

The Whitewater NZ AGM held at the end of July in Christchurch was a great success, with paddlers coming from all over the country to discuss the role of the national association. The incoming Executive has some new faces. Polly Miller has stepped down as President and Matt Bennett has taken on this role. Jo Mair is also moving on. After ten years on the Executive Tony Ward-Holmes and Mike Birch also stepped down. Tony has just done a marathon effort on the Mokihinui defence amongst other things. Mike has made (and continues to make) a valuable contribution to the whitewater community having held many positions on the Executive including President. We will be sad to see them go but know they will all be lurking in the background ready to offer each their own breed of wisdom and support. Doug Rankin has taken over as Conservation Officer with assistance from Miriam Odlin for North Island issues. Debbie Bloxham is the new Editor. Sean (Sid) Bellamy will take over the Access role and Stu Richards is our new Administrator. Mike Nooney will carry on from Mike Birch as Communications Officer.



Morgan Gorge on the Waitaha. Photo: Zac Shaw

The Outstanding Rivers campaign has just been launched by a conglomerate of river huggers (Forest and Bird, Fish and Game, us...) to raise the profile of Water Conservation Orders as a means of protecting some of our wild and scenic rivers.

Whitewater NZ will help organise a mass paddle on the Ngaruroro River this Labour weekend to highlight the importance of this river to kayaking and support our partners Fish & Game in a possible Water Conservation Order application. If you are interested in joining the trip contact any one of the Exec who will point you in the right direction.

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About New Zealand Canoeing

New Zealand Canoeing is the official newsletter of Whitewater NZ Inc. *NZ Canoeing* is published quarterly and distributed free to around 1,200 members of Whitewater NZ 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 Whitewater NZ.

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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*.

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as elected at the Whitewater NZ AGM July 2012

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Canoeist of the Year

2012 - Tony Ward-Holmes

Tony has made a significant and extremely generous contribution to protecting and preserving our rivers, and has done so during a very challenging time following the Canterbury earthquakes.

He was editor of NZ Canoeing from mid 2002 until July 2005; vice president from July 2005 until April 2009, and conservation officer from 2009 onwards.

As conservation officer, Tony's role was fundamental in all the work that led up to the joint Whitewater NZ / Fish and Game application for a Water Conservation Order for the Hurunui River. Tony was deeply involved throughout the hearing process and in our initial efforts to appeal the Tribunal's decision in the Environment Court – before legislative changes and the Canterbury Water Management Strategy changed our approach.

Instead of winding down after the end of that process, Tony became the central person driving Whitewater NZ's defence of the Mokihinui – he contributed numerous hours to the project. Emails from Tony in the wee hours of the morning were not at all unusual. We are delighted to see that his efforts were rewarded when Meridian decided against proceeding with the scheme. Now the West Coast Conservation Board has initiated a process which may see the river and catchment added to Kahurangi National Park - based in part on the excellent documentation developed as part of the court process.



2011 - Doug Rankin

Doug has been kayaking for over 40 years. He started with the University of Canterbury Canoe Club in the 1970s back when students had long hair, flares, HQ Holdens, and a short playboat was a mere 4 metres long. He has paddled all over New Zealand, Europe and the USA, and the Franklin River in Tasmania.

Doug was instrumental in the successful application for a Water Conservation Order on the Grey River back in 1984 and then the Buller River WCO in 1985, and quite a few since.

In recent years he took on the role of co-ordinating Whitewater NZ's application for a WCO for the Hurunui. Doug contributed much of his time to writing submissions and reviewing the submssions prepared by local groups and individuals to ensure our case was covered in detail. He also contributed to the development of the WWCC questionaire, and statistical analysis, which documented the use of the Hurunui by the WWCC.

Doug continues to be active in conservation matters.

As well as kayaking Doug is a founding member of our local river bug club, where he introduces new "river buggers" to the sport.



Above: Doug and cataraft in the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River, June 2012. Photo: Rick Onorato

Left: Tony Ward-Holmes breaking Maritime NZ Navigation Rule 91.6 (1)(b) , Rule 91.17 (a), and potentially Waikato Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 3.10.1 (d) as well. Surfing the wave between Waikato Falls and Poutu Intake on the Tongariro River, Photo: Neil Muncey

Easter on the Clarence

by Polly Miller

My previous trips down the Clarence have had a consistent theme of sleet, poor visibility and relentless misery with the power to reduce strong outdoorsy people to shivering wrecks. When one of my best friends said that she wanted to paddle the river one last time before she popped, it was testament to our long relationship that I didn't hesitate. I rang Ben Judge and booked our shuttle through Clarence River Rafting. One email to round up all the topo duo kayaks we knew of in the South Island, and we were ready.

The Clarence is the deepest valley in New Zealand, cutting between the Kaikoura Mountains and the Seaward Kaikoura range. It is New Zealand's longest moderate grade multiday trip, and is justly famous for its sweeping high country scenery, its remote wilderness environment, and its quality class II and III whitewater.

The gauge showed four cumecs on the day we put on, and the Acheron river doubles the flow. Our driver cheerfully told us there was plenty of water in the river – with the side creeks running uncharacteristically late in the season our six person, three topo-duo team would be fine. Those who had dry suits tested them by floating in the river – while there wasn't much current

it was lovely to put on with bright sunshine and warm feet.

The first day on the Clarence brings some of the more technical class III, and after a few exciting experiences, we decided to camp relatively early on a river flat high on the left. With a fantastic fire and dinner, those of us who could sampled a range of alcoholic beverages and wrapped up warmly as the temperature plummeted.

A quick change in the topo teams meant a more balanced mix of strengths between the boats, and I – surprisingly – found myself in the front of a topo. It's an interesting experienced) paddler's hands, and it made for much amusement for the rest of the team as we negotiated the modest range of white water challenges and learned a few things about ourselves and each other along the way.

The Department of Conservation has built a series of lovely new huts along the river, and on our second night we took advantage of one, lighting the fire and eating and sleeping in the warm. Waking to morning sunshine, we paddled towards the mountains, and I appreciated for the first time the dramatic views of the 2880-metre Mt Tapuae-o-Uenuku to the north and Mt Manakau to the south.

The Clarence is a nationally important river for kayaking and rafting, and is also a potential source of water for rapacious irrigators in the dry north Canterbury area. We were reminded of an early battle between the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association and Tranzrail meant that the boulders in the lower Clarence section were undisturbed by the plan to build a new ferry terminal on the coast south of Blenheim. On our third night, camping in yet another beautiful spot under starry skies, we raised a glass to those responsible. Reflecting, we discussed that these days, threat to the river is most likely to come from dairy and water intensive farming interests.



experience, putting all the control The team (from left): Kate Downer, Mike Nooney, Polly Miller, Richard Stean, Sarah Fawcett, Steve Chapman. of the boat in another (much less Photo: Probably the bus driver



Sarah, Mike, Kate, Steve. Photo: Polly Miller

For our last few hours paddling, the perfect weather continued and it was possible to see bright reflections in the calm water between the last bouncy class III rapids. A nasty hazard is present just above the main highway bridge. An old bridge support is in middle of the flow and much concrete and steel is on the left bank. Happily, our ability to negotiate class III rapids in tandem had improved to the extent that we made the eddy on the right – at the top!

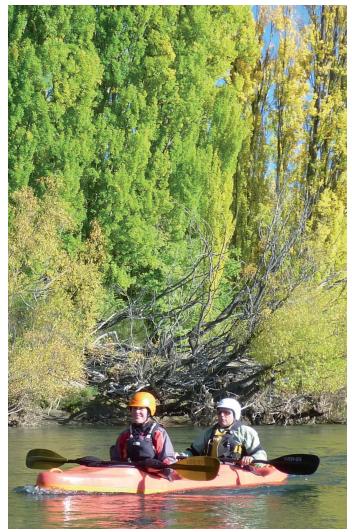
We chose for the first time to paddle past the main highway bridge and take out at the sea. After a couple

Releases and Events

Whakapapa Release	
1 September	09:00 - 17:00
22 September	09:00 - 17:00
Tongoriro Release	
15 September	09:00 - 15:00
16 September	08:00 - 16:00
Wairoa River Release from McLaren Falls	
16 and 30 September	10:00 - 16:00
14 and 28 October	10:00 - 16:00
11 and 25 November	10:00 - 16:00
9, 23 and 30 December	10:00 - 16:00
Piripaua Release	
9 September	09:00 - 15:00
9 December	09:00 - 15:00

Refer to our website (<u>rivers.org.nz/events/</u>) for the latest release schedules, including flow information.

of bonus rapids and an increasingly salty taste in the air, the breakers finally came into view. In beautiful afternoon light we could look back up at the mountains as we pulled in beside the bus – only two hours late! Our driver was relaxed, and between plans for burgers and chips in Kaikoura, he suggested that the only thing our four day trip needed was an extra day.



Kate, Steve and trees. Photo: Polly Miller

Pack 'n' Paddle

Some tips from other adventurers on how to pack for multiday trips, self propelled trips and getting silly amounts of paddling gear on planes.

Ben Robson (who walks into rivers for multiday trips)

1. We may as well get used to walking. I don't think choppers are getting any cheaper. It is also more rewarding.

2. The most important thing for big trips is the people you go with; it makes all the difference. You can compensate for adversity with good company.

3. The more epic the trip the lighter you want to pack, take your adjustable footrest out and replace it with foam. Rolled up foam mats make a great foot block and you can sleep on them.

4. On that note, try to think about gear that is versatile e.g. carry systems that convert to pin kits.

5. In saying that if you're planning on doing some serious walking then put a lot of thought into your carry system. Five minutes in the garden with an empty boat doesn't cut it.

6. I hate running out of food so I will always choose more food over another poly pro.

7. If you are planning on staying in huts then you can take a gamble and not take any cookware or a cooker (there will usually be a dirty old billy and some firewood)

8. Photography is not essential. If you are cold and hungry you would probably rather have some food than munch on a heavy SLR camera. There is another upside, you can make your stories of the trip as wild as you want because there will be no photograhic evidence.



Shalabh Gajlaut sleeping in on the Zanskar. Photo: Sam Hughes



The locals check out the latest technology. Photo: Ngaio Hart

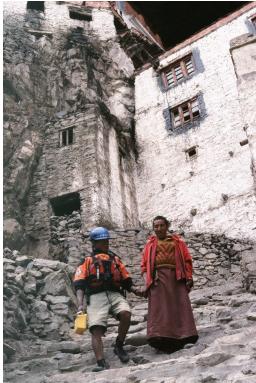
Ngaio Hart

If you are travelling around Nepal make sure everything is compact and tidy so you can keep an eye on it at all times... otherwise little hands that see something shiny or exciting and will be off with your valuable caribiners/throwbag/helmet/etc etc....

A wee story to back up the advice:

We stopped at the village at Hakapur (big rapid on the Sun Kosi), just really wanting a quick rest stop and a cup of chai. Polly left her paddle and helmet on the beach with her kayak whilst giving me stick for wearing my helmet and carrying my paddle through the village looking like a dork! Anyway, we got back to the kayaks and pretty helmet and carabiners and I'm not sure what else are all missing. Which would be fine on the big water Sun Kosi, but not so fine on the rocky Tamar Kosi.... so anyway result was we had an unplanned night camping on the beach at Hakapur while negotiating with the helmet thieves to buy back the helmet that had been stolen! \$20 in the end... so yes, we contributed to the whole notion that thieving from the rich white people is a worthwhile pastime and ends in financial reward. Also reasonably entertaining as the villagers kept turning up with options of things Polly could use on her head as a helmet. Moral of the story: keep an eye on your essential gear... unless you need a little extra spice in your adventure!

If you are flying out of the States with two kayaks I would recommend turning up to the checkout in little shorts and a wee summer top and smiling sweetly at the guy behind the counter. Not so PC but I'm pretty sure that was the only reason I got my 2 kayaks on the plane.



Babu discusses accommodation and food with a monk at the Phuktal Monestary, Zanskar. Photo: Sam Hughes

from his intended message!

Apart from this, I generally take little more than a sleeping bag, short lightweight mattress, and a large light weight tarp between the group. A very good shelter can be constructed with some slings, throwlines and paddles.

The one thing I think it is worth not saving too much on is food, as a good meal can keep both morale and strength up. Also the value of a half bottle of whisky on a cold rainy night is hard to beat (although it's best to use a plastic bottle for obvious reasons).

Despite feeling I was quite good at packing light, I learnt a lot from a good Nepali friend Babu Sanu Sunawar. He turned up one morning at my hotel and asked "Sam dai, we go kayak today?". Thinking this sounded like a good idea, and as he was already in kit, I got changed, and jumped in the taxi with him, with my boat tied with a shoe lace to the roof, and no other kit. An hour later we arrived at a bus station. We transferred to a bus. Five hours later, still on the bus I asked where we were going. "A very good river



Alan Ellard looking cosy on the Tawang Chu, Arunachal, India. Photo: Sam Hughes

Sam Hughes

I've always been a big fan of packing as light as possible, as most of our missions usually involve a bit of carrying at some point, and a heavily loaded boat only gets harder to manoeuvre.

In that respect the most valuable single piece of kit for me is a good drysuit. The difference of being dry and warm at the end of the day, and not needing to take any extra clothes (apart from a down jacket) is a great space and weight saver. Although I can advise wearing a pair of board shorts over your thermals to avoid looking like a gimp when you get stranded from the rest of your kit for a week! I remember with great amusement watching Rob Coffee stumbling round in his onepiece thermal, tugging at local Ladakhi's trousers, trying to signal that he would like to buy them.....I'm

not sure what they understood of his actions, but it was clearly something quite different

looking young lady. He gave





them a few rupees, and they provided us with food and let us sleep on the dirt floor next to the fire.

We were away on the trip for 10 days. Every time we needed a meal or a place to stay, Babu would run off into what, to my eyes, looked like wilderness and come back with a large group of children in tow who would lead us to someone that would put us up.

This is probably the most valuable thing you can have on any trip: local knowledge and a pocket full of cash.

Polly Miller

For multiday trips:

The key for multiday happiness is to consider your yen for multiday whitewater adventure when you acquire your boat. For example, the now outdated Pyrhana Micro 230 was an excellent choice for a smaller paddler to take on longer multidays. I managed to fit gear and (nearly enough) food for eight days on the Franklin river in Tasmania. By contrast, recently on a two day Waiatoto trip, a friend struggled to fit her weekend basics in the back of her mini mystic.

Ask yourself: How many multidays am I going to take on with this boat? How many days? Most NZ multiday trips are 2-3 days out. If you're off to Nepal or the US runs can easily take twice as long.

Think about: Can I get gear in the back of a boat? In the front? I eventually acquired a small Dagger Nomad, as they changed the shape of the cockpit rim and it's now possible to slide more than a small child's hand into the back of the boat. The Dagger boats have front



and rear foam pillars which make it much safer than the old Micro 230, but definitely get in the way when packing. I have a couple of carefully chosen dry bags which fit in either side of the back pillar, and a smaller one behind the seat. In front of my feet I sneak in the MSR, the fuel bottle, and (well wrapped)



emergency food. Andy Phillips loses at rock, paper, scissors, and has to A teensy sleeping fit the cooking pot in. The first plan was to stick some foam in it and duck tape it to his head to get the double system and tak- use of it as a helmet. He opted for plan B, which was ing at least some flattening it with his foot, and hammering it back into dehydrated food shape each night at the fire! Photo: Sam Hughes means my Nomad

tops out at about 5 days.

Most boats paddle a bit differently with gear, but if you've managed to balance your boat well (move your seat forward and think what small heavy items might fit beyond your toes!) then you'll quickly adjust. With masses of momentum you'll find that you can blast through holes However that airy feeling from a fantastic boof is something I associate with a light boat. I'm definitely more conservative on a multiday wilderness run, however my enthusiasm for portaging can be dampened by a 30kg boat. On the Middle Fork

of the Feather river in California, there are apparently between 15-20 class V rapids over the 32 miles (or three days). I'm not that into class V, and I definitely walked a handful of rapids. However, I was motivated to sneak down quite a few which I cheerfully told myself were IV+, as I knew that walking too much would definitely thrash me.

Multiday kayaking trips are an amazing way for relatively modest adventurers to get completely away from it all. Choose your team and weather carefully, and you'll still be dreaming up crazy adventures long after you've retired from the 9 to 5

The road back to Leh, after a week on the river. 2 Rafts, 13 kayaks, 11 passengers, 1 driver and a pregnant you've retired from the 9 to 5. dog! Photo: Sam Hughes

Conservation News

By Tony Ward-Holmes

It has certainly been an eventful year or so for NZ's rivers. In mid-2011, King Country Energy withdrew their appeal of the consent decision declining their application to dam the Mokau River. In mid-2012, in the space of only a few weeks, Trustpower shelved their Arnold project, Contact announced it was suspending investigation of various possible Clutha dams, and then, completely unexpectedly, Meridian cancelled their plan to dam the Mokihinui. The main reason given for all of these was low power prices, which are driven by the Great Financial Crisis of 2008 and its continuing aftermath plus a series of large new geothermal stations in the North Island. NZ is basically awash with power, although distribution and storage remain a problem because they are managed not according to the laws of physics but according to unrealistic market theories.

Another major reason in the case of the Mokihinui was that Meridian did not manage to obtain a concession or a landexchange from DOC. This is required as well as a consent. Meridian reportedly spent \$18 million on the Mokihinui Project and millions more were spent by councils, the judiciary and DOC (Whitewater NZ understands DOC spent an entire year's advocacy budget on it), much of it after the stage where they knew it was unlikely they would be granted the concession or land-exchange. It is ironic that the possible partial privatisation of Meridian appeared to give them a dose of reality that was missing when they ignored the requirement under the SOE Act to act responsibly, and chose to play poker with millions of taxpayer dollars.

Along the way rivers have maintained a high profile in media, politics and policy circles, including releases of major reports from the NZ Conservation Authority and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. Both of these recommended improved protection of wild rivers. The latest development is Fish & Game, Whitewater NZ, Forest & Bird and other NGOs running a campaign to promote Water Conservation Orders for what they really are: the National Parks of rivers. Check out www.OutstandingRivers.org.nz

Recent news, however, has been not quite so positive, with Westpower planning a 20 MW hydro scheme on the Waitaha River at Morgan Gorge. The gorge is one of the pinnacles of West Coast kayaking and has only very recently been paddled. In Westpower's favour is that they are consulting early, making sure they get the required concessions before applying for consents, and that the scheme is a run-of-river scheme that will not inundate the river. In defense of the river it is impossible to speak more eloquently than Keith Riley:

I am one of 10 people on the planet to have kayaked through the Waitaha's Morgan Gorge. Because of this I feel a duty to respond to the Guardian headline "Kayak fight brewing over Waitaha hydro". The damming of the Waitaha is not the beginning of a kayak battle. It's the beginning of a wild places battle and it's part of a much larger war that has been going on for centuries and is of particular significance in this country at this time.

Have you read the Parliamentary Commissioner's recently released report; Hydroelectric generation or wild rivers? www.pce.parliament.nz/assets/Uploads/Wild-Rivers-web. pdf. Very few people will ever kayak through Morgan Gorge. Very few will ever see more than more than 0.5 percent of our national parks, nor will they go to Antarctica. Yet we feel compelled to protect these places. The fight that is brewing on the Waitaha happens to be with kayakers because we are the few lucky souls who have seen this place first hand.



Morgan Gorge is a 200 metre high rock sculpture that has been millions of years in the making, with its maker (pure west coast water) constantly at work. It dwarfs and pales the much loved Hokitika Gorge. It is part of a tongue of water that shapes our province. We fish on it, we swim at it's mouth, we tramp up it, we camp next to it, we climb the mountains it's wearing down and we kayak on it. It's a big part of why we live here.

Of the 10 people who have been through Morgan Gorge, 4 were professional athletes; the other 6 live here: geologists, doctors, anaesthetists, pilots, school teachers and tutors. We recognise that West Coast rivers make up part of the world's 1 percent of rivers still in their natural state. Its why we call this place home. Hydro is a fantastic means of making power. It's not rocket science. Amethyst, Stockton and Griffin Creek all hydro schemes that have the go ahead. Why? Plenty of head (height) and a little water. Smart and supported by wild places advocates. Mokihinui, Clutha and Waitaki projects, big rivers, heaps of water, not much head. Opposed-stalled - canned?

It's merely coincidence that it is kayakers who have the loudest voice about the preservation of the Waitaha. It is not about the loss of a kayaking resource. It's about saving our wild places. It's about holding the wolves at bay until a national strategy exists to guide the hydro developers towards smart schemes that keep our wild rivers intact.

Outstanding Rivers Campaign

Whitewater NZ has joined Fish and Game and other recreation and environmental groups in launching a campaign to raise public awareness of river protection in New Zealand. The campaign www.OutstandingRivers.org.nz is headed by Anton Oliver and aims to publicise Water Conservation Orders (WCOs) already granted on some of New Zealand's outstanding rivers and to support strengthening WCO protection. WCOs are only granted after a lengthy application and hearing process and offer the highest level of protection of water bodies in New Zealand. There are still a number of iconic rivers in New Zealand that do not have any recognition nor protection for their outstanding values.

"The status afforded by a WCO to a river is of immense value to our members and the New Zealand public", said Dr Doug Rankin, Conservation Officer for Whitewater NZ. "WCOs recognize the values of our rivers, be they iwi, scenic, fishery, whitewater, ecological or recreation values, and afford a measure of protection against future development and inappropriate exploitation. Only one other country in the world, the USA, offers similar protection to its outstanding rivers, through its Wild and Scenic Rivers Act."

Since the granting of the first WCO on the Motu River in 1984 (primarily for its whitewater recreation, wilderness and scenic values) Whitewater NZ has actively worked alongside Fish & Game and others to obtain many of the WCOs now in place, including those on the Ahuriri, Rangitikei, Mohaka, Grey, Buller (and tributaries), Kawarau, Motueka, Whanganui and Rangitata.

"It is indeed fortunate for Whitewater NZ and the public that many of the rivers prized for their fishery values throughout New Zealand are similarly prized by our members for wilderness, whitewater and recreational values. The synergy from different values strengthens WCO applications significantly when they are considered by Tribunals or the Environment Court."

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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Access on Aratiatia



Josh Nielson and others on the Aratiatia Rapids Photo: Kenny Mutton

Two issues have reared their heads on the Aratiatia recently. One is release times and the other is access. The Mighty River Power (MRP) Aratiatia Power Station dewaters the spectacular grade V - VI Aratiatia Rapids. As part of their resource consent, MRP was obliged to open the spillway gates to replenish the Aratiatia rapids four times a day during Summer and three times a day during the Winter. In 2011 MRP applied to the Waikato Regional Council for a change in the resource consent to reduce the spill time from 30 to 12 minutes.

This just allows the rapids to fill before they begin to drop again. This apparently provides a more dynamic viewing experience for tourists. It also saves the generating company money.

MRP consulted with a number of parties - iwi and local tourist operations - about this change to the consents, but did not consult with kayakers, on the basis that it does not condone running of the rapids by recreational paddlers. The only parties who submitted on the original consents were kayakers.

MRP also requested that processing of this application could proceed without the need for public notification.

Parts of the Aratiatia rapids have been kayaked since 1982 with the entire rapid being navigated since 1996.

Mighty River Power point to a section in the Waikato Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw as justification for kayakers not being allowed to paddle the section. The Bylaw states that:

A person in charge of a vessel on a river must... (d)Not operate any vessels (other than for maintenance purposes) within 200 metres of the Taupo gates and hydro dam structures on the Waikato River Earlier this year kayakers were confronted by police, who were requested by MRP, and told the spill gates would not be opened if they didn't leave.

Whitewater NZ have approached Waikato Regional Council about both the granting of the consent variation without public notification or consultation with truly interested parties and about having some input into the Navigation Safety Bylaw.

We will keep you updated.

http://www.rivers.org.nz/news/2012/updatearatiatia-access



Whitewater NZ

Our purpose is to preserve New Zealand's White Water resources and to enhance

opportunities to enjoy them safely.

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NZ Canoeing, Winter 2012 (12.2)