



Media Release

Thursday 12 March, 2015

Kayaker fatality on the Kaituna River, Rotorua

In response to the drowning of kayaker Louise Jull on Wednesday 11 March while kayaking the Kaituna River near Rotorua, Whitewater New Zealand would like to make the following statement:

Whitewater kayaking is a highly rewarding and challenging recreation. Any activity undertaken on water is inherently risky and good decisions must be taken to ensure the participant's safety. While kayaking this includes having the correct equipment, training, teamwork and having good information about the river and conditions.

The kayaking community, in particular the Okere Falls community, is saddened by the loss of Louise and we extend our condolences and support to her family, friends, and kayaking team. Whitewater New Zealand has been in contact with members of Lou's team and understands they were skilled and well equipped. Louise was an extremely talented and inspirational athlete, well respected for her skill and decision-making on and off the water. Her passing will affect many of the kayaking community on a deeply personal level.

Whitewater New Zealand along with its members and regional clubs provide information and training on the best river safety and rescue practices, which includes leadership and decision making. The www.rivers.org.nz website has information on the known sections of rivers that are commonly kayaked and includes recent changes to these rivers and new hazards. Whitewater New Zealand is committed to the promotion of kayaking in a safe and responsible manner.

If you require more information please go to our website or contact either of the officers below.

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About Whitewater NZ:

Whitewater NZ is a volunteer advocacy association for whitewater kayakers in New Zealand. Our purpose is to preserve New Zealand's whitewater resources and enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.