



# New Zealand 08.1 Canoeing

Winter Issue 2008

## Canoeist of the Year Announced!

Congratulations to the 2008 recipient of this award, Andy England. Previously from Scotland and president of the Scottish Canoe Association Andy moved to NZ and settled on the West Coast where he continues to contribute to the NZ paddling community on a daily basis.

He is a keen explorer of South Island rivers with trips ranging from slogging up the Styx, sometimes at ridiculously high flow, to a 'first descent' from Rakaia to Hokitika - initially carrying kayaks over Whitcombe pass and then walking/paddling down the Whitcombe and Hokitika rivers to Hokitika township. Another trip of note would be the attempt of Morgan Gorge on the Waitaha which, if nothing else, proved to be definitely a river worth protecting.

Andy has been a key player behind the Tasman Whitewater SAR team on the Coast since its inception and smoothly bridges the gap between working with the police and kayakers and is hugely respected by both sides. He regularly takes part in searches so is not just a bureaucrat. In his professional life Andy is Deputy Principal at Greymouth High School, where he takes great pride in teaching school kids to paddle. He has been instrumental in impelling local kids from Greymouth into the river and out into the larger world that the river represents.

It is Andy's energy for the rivers that defines his contribution to the sport and indeed the community on the West Coast. He has vision, belief and somehow - amidst a demanding job and young family - time, to commit to the mammoth task of protecting what natural resources are left on the Coast. He may be the single largest obstacle in the way of the development juggernaut.

During 2007 Andy and Dave Ritchie (2006 COTY) teamed up to lead the discussions for mitigation of the proposed Arnold River Power Scheme, hopefully ensuring that if the scheme does proceed a world class white water park will go some way to offsetting the lost teaching and recreational amenity the natural river provides. Currently Andy is working at objecting to the proposed Mokihinui the Waitaha dams. He is also promoting the possibility of protecting all the rivers of the West Coast as a world heritage site.

Congratulations Andy! On behalf of NZRCA and the paddling community thanks for your hours volunteered and your kayaking passion. Safe paddling and have fun!

*Michelle*

## In our thoughts

*The outdoor community was shocked to hear of the Mangatepopo tragedy. The staff of OPC have the highest standards and many years of experience. That such a dreadful event could occur is a lesson to us all that risks are omnipresent whenever we adventure. Similarly the loss of Derek Lovell, who died in the Hamilton coolstore fire, highlighted that we should make the most of the time we have. Milli Lovell, NZRCA's past Administration Officer, shared far too short a time with Derek; but they were quality years filled with love.*

*Our condolences go to everyone affected by these events. you are in our thoughts*

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## About New Zealand 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 around 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.

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Thanks to contributors and advertisers and the myriad of e-mail correspondents for their contributions to this issue of *NZ Canoeing*. May the rivers flow for you!

All map references are to NZMS Infomap 260 Topographical series.

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**The New Zealand River Guide will be online from June 2008. Check it out!**

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

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*as elected at the NZRCA AGM April 2008*

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## River Rescue Course Subsidy!

The NZRCA offers a safety subsidy to its affiliated members through the Water Safety Council. This subsidy reimburses 50% (up to \$100) of the cost of a River Rescue or River Safety course done with an approved provider, either on your own, through your club or in an organised group.

Before the intended course date the individual or group organiser must email [education@rivers.org.nz](mailto:education@rivers.org.nz) and advise the name of the provider/ instructor, course dates and the amount of subsidy which will be required. The NZRCA will pre-approve the subsidy provided funds are available, and will confirm this by email. The reimbursement will be made on completion of the course, once the NZRCA receives the subsidy claim form (print this from [www.rivers.org.nz](http://www.rivers.org.nz)) and the course receipt from your course instructor. If your subsidy is not pre-approved you may not be subsidised.

So take control! Organise a group, find an instructor (look under Safety, then River Safety & River Rescue Course's on [www.rivers.org.nz](http://www.rivers.org.nz)), email [education@rivers.org.nz](mailto:education@rivers.org.nz) to get pre-approval, enjoy your course, fill in your claim for reimbursement and send it to us.

# Newssplashes

## Kaituna

A few years ago Bay of Plenty Electricity (BOPE) applied to DoC to inundate part of the Upper Kaituna Scenic Reserve which abuts Awesome Gorge on the Kaituna River. The NZRCA submitted on this concession application earlier in 2007 as it would ruin Awesome Gorge forever and Gnarly Gorge would only be runnable if there were releases. The initial Bay of Plenty Conservancy report said it shouldn't go ahead. Following public submissions another independent Conservator (quoting our submission extensively) also recommended that the Kaituna dam application be declined. Two days before the Christmas break, the Director General of the Department of Conservation gave effect to the Government's energy strategy and did a back flip and gave BOPE a 60 year concession. The NZRCA is considering a judicial appeal as this decision is based on a highly questionable legal technicality. Unfortunately the Government has indicated that it might preempt this sort of appeal by pushing through a change to the Conservation Act to more easily allow renewable energy on Conservation land.

## Releases

Whakapapa release Sat, 06 Sep 2008 09:00-17:00

Poutu release Sat, 20 Sep 2008 09:00-15:00

Rangipo release Sun, 21 Sep 2008 08:00-16:00

Whakapapa release Sat, 27 Sep 2008 09:00-17:00

## Mokihinui

The Mokihinui River is a beautiful wilderness run paddlable by intermediate kayakers. Meridian proposes to drown the entire main stem for which there is no mitigation possible for kayakers. The North Branch is a classic grade 4 creek, which will also be made much less attractive due to a 14km flatwater paddle-out after a long and testing run. DOC rates the Mokihinui seventh nationally for its heritage and natural values, a rating much higher than for any other river threatened by a hydro project. Meridian commissioned a study, which concluded there was no possible mitigation for these values, which was then buried but has recently come to light via an Official Information Act request. Robin Rutter-Baumann compiled the NZRCA's submission opposing Meridian's resource consent application.

## Ngaawaparua Rapid

There has been some misunderstanding around access to the Ngaawaparua rapid (Full James rapid, Waikato River). This site is open to the public, however access arrangements have to be made with the security company; Forest and General Security Ltd, 63 Miro St, Taupo. Ph (07) 376 5333. NZRCA asks that paddlers and all other users absolutely respect this arrangement and the land, so that future negotiations are not hampered by disrespectful use.

## RIVERS UNDER THREAT

potentially on the chopping block in the next 20 or so years:

North Island

Whangaehu

Kaituna – “lower level”, “upper level” and Okere Falls

Whakapapanui

Papamanuka

Taraw

Mohaka – lower (as early as 2010)

Rangitaiki (at Kioenui)

Ruakituri – Waitangi Falls (above main sections, but may affect paddling)

Pohangina

Mangawhero

South Island

Mokihinui

Waitaha

Matiri

Clarence (possible diversion to Waiau)

Arahura

Taipo

Toaroha (potentially by 2011)

Kakapotahi (potentially by 2012)

Nevis

Wairau

The Government is resolute in its quest for renewable energy - rivers will be lost forever as a result of these policy changes.

Above a list of paddling rivers listed in Electricity Commission or Transpower official documents from the last six months that are potentially on the chopping block in the next 20 or so years:

We won't be able to fight all battles - we'll need to make some choices on what rivers we will “die in a ditch for” as some hydro will inevitably go ahead. But we also need to make politicians, decision makers and the general public (including other kayakers) realise what is at stake. The media is slowly starting to pick up on the issue (Wilderness magazine published a feature article in its February 2008 magazine on this topic with substantial contribution from the NZRCA) but the time for action is NOW - we all need to get the message out there.

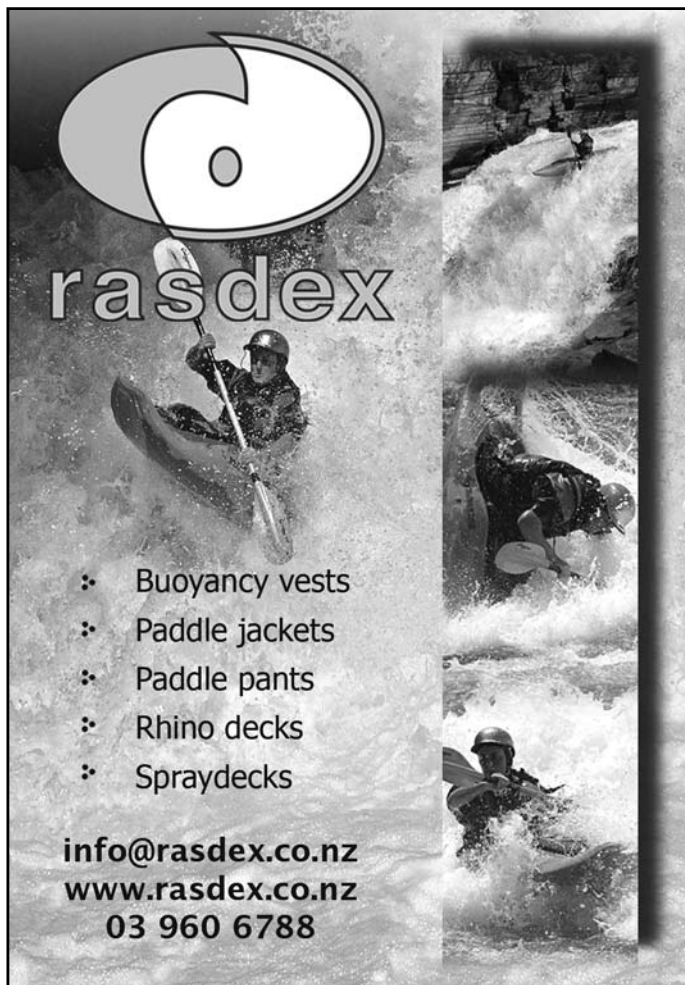
## Pack Paddling on the Upper Kakapotahi

*Too many people, too much water and too little beta give a group of outlanders all they can handle on the South Island's West Coast.*

*Story by Joe Bousquin for New Zealand Adventure Magazine.  
Photos by Robin Rutter-Baumann*

The decision to run the Upper Kakapotahi, a Class IV-V gorge on the South Island's legendary West Coast, seemed logical at the time. I had spent the day before, along with another American I'd met named Jesse Sears, chasing a group of multinational paddlers - and no Kiwis - through the bush surrounding Hokitika, the lovely beach town that is the center of kayaking on the West Coast. After a morning filled with U-Turns, bungled directions and repeated utterances of the phrase "this is just like herding cats," we had settled for a short, walk-in run of the Class III-IV Toaroa River. Nice, but hardly the legendary New Zealand paddling I'd seen in my collection of whitewater porn over the years.

Hoping to avoid a similar fiasco the next day, Jesse and I schemed early that evening around the hissing gas stoves of the Lake Mahinapua campground. We'd heard the water level on the Upper Kakapotahi should be good the next morning, even though an attempt by a different group that day had ended at the Greymouth hospital with a dislocated knee. Still mending a broken arm I'd snapped boating six months earlier



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in California, I heard the news with some trepidation. Yet, looking at the description in Graham Charles's New Zealand Whitewater guidebook, we were confident. The Upper Kakapotahi was described as a short run, less than 2 km long, packed with seven good drops in a beautiful, walled-in gorge. Rapids named Postman's Falls and Air Mail sounded glorious, and Charles dubbed it a "destination" run. Just what someone that had come all the way from the States would want.

But the guidebook also recommended going with someone who knew the run, especially at higher flows (which we were sure to have). It warned of a nasty sieve (where water goes under rocks) and logs lodged in blind slots. Getting local information was essential, the book advised.

Kiwi paddler Jess Brown, left early that week with her van, a pre-paid cell phone and the advice: When boating on the West Coast, go with people who know the runs. She'd then happily returned to New Zealand Kayak School, Murchison

Since then, I'd been hooking up with random boaters at the Mahinapua campground all week. It was just after New Years, and the "Pu" camp, always ground zero for foreign boaters visiting the Coast, was packed with dozens of eager, out-of-country kayakers with very little first-hand knowledge of local rivers.

Asking around, we discovered a third American, Jayson Yates, had paddled the river the week before, and he agreed to lead us down. Of course, as we made our plans, word started swirling through the campground, and it was soon clear dozens of beta-light, outlander paddlers would head for the river the next day. Thinking of the tight, small gorge, I became wary of a dangerous bottleneck forming on the Upper Kakapotahi.

### An Early Start

Just 15 minutes after rolling out of bed the next morning, I was packed in Jesse's van. Next to me was Tom Woodhead, a Brit we'd paddled with the day before. Jayson was in a vehicle behind us, with two other boaters.

Looking at the river from a bluff high above the gorge when we arrived, the water level looked good, compared to descriptions we'd heard. Conditions seemed optimal.

Just as we were putting on, two Australians approached us. Though we didn't want our group to get too large, in the "bro" world of kayaking where paddlers routinely hook up to run shuttle and paddle together, it's hard to turn someone away; we invited the Aussies along. But now, we were eight, too many for one team in the tight gorge.

We decided to split into two groups: Jesse, Tom, myself and the two Aussies, with Jayson's trio behind us. As we took off downstream, the thought occurred to me that I was paddling with boaters I didn't know well, and that no one in my group had seen the river before. With 13 years of paddling

experience, I shrugged off my fear; I'd done the same in the States countless times before.

### Watch out for wood

Running the first few drops, I felt the hum of adrenaline in my body, and the initial buzz calmed me. We made our way through the first three drops without incident, and at the halfway point of the run, everything seemed fine.

Then we came to the lip of Postman's Falls, a blind drop in the heart of the gorge. With vertical walls on both sides, we couldn't get out of our boats to scout the falls from shore. The rocks on river left, where paddlers usually scout or portage, were underwater. It was a sure sign we had higher water than we'd thought.

Jesse paddled along the lip of the falls, trying to get a glimpse of what lay downstream. He reported seeing a large tree lodged in the drop, the perfect snare for an errant kayaker.

A quick survey of our position didn't look good. With high water pouring over the drop and steep walls around us, there was no obvious egress. We decided to wait for Jayson, the one person on the river who'd run it before, before making a move. When he arrived, he said he couldn't remember any wood in the drop. "And there's a lot more water in here now," he confirmed.

I began to feel a slight chill in our shadowy berth. One rule of hard-water kayaking is to keep your momentum going, and we'd already been stopped at the falls for 20 minutes.

Scanning the walls again, we spotted a crack upstream leading out of the gorge. Tim, a member of Jayson's trio, clawed his way up the 30-meter crack to scout the drop.

His initial assessment was less than positive: instead of a thumbs up, I saw an open-palmed flutter, riverese for "It looks kinda dodgy to me."

Up, up, up...

Relying on Tim's judgment, I looked at Jesse and said, "Let's get to work." I knew the portage was on.

It took us 45 minutes to climb the crack and rope all eight, 15-20 kg kayaks up the wall.

With another mandatory portage downstream -- the scary sieve we'd read about -- I was somewhat doubtful about climbing back into the gorge to finish the run. But then Jesse and I scouted the drop that had just caused us so much grief. As we did, my heart sank.

With a clear view, I immediately saw a narrow - but, in my judgment - very doable route around the tree on river left.

"I think that goes," I said. Jesse nodded silently.

There was no blame to assign Tim. Part of the nature of kayaking is relying on others to make judgment calls for the group. Tim had never paddled with any of us before, and made a conservative decision, erring on the side of safety for all of us.

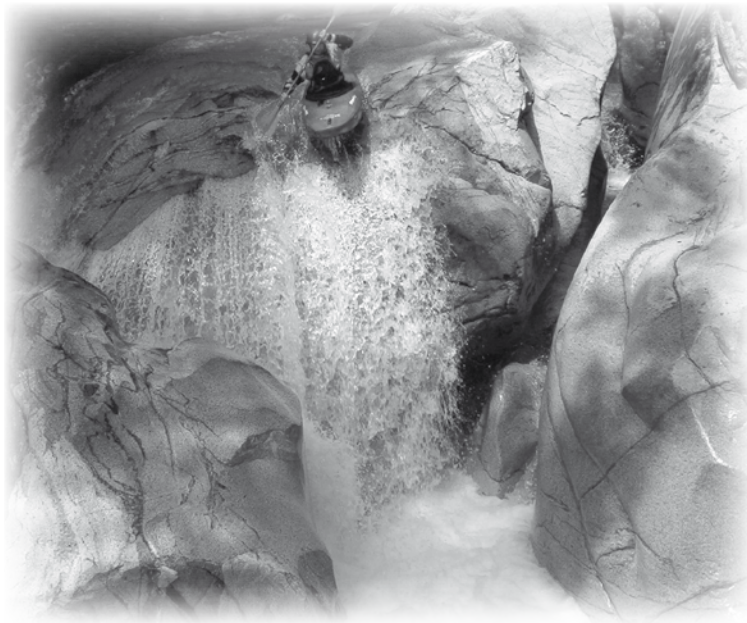
...And back down again.

Still, Jesse and I grunted audibly, realizing we were about to lower our boats back down into the gorge, a slippery, muddy and grueling ordeal. The rest of our group did the same.

river, boof, waterfall, sieve, huck, drop, paddle, rock, loop, cartwheel, air, nature, float, explore, canoe, white water, buffer, travel, experience, rescue, slide, spin, ferry, attain, eddy, whirlpool, cataract, gorge, swim, blunt, kayak, fun, scout, hydraulic, play, portage, creek, slalom, grade, carve, inspire, power, pourover, stroke, slice, pfd, donkey flip, helmet, race, wave, expedition, friends, lines, camping, throw-bag, movies, trips, adventures, knife, ecology, fitness, life, lateral, gate, undercut, lifejacket, carry, challenge, pour-over, competition, breath, crank, shuttle, mission, sunshine, passion, road-trip, events, prizes, tips, techniques, pin-drop, seal launch,

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By the time we were back on the water, it had been nearly two hours since we first approached Postman's Falls. In the meantime, the herd of boaters from the Pu camp had descended to our position. We ran the Postman's without mishap, but our giddiness had faded. I was getting cold, and Jesse said he was tired.

When we finally made it to Air Mail, the culmination of the run, the exact scenario we'd feared was unfolding: at least 20 kayakers clogged the small gorge, scouting Air Mail and the sieve portage below it. Indecision set in. Paddlers milled around holding ropes, each waiting to see what someone else would do.

### Going to porridge

Halfheartedly, Jesse and I tried to set up a safety system of ropes, positioning paddlers at strategic spots along the rapid in case someone crashed. But as I walked up the rapid to get in my boat, I saw empty expressions and little collective communication among the group.

Then I heard yelling downstream. One of the Brits from the campground, Robin, had inadvertently run the sieve drop - the mandatory portage - without any apparent consequence. We lacked the knowledge to know that at high flows, the drop can be run on river right; the shiver of near miss shot through my psyche.

When it was my turn to run the rapid, I paused and thought how we hadn't achieved any rhythm that day, save an excruciating stop-and-go.

Still, to my relief, I nailed my line off the Air Mail drop. I landed in the foamy water below it, just where I wanted to be. I started building speed to punch the big hydraulic, or turbulent stopper hole at the bottom of the rapid, just above the sieve.

Suddenly, I found myself engulfed. The hole was larger and more powerful than I expected. In seconds, the sky opened itself to me and I was cart-wheeling backwards. Then I was

upside down.

A world of bubbles and light

I missed my first roll, and as I tried to set up again, my head hit a rock. I rolled up just in time to run the entrance of the sieve rapid, backwards. Hitting a second hydraulic with my stern, I flipped again, immediately upstream of the sieve.

Perhaps my broken arm, just six months old, wasn't yet fully healed, but I missed my roll again. Underwater, I remember

thinking how bright it was, yellow, quiet and still. With a calm sort of resignation, I reached for the grab loop on my spray skirt, to bail out of my boat. I was directly above the treacherous rocks.

I bobbed up to a world of noise and rock, but luckily, next to an eddy - a calm pool - a metre upstream of the sieve. I feebly attempted to grab my boat before it washed downstream to get wedged in the snare. I pushed myself back into the eddy, feeling the delayed panic of my swim. If I'd washed over the edge, I almost surely would have become trapped under the rocks and drown.

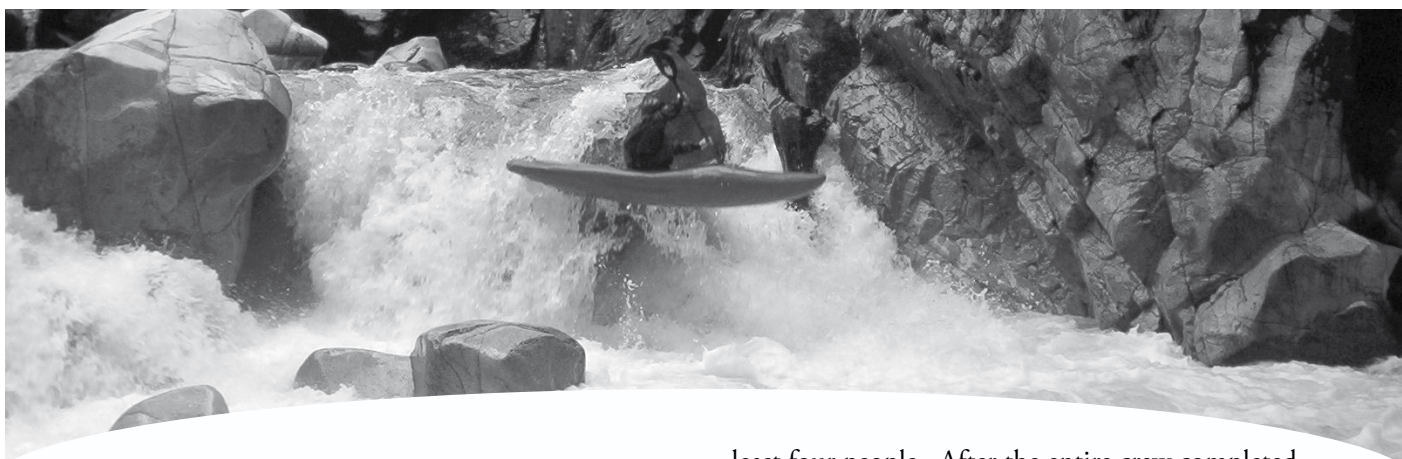
Walled in again

Hoisting myself out of the water, I surveyed my situation. The eddy was walled in, too. There was a small, slippery crack above me, but I doubted I'd be able to climb up it. I had my paddle, and edging onto a rock so I could see back upstream, I saw Jesse peering down into the drop, a worried

look on his face. I placed my hand on top of my head to signal that I was okay, and Jesse signaled back for me to stay where I was. He didn't have to worry; I wasn't going anywhere.

I could see the perch on river left usually used to portage the sieve. It wasn't an eddy, just a nook in the rock with moving water next to it. Between us was the Kakapotahi at high water; I would somehow have to cross above the sieve again to get out. Jesse and Jayson arrived in their boats minutes later with a good plan. They paddled across to the portage





spot, and then sent an empty boat back to me on a throw rope. I made the ferry without incident, and got out on the rock to help others portage around the sieve. With relief, I saw my own boat perched on a cliff downstream; Robin, after unintentionally running the sieve, had been in the right place to recover it.

The sheer number of paddlers still in the gorge made the group portage complicated, though. My run had already inspired several people to walk around Air Mail and the hydraulic, but as I scampered above the sieve, I saw an overturned, empty boat shoot through a nasty cave on river left, behind the rock we were using to portage. A very frightened, though unharmed, paddler swam after it. In all, the hole where I swam had wrenched at

least four people. After the entire crew completed the portage, we paddled down to the take out and hiked out of the steep canyon. By the time we reached Jesse's van, it was 4:30 p.m. A run that can be completed in less than an hour had taken us six hours to descend.

News of our day, and the numerous swims, mine included, on the Upper Kakapotahi quickly spread throughout New Zealand's West Coast boating community, inspiring much grimacing and raising of eyebrows. Had I not been involved in the fiasco, I might have had a similar reaction. All I can say now is that there was a lot of experience, but very little knowledge, on the river that day.

The Upper Kakapotahi is not an extremely difficult run, rated just IV-V in Graham's book, instead of the other, ultra hard V+ runs on the Coast. It is, however, very committing, due to its steep walls and blind drops. I had broken the one piece of advice Jess had given me, and that I knew myself after 13 seasons of kayaking: boat difficult water with people you know and know the river. But it is also part of the friendly



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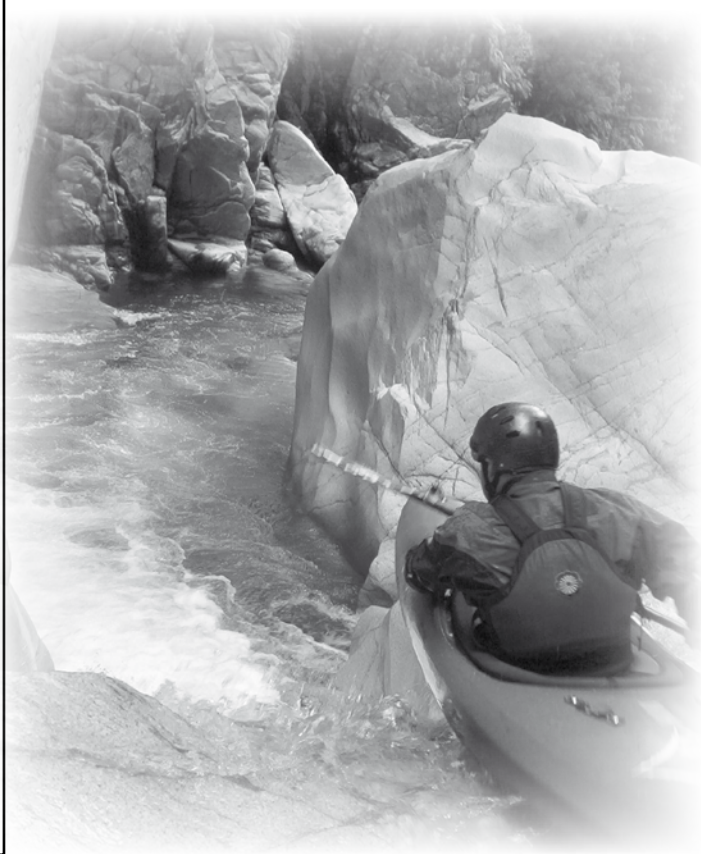






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nature of the sport to boat with new people, to share the unknown with people unknown to you until you have that shared experience.

The lack of first-hand knowledge on our trip compounded the don't-know-you dynamic of the group. Had someone stepped up to charge off Postman's Falls before our fiasco started to unfold, we may have gotten through the gorge quickly, and safely. But there was no way to know what was in that drop. Given our situation, we made a good decision to scout it, but better communication and a collective assessment would have made our trip a lot easier. That said, paddlers sometimes have to depend on one person's opinion to get further downstream.

Fatigue, a lack of rhythm and high water all contributed to our fiasco during the most dangerous part of the run, just above the sieve. A return trip to that spot at lower water revealed to me how heinously porous the sieve is. While freeing a log that had gotten choked in the exit of the sieve, it dropped into the water and disappeared without exiting the other side. The thought of being pushed under that rock while swimming through the squeeze still makes me wince.

I am grateful to the paddlers who were with me, especially Jesse and Jayson, who thought carefully and worked methodically to get me out of my jam. No one was to blame, but the free-wheeling atmosphere of the campground and the pack-paddling mentality of that day is something to consider on any overseas paddling adventure. Most of all, I'm thankful to have paddled the Upper Kakapotahi another day, with someone I knew, who knew the run.

## New Thinking To Save Rivers... Part III

*Thanks to Guy Salmon, Ecologic Foundation for allowing NZRCA to reprint this story.*

... This is the final part of the article, continued from last edition

In New Zealand's search for a sustainable energy future there are four main strategies available:

- + Waste less energy
- + Foster a less energy-intensive economy
- + Develop and apply new renewable technologies
- + Continue to use fossil fuels a bit longer, but sequester the associated carbon out of the atmosphere.

New Zealand will almost certainly end up using a mix of all four strategies. Almost inevitably, this will require higher energy prices than we have today.


So we need RMA protections for rivers that will be robust in a high-energy-price environment. That must be a key outcome from the Government's Sustainable Water Programme of Action.

In facing the climate change threat, the basic principle must be that everyone has an Abatement Obligation (AO) for their greenhouse gas emissions. That means they must either pay to reduce another emission source by an equivalent amount, or pay to establish permanent forests to sequester an equivalent amount of emissions.

Ebex21, a commercial project of Landcare Research, already offers businesses the opportunity to become "CarboNZero" by abating their emissions through regenerating a native forest. The cost is only \$15 per tonne of carbon dioxide stored. Larger scale operations in future should be cheaper still.

This approach, scaled up, provides a funding source that should see a lot of New Zealand's eroding hill country put back into forest over the next few decades, reducing the turbidity of our rivers.

The cost of requiring greenhouse gas emitters to offset their emissions in this



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way would also flow through, via increased energy prices, to support the other sustainability strategies listed above. That is important, because each strategy is hampered at present by lack of financial incentives for the required actions.

In the long run, everyone's AO must cover 100% of their emissions. Indeed, that should be the focus of a popular campaign to get individuals and businesses to sign up to abate their emissions. Ultimately, this cannot simply be a voluntary matter. The Government will need to set and enforce a minimum AO for everybody. To ease the transition, it will have to start with an AO of less than 100%, and progressively raise the number over time.

Previous efforts to tackle this issue through a carbon tax were based on handing out exemptions left, right and centre, but that proved to be a house of cards in the end. It's an approach that mobilized the lobbyists seeking exemptions, but failed to catch the nation's imagination on the main issue.

In contrast, the AO is a simple idea, easy to understand, and engaging everyone with the challenge we all face.

#### Strategies for sustainable agriculture

There are five water-related issues where action is needed:

- Separating livestock from contact with waterways
- Reducing nutrient leakage from farm fields
- Controlling water use to preserve environmental flows
- Preserving and restoring wetlands
- Curbing sediment losses from erodible hill country into waterways.

To bring about change in the way the land is farmed, we have three options: we can educate, we can regulate, and we can offer incentives. In practice, we will need to do all three together. Are regional councils up to this?

Their performance is certainly rather variable. Making the regional council system work properly is going to be the first critical challenge for achieving sustainable agriculture.

Central government put its foot down – albeit rather unsteadily – in setting a deadline for regional councils to achieve clean air standards. It will need to do something similar with its Sustainable Water Programme of Action.

The second critical challenge will be to provide better funding – partly for incentives, and partly for outreach. Regional councils need to train and employ a lot more farm advisers who can talk one-on-one with farmers.

Experience so far suggests that the underlying values of farmers are supportive of looking after the environment – once they are made aware of issues, and of how to solve them. With farmers, nothing works as well as one-on-one dialogue with a trusted adviser.

We need farmer acceptance of a history-making transition, from a traditional set of perceived property rights to a new set of sustainable property rights that is consistent with the long-standing purpose of the Resource Management Act, and is enforceable.

Many farmers act as though they still hold the same property rights that were held during the colonial settler era of New Zealand's history, when land could be cleared, swamps drained, streams polluted and soils eroded away without reference to anyone else.

The transition to sustainable property rights calls for attitude changes, but there is also a need for the community to share the costs of the transition with farmers.

Some of these costs – such as those associated with the measures set out in the Clean Streams Accord – can reasonably be expected of farmers themselves, especially given the leisurely timeframes provided for compliance.

But there are some other, larger costs that arise from mistakes made in the past, costs that it would be unfair to impose wholly on the present generation of farmers. Two examples illustrate this.



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The first is the restoration of lakes. The serious current condition of several of the Rotorua lakes, of most of the shallow Waikato lakes, and of Canterbury's Lakes Forsyth and Ellesmere, is the cumulative result of generations of unwise farming practices that were encouraged by governments over the years.

Degraded lakes are expensive to fix, and it would be unfair to load all that cost on to those who farm in their catchments today. The Government has already made some payments for lake restoration at Taupo and Rotorua, but it must do more.

Such payments should only be made when regional councils have come up with convincing and binding plans to restore the lakes. Most councils will need deadlines to get on to this.

Outside funding will also be needed to help the transition to sustainability on the erodible hill country. What was unwisely cleared in the past, should now be returned to bush. Under sustainable property rights, farming the rest should only be permitted if it is space-planted with sufficient trees to protect it from erosion.

Like fixing the lakes, fixing the hill country is a big-ticket item which the current generation of farmers on the land

cannot afford on their own.

The Manawatu-Wanganui regional council is seeking \$60 million of government assistance over ten years to make a start on the task in just one region.

Because erosion-prevention forests also have large, measurable carbon storage benefits, the introduction of an abatement obligation – discussed above – could provide a sizeable new source of funds to help with this task.

Charging for water use is another novel source of funds for the transition to sustainable agriculture which needs to be discussed. At present, a Canterbury farmer who gets a water permit to irrigate his farm, doubles its value.

But while the land resource must be paid for, the water resource is provided free by the community. Providing water for free has two perverse results: scarce water resources get over-used, and the community lacks the funds it needs for the eco-restoration of lakes and rivers.

It's time to insist that a rental is paid for use of water, just as it is for leasing land.

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