



Whitewater NZ



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and the

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Submission on the St James Conservation Area - Kayaking and Related Issues.

Kayakers and river runners have a deep and abiding interest in the St James Conservation Area, but in particular the river running amenity of the Upper Waiau River from the Maling Pass access down to the Hope-Waiau confluence, and the Clarence River journey from the Lake Tennyson source or from the Acheron confluence to the sea. They have been using these resources since the birth of modern canoeing and river running in New Zealand in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

I am making this submission to you on behalf of my club, the Whitewater Canoe Club (WWCC), and Whitewater New Zealand (Whitewater NZ). I have a mandate from both organizations to engage with the Department of Conservation (DoC) on this issue. I would be happy to arrange to meet DoC staff at an appropriate time to outline our interest and commence a dialogue. We would be happy to involve other members of both the WWCC and Whitewater NZ in these meetings if you would prefer a little wider representation.

Representation

Whitewater NZ is the new official name adopted this year for what was formerly the New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association Inc (NZRCA). This national canoeing organisation was formed in 1957 and was previously called the New Zealand Canoeing Association, but there were canoe clubs established in New Zealand back in the 1890s. Whitewater NZ is the national representative organisation of canoe clubs and recreational kayakers throughout New Zealand. Whitewater NZ is a voluntary, non-profit, incorporated society and is affiliated to the NZ Canoe Federation (NZCF). The NZCF is in turn affiliated to the International Canoe Federation (ICF). Whitewater NZ has the delegated authority to represent the NZCF and all its member disciplines on advocacy issues. The name

Whitewater NZ is a clearer representation of our interest in wild rivers and river paddling as opposed to flat water kayak racing.

Whitewater NZ represents both club and individual members and further associated clubs. At time of writing there are 24 full member clubs with a combined membership of around 1000 kayakers, the largest of which is the Whitewater Canoe Club of Christchurch. There are also 90 members who have joined Whitewater NZ individually. A feature of both Whitewater NZ and the WWCC is that a number of overseas paddlers are members. New Zealand and international paddlers belong to networks with a mutual interest in rivers, conservation, and New Zealand rivers in particular. Another 30 organisations representing over 1200 kayakers are associate members. Associate members generally choose to support Whitewater NZ on specific issues; e.g. the largest, Arawa Canoe Club with 430 members, paid all of the Whitewater NZ's legal costs during the Central Plains Water hearing.

The combined total of around 2,300 full and associate member kayakers in no way adequately represents the sum total of kayakers in New Zealand, as there are many who do not belong to clubs, and who have not joined Whitewater NZ as individuals. Whitewater NZ's website has many thousands of unique users from all over New Zealand and internationally.

The **Whitewater Canoe Club** is Christchurch-based, has around 200 members and it belongs to the national body, Whitewater NZ. We are one of the principal advocates for those who paddle whitewater in Canterbury. We wish to work with DoC to establish management protocols so that all access and use is soundly based environmentally, is user-friendly, and is manageable by the Department.

We have video and written accounts of trips in the Clarence dating back to 1970 and the Upper Waiau dating back to November 1981 right up to the present. Our collective institutional knowledge of the river trip is probably the most comprehensive there is, with members who paddled the pioneering trips in the 1970s still active in our club. We would like to share that with the Department in the interests of our members and future generations.

Definitions

For the purposes of this submission 'kayakers' includes private amateur rafters, kayakers, canoeists (who use a single bladed paddle), and river 'buggers' (using inflatable craft called river bugs) and combinations of all these forms of river travel. There is also the blurred distinction between river parties that sometimes engage the services of commercial raft outfitters and shuttle operators for what are essentially private river trips, and the occasional use of professional guides by otherwise amateur raft or combined raft/kayak groups. Overnight river trips demand more gear and the weight and bulk of tents, cookers etc can be more readily carried by rafts and open canoes. Rafts and canoes enable less skilled friends and family to participate in trips on the Upper Waiau and Clarence Rivers.

Rivers of the St James Conservation Park

Upper Waiau River

This section of river is unique and special, not only in Canterbury, but nationally.

The Upper Waiau has a number of rare features.

- It is the only intermediate Grade (with some higher Grade 4 water) overnight river trip in Canterbury
- It is only one of three intermediate Grade overnight trips in the South Island,
- It is one of only 8 overnight wild river trips in New Zealand
- It passes through a number of stunning short diverse gorges in a Canterbury High Country setting with many spectacular rapids and whitewater features (some up to Grade 4), including many long sections of spectacular continuous Grade 3 whitewater
- It passes down through a section called the 'Narrows', where the whole river passes down through a short tight gorge less than an old conventional 4m boat length wide (and has other equally tight squeeze features such as the 'Chockstone') just above the Steyning Stream confluence
- In high flows the run can turn into 40 kilometres of continuous whitewater.

The river has a number of distinct sections from a river runner's viewpoint.

- Maling Pass to just upstream of the Henry confluence – single channel grade 1-2 easy water, shallow in places with tussock banks and open views.
- Henry to just below the Edwards confluence – short gorges with rocky Grade 3-3+ rapids. Open sections of quieter water in between.
- The Narrows – a distinctive and unique narrow section of hard bedrock with deep water and sharp drops. Very turbulent. This section is sometimes portaged due to difficulty and objective danger.
- Tin Jug Hut (bottom of the Narrows) to State Highway 7 – a longish section of bedrock gorges and boulder rapids of Grade 2-3. Access has been made via 4WD over the Boyle/Magdalen/Steyning Stream track, but has been denied since 1989.

Access via Maling Pass and the Edwards opens the potential for two One Day paddle trips, and the full 40 km classic overnight trip.

1. Maling to Edwards
2. Edwards to SH 7
3. Two day overnight from Maling to SH7.

A useful option 2(a) could be introduced if access to the Tin Jug Hut area at the bottom of the Narrows was available. This would allow an intermediate trip from here to the Hope confluence, a distance of 18km. If the track was upgraded, a carry in (or possible 4WD access) to the bottom of the Narrows would be an option to enable novice/intermediates a beautiful and rather rare trip.

This section is easier than Maori Gully on the Hurunui and more often available than the Ashley Gorge, which are the only other Grade 3 runs in Canterbury.

Upper Clarence River

The St James Conservation Park boundary takes in the true right bank of the Upper Clarence River below Lake Tennyson, and the whole of the Upper Clarence above Lake Tennyson. The upper reaches of the Clarence River from Lake Tennyson down are not paddled very often, but some paddlers like the idea of source to sea journeys, and therefore some trips start at the lake. The lake itself is paddled as a day excursion in kayaks, canoes and sea kayaks. The trip from Lake Tennyson down to the sea requires a decent flow and takes around seven days.

The Clarence River from the Acheron confluence is a highly valued and popular trip for river parties, principally in Spring and Summer, but not exclusively so. This river also passes through a series of spectacular gorges, although they are more open and the whitewater not as demanding or difficult as that in the Upper Waiau, and dry arid Canterbury and Marlborough backcountry. The Clarence river journey is one of two easier grade wilderness multiday trips in New Zealand (the other being the Whanganui River) and is nationally important as a result. It can be run by paddlers who can handle Grade 3 whitewater. It has a number of named whitewater features on it such as the 'Chute' and the 'Jawbreaker rapid' steeped in the history of the first river runners that attempted it. It is regularly run by family groups, private kayaking and rafting trips as well as commercial rafting trips. It also has a rather unusual feature with an outstanding section of whitewater right at the end of the journey, from Glen Alton bridge down to the SH1 north road bridge or the sea.

It should be noted that both the Upper Waiau and Clarence River trips have a significant social aspect to them, with the Clarence being popular with groups of friends, families and clubs.

Other Rivers in the St James

A number of the tributaries of the Waiau are potentially navigable with the right flow. We are not aware of any attempts or successful trips down the Stanley, Ada, Henry, Boyle etc, but we think it is sensible to leave the option open for future generations. The pace of development of kayaking is such that we would be foolish to assume that these rivers will never be run.

The ability to run these rivers will largely depend on air access to the top of the runs. The Edwards will most likely be accessible via 4WD road.

National Context

Whitewater NZ has been increasingly concerned about our diminishing wild rivers. This includes local runs, but of specific concern are our remaining longer rivers which are of sufficient length for a self-supported overnight on the river.

This small threatened group of rivers comprises:

River	Days	Grade	Current Issues	
NORTH ISLAND				
Motu	3-4	2-4	Threatened by hydro proposals	WCO applies
Mohaka (upper)	2-3	2-3	Expensive access and issues with private landowner/lessees	WCO applies to sections
Ngaruroro	2-3	2-3	None, but flow is too low in summer	Access is contested by private lessees
Rangitikei	2-3	2-5	Wild river, but roads access the river in places	Upper river is small and intimate. Middle section is up to Grade 5.
Waiohine	2	2-4	Not often sufficient flow for upper river fly in	
SOUTH ISLAND				
Karamea	1-5	3-5	Wilderness area divides the trip, eliminating one of the best Grade 3-4 one day-trips in the country(section above Grey's Hut)	In Kahurangi NP, but still on every official potential hydro list
Mokihinui	1-2	2-4+	Immediate threat of Meridian hydro dam	Under consideration by tribunal
Clarence	4-6	2-3	None	It's on every official potential hydro list
Upper Waiau	2-4	2-4	Access issues are long-standing	Highly valued in Canterbury and beyond.
Landsborough	2-3	2-4	Wilderness zone denies access to upper section of Grade 4	In Westland NP
Waikatoto River	2	2-4	Proposed air access restrictions in MANP locks out river running parties from the 2 day trip.	Upper river is in Remote Zone and Wilderness zones. Main river is not in Mt Aspiring NP, but is under grazing leases.

Our remaining un-modified longer rivers are not as plentiful as some might believe, and there is a range of issues threatening continued recreational use.

Each of these trips offers a different set of characteristics – landscape, river bed morphology, geomorphology, whitewater features, whitewater and journey challenge, wilderness experience, and flows. A point which we wish to make is that each of these trips has access issues, some physical, but mostly regulatory and management plan related. Some rivers are cut through the middle by wilderness zones - others have constraints on air access. Our policy is to engage constructively to resolve these issues.

Of the South Island Main Divide intermediate difficulty longer river trips remaining largely in their natural state, we have only three - the Upper Waiau, Landsborough and Waitoto Rivers. The Upper Waiau is close to a major urban population, and that raises its recreational value to kayakers accordingly.

The Upper Waiau has been severely constrained by access issues for kayakers and rafters for over two generations. Access by vehicle, despite the legal road at Maling Pass, has never been allowed in practice in our experience, which dates from the early 1980s to today. This leaves us the option of carrying our kayaks, rafts and overnight gear on foot creating a huge barrier to river sports; or helicopter – a major expense, and beyond many. The relationship between canoeists and the private owners has been cordial, but the former lessees/owners have rarely allowed vehicles access due to presumably bad experiences with vandals and recreational user groups. Often we have wanted to run the river in spring when it is high, and the owners have expressed concerns about damage to the road. We have tried to build a trusting relationship, but the individuals involved on both sides move on and the whole process has to start again.

Access via Glenhope or over the Magdalen and Steyning Stream was last obtained by the WWCC 20 years ago in 1989. The present lessees use excuses such as spurious OSH issues to deny access. Clearly this is unsatisfactory.

We could relate chapter and verse on the difficulties that our parties have had over the years.

St James Conservation Area – Management Plan

We wish to work collaboratively with the Department particularly to develop a management plan that enables kayaking or kayak/raft parties to experience the highly valued river journey of the Upper Waiau River. If some simple but effective management conditions can be mutually developed that allow our reasonable and responsible access and use, and that protect the values of the setting, that would be a very worthwhile achievement. The canoe clubs and Whitewater NZ can use their networks, which nowadays operate very effectively via the internet, to reinforce the responsible use guidelines that emerge.

The four principal issues for us are:

1. The absolute protection of the Waiau and Clarence Rivers from irreversible destruction by hydro schemes and associated industrial development.
2. Responsible vehicular access over Maling Pass and the Edwards Valley, and possibly to the bottom of the Narrows. We need access only briefly to the river, not along the river. The proposed carparks close to the river would be useful to us, as we often need to leave vehicles at the put in and collect them via a shuttle at the end. The same applies at the Edwards River access.

3. Some sensible environmental care rules regarding camping along the river, bearing in mind safety issues in floods, snow, and high winds, and the environmental issues of fire, rubbish and human waste. Kayakers/raft parties are capable of carry-in/carry-out. All river users will wish to prevent the spread of Didymo to the Upper Waiau River.
4. The ability to access the river at reasonably short notice to take advantage of natural flows at any time of the year. We ask the Department to note that over the past 30 odd years, kayak/raft parties have run the Upper Waiau at all flows at all times of the year. This would include helicopter access to the Maling Pass put in, and the Henry put in.

Further to item 1 above, we note the shift in government thinking on the value of our rivers expressed in public statements recently.

The Associate Minister of Tourism, Dr Jonathan Coleman at the recent Ecotourism Conference in Nelson said,

The Government's Vision

I believe that New Zealand is an aspirational destination for our international visitors. They expect and want to immerse themselves in New Zealand's landscapes, culture and experiences. Our visitors hope the whole experience will be greater than the sum of its parts.

The Government's vision for tourism is to deliver on these expectations through top-quality, high-value products and maintaining the stunning natural environment we are renowned for. To do this, New Zealand needs to make the most of its competitive advantages. New Zealand's rivers are assets that support tourism and recreational opportunities. Quantifying their economic contribution can go some way to demonstrating their importance, and the Ministry is considering undertaking further research in this area.

And this statement.

On proposals such as the Matakītiki River, I encourage you to continue, as I know many of you have already done, to raise your concerns using the most effective channels. This means raising your concerns with the Minister for the Environment, who has responsibility for the Resource Management Act 1991.

The context of the speech was that our conservation estate needs to be used sustainably, and that our rivers are important not only for their hydrological water resource value through exploitation for industry and agriculture, but also for tourism/recreation. We support this sustainability view and we think that the St James Conservation Park Plan needs to draw a line in the sand on this issue. We urge the Department of Conservation to include

a strong statement in the St James Conservation Park regarding the exclusion of hydro dams and diversions in the Clarence and Upper Waiau Rivers.

Yes, the Upper Waiau and the Clarence Rivers represent “*an aspirational destination*” for all kayakers. We need to nurture and protect these places, of course, but to truly “*immerse*” ourselves in them we need affordable, practical access. We wish to support the general thrust of the consultation document and offer to contribute to the St James Conservation Park’s long term future for all.

We have few, if any issues with commercial tourism, and we are frequent users of aircraft, shuttle services, accommodation and food services that comprise tourism infrastructure. As most of us travel to our kayaking destinations, we too are tourists. The distinction is that we return many, many times to our favorite rivers. “River towns” like Murchison, Hanmer Springs, Hokitika, Rotorua and Cromwell/Queenstown benefit economically from the expenditure of kayakers.

The Waiau River in St James has tremendous potential for kayakers. It has a wide diversity of rapids in a remote Canterbury high country setting. The river has the potential to offer unique river experiences to a broad spectrum of paddlers across the entire range of abilities from novice to expert and all in between. As many of our number cross over to mountain biking, tramping, and fishing, the synergistic association of outdoor recreational activities possible have the potential to form a life-long association for all of us outdoor recreationalists with the St James Conservation Park.

The Clarence River already has a world-wide reputation. As for the Waiau, there is simply no other river like it in New Zealand.

Yours sincerely,

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The following table lists the issues relevant to us as described in the DoC consultation document, and our comments on these.

From the Draft Paper	Kayakers' Response
<p>"The overarching purpose of the department is to increase the value that New Zealanders attribute to conservation. This leads to enhanced care of New Zealand's unique heritage for people to benefit from and enjoy."</p>	<p>Whitewater kayaking is a form of healthy outdoor recreation that highly values the setting of a wild river natural environment. Kayakers and river runners share these goals.</p>
<p>The outcome the department wishes to achieve from applying its strategic direction is: "New Zealanders gain environmental, social and economic benefits from healthy functioning ecosystems, from recreation opportunities, and from living our history."</p>	<p>Whitewater kayaking takes places principally on rivers that run through or arise from the conservation estate. There is a close alignment with our desired outcomes and those of the department.</p> <p>Kayakers' means of enjoying the outdoors is on the water of our wild rivers. We have a minimal impact on the river and a small footprint at campsites. Having said that, kayakers spend their time both on the river and on the land, and we derive from these interactions all of the benefits noted in the outcome statement opposite.</p>
<p>The assumption is that managing healthy natural ecosystems, providing recreation opportunities, working with tangata whenua and providing economic benefits combines to enhance the lives of individual New Zealanders and their families. It also contributes to the viability and resilience of local communities and to New Zealand's international reputation.</p>	<p>Kayakers agree in principle.</p> <p>We think the St James's contribution to all of the benefits listed can best be achieved by managing the St James for responsible outdoor recreation, and this includes tourism, but excludes industrial development.</p> <p>On the issue of economic benefits.</p> <p>Our rivers have borne the brunt of New Zealand's exploitation for economic benefit, sometimes for the national benefit, but increasingly nowadays for the economic benefit of narrow sectors of our society or corporate interests.</p> <p>We think that too many of our rivers have been exploited in an unsustainable way through damming and diversion, and that few people appreciate how little of this resource remains intact.</p> <p>We have no major issue with tourism as a means of economic development, except where it might crowd out use by and enjoyment of amateur recreationalists. The line between tourism and recreation is often blurred. E.g. the use of commercial shuttles and helicopters by kayakers.</p>

	<p>The Upper Waiau River is one of only a very few of our wild rivers extant.</p> <p>Tourists will not value and therefore travel half way around the world to experience our natural environment if it is just as developed and exploited as in their home country.</p> <p>Our remaining wild rivers are assets that need to be better appreciated. We do not believe that NZ's international reputation will be enhanced by damming out remaining wild rivers.</p> <p>For this reason we believe the St James plan should contain very strong advocacy statements regarding the rarity of such a landscape and the values of the river itself.</p>
<p>St James is situated within the headwaters of two major Canterbury rivers, the Waiau and the Clarence. Three mountain ranges and expanses of drylands are within the boundaries of this purchase. The landscape consists of glaciated valleys, glacial moraine deposits, streams, wetlands, lakes and high-altitude tarns.</p>	<p>Kayakers value both the Upper Waiau and the Clarence River valleys for their remote wild qualities and for their whitewater. These two rivers form a major component of the shrinking resource that is our wild rivers.</p>
<p>There is the potential for a wide range of recreational opportunities to be undertaken on St James.</p>	<p>Understood.</p> <p>Kayakers are fundamentally outdoorsy people, and we also participate in tramping, fishing and MTBing. There is a significant cross-over between these recreational activities, and they are often taken together.</p>
<p>On the other hand there is the possibility for conflict between differing types of recreational activities or with natural, physical and cultural values. These conflicts could increase in the future with intensification of some uses and diversification of others.</p>	<p>Kayakers wish to participate fully in ensuring that user conflicts are minimized and are successfully managed should they occur.</p> <p>We note that our use is basically on the river and the immediate river corridor, and the two principal access roads to the Upper Waiau.</p>
<p>A site visit to St James was arranged on 1 and 2 December 2008 by the department. In attendance were representatives from national and local recreational associations, organizations and clubs, Ngāi Tahu, staff from other government agencies and the</p>	<p>Kayakers were not represented at this early meeting, but we have since opened a constructive dialogue with the department.</p> <p>The national association is Whitewater NZ, and the contact details are on the letterhead.</p>

Chairman of the New Zealand Conservation Authority.	
<p>The framework for future management</p> <p>In the short to medium term (from now to three years forward) management of the St James Conservation Area needs to consider the recreational and commercial activities that were in existence before the land became public land, or that have developed since, and to consider new opportunities recently identified.</p>	<p>Kayaking use of the Upper Waiau River can be traced back to the early 1980s and the Clarence River to the 1960s. We have an existing use that was initially constrained by skill levels and small numbers of participants. Prior to the Crown purchase, kayaker use of the Upper Waiau was constrained by access difficulties and cost of helicopters.</p> <p>A further factor is the opportunities to catch the river at a navigable flow were very confined to spring snow melt. With the river height staging gauges at Waiau at Glenhope, Hope; and the flow gauge at Waiau at Marble Point, we can anticipate and more readily take advantage of flows at any time of the year.</p> <p>Our season is now 365 days a year.</p>
Mountain biking	<p>Kayakers have no issues with MTBing. From a route planning perspective, it would be preferable to look at potential overnight camping sites for river runners that were not on busy trails.</p> <p>As mentioned elsewhere many kayakers also cycle in the back country.</p>
Aircraft	<p>Kayakers and rafters have used helicopters since the 1980s to access over Maling Pass. This is expensive and uses a lot of fuel and still requires long vehicle shuttles. If vehicle access was permitted then aircraft access would no longer be needed as much but might still be desired by some (to simplify shuttles or reach particular starting points more easily as has been done in the past).</p> <p>Aircraft access may be the only option if the Maling Pass access road is closed for any reason, and for this reason also we would like air access maintained. Our first choice is vehicular but we would like air access retained as a second option.</p> <p>Air access to the top end of the Waiau tributaries should be left open for future generations of kayakers who may want to attempt these runs in the right flow. We should not close off this option.</p>

<p>Aircraft landing activities which have been proposed for consideration on St James include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning recreationalists, self-sufficient hunters, mountain bikers and their bikes (excluding for down-hill mountain biking on untracked sites) and people and their equipment, including people wishing to raft or kayak the Waiau River • Heli-skiing on the St James Range between Fowlers Pass and the Edwards. • Fishing, but only alongside the Waiau River downstream of the Ada/Waiau confluence. • Sightseeing from high mountain vantage points <p>Fixed-wing aircraft will be permitted to use the airstrip at the Ada homestead flats. Any concession issued for helicopters will contain conditions to minimise conflict with other users.</p>	<p>Kayakers use aircraft to access many rivers for kayaking. New Zealand is the place where the term heli-kayaking was born.</p> <p>We fly in to the river, drop people and gear and that's it. We note that many fishing and hunting parties fly in <u>and</u> fly out on a day trip basis.</p> <p><i>Positioning recreationalists, self-sufficient hunters, mountain bikers and their bikes (excluding for down-hill mountain biking on untracked sites) and people and their equipment, including people wishing to raft or kayak the Waiau River</i></p> <p>We agree 100% with this statement, noting that the Henry/Waiau confluence is a suitable landing site when the river is low, or for those parties capable of paddling the river to the Lewis Pass highway from this point. The Henry confluence is where the rapids start in earnest, and it has been used for helicopter landings for this purpose .</p> <p>The landing sites should be general rather than too specific, due to the conditions at the site on the day. It is important to allow the pilot and party leaders to make a judgment call on this decision. We would want to have this access method retained, even though its use for kayakers may fall away as vehicular access is established.</p>
<p>Wild horses</p>	<p>We think the horses as proposed add value to the experience of the Upper Waiau valley. The levels proposed seem sensible.</p> <p>We are neutral on this issue and will go with the consensus of those who have better knowledge of the issue.</p>
<p>Heli-hunting under the draft "Guidelines for Aircraft Access in Canterbury Conservancy" would not be a permitted activity within the proposed 'restricted' zone and is unlikely to be permitted in the 'limited' zone as it is currently defined, but it would be compatible with a 'frequent' zone.</p> <p>Applications for heli-hunting would be publicly advertised.</p>	<p>Kayakers have no issue with heli-hunting itself, except that we have incidences of being shot at by hunters who mistake fast moving rafts and kayaks on the river with deer, pigs and goats that move at similar speeds. Also we are likely to be camping away from tracks in 'unexpected' places.</p> <p>We would ask that heli-hunting be kept away from the river and its immediate environs, say a corridor of 200m either side of the navigable river. This</p>

	<p>would affect MTB and horses, and their input on this issue might support ours.</p> <p>The Roar may be an issue here. Easter will be a busy time in the Park as all user groups will wish to take advantage of the longer break to access the more remote corners of the Park.</p> <p>Possibly the use of helicopters should be dictated by deer numbers rather than by treating heli-hunting as 'recreation'.</p> <p>On the Clarence we can cite instances of unsettling firearm use close to river parties, including one instance involving DoC contracted hunters. The rule suggested above could apply to both rivers.</p>
Stock grazing	<p>The Upper Waiau and Clarence valleys have numerous small side streams, and in places, open flats and gravel bars that are currently trampled by cattle and covered in cow pats.</p> <p>The reduced grazing levels (2007 to 2009) in the Clarence have made a noticeable difference to the river banks and camping experience has improved as a result below the Acheron confluence to the first gorge and below Quail Flat to the Sawtooth Gorge. For years (1980 to when DoC took over Clarence Reserve) there were few campsites that weren't covered in cow dung and now the place is looking much better.</p> <p>We think the removal of cattle will benefit native fish and trout habitat, and certainly improve the camping and MTB experience. For city and international visitors, the presence of cattle is a big concern. Cattle in these remote locations can be somewhat wild and quite menacing to an urban dweller.</p> <p>Removal of cattle, followed by some wet weather over time, should make the streams and the rivers drinkable again.</p> <p>We think all grazing along the two recreationally important river valleys should cease.</p>

<p>Foot access – short walks, day walks, overnight walks, multi-day walks, St James Walkway</p> <p>The St James Walkway will continue to be promoted as a traditional Kiwi backcountry tramping experience. The St James Walkway is classified as a ‘backcountry comfort-seekers’ track. It is a track which caters for “<i>relatively inexperienced backcountry walkers</i>”. To maintain the character and experience of the track, it is proposed that mountain biking and horse trekking will not be permitted on the track. Tramping and camping through the St James Conservation Area will be unrestricted. People are expected to adhere to the camping code of conduct.</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>A comment from trampers in our club.</p> <p>The St James Walkway has some features which can make it harder than “<i>relatively inexperienced backcountry walkers</i>” can manage safely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radios are not in all huts • Avalanche danger in the Upper Maruia valley • Avalanche debris in the Upper Maruia valley • Long distance from the Anne to the Boyle huts. • Snowfall is usually general and heavy when it occurs. <p>We note a poor attitude to compliance on DoC Hut Fees in all the huts in the St James Walkway and the Clarence huts.</p>
<p>Fishing</p> <p>Recreational fishing is a popular activity on the Waiau, Ada and Henry rivers and at Lake Guyon and Lake Tennyson. Fishing is likely to be more popular now that access is more easily available.</p> <p>The fishing season is open from 1 October to 30 April. The New Zealand Fish and Game Council is responsible for the regulations that govern fishing for sports fish. A question for consideration is whether the Upper Waiau River within St James should be designated as a ‘catch and release’ zone.</p>	<p>Kayakers often fish the rivers we paddle. One of the great pleasures of longer river trips is cooking and eating your catch. If catch and release is recommended by F&G, however, we will support that.</p> <p>We respect the views of Fish & Game on this issue, and we will back whatever submission they make.</p>
<p>Horses and horse trekking</p> <p>It is proposed that horses will have unrestricted access to all of the St James Conservation Area, except for the St James Walkway, subject to the natural limitations of topography. The exclusion of the walkway is to minimise conflict with other users, to protect their recreational experience and to protect the track surface. The use of the</p>	<p>Agree re the St James Walkway.</p> <p>Kayakers have no issues with horse trekking except to draw the Department’s attention to the fact that user conflicts have arisen in the USA where trails and campsites are shared. Horses need to be kept away from other user groups while camping. The conflicts arise where non ‘horsey’ people find horses</p>

<p>Anne and Christopher huts by horse trekkers is regarded as acceptable. Facilities to corral or tie up horses on popular routes and at overnight camping sites and huts will be investigated. Public views on what may be required are welcomed.</p> <p>The establishment and upgrading of routes for horse trekking will be investigated along with any accommodation-specific proposals that the public may have. The historic Stanley Vale homestead has been suggested as one place to restore for horse rider overnight accommodation. As such it could provide a rich experience of both the station’s history and its future.</p>	<p>and their dung somewhat off putting, whereas ‘horsey’ people are in heaven.</p> <p>We are not certain about potential conflicts between walkers and MTB and horses. There may be safety issues where MTBs squeaking brakes and general speed could spook horses. In the USA MTBs go off trail to avoid horses and this can damage vegetation and trigger water erosion channeling.</p> <p>We think there is a good case for some exclusivity and some separation. After that it’s mostly about managing peoples’ expectations.</p>
<p>Hunting – deer, pigs, game birds</p> <p>It is intended that St James be fully open for wild animal hunting (deer, chamois and pigs), and for game-bird hunting as governed by the regulations of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. Hunters may use foot, mountain bikes and horses to access their hunting locations now, and potentially motorised vehicles/aircraft in the near future, as the decisions are made about their use. For safety reasons no hunting should occur in close proximity to any of the main access routes or the St James Walkway. Once St James has been destocked, hunting dogs will be permitted east of the Waiau River.</p>	<p>We think the vehicle access via Maling Pass and the Edwards River should be limited to the primary purpose of enabling access. We think it would degrade the experience for all users on the river or foot-bound parties following the Waiau and its tributary rivers to have hunters on trail bikes, farm bikes or 4WDs spotlighting or generally following the river trails or roaming the tussock-land in pursuit of animals. The upper river can be crossed by determined 4WDs and bikes and we think this would generally diminish the place and cause damage.</p> <p>The recently announced upgrades as part of the NZ Cycleway must have an impact on this issue too. Recreational uses such as cycling, walking, fishing and horse riding are incompatible with hunting from a helicopter or motorized vehicle – day and night. The Cycleway upgrades will increase recreational use including a new segment of Front Country visitors, and it seems inevitable that firearm use presents dangers as recreational density rises.</p> <p>We propose that hunting along the access ways, the river corridor and the tracks be confined to professional hunters under contract to DoC, and that they are closely managed. In the recreational corridors hunting should be governed by pest management needs and elsewhere by</p>

	<p>recreational/pest management needs. Recreational hunting permits can be zoned accordingly.</p> <p>We request a hunting no-go zone along the river corridor of say 200m either side.</p>
<p>Rafting/kayaking/canoeing</p> <p>Continued access to and use of the Waiau River for kayaking and rafting is considered appropriate. People undertaking these activities will be able to use any of the permitted access methods.</p>	<p>Thank you. We agree!</p>
<p>Department-managed huts and associated facilities</p> <p>The department proposes the following developments over the next 1-3 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signage and interpretation • construction of a bridge across the lower Waiau River in the vicinity of the Edwards valley, suitable for foot, mountain bike and possibly horse use • construction of new huts at Lake Guyon and the lower true right of the Waiau valley with a replacement of the Caroline Bivvy – new toilet facilities and wood sheds would also be built • construction of high-river access tracks • fencing of the Ada homestead • development of car-parking areas and toilets at the Malings and Edwards valleys' entry points. 	<p>Agree with all proposed plans.</p>
<p>Didymo</p> <p>Didymo is present in the nearby Clarence, Hurunui and Buller rivers, but not yet in the Waiau River within St James. It is important to do whatever is practicable to protect this pristine river and its sports fishery and wild life from didymo contamination. Much of the upper catchment with its rocky substrate and clear, fast-flowing water is ideal didymo habitat. If introduced, didymo is likely to establish and grow. To minimise the chance of didymo entering the upper Waiau catchment it is proposed to establish</p>	<p>We agree. As kayaks and rafts are a potential vector for Didymo, we are well aware of the need to contain this menace as far as possible.</p> <p>Kayakers as a whole are aware and practice clean, check dry.</p> <p>If a locked gate key system is instigated, this is the opportunity to deliver a strong message to all groups. It is our experience that some individuals (kayakers and fishers and MTBers) have a cavalier attitude and some overseas visitors are unaware.</p>

<p>cleaning stations/decontamination sites at all access points for all activities and users. Given the logistics and resources that are likely to be required for such an operation, further investigation will be undertaken as to the most efficient and effective methods.</p>	<p>Education is the best and ultimately the only defence. Biosecurity NZ will no doubt assist with Didymo education in the St James.</p> <p>Peer pressure within the kayaking community to follow the biosecurity procedures is strong.</p>
<p>Motorised access (including 4WD and motorbikes)</p> <p>There has been a lot of comment and debate around vehicle access. St James is currently closed to public vehicle access for the transition period while livestock are phased out.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This transition will be complete by 1 June 2010. 2. It is proposed that from 1 June 2010 open seasonal access will be permitted on formed and marked tracks over the Malings and Edwards passes to the true left (east) of the Waiau River. At the Waiau River there will be clearly defined car parks where it is intended vehicles must stop. The access will be managed to minimise potential conflicts with other recreational users. 3. Both routes could be subject to seasonal closures for vehicle access because of environmental considerations (e.g. snow, floods, ice, and extreme fire risks). This is expected to predominately apply from May to October (inclusive) annually for snow. The highest fire risk is likely to be in late summer. It is expected that closure because of a high fire danger would occur infrequently. 4. Social and environmental impact monitoring will determine the conservation impact of open public 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understood. 2. Agree. 3. Please note that the Upper Waiau has been paddled a number of times in flood, and that this experience is a significant challenge that some kayakers aspire to meet. Expert kayakers can paddle the whole river in a day in flood conditions, but the norm is still two days. 4. Agree. Kayakers wish to participate in any constructive way we can.

<p>vehicle use. Further controls may be needed if there are adverse effects.</p> <p>5. If the adverse effects cannot be practically remedied, some or all forms of public vehicle access may need to be stopped. If this should eventuate, consideration would be given to permitting a commercial vehicle-access option that would essentially provide a taxi service.</p>	<p>5. Agree, subject to kayakers being part of the solution.</p>
<p>MEDIUM TERM</p> <p>New privately owned and commercially managed huts and associated facilities It has been suggested that there may be interest from prospective concessionaires to develop a range of accommodation that will assist people to experience and enjoy St James. These could cater for fishers, horse riders, hunters, walkers and mountain-bike riders. There may be the potential for privately owned and managed tourist accommodation on the St James Walkway elsewhere.</p> <p><i>Vehicle access will be subject to a 'Code of Conduct'. If experience shows a higher level of control is required, then a gate and key system could be considered. A gate system will be necessary for seasonal and fire closures.</i></p> <p>There may also be the potential for a 'public/private' partnership whereby the department builds a new hut either in partnership with or for a commercial operator. The new hut could be jointly used by the public and the commercial operator's clients, or solely by the operator's clients. In this scenario the commercial operator would be providing accommodation for his/her clients who are undertaking recreational activities such as mountain biking, horse riding, walking or fishing. The department is open to people putting forward their ideas</p>	<p>We do not agree that there should be private huts in the St James. It should be possible to cater for guided commercial trips in balance with public uses.</p> <p>We think DoC should build and manage the huts. Should these huts become over-used, for example at weekends, then a hut booking system could be introduced. If the capacity becomes insufficient, then carrying capacity can be assessed as part of the decision process to decide if further expansion of the capacity or diversity of huts in the Park is sensible.</p> <p>A hut located at the typical overnight stop for river parties would be a good option to consider. A DoC hut near the old Mc Arthur Bridge site would be used by river parties. If the hut was too near the road end at the Edwards it might be vandalized, so the location would require some thought.</p> <p>We think such an investment would attract use by our members. For example, the new DoC Clarence huts are changing the planning of river journeys. The spacing is OK in the first few days but another hut is needed near Matai Flat to complete the suite of huts that would make a hut-to-hut trip perfect.</p> <p>We recommend that DoC considers a new publicly owned DoC hut at the most appropriate location in the Upper Waiau.</p> <p>Vehicle Code of Conduct. Agree. The Code should include cleaning or chemical treatment of vehicles to</p>

<p>on whether this is a good idea and, if so, how and where this could be done.</p>	<p>remove seeds.</p>
<p>Hydro-electric power generation and/or irrigation water storage</p> <p>There is the potential for the generation of hydro electric power and water storage within both the Waiau and Clarence rivers. The Ministry of Economic Development and the Canterbury Water Management Strategy websites contain information about ideas which have been developed so far. At the present time no proposals have been made for that section of the Waiau River that lies within St James, but this could change. Future investigations may identify sites with potential that could be considered for development.</p> <p>Applications for installing flow recording devices would be regarded as low impact activities. Monitoring equipment is unobtrusive and can be installed with little impact on the environment. Applications would not be publically notified.</p>	<p>Kayakers would be aghast at the idea of building such river-destroying and intrusive structures as hydro dams and pylons in either the upper Waiau or Clarence River valleys.</p> <p>A strong and unequivocal ‘no dams’ statement from the Department based on maintaining the precious and unique values of St James Station would be a deterrent to developers.</p> <p>The Clarence and Upper Waiau are both strong candidates for national Water Conservation Orders. The Upper Waiau is so little known that it is not appreciated for its remote values. Now that the Crown has purchased St James, and access and facilities will improve, use of the whole area will grow. Its unknown status will no longer protect it.</p> <p>Kayakers who have paddled the river rate the both the Clarence and upper Waiau as world-class experiences. It seems crazy to have the Crown purchase such a valuable recreational asset and then not protect it to the fullest extent from irreversible and massively destructive hydro dams.</p> <p>Hydro dams and their ancillaries are <u>industrial development</u> and are counter-productive to all of the values that St James offers.</p>
<p>An electricity-generating wind farm</p> <p>The St James range adjacent to the Clarence River is the most likely location for considering the generation of wind power. The existing roads and electricity infrastructure in the Clarence River valley could be used to support a new wind farm. There may be other potential sites within St James, but they are likely to be disadvantaged by their impact on conservation values, remoteness from roads and a supporting line network. To gauge the potential for wind power generation monitoring masts would need to be erected.</p>	<p>Wind power has a visual impact. From our point of view, keep the site and the pylons away from the valley landscape, and we would not have an issue. We cannot imagine trampers will want to see any more additions to the visual pollution of transmission lines already in the area.</p> <p>If the wind power came as a package with hydro, then everyone who values the St James recreational assets loses. We get artificial lakes, lose the wild river experience and suffer the intrusion of roads, structures and transmission lines. Why go to the St James if the river has gone, and what’s left is</p>

<p>Monitoring masts are temporary and have a low environmental impact. Applications would be treated as non-notified concessions.</p>	<p>cluttered with concrete and steel?</p> <p>As more recreation takes place in St James the idea of industrial development will be an even greater anathema. The prudent management action is to state clearly from the outset that this place is special and is to be maintained as a place for outdoor recreation and for biodiversity. Economic development should be confined to tourism.</p> <p>Recreation and tourism are merged here as most recreational activity will generate economic activity in Hanmer Springs and the wider Hurunui District. Accommodation, food and services will cater for the needs of the growing numbers of recreational users.</p>
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APPENDIX

Whitewater NZ RIVER GUIDE

www.rivers.org.nz/nz/canterbury/waiiau/upper-waiiau

UPPER WAIIAU RIVER

North Canterbury

Class:	III-IV+
Portage:	Some parties portage The Narrows, either due to floods or low flows, or objective danger.
Level:	Ideally needs spring run-off or a little rain, but has been paddled at all times of the year and all flow levels.
Gauge:	visual, or the Waiiau at Glenhope graph at > www.ecan.govt.nzhttp://www.ecan.govt.nz/Our%20Environment/Water/Rivers/RiverFlows/river-flows.html?site_no=64604&Location=N&StageFlow=W
Length:	45km
Gradient:	11m/km
Time:	2-4 days
Put in:	Maling Pass (helicopter or walking)
Take out:	SH7 after the Hope confluence
Shuttle:	Helicopter or 1.5 hours drive via Hanmer Springs to Lake Tennyson and the Maling Pass track
Maps:	M31, M32
Character:	fantastic high country scenery, fun whitewater, a great weekend
Hot tip:	Don't swim in the Narrows
Upstream of:	Waiiau / Lower Waiiau (Hanmer Gorge), II+

It doesn't come much better. A multi-day package of interesting whitewater, great mountain scenery and fantastic camping makes the Waiiau trip both rare and hard to turn down. One of the delightful features of this trip is excellent camping on flat grass sheltered by mature matagouri, surrounded by a plentiful manuka firewood supply. The trip can be done in two days, but considering the shuttle and the pleasurable camping many parties prefer three. Labour Weekend, in October, is ideal as spring flows usually provide good water.

The trip begins one of two ways: a helicopter trip to just above the Henry River confluence, or a walk from Lake Tennyson over Maling Pass. The walk is along an open 4WD track and takes three to four hours depending on fitness and the efficiency of your carrying system. The first three hours paddling from the Henry River confluence involves a gentle float down a shallow stream — a chance to get used to a laden boat and absorb the views of Mounts Una and Faerie Queen in the surrounding Spenser Range.

Busy class III boulder gardens and narrowings between rock walls begin 1.5km below the Ada River confluence, near the Henry River confluence. About 2km from there, a lovely,

long rapid known as Boulder Garden leaves many wanting for more. Unfortunately the river eases, but there are still many class III rapids to follow and plenty of waves and holes to dally over if flows are good. The whole section is boat scoutable except one drop on a left hand bend after a short gorge. As the river opens out and flows under the McArthur swingbridge it signals 6km of class II spiced with the occasional good wave down to the Narrows.

The Narrows has a legendary reputation in excess of reality. The entry rapids have changed dramatically since 1995 and several drops have disappeared completely. The hazard is that if someone swims in the 1.5km long Narrows it is difficult to get out of the gorge. The main rapids are right at the start. At low flows a weir-like drop, appropriately named The Weir, requires a move. At high flows this disappears and the entry is a churning mass of boils and buffers — a matter of keeping straight and paddling fast. There are some changes below the Narrows. A team of five from Blenheim all swam from an undercut rock below the Narrows — all gear was lost but, luckily, it was all recovered the next day from a sandbar by Tin Jug Hut. Very lucky.

Arguments rage about the best portage route, if this is your choice. I say the best bet is to stay on the rocks on river right and seal launch back into the gorge after the rapids. Some hardy souls crash up to the road to Tin Jug Hut, but that is a long haul.

After the Narrows the river is class II to II+ down to the Hope confluence. Many parties camp just below the Narrows (or use Tin Jug Hut) and have a three or four hour trip out the following morning.

**This river can rise alarmingly with NW rain in the headwaters of the Upper Waiau or the Ada River tributary. A Whitewater Canoe Club party in 2007 was confronted with bank to bank floodwaters surging out of the Ada, transforming the gentle float into a survival exercise. Others in the same party were overtaken by the flood surge down the Upper Waiau itself, which had dead cattle floating in it, so it must have been exceptional.*

To get to the put in: either fly by helicopter or drive from Hanmer Springs to Lake Tennyson via Jacks Pass. At the top bridge over the Clarence River, a couple of kilometres from the lake, the track heads off on the western side of the bridge. Follow this up and over Maling Pass and down to the Waiau. .

Access arrangements are under discussion since the purchase of St James Station by the Crown. A resolution is expected by July 2010.

To get to the take out: from the Hanmer Springs turnoff head west along SH7 for about 15km to Calf Creek. Find the small road which leads down towards the river and leave a car here. It is worth going down to the river as spotting the take out from the water without any prior knowledge is difficult.

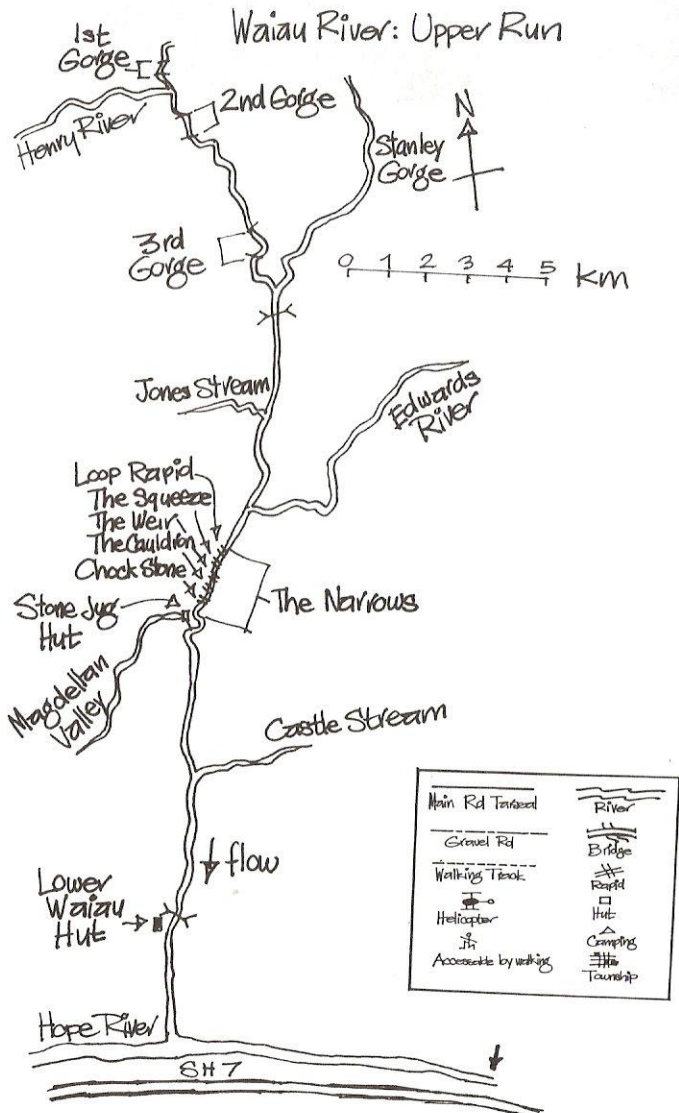
NZ Whitewater 4th Edition 2006: p223

Credits: Bruce Barnes **added by Hugh Canard, 2009*

This section appears in [New Zealand Whitewater, 4th edition, 2006](#) on p223.

Map of kayaking features

Errata: Tin Jug Hut is actually Stone Jug Hut.



Video references

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tM6UWmn2pI>

Written accounts

Two parties from the WWCC joined together on this trip.

1. Mike Nooney (by email from China)

It was Labour weekend, 2007. Our 6 person team hiked our boats over Maling pass in a little over 3hrs. Gusty NorWest winds and driving rain were signs to us experienced kayakers that we may encounter a river with rising waters. We set off and 90 mins of class 2 followed with a good flow in the river, with the occasional scrape of a kayak on rock. The river banks began to swing around to the left and we could see a gorge ahead. A chocolate brown river (Ada R) flowed into the Waiau from river right. This stream turned the river brown as we looked around the corner to see superb whitewater rapids. Our heavy boats loaded with camping gear gave us great momentum to punch through the difficult water.

What followed was around forty kilometres of Class IV big volume water and a river in flood conditions. High walled gorges with boils crashing off the walls. We clocked a top speed of 32 kmph on a GPS, not bad for a kayak! The speed and power of the river amazed us. Four to five kms went by in a flash. The big volume water demanded good river reading and fast reactions. After each main rapid we recounted and shared smiles mixed with a touch of 'This is huge!'. Onwards we paddled hearing the rumble and crack of boulders on the riverbed.

More high quality paddling was to come with the Narrows rapids on Day 2. Bluffs with surging eddies and zig zag river bends kept the tempo high on the paddle out. In no time we were at the road end and later soaking in the Hanmer hot springs.

Looking back 2 years later this was one my best river adventures since I first sat in a kayak 10 years ago. The fact that this river is rarely paddled in flood made it all the more special. I want this high water kayaking opportunity to be available for experienced kayakers in the future.

2. From Ian Gill-Fox, WWCC member

Labour Weekend 2007 saw quite a large WWCC trip planned for the Upper Waiau. Most of the party planned to fly in, but 4 of us had chosen to walk in due to the cost of the helo being more than we wanted to pay. We all resented the lack of road access over a legal road too.

As it turned out the wind was too strong for the helo to fly so it looked like only the hardy/hard-up 4 would get a paddle. A 3 1/2 hour walk over Maling Pass, with boats heavy because of overnight gear, saw us at the river simultaneously itching to get on the water and almost too tired to be bothered! Once going the fatigue wore off as excitement at something new took over.

A long flat lead-in with cold weather made the first real rapid quite something. It was a very steep rapid after so much flat water and we all took it cautiously. The river was up a bit from previous rain but still flowing clean and this made for fantastic river conditions even if the weather was becoming worse.

When we got to the McArthur swing bridge we discussed either continuing (which we could easily have done and made the take-out in one day given the speed of the water, which was now rising) or camping in case any of the helo team had decided to walk. We chose to camp near an old hut and see if anyone showed up. 6 of them did arrive, nearly on dark, all buzzing with tales of a now raging flood and dead cattle surfing waves with them! All 10 of us got a good night's sleep after a long and very fun, if at times a hairy day!

Next morning as we stood by the river before setting out, the original foursome all commented on how huge the river had become. The other 6 all looked at us and pointed out that when they'd arrived the night before the river had been about 2m higher than it now was! As it was, the river now gave a very quick and bouncy ride down to The Narrows.

We all had a pretty good look at this set of rapids. A couple of the team chose to walk around and the rest of us started running it. I pulled out after the first drop as I was paddling a new boat that I had little experience in and was struggling a bit with the boisterous nature of the water. I joined the other walkers, wishing I'd brought my more familiar older boat. All the paddlers made it through The Narrows fine though, and it was almost as much of a thrill to watch as to do. Something to look forward to next time!

After The Narrows the river toned down a lot but was still fast and pushy, and had very few beaches to pull up on for any rest. We made good time on this last stretch and met up with our shuttle drivers just as they arrived at the take out.

This was one of the most challenging trips I've done. I've paddled both harder and longer rivers before, but not a river of this length with such a continuous level of

reasonably difficult water. It would have been far easier at lower flow and I'd like to do a lower flow trip soon, but I am very glad I did that high flow trip as I know it is a special challenge that is increasingly rare. I hope that access to the Upper Waiau improves so that the river is far far easier to access for paddlers. And at a full range of flows so that all paddlers have the chance to experience this wonderful river at a level that suits their needs - be that advancing adventure boaters just getting into harder grades, or those wanting the full-on bank to bank bloated cow experience that my trip had!