to show in which area of the outdoors the bulk of their experience was (ie. tramping, kayaking, 'other'). The point drawn from this was that the participants as a group had years of experience from which to draw.

We then moved into three groups which competed against each other to be first to get the word in kayak 'pictionary'—the words chosen being kayak, big water, and paddler. Other words could be used, but these three were deliberately drawn from the three areas of the risk management matrix: equipment, environment and people. A very brief overview of the matrix followed.

Next the three groups were each assigned a different task—to draw up guidelines for club river trips in their three main phases—before the trip, on the river bank, and on the river. Each group reported back on their guidelines and compared them to the club's published guidelines.

Brett Whiteley, NZOIA Level 2 Instructor and Assessor, and former NZCA Safety Officer, then gave a presentation expanding on the criteria for safe trips. This part of the session could equally be used to further introduce the Risk Management matrix, or any other area individual clubs feel the need to focus on.

*Continued on page 15.*

## Aorere River

*Hugh Canard*

Further to the item in NZC (Autumn 1998) about Golden Bay, it is worth mentioning the area's largest river, the Aorere. This river has a large forested catchment which extends well into the Kahurangi National Park and therefore it collects water from every westerly front out of the Tasman. The river has road access up to the start of the Heaphy Track and there are some interesting little canoeing features, especially after rain. The lower river is grade I-II and becomes tidal as you approach Collingwood. The best whitewater section is from 15 Mile Creek to the Quartz Range Bridge.

The river flows mainly over coarse shingle without much braiding and there are three hard rock gorges with deep pools and some rapids. At normal summer flow there is nothing over Grade II, but as the flow increases so does the action. There are frequent play spots and some surprisingly grand scenery in the gorges. There is a stretch 1km above the Quartz Range road bridge which has a series of superb surfing waves and soft holes created by flow over smooth rock ledges. Immediately after rain there are six or seven waves about a metre high and eddies on river left to provide return rides. One wave is 15 metres across and maybe 1.5m high. There is no limit to the time you can spend here. I've even done the shuttle and my companions were still surfing away merrily on my return.

A word of caution. A number of otherwise grade II rapids run into bluffs with serious undercuts and tree debris. They seem nastiest either at lower flows and flood stage. Two kayakers were drowned in the Aorere in the 1970's in a seemingly innocuous pool which formed a massive whirlpool in flood. We paddled at high flow and we experienced conditions similar to a high flow Roaring Meg in the narrower sections of the gorges. ¶



## Three go mad in South Westland

Justin Randall

The Easter break coupled with a good weather forecast provided the perfect opportunity for a trip to South Westland (and a good excuse to avoid the cold of Queenstown). Throw in two other interested parties (Paul Macey of Christchurch and Erik Bradshaw, Arrowtown), a couple of inflatables, a right turn at Yaldhurst and we were in business.

After a long drive the team assembled in Fox and, with maps and red wine in hand, retired to do planning for trips on the Cook and Mahitahi rivers. First problem encountered; dimly lit bars are no place to mark topographic maps as we were to find later.

Saturday boded well weatherwise so with inflatables in hand we set off up the south bank of the Cook. Surrounded by native forest, glacial blue water and the awesome view of the Balfour glacier ahead even my disdain for anything involving walking with a kayak left me. After three hours walking we eventually got in about 1/2km above the confluence with the Balfour river, where the river's gradient started to steepen. Having never been in an inflatable before (tractor tyres aside) the moment of kayaking truth loomed ominously. A couple of eddy turns, a ferry glide and two rolls later the first rapid had been descended intact, and another convert to the world of inflatable paddling made.

The river was medium volume and grade III+ at the top easing to II lower down. Though not difficult paddling-wise, the combination of high snow-covered mountains and the absence of signs of human activity were hard to beat in a river with such easy accessibility. There was also some potential playing, and harder



*Erik Bradshaw on the upper Mahitahi.*

*Photo: Paul Macey.*

water higher up for those willing to carry hardshells (sherpas suggested though).

Sunday dawned early (real early) to meet the Alpine Guides Helicopter at 7.30am at the Mahitahi. It was here that the earlier mentioned map problem became evident; one contour included and three omitted in error! A bit perturbed by this sudden gain of 40m of vertical drop I was hastily bundled into the back seat where I couldn't see anything—hmm...

We eventually got in below the large orange-coloured slip on river left (you can't miss it). The river started with about an hour of grade III/III+, which provided a great warm up, before the river passed a large island and turned to the right and steepened. What followed was a couple of hours of continual grade IV/IV+ water as the water tumbled through boulders that seemed to be ever increasing in size. We chickened down the left out of the main flow before rejoining it, with individual drops and rapids tending to blur together into one big enjoyable ride. After a couple of hours or so the river eased briefly in gradient giving a

chance for a breather before steepening further and tumbling on. We ran some of the drops in this section, then got out for a long walk on river right. We portaged for about an hour (500m) past some interesting drops climaxing in a very interesting 5-6m one followed later by an exit drop of about 3-4m into a flat pool. From here the river eases through the grades with a scenic but long paddle out to the road bridge.

Having some time left before going home we thought we might explore the Manakaiaua (just south of the Copland) with the inflatables. We hiked up about 3-4km from the main road, getting in below where the walking looked like getting difficult—I haven't totally lost my disdain for carrying kayaks. What followed was a cool hour or so of grade III+ pool drop, as we descended what at times seemed a ridiculously small amount of water pouring between some conversely large rocks. Another cool little side trip if you're passing or looking for something different, mostly paddlable except for a couple of drops with trees in them. Anyone keen for this one who wants to take the short cut across the fields check



with the farmer south of the bridge on the left (as you go south) first. They seemed a little sceptical that we were interested, otherwise there's always the chain.

#### Cook

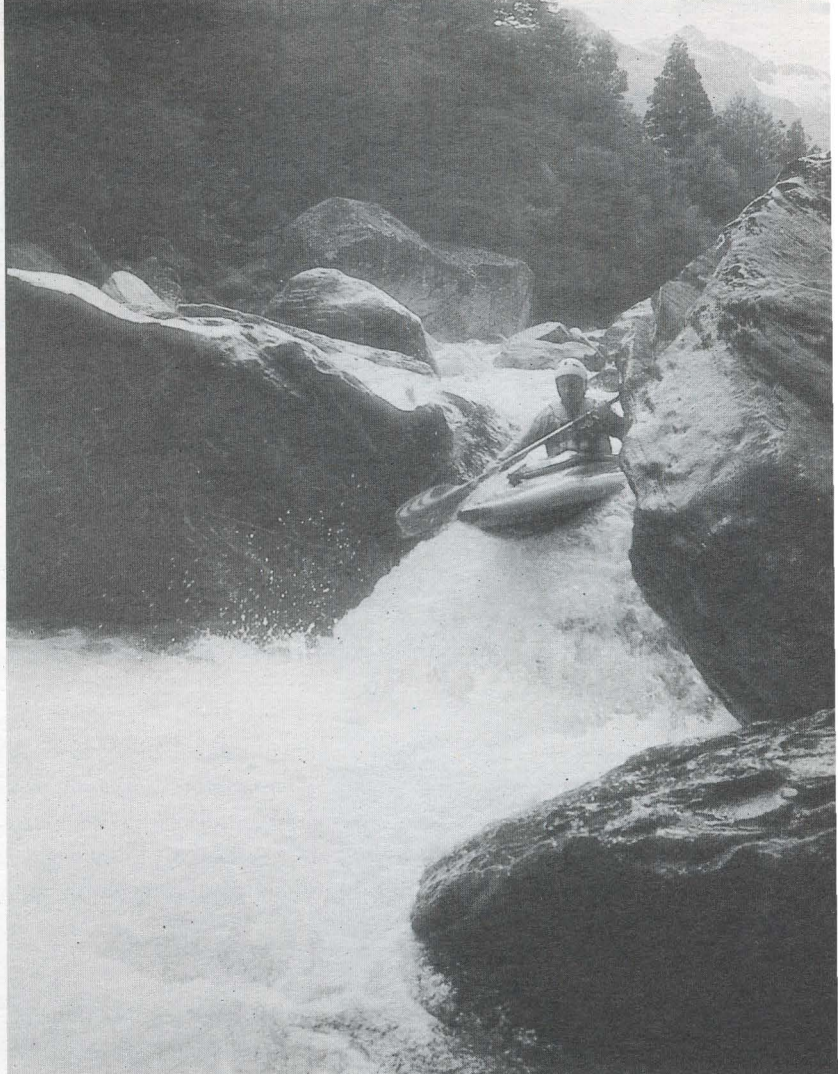
**CLASS:** III/III+  
**LEVEL:** medium  
**GAUGE:** Visual  
**LENGTH:**  
**GRADIENT:**  
**TIME:** 4.5 hours including walk in  
**PUT IN:** 1/2 km above the Balfour confluence, or higher for harder stuff  
**TAKE OUT:** SH6  
**SHUTTLE:**  
**MAP:** H36 Mt Cook  
**CHARACTER:** Medium volume, rock garden

#### Mahitahi

**CLASS:** IV+ (V) with some portages  
**LEVEL:** 30 cumecs at bridge, 10 at put in  
**GAUGE:** Visual  
**GRADIENT:** up to 70m per km  
**LENGTH:** approx 17km  
**TIME:** 9.5 hours in total  
**PUT IN:** below orange coloured slip (below upper steep part)  
**TAKE OUT:** SH6  
**MAP:** G36 Paringa  
**CHARACTER:** Steep, continuous, medium/low volume

#### Manakaiaua

**CLASS:** III+  
**LEVEL:** Low  
**GAUGE:** Visual  
**LENGTH:** 3-4km  
**GRADIENT:**  
**TIME:** 4 hours in total  
**PUT IN:** When you're tired of walking  
**TAKE OUT:** Main road  
**MAP:** M36 Paringa  
**CHARACTER:** Low volume, pool drop



*Erik Bradshaw tends to his broached inflatable kayak on the Mahitahi.  
 Photo: Paul Macey.*

### Education report for 1997/98, continued from page 13...

The evening concluded with the introduction of the safety manual, the assigning of "apprentice trip leaders" to established leaders and appropriate trips, and the issue of the basic trip guidelines to all trip leaders.

I used the standard lesson plan of aims | teaching points | activities | organisation | equipment. I facilitated, rather than taught, the session as the overall aim was to run an awareness raising, confidence-building programme. ¶

*Have you been on a great trip recently?  
 If so, write it up and send it in!*



## New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association Inc.

*Our purpose is to preserve New Zealand's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.*

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