

# **NZ Salmon Anglers Newsletter**

**AUGUST 2007 Number 86**



*Interring the "coffin". Story on page 6.*

**Official Newsletter of the  
New Zealand Salmon Anglers Association Incorporated  
P.O. Box 1113, Christchurch 8140**

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2007-08 OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE**

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**Committee Meetings:** The Committee meets on the first Monday each month (except January) at 7.30 pm in the Fish & Game premises, 3 Horatio Street, Christchurch. Members and supporters are welcome to attend these meetings.

**Honorary Auditor:** Trevor Hayes

**Life Members:** Lindsay Dell, Ron Dougherty, Trevor Hayes, John Healy, Ken Hughey, Ross Lightfoot, Athol Price, Stephen Sparrow

<p><b>Disclaimer:</b> The opinions expressed in any letters and articles in this newsletter are the authors' own and are not necessarily those of the New Zealand Salmon Anglers Association Incorporated or the Editor.</p>
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## PRESIDENT'S EDITORIAL

For some of you the season will start with whitebaiting, followed by visions of the salmon season starting in a couple of months. That will come along seemingly quickly as you battle through the elements. The thought of longer warmer days is a bit more exciting added to which are the thousands of baby salmon swimming in the opposite direction to migrate out to sea.

For me I will be jumping straight into summer conditions with a few weeks on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. The prospects here are to fish the mouth of the Maroochyadore River. A friend of mine did so last year and had some good success catching a variety of fish including brim or brill. One of the highlights of his catch was the landing of two stingrays. When hooking up he played these in a salmon-like manner and when beaching them cut the line above the hook and released them back to the tide. This was the time that Steve Irwin had his misfortune with a stingray up at Port Douglas. In reprisal it was reported that local fisherman when catching rays were killing them out of spite.

An onlooker observed my friend landing and releasing the stingrays and approached him after the release of the second catch and commented on his sporting actions in the way he played and landed his catch and complimented him on the release, when others were killing them. The onlooker was so impressed

that he said to my friend "I am bringing my boat up next week and would like you to come out fishing with me as we are going 30km offshore from Noosa." Almost immediate acceptance of the offer was confirmed and they all had a great day on the water with bountiful catches and extended friendships.

The moral of the story is to only catch and take what you can eat and a release will bring other rewards.

It was a disappointment that our open day release was cancelled at Montrose, but it is understandable with the property being on the market and the threat of Didymo infection. We have and continue to enjoy the use of this delightful facility which has greatly benefitted our salmon recovery programme.

I had the opportunity of attending the first Lincoln University debate hosted by Kim Hill entitled "Water Wars" and, for sure, there is a lot of opinion on the subject but I am yet to witness action that is prepared or has the ability to take the subject by the balls and shake out a satisfactory solution. Somewhat similar to the bureaucratic issues faced by our Health and Law and Order systems.

Perhaps this could be construed as a biased opinion but the panel did agree on a couple of issues, like the only ones that are going to get rich out of the water allocation issues are lawyers. Another point that I picked up on is that all parties had an awareness that the rivers should

retain sufficient water for protection of the river system habitat. (How much is that though !)

Because of the increasing demand for water at specific times and the extended allocations in "Red Zones" the option mentioned on several occasions was lake type storage to meet peak demands, when general natural resources are not available. When questioned, the panel advised that economically the best storage options were large ones and not small farm lots. What does this tell you and where will the water come from, as seldom is floodwater suitable because of the silt?

Our responsibility is to ensure we elect people to local and central governments that will make the right decisions. The pollution factor is on the way and lack of monitoring to date will bear out my comments in future years. You are encouraged to make your voice heard and take positive action at every opportunity.

Salmon returns this past season have shown an increase in numbers, with indications that spawning counts are two to three times better in our North

Canterbury rivers. Central South Island report a trend for an 8 year high having resulted and the West Coast has experienced healthy catches and counts.

This coming season is the first 3 year expected returns from the Scotty Box programme, so it will be interesting to see if our trend of salmon continues upwards. I believe it is safe for me to indicate that between 50 and 75% of returning fish have been a result of our assisted or enhanced breeding programmes. So you can see the result of your membership and use it as an encouragement for others to join our Association. It is also appropriate to acknowledge the wonderful support we have had from Fish and Game, their staff and volunteer input. Rakaia River Promotions have also made significant contributions.

On a final note perhaps we should be applying for more water allocations in our rivers as with a greater number of fish coming back we'll need more water !!!

*Ron Stuart*

**PRESIDENT**

## **SALMON ANGLERS CAPS**



**Promote your Association  
Buy a Cap**



The caps are navy blue, with a silver/grey salmon, orange print with white and gold stripes. Cost \$20. Each cap you purchase includes a small donation to the Salmon Recovery Programme.

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to P O Box 1113, Christchurch 8140,  
or call the Secretary on 383 0900 to pick one up.**

## Committee Highlights

On 2nd July we had a very well attended meeting with all committee members present except Brian Foley who was absent as he was undergoing hospital treatment. (Good luck for a speedy return, Brian). In addition we had four guests in attendance; Kristen and Robert McKey, Bruce Moody and Kevin Gates.

The financial report continued on a healthy trend due mostly to subscriptions still coming in. Thank you to all that have paid promptly - it does help us a lot.

Relating to membership, we had one resignation from Mr F A Small, due to health problems, but in so doing we received a generous donation. Thank you Mr Small for your support over a long number of years. We received one new member, Colin Griffiths. Colin had helped out this year with our voluntary working parties and it is great to have him as a member.

A busy time is ahead for Ron Dougherty and Tim Ellis attending to environment and resource matters relating to our representation or objection for Meridian/South Canterbury irrigation schemes, Robindale Dairies Rakaia, Central Plains Water Trust, P G Brown Rakaia, Smith Cranes 484 Johns Road, Hurunui River Management Regime, Malvern Hills Protection Society, Waitaki Management Society and Heathcote River. It is important that we give support to our team on these matters as in the long term major impacts will result to our salmon fishery and water quality or quantity

General business included reports relating to the Angling Regulations following a working party meeting and Fish &

Game councillor meeting, the result being that the status quo mainly remains in place with little changes for the coming season. As reported previously serious consideration was being given for a shortened season.

Discussion took place on ways to lift our profile to attract membership and we are working on suitable print data to encourage others to join. In our newsletter the results of allocating Committee Portfolios was published, showing areas of responsibility, recognising fields of particular interest, expertise and reporting. We are very fortunate to have the depth of experience amongst our committee.

### **A Note from Darryl French, NZSAA member in Australia**

We are on the move again to an even warmer climate and better fishing. Weipa which is at the top of the Cape York Peninsula in Queensland is where we are now residing. Working for Rio Tinto mining company. Plenty of big Barramundi, Mangrove Jacks, Tuna and Mackerel but still not as good as our mighty Salmon though. Good to see the returns were a lot better this year and all the hard work by the Association is paying off. Please pass on my appreciation and thanks to all involved.

Regards  
**Darryl French**

*Editor's Note: The warmth of North Queensland sounds alluring but no doubt we will see you on our NZ salmon rivers during the next season??*

## The Funeral Procession Hurunui River 23 June 2007

On this day we transported four “**coffins**” to the Glencoe River and Dove Stream, both of which feed into the Hurunui River. I have called it a funeral procession, but in fact it was just the opposite. You see we have had such a great season with ova supply that all our Scotty Boxes have been used up and we are into the coffins for river hatching.

The coffin is basically a steel locker or cabinet that is planted into the stream, loaded with good size stones with a constant flow of water passing through its length. At the appropriate time salmon ova are placed inside the coffin to hatch. When hatched they have protection from predators whilst they stay in the coffin and when they are ready they can progress out into the stream and eventually down the river and out to sea.

We took the option of taking the coffins up prior to the eggs being available, as we had a terrific labour force available on the Saturday. Later in the week another team went up and deposited the eggs in the coffins and it was a much easier exercise with the heavy labouring out of the way.

At this stage the method is more convenient than using the barrel method, but we are yet to see what happens in flood conditions, as the coffins could be moved if severe water force hits them. Because of the method used to secure them in the stream bed it would take a fair amount of force to dislodge them. The other great aspect

about this method is the convenience of placing the eggs in the coffins and the protection the eggs get during the incubation process

When using the barrel method it is close to natural spawning but the mortality rate is much higher and the same amount of stability or predator protection is not available. Another good feature relating to the coffins is that when the ova are placed inside we do not experience any loss of eggs floating away. This tends to happen a wee bit with the barrel method. The cost of a coffin is minimal compared with the cost of Scotty boxes, so if we have a loss the effect is not too bad.

As the seasons progress our team is developing knowledge and methods best suited for ova planting and we have moved a long way on best site selection with the avoidance of silt, predators and effects from wandering stock. In some situations our planting programme may have introduced salmon to a new section of the river. From the coming season on we will have positive indications of past successes, with salmon returning to spawn at our selected locations.

Our team of Saturday volunteers included Warren Mackie, Graham Long, Colin Griffiths, Robert (Mick) McKey, Graeme McLeod, Andrew Lock, Ken Paterson, Steve McNeil, Peter Robinson, Ron Dougherty, John Hodgson, Ron Stuart, Diane and Colin Eaton.

The second expedition to plant the ova on Thursday 28 June comprised Douglas Roy, John Hodgson and Dennis Long.



*A “coffin” in the stream, loaded with stones and ova*



*Placing coffin in stream and loading with ova*

Thanks to all the volunteers for some fantastic support. It has been a pleasure being part of the Team and having such wonderful cooperation

*Contributed by Ron Stuart*

# 2006-2007 Salmon Management Report for the North Canterbury Region

*By Steve Terry, Fish & Game Officer*



Anglers' hopes of an improved salmon run last season were satisfied with reports of good numbers of salmon observed in most of the east coast salmon rivers at different times throughout the season. However, catching them proved to be another story. Angler catch records for the 2006-2007 also confirm this and show anglers had limited success in both the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers. Although catches were higher than the previous season in both rivers, they were the lowest on record as a percentage of the total run in the Waimakariri and a similarly low catch rate was seen in the Rakaia. Spawning numbers in the headwaters were up almost five fold on the previous year in the Waimakariri and more than double in the Rakaia compared to the previous season.

## **Results**

### **Rakaia River**

The total run in the Rakaia was almost double the 2005-06 season with almost 4,000 salmon returning to the river to spawn. Angler catch remained similar to the previous season but spawning escapement was the highest seen in eight years at almost 3,000 fish. The total catch was not boosted significantly by the Montrose hatchery returns which made up only 7% of the total run (180 fish). The Hydra Waters was the standout spawning stream last season with almost 1,500 salmon returning to spawn, the highest seen in eight years. Mellish Stream, a

tributary of Lake Heron which flows into the Rakaia River a few kilometers above the Glenariffe, had similar number of salmon return as the Hydra Waters the previous season but this season only saw around 30 salmon return.

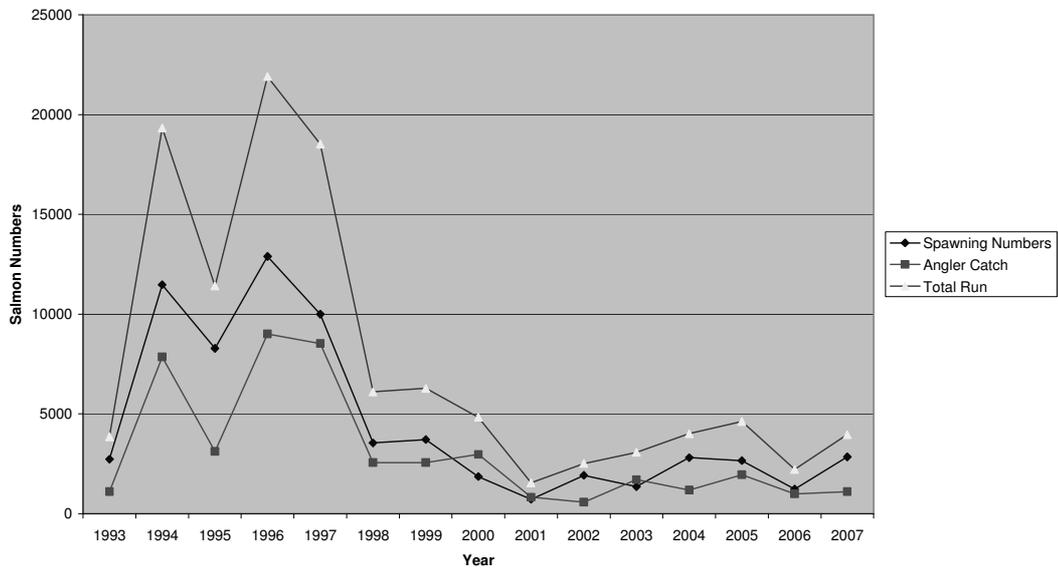
### **Waimakariri River**

Waimakariri returns were more than double the previous season with angler catch remaining similar to the previous season at 1,373 and spawning escapement almost four times greater at 2,659. The standout tributaries in the Waimakariri River were Cora Lynn and Cass Hill Streams which both saw more salmon returning this season than the Poulter River. Cora Lynn had its highest returns ever with almost 800 salmon, which was one and a half times more than returned to the Poulter River. Returns to the Silverstream hatchery were relatively poor with only 275 salmon returning to the trap.

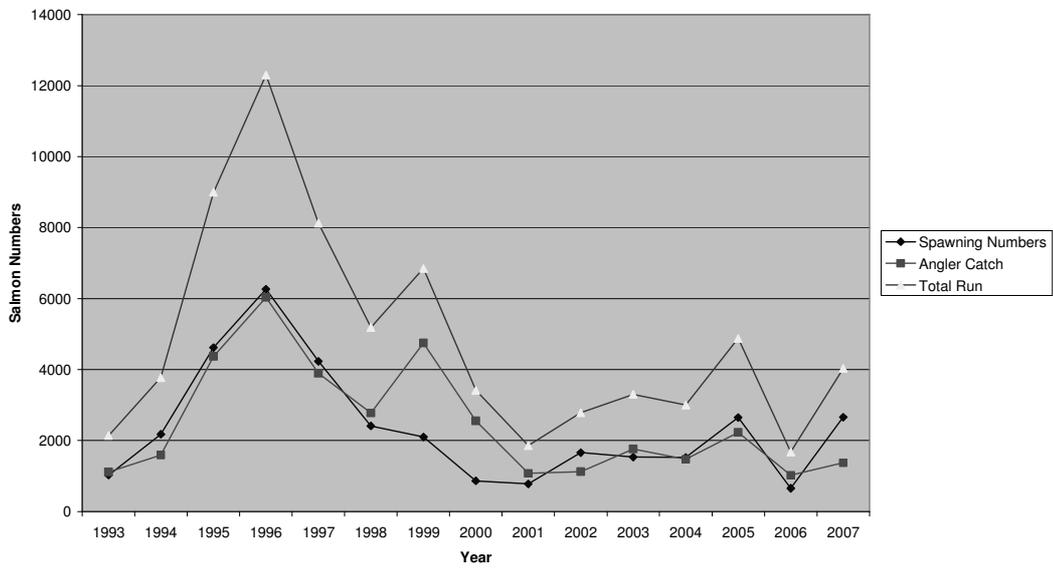
### **Angler Catch**

A phone survey was carried out on 1,200 randomly selected licence holders in the region (adult whole season, principal family member and complimentary), to ascertain the number of salmon that were caught by North Canterbury anglers from each of the salmon rivers. Six hundred and forty (640) of these anglers were successfully contacted and willing to participate in the survey. All of those anglers had no trouble recalling exactly how many salmon they had caught last

2007 Rakaia Salmon Spawning Numbers, Angler Catch & Total Run



2007 Waimakariri Salmon Spawning Numbers, Angler Catch & Total Run



season. The survey results were then analysed and the results extrapolated to include all licence holders in the above categories. An estimate of the total salmon catch in each river was then calculated. A similar survey conducted in the Central South Island region provided data on the number of salmon caught by their anglers in North Canterbury Rivers.

Both the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers had significant decreases in the percent of the returning salmon that were caught by anglers although the actual number of salmon caught in each river was higher than the previous season. The angler catch in the Rakaia River was 1110 salmon, or 28% of the total run and the Waimakariri River had an angler catch of 1373 fish, or 34% of the total run.

#### **Natural Spawning (Hatchery Returns Excluded)**

The main spawning streams in both the Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers had above average spawning returns last season.

#### **Hurunui/Waiiau River Salmon Runs**

The total run is not calculated for the Hurunui or Waiiau Rivers as the area under the curve model cannot be used when only one aerial count is conducted. The aerial trend count conducted on the 8<sup>th</sup> May recorded more than double the salmon numbers than seen the previous season in both the Hurunui and Waiiau Rivers.

Unfortunately due to the relatively low number of anglers who successfully fished these rivers who were contacted during the phone survey, there is a large degree of error associated with these calculations but the figures show similar low catch rates to the larger rivers further south. Whilst the estimate of angler catch varies from year to year, actual angler

harvest and spawning numbers have followed trends similar to the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers most years. Other than the number of salmon returning to a river, angler catch is affected by the number of days the rivers are fishable, the frequency and duration of floods and all the main salmon rivers on the east coast tend to mirror each other in these aspects.

#### **Rangitata/Waitaki River Salmon Runs**

Salmon returns for the Central South Island salmon rivers showed the Rangitata had a reasonably good season but the Waitaki River showed very similar characteristics to the North Canterbury Rivers with very poor angler catch rates but reasonable spawning numbers. North Canterbury anglers caught an estimated 514 salmon in the Rangitata River which is up significantly compared to catches over recent years.

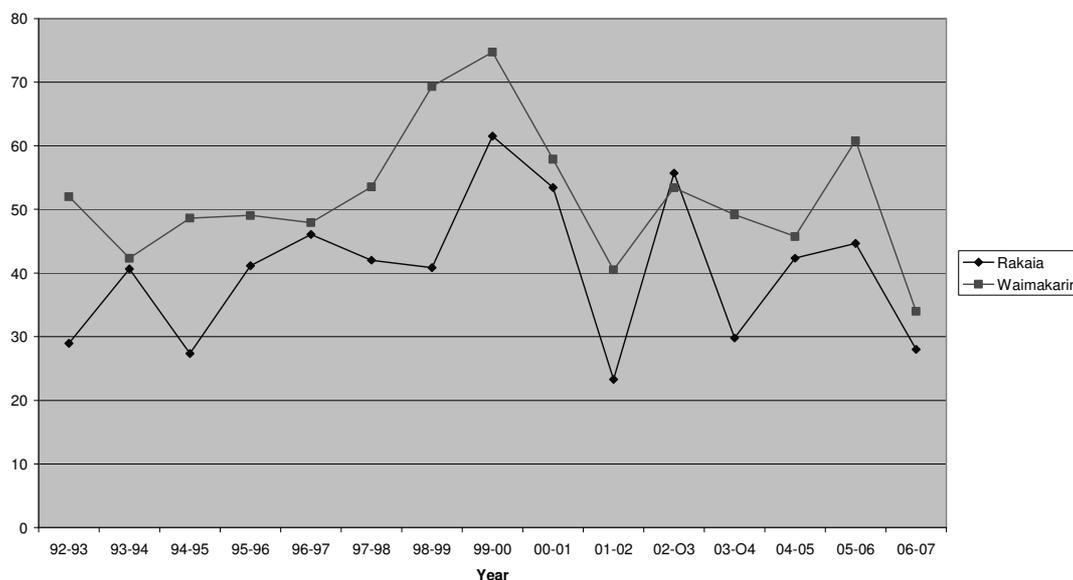
#### **Out of Region Anglers**

Angler catch records from Central South Island Fish & Game phone surveys show 207 salmon were caught in the Rakaia River, 19 in the Waimakariri River and 3 in the Waiiau River by Central South Island anglers. Previous phone surveys indicate that very few salmon are caught in all but the Rakaia River by Central South Island anglers and this is also true of this year's surveys.

#### **Discussion**

A few of the spawning streams stood out from the others this season. In the Rakaia River, The Hydra Waters had its best run in eight years with almost 1,500 salmon returning to spawn. Glenariffe Stream also had its best return in eight years with almost 600 spawning salmon.

Angler Catch as a Percentage of the Total Run



In the Waimakariri River, Cass Hill Stream had its best return in nine years with over 500 spawning salmon and Cora Lynn Stream had its best spawning numbers since aerial counts began fifteen years ago with over 500 salmon returning.

The salmon enhancement programme has continued in the North Canterbury region with strong volunteer support for the Fish & Game hatchery at Montrose and enhancement of secondary spawning streams. This programme has been in progress for six years now and includes smolt releases, eyed ova planting, transfer of fry and smolt donated by hatcheries to spawning streams and an increase in Fish & Game funded releases from the Silverstream hatchery. The current salmon enhancement programme is as much an education tool as it is insurance against low spawning survival rates.

Returns to the Rakaia River last season from the release of 60,000 fin clipped salmon smolt from Montrose in August 2005 were surprisingly low. Only 180 salmon returned to the Montrose hatchery. Relatively small numbers were also caught by Rakaia anglers. However anglers fishing on the south side of the Rangitata Mouth reported catching good numbers of these fin-clipped salmon earlier in the season. The Rakaia Salmon Fishing Competition reported around 22% of the salmon weighed in were fin-clipped Montrose fish.

Many anglers would not have noticed whether the salmon they caught was fin-clipped or not, therefore specific questioning about fin-clipped salmon in the angler survey is of no use to calculate total angler catch of these hatchery fish.

However, it can be estimated from angler catch statistics for the Rakaia River that anglers caught 28% of the Montrose salmon returning to the Rakaia River. Add this to the hatchery return and this brings the total return of Montrose salmon to around 0.42 % (250) of the initial 60,000 released.

Returns to the Silverstream hatchery were also relatively low last season, accounting for approximately 10% of the Waimakariri salmon run. The annual variation in returns to this hatchery is however likely to be at least partially due to the annual variation in numbers of salmon released from this hatchery.

Both North Canterbury and Central South Island Fish & Game Councils have been intensively monitoring salmon returns for 15 years now. The salmon monitoring programme is continuing to add knowledge of the salmon fishery for scientists and fishery managers. However, with the many environmental factors involved in salmon survival, understanding the fishery is still rather a rather complex goal.

Studies carried out in North American salmon rivers suggest that it the period shortly after salmon fry and smolt enter the marine environment that heavily influences the year-to-year variations in salmon survival and this is thought to be largely determined by climatic and environmental variations. In some years the ocean environment greets migrating salmon with an abundant food supply and relatively light predation pressures, while in other years food is scarce and predation pressures are high.

Each season it appears that angler confidence in the salmon fishery varies depending on angler catch rates. Thinking optimistically, the record low spawning

numbers of the 2000-2001 season did not have a significant negative effect on the number of salmon returning during the 2003-2004 season as some anglers feared and recent spawning numbers are hopefully capable of producing a bumper run in coming years.

Fish & Game are constantly seeking a better understanding of the salmon fishery and predicting salmon runs based on past returns and forming management decisions around these predictions are still beyond our abilities.

There is however very little salmon research being undertaken in New Zealand at present and given the current state of the fishery it would be wise to continue to expand our knowledge of the salmon run.

Staff believe that salmon spawning numbers have improved significantly and that it would be appropriate to install a residency research trap on one of the primary spawning streams that has not been trapped yet.

It would be great if anglers could write to their local MP expressing concern and requesting help with future research.

Good luck this coming season.

**Steve Terry**  
**Fish & Game Officer**

**3 August 2007**

*Editor's Note: Thank you Steve for preparing this report and sharing it with NZSAA. It is much appreciated.*

**Figure 1: Rakaia Tributaries**

Year	Hydra Waters RT=14.67	Manuka Pt RT=16.7*	Double Hill RT=13.95	Glenariffe RT=18.5	Mellish Strm % Goat Hill Strm	Montrose Trap Census	Nat Spawning (Excl. Mont-rose)	Spawning Numbers	Angler Catch	Total Run	% of Run Mon-rose
1993	1113	209	704	713	'		2739	2739	1116	3855	
1994	4021	467	2491	4497	'		11476	11476	7861	19337	
1995	3689	386	1185	3026	'		8286	8286	3120	11406	
1996	4653	811	1985	5442	'		12891	12891	9008	21899	
1997	2998	966	2401	3630	'		9995	9995	8531	18526	
1998	1559	216	857	912	'		3544	3544	2567	6111	
1999	1510	302	377	1528	'		3717	3717	2567	6284	
2000	812	175	604	271	'		1862	1862	2975	4837	
2001	476	43	103	100	'		722	722	829	1551	
2002	1382	193	258	93	'		1926	1926	585	2511	
2003	674	196	284	89	'	120	1243	1363	1714	3077	8.8
2004	1456	298	303	649	'	110	2706	2816	1195	4011	3.9
2005	898	289	306	325	'	850	1818	2668	1958	4626	31.9
2006	357	87	132	147	400	110	1123	1233	994	2227	8.9
<b>2007</b>	<b>1471</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>2673</b>	<b>2853</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>3963</b>	<b>6.3</b>

Note: 2006 Mellish Stream Max 350, Lower Goat Hill Strm Approx 50

**Figure 2: Waimakariri Tributaries**

Year	Poulter RT=21**	Winding Crk RT=15.42	Cass Hill RT=16.7	Cora Lynn RT=16.7	Hacketts Crk & One Tree Swamp	Silverstream Trap Census	Nat Spawning excl. Silverstrm	Spawning Numbers	Angler Catch	Total Run	% of Run Silverstream
1993	304	327	213	186			1030	1030	1116	2146	
1994	363	236	438	285		855	1322	2177	1597	3774	39.27
1995	1225	1011	817	337		1230	3390	4620	4372	8992	26.62
1996	1559	2336	1045	508		818	5448	6266	6033	12299	13.05
1997	726	824	1362	491		830	3403	4233	3893	8126	19.61
1998	505	417	840	389		260	2151	2411	2778	5189	10.78
1999	593	417	302	289		500	1601	2101	4748	6849	23.80
2000	166	86	185	80		347	517	864	2553	3417	40.16
2001	63	27	117	28		547	235	782	1075	1857	69.95
2002	878	313	148	69		250	1408	1658	1128	2786	15.08
2003	414	183	342	Not Counted <sup>a</sup>		600	939	1539	1764	3303	38.99
2004	480	278	251	312		205	1321	1526	1475	3001	13.43
2005	960	689	320	381		300	2350	2650	2234	4884	11.32
2006	89	88	131	101	80	170	489	659	1022	1681	25.80
<b>2007</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>2384</b>	<b>2659</b>	<b>1373</b>	<b>4032</b>	<b>10.34</b>

Notes: 2006 Hacketts Creek Foot count 60, One Tree Swamp 20.  
Cora Lynn 2003 had main stem of the Waimak flowing through it

**Figure 3 : Waiau & Hurunui Trend Counts**

	Date	Hurunui Trend Count	Date	Waiau Trend Count
1995		89		243
1996		47		420
1997		329		393
1998		114		146
1999	11-May	129	11-May	281
2000	10-May	64	10-May	111
2001	3-May	20	3-May	87
2002	9-May	132	9-May	162
2003	7-May	151	7-May	203
2004	10-May	106	10-May	121
2005	24-May	93	24-May	197
2006	16-May	37	16-May	66
<b>2007</b>	<b>8-May</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>8-May</b>	<b>168</b>

**Figure 4 : Waiau & Hurunui Angler Catch**

	Hurunui Angler Catch	Waiau Angler Catch
1996	714	63
1997	826	305
1998	665	70
1999	559	496
2000	195	253
2001	15	30
2002	113	40
2003	307	40
2004	439	40
2005	268	110
2006	128	18
<b>2007</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>16</b>

**Figure 5 : Angler Catch as a Percentage of the Total Run**

Season	Rakaia	Waimakariri
92-93	29	52
93-94	41	42
94-95	27	49
95-96	41	49
96-97	46	48
97-98	42	54
98-99	41	69
99-00	62	75
00-01	53	58
01-02	23	40
02-03	56	53
03-04	30	49
04-05	42	46
05-06	45	61
<b>06-07</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>



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## Like a Cup of Tea - With or Without Chlorine?

*Contributed by Ron Stuart, President NZSAA*

Have you visited another city or town and noticed the bloody awful taste of a meant-to-be-nice cuppa spoilt by the flavour of treated water. Unfortunately we do every Christmas when visiting Nelson during the peak holiday period and now resort to using water filters to remove some of the taste. Try visiting Auckland: theirs is probably best reserved for sailing boats on.

Why do I raise this subject? Well during the month, some of our Committee were invited to a social occasion with The Malvern Hills Protection Society, hosted by Barry Mathers and Rosalie Snoyink, to thank those people who had supported or interacted with their organisation. It was a very pleasant time mixing with others that have common interests and there was no hard sell or the canvassing for more support, but during the occasion a couple of key speakers brought us up to date on current progress. Of particular interest was the solicitor representing Malvern Hills in their Resource Consent objection to Central Plains Irrigation Scheme, firstly applying for consent for a dam 38 metres high and a tunnel 3 kilometres long, and then changing this to a dam 55 metres high and a tunnel 10 kilometres long. Wow, a big difference and it is due process that this matter be challenged and their progress stopped.

What's this got to do with a cup-o-tea? Bugger all actually, except with the increase of **Factory Farming Dairy Cows** concentrating nutrients and pollution into the aquifers, it may eventually affect our City water supply. Without the intensity of the Central Plains Irrigation Scheme,

nitrate contamination of deep aquifers is becoming evident, and may be occurring at a faster rate than we think! Groundwater is the principal source of drinking water in Canterbury. Christchurch (pop. 350,000) relies entirely on the Christchurch-Westmelton groundwater system for high quality untreated groundwater for domestic drinking water and other uses. There is still a lot to learn about how the aquifers are linked. Isn't it better to preserve our pristine water now, rather than fix it later, if we can?

In addition to these comments, our Mayor Garry Moore when addressing the 7<sup>th</sup> World Masters Games approx 5 years ago had great pride in telling the athletes from 33 countries, "Hey you guys we have some of the best water in the world coming right out of our taps. It's clean and pure – enjoy." I know the people I will be voting for come our next local body elections, and hopefully will enjoy that cup-of-tea with or without milk.

*Ron Stuart*

**As we go to print, the Malvern Hills Protection Society is disappointed at the Environment Court's decision against the Society's first legal challenge to the Central Plains Water irrigation scheme.**

The group mounted the legal challenge and sought a declaration seeking clarification on certain aspects of the CPW's "Requiring Authority" for its controversial \$628 million irrigation scheme.

Environment Minister David Benson Pope granted the Central Plains Water Requiring Authority status (i.e. ability to compulsorily take land) in July 2005.

The declaration sought by Malvern Hills Society was to overturn the Requiring Authority based on the grounds that the scheme would now be substantially different and Selwyn District Council didn't have jurisdiction to hold hearings on the revised scheme. It was the Society's intention to seek through the Courts some clarification about what CPW can do and cannot do in relation to the Requiring Authority status.

"The requiring authority status granted to Central Plains Water is one of the most disturbing aspects of the scheme and causing anger amongst the Society's members who are some of the most adversely affected landowners and residents," Rosalie Snoyink said.

Responding to claims that the Society court action was "frivolous, vexatious and an abuse of process" she said, "The declaration sought was following legal advice on the basis of legal principle and sound resource management practice." She said the Society would consider its position as to whether or not

***“...there are virtually NO constraints on the project other than it has to be built within a certain boundary between the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers.”***

Rosalie Snoyink from the Malvern Hills Society says: “As a result of evidence presented at the Hearing, we have now learned that the Requiring Authority gazetted by the then Minister, indicates there are virtually NO constraints on the project other than it has to be built within a certain boundary between the Waimakariri and Rakaia rivers. If our understanding is correct, CPW can in fact dam as many valleys as they want, build a 100m high dam if that is necessary, construct any number of canals, and make any scheme changes, as they require.”

“This news will come as a significant shock to the many landowners and residents living within the scheme area and to those concerned about downstream water quality and quantity. “

to appeal once the written judgement from the Court is made available and the Society has taken further legal advice.

Malvern Hills Protection Society has a seven-year history of opposing the CPW irrigation scheme. The Society is supporting several groups seeking a 'call in' of the CPW applications and a halt to all major abstractions until the impacts on ground and surface waters are more certain and until there are better water management guidelines incorporated into Regional Policy and law.

*For more information contact:*

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## News from South Canterbury & North Otago

### **NZSAA South Canterbury Branch Annual General Meeting**

*Report by NZSAA President, Ron Stuart,  
on his attendance, together with Vice  
President Ron Dougherty and Athol  
Price, at the South Canterbury Branch  
AGM on 26 July 2007*

We were welcomed to the meeting by South Canterbury President, Jeff Keay.

Phil de Joux gave a presentation on the development of the Salmon Enhancement Trust project at McKinnons Creek and paid tribute to the vision of the salmon anglers and many other people who had spent a huge number of hours voluntarily rebuilding the hatchery, feeding fish and maintaining the site. They have successfully reared and released 60,000 salmon this year. The Trust has also acquired three incubators, two of which were imported at a cost of less than \$2,000. This gives the capability of raising some 240,000 eggs.

In reporting on the Branch's financial statements, which show a healthy trend, President Jeff Keay made mention of the hut at the Rangitata South Reserve. He said hire of some 80 bed nights was an encouraging result considering how erratic the salmon seasons have been over the past few years.

Recognition was made of the excellent contribution of former committee member Rex Hobbs to improving the lot of salmon anglers and fostering the resource in this region.

Russell Frank, a former gillie on a river in Scotland, and now at High Country Salmon, Twizel gave an excellent presentation of the management of Atlantic salmon in his homeland.

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Thank you, South Canterbury, for making us so welcome. We applaud the efforts being made in your region to retain and enhance the salmon fishery.

*Ron Stuart*

### **Waitaki River**

The consent hearings for Meridian Energy's proposed Waitaki Valley North Bank Tunnel Concept will run from 13 to 31 August and 25 September to 5 October. The proposal seeks to take water from Lake Waitaki and pass it through a tunnel and power station before discharging the water into the Waitaki River at Stonewall. It seeks a lower minimum flow than that specified in the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Regional Plan.

An Environment Canterbury officer's report has been released, advising on the potential effects of the proposal and whether it is consistent with the Resource Management Act and river plan provisions. The report expresses concerns over effects of the project on other water users, including recreational users and irrigators, as well as effects of the lower water table on wetlands. The report questions whether some of the measures proposed by Meridian can address the effects. Overall, the report considers that the key effects of the proposal are associated with a minimum flow lower than that specified in the Plan.

Over 200 of the 430 submitters have requested speaking rights at the hearing, so it is going to be a long process.

*(Continued on page 19)*

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## From Overseas



### **Ruined spawning beds to be vacuumed before fish return**

COEUR D'ALENE, Idaho -- A developer who damaged key kokanee spawning beds in Lake Pend Oreille in April with a marina expansion project has proposed a costly plan to vacuum off silt and sawdust covering the area. The restoration could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Last spring, Holland's workers used a tugboat to manoeuvre a barge to place pilings in the lake bed for the marina, scraping through spawning grounds and killing thousands of young fish in what is one of lake's last remaining spawning areas for wild kokanee. Silt was also kicked up that suffocates eggs.

After the spawning beds were damaged, Holland, owner of Waterford Park Homes, was fined \$2,500 by the Idaho Department of Lands, which had not issued a permit for the project at Harbor View Marina at Bayview.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game values the loss of the fry killed during the expansion project at \$1.4 million. The department's Panhandle region is not pursuing any financial penalties against Holland. The focus is on restoring the damaged site to make sure it is ready for when the kokanee return.

The damage to the spawning beds followed a multimillion dollar effort in recent years by Fish and Game and sport fishing groups to restore the kokanee, which are the foundation of a \$17 million fishery on the lake. Biologists said that the spawning site that was damaged is thought to be a key area for kokanee

reproduction because it's where lake water flows through gravel and into the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer, bringing oxygen to the eggs and preventing silt from building up.

Kokanee are a prized sport fish, but the population in the lake has collapsed in recent years, a problem biologists said stems from loss of spawning habitat, and rainbow and lake trout that eat kokanee.

*The Eagle Herald*

### **Oregon Coast Coho Deserve Federal Protection, Judge Rules**

PORTLAND, Oregon, - - A federal judge has decided that the Bush administration's decision to remove endangered species protections for Oregon Coast coho salmon should be declared illegal.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Janice Stewart recommended Friday that coho's legal status under the federal Endangered Species Act be reviewed and a new listing decision be finalized within 60 days.

Restoration of the listing would prohibit federal actions that harm the species and require the government to prepare recovery plans.

The decision comes in response to a lawsuit filed by fishermen and conservation groups last year. The government has until July 30 to object to Stewart's recommendations before they are approved by a federal district judge.

Historically, more than two million coho salmon spawned in Oregon's coastal rivers. Due to decades of logging and

poorly managed fishing, salmon runs bottomed out at about 14,000 in 1997, a decline of more than 99 percent from historic levels.

Oregon Coast coho were listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1998. A slight rebound between 2001 and 2003 prompted the state of Oregon to declare Coast coho sufficiently recovered to be stripped of federal protection.

"For the sake of our fishing families and communities, now is not the time to slack off on habitat protections for coho salmon," said Glen Spain, with the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations.

"With federal habitat protections restored," he said, "coho have a chance to recover and, one day, draconian fishing restrictions can be lifted."

*ENS News*

July 17, 2007

### **New Atlantic Salmon Conservation Agreement**

ST. ANDREWS, NB — A new Greenland Conservation Agreement will suspend commercial salmon fisheries in Greenland's territorial waters for seven years, beginning with the 2007 season. The fishermen of Greenland have agreed to continue a moratorium which began in 2002 under an earlier agreement. The moratorium has already saved thousands of wild Atlantic salmon that originate in rivers of North America and Southern Europe, migrate to feeding grounds off West Greenland and then return to their home rivers to spawn.

*By the Atlantic Salmon Federation*



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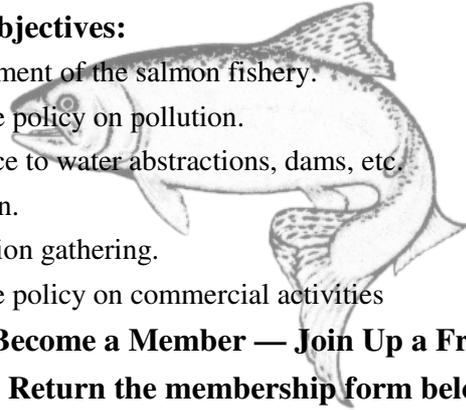
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