



Whitewater NZ

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Whitewater NZ Media Release 29 July 2009

Whitewater NZ works to protect and conserve rivers, improve opportunities for kayakers to enjoy our whitewater resources safely, and protect public access to rivers for recreational use.

Strong Opposition to Proposed Matakитaki River Hydro-scheme

Whitewater NZ (formerly known as the NZ Recreational Canoeing Association) has presented Network Tasman with feedback from over 200 kayakers and kayaking organisations, opposing the proposed hydro scheme on the Matakитaki River in Murchison. Feedback has been received not only from kayakers around New Zealand but also from kayakers and visitors from overseas, highlighting the value that the Matakитaki River has as a recreational and teaching kayaking resource.

Whitewater NZ conservation officer Tony Ward-Holmes believes that: “submissions received on the pre-feasibility study from whitewater users are only the tip of the iceberg. The Matakитaki River is one of the most highly used kayaking rivers in New Zealand and if Network Tasman were to proceed to a full feasibility study there would be many more kayakers who would oppose the scheme.”

Network Tasman have undertaken a pre-feasibility study into the possibility of building up to three dams on the Matakитaki River, destroying the natural character of the river and its flora and fauna.

Murchison’s economy is based on two main industries - farming and tourism. Tourism has been valued at \$23 million per annum, and is largely based on the Murchison rivers. If this resource were compromised then so would the tourism income for the community. Wendy and Steve Wood, who own Korimako Lodge and host international anglers who come to Murchison for world-renowned trout fishing, say “a dam on the Matakитaki River

would be a disaster for tourism in Murchison.”

Network Tasman has a director’s meeting on July 31st, at which they are scheduled to decide whether to proceed with a \$1 million Feasibility Study for the proposed dams. Whitewater NZ asks they consider the overwhelming feedback from kayakers and the Murchison community, and decide to preserve the Matakitaki River for future generations.

For more information contact

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