



Annual Report 2012

It's been another busy year for kayaking and for river conservation. Highlights from the year include the decision by Meridian Energy to withdraw their application to dam the Mokihinui on the West Coast, and continued efforts in Canterbury and further afield to protect our precious whitewater.

Developments within the Association have meant a **new look for rivers.org.nz** and a new **on line membership system** – both enormous projects finally coming to completion due to hundreds of volunteer hours.

Changes in the Executive for the coming year include our Conservation Officer Tony Ward-Holmes indicating that he does not wish to stand again. Tony's contribution in a wide range of roles on the Executive spans more than ten years and it is in his conservation role that he has made the most impact. Due to Tony's considerable abilities, Whitewater NZ has continued its incredibly successful track record in defending our precious rivers from hydro and irrigation threats.

It's with regret that I've decided that I won't be standing again for President at the AGM. During the time I have been President, the Association has worked through some important and high profile processes. Conservation work on the Hurunui and Mokihinui, internal processes to improve our systems and communication... and a few earthquakes. I've very much enjoyed working with the Whitewater NZ Executive and would like to thank all paddlers for their quite extraordinary contributions as we've worked and played together over the past three years.

Conservation

The best possible news for the Mokihinui

Whitewater NZ are delighted to see Meridian Energy's announcement that they will abandon their plan to dam the wild and scenic Mokihinui River on the West Coast.

Whitewater NZ Conservation Officer Tony Ward-Holmes says that our last remaining wild rivers do not need to be dammed to meet our power needs for the future. There are other schemes already consented on the West Coast to provide for local power demand and other alternatives, such as geothermal and wind that are being built now across the country.

"This decision has meant that the Mokihinui will remain a pristine river valley, providing outstanding wilderness kayaking and rafting opportunities. Whitewater NZ prefers to work with parties at an early stage to avoid expensive and time consuming processes in the courts. After a conservation battle that feels like it took forever, this is an amazing result, says Tony Ward-Holmes.

In October 2010 Whitewater NZ organised over 120 activists, photographers and rafters and kayakers to paddle the Mokihinui, showing their opposition to the proposed dam. Described in the video a Tale of Two Rivers, the Mokihinui River will continue to provide a beautiful untouched environment for adventure, conservation and eco-tourism. More information can be found on <http://rivers.org.nz/a-tale-of-two-rivers>.



In a process which has taken countless volunteer hours, Whitewater NZ would particularly like to thank leading kayakers in Canterbury and on the West Coast for their tireless contribution, and the expert support from our legal team.

Canterbury

This year for has again been largely dominated by the Environment Canterbury (Temporary Commissioners and Improved Water Management) Act 2010, enacted in April 2010, and by the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS). Vice-President Graeme Wilson has been part of a series of meetings with some of the commissioners along with other NGOs and interested parties.

The CWMS has "split" water issues for Canterbury into ten different zones, and assigned a zone committee in each zone to develop via community consultation a zone implementation plan which is intended to achieve the overall objectives of the CWMS. We need to make sure that kayaking values are understood and reflected in the plans that the committees develop – and we are making considerable effort to do so.

We've tried to stay in touch with the zone committees and make sure that what they're up to doesn't overly impinge on our kayaking amenity....and it's amenity in the wider sense too. Not just about paddling (making sure the rivers have some water) but about making sure that the places in which we paddle are nice places to be in. We've presented over time to the Hurunui Waiau; Orari Opihi Pareora; Ashburton (Rakaia and Rangitata); Selwyn Waihora (Rakaia, Waimakariri); and Waimakariri (Waimakariri, Ashley, Okuku) zone committees.

We've also presented to the hearing for the proposed amendment to the **Rakaia WCO**. In the last few days it has been announced that due to the sad death of one of the members of the hearing panel evidence will be re-presented – however, the discussions we had with Trustpower suggest that there may be relatively little impact on kayaking amenity, and the impact will be in late autumn or early winter. We are still concerned that a WCO, the only tool we currently have to protect outstanding rivers, might be varied and weakened.

We've continued to engage with the Hurunui Water Project regarding the **Hurunui River**. Some proposals to create irrigation storage in the Hurunui catchment could significantly damage, or completely destroy, kayaking amenity and conservation values on the Hurunui whereas others could have very little impact. This process continues to evolve.

Hugh Canard has been appointed to the Regional committee which also looks at the co-ordination of all ten zone committees, and Whitewater Canoe Club president Ian Fox has been appointed to the Christchurch/West Melton zone committee.

We have continued to be involved in fine tuning the conditions re the **Central Plains Water** (CPW) proposals for the Waimakariri and Rakaia. The scheme as we believe it will be consented has far less impact on our amenity and safety than the original proposal.

Andy England outlined his West Coast river research to the hearing panel as well. Given the national and international significance of the West Coast to kayakers we've sought to gain a specific recognition of kayaking and key whitewater rivers in the plan.



Other conservation news

It's likely that the **Nevis River** WCO will be challenged in the Environment Court in 2012. Central Otago Whitewater are working with key partners including Fish and Game to protect the river in its natural state.

And more broadly...

A couple of key reports have been released in the last year – the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and the New Zealand Conservation Authority have both released reports which recommend, amongst other things, the development of a systematic process to identify and protect important rivers. For this reason, any work we can do over the next year in developing and documenting our river inventory and developing our kayaking recreation strategy will be critical.

Treasurers Report

Financial Performance

Operating surplus of \$1,635 was down \$8,495 on the previous year and revenue decreased \$16,612.

Annual subscriptions were similar to last year. However total donations were down \$14,076, this was due to a large donation from the Hawkes Bay Canoe Club of \$10,000 received last year and a request for additional donations to support conservation efforts on the Hurunui.

Revenue from publications was down on 2011 by \$1,762, due to a reduction in the number of newsletters produced compared to the previous year and a reduction in demand for Wanganui river guides. Income from Mohikinui DVD sales and royalties amounted to \$4,797, a reduction of \$743 on the previous year.

Expenditure was down some \$7,077. Portfolio costs remained stable, with only very small charges for both conservation and access costs. Net cost of publications was down \$900, mostly due to reduction in number of newsletters. DVD project expenditure was down \$8,495 on 2011, with legal costs increasing by \$5,147 compared to last year.

Jo Mair was employed to complete essential administration tasks throughout the year at a cost of \$620.

Financial Position and Movement in Equity

Net wealth was \$51,618 at the end of the financial period. Assets increased \$8,535, made up by an increase in accounts receivable of \$265 (all for newsletter advertising) with the bank balance increasing by \$8,270 mainly due to the unspent portion of funding from Water Safety NZ and interest earned on term deposit. Liabilities increased by \$6,900 due to the grant received by Water Safety NZ which remained unspent at balance date. Whitewater NZ equity increased by \$1,635 from \$49,983 at 31 March 2011.

Annual Audit of Accounts

A volunteer is currently being sort to audit the 2010/11 and 2011/12 accounts.



Safety

It's been a good year for Safety with few incidents or accidents to note on New Zealand rivers.

Our relationship with Water Safety NZ appears to be going from strength to strength, with safety subsidies once again available to members wishing to take a river safety or rescue course.

We are hopeful that more people will begin to take courses and refreshers regularly as they're GREAT. Paddlers seem so keen to take the courses and get subsidies but this isn't translating into numbers of subsidy applications at the moment.

Membership

New Membership Officer Jo Dovey has worked closely with Peter Davis from Fuzion to transfer our membership records to a new web based system. Fervent thanks go to Jo and Peter for their continued efforts as we improve our internal processes.

Access

Matt Bennet has worked closely with the various energy companies to arrange releases and resolve problems with access in the last year. A key issue for Matt has been access to Aratititia Rapids and we expect further progress on this issue prior to the summer paddling season.

Mike Birch has continued to manage the on-line registrations for the Piripaua and Whakamarino releases on the Waikaretaheke River. These releases have suffered from low attendance and Matt Bennett is working with Genesis Energy and the Hawkes Bay Canoe Club on ways to structure and promote these releases .

Communications

Mike Birch has been posting to our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/WhitewaterNZ>. Mike and Jonathan have been tweeting @whitewaternz and keeping the website up to date with updates and additions to news, events (including releases), and the river guide.

Mike has been using the new membership web application to send out e-mail newsletters and notifications, which should improve our communication with members.

Mike Birch has set up Whitewater NZ on Facebook and Twitter:

<http://www.facebook.com/WhitewaterNZ>

<http://twitter.com/whitewaternz>

NZ Canoeing

Miriam Odlin has taken her second year as Editor by changing printers and following up new content.

Rivers.org.nz

With a major upgrade of the site achieved this year, Jonathan Hunt is to be congratulated for the fresh new look and feel of rivers.org.nz. Jonthan comments:



Despite disruptions arising from the 22 February 2011 earthquake, in the past year I finally completed a major update to the underlying CMS (now Drupal 6) plus a redesign based on commissioned work from Deflux.co.nz.

The site has been migrated to new hosting (c/- Simplehost) after the long-running sponsorship from Egressive.com came to end. We are very grateful to Egressive for their support over many years.

The Executive committee has moved to "the cloud" via Google Apps (email, docs) 7and we are experimenting with Google Drive as a file storage and sharing system.

Whitewater NZ has selected CiviCRM as its membership management solution and I have assisted in its implementation.

The website remains a primary channel for many WWNZ members and stakeholders but needs additional resource, specifically content curation, to realise its full potential.

Usage

Traffic has declined year-on-year, probably due to the lack of fresh content (aside from the ever popular news and forums).

Non-website

- Drafted detailed requirements for membership management system.
- Liaison with Walking Access Commission
- WWNZ is evaluating Xero as an accounting solution

Future work

- Plan and start Drupal 7 upgrade.
- Update Whanganui Guide.
- Trial Google drive for "in the cloud" shared document storage.
- Integrate with CiviCRM: link website accounts with membership management.
- Trial paid advertising on key pages (eg. home page, forums).
- Offer pages formatted for mobile devices.
- Pursue NIWA flow data.
- Expand River Guide with Rivers and Sections from various regional surveys.

If you have an comments or feedback for Whitewater NZ, or if you'd like to volunteer your time and expertise to help us advocate for river conservation, access and safety, drop us a line at whitewaternz@rivers.org.nz. We'd love to hear from you.

Thank you very much for your support. May the rivers flow for you!

Polly Miller

President

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