

# **NZ Salmon Anglers Newsletter**

**March 2007 Number 81**



Happy South Canterbury anglers, Dave Herring, Ken Lloyd and Grant Ivey with their morning catch mid-January on the Rangitata River

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

**NEW ZEALAND SALMON ANGLERS ASSOCIATION (INC)  
2006-07 OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE**

<b>President</b>	Neville (Tim) Ellis	383 0900 021 363 140	npellis@paradise.net.nz Fax 383 0900
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Ron Dougherty	338 2479	
	Ron Stuart	358 9082 021 216 3901	cqurityron@xtra.co.nz
<b>Secretary &amp; Treasurer</b>	Pam Ellis	383 0900 021 211 3293	npellis@paradise.net.nz Fax 383 0900
<b>Committee</b>	John Healy	03 318 8216 0274 334 511	jhealy@xtra.co.nz Fax 03 318 8190
	Phill Ball	349 5993 021 256 133	
	Brian Foley	352 8972	
	Dennis Long	352 2874	Fax 352 3708
	Alf Long	385 8651	
	James Parbery	03 312 8229	
	Ken Paterson	338 3115	
	Athol Price	332 7698	
<b>Patron</b>	Douglas Roy	352 8564	dfroy@xtra.co.nz Fax 352 8564

**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, 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

This newsletter comes to you later than usual in the month. We apologise for the lateness but, as indicated on previous occasions, publication continues to be difficult without a dedicated editor. This needs resolution soon if the newsletter is to continue on a monthly basis. We consider it important to do so as this is our only regular contact with some of our members. So if you have any publication skills or know someone who has, please let us know.

It is with sadness that we record the passing of Bill Badland, one of our Life Members. Bill passed away on 7th March, peacefully at Oxford where he lived in a retirement home close to his family. Bill had his 90th birthday last year and remained bright and fully in charge of his life until the last month when he contracted pneumonia and passed away a few days after an initial recovery. We mourn his passing but fondly remember his enthusiasm and the great amount of work he did for NZSAA. Rest in peace old friend.

We have enjoyed good weather this last month and the rivers we fish have become clearer and clearer as the flows have fallen. The most productive periods for fishing seem to have been dawn and dusk due to the clarity of the water. A good fresh would be a god-send. However, the Waimak is reportedly producing some very good catches at present.

The Rakaia River Salmon Contest was held in low, clear river conditions with a total of 65 salmon being weighed in over the three days - not a large number but certainly more than the 24 from the year before. Vice President, Ron Dougherty, was once again the official Weighmaster for the contest. Nothing much gets past Ron's eagle eyes and he does an excellent job in inspecting, gutting and weighing in the salmon. Regretfully and unexpectedly, I was unwell that week and was unable to be there this year - first contest I have missed, dammit!

We still have a lot of work to do with several water consent applications being lodged each month. It takes quite a time to lodge the initial submission, then prepare a detailed submission and present it at a subsequent hearing. I wonder if the farming community ever stop to think about the cumulative damage they are causing to our environment over their endless desire for more and more water. Interestingly, even the staff at Environment Canterbury are criticising the recent decision of the commissioners on the Rakaia-Selwyn "red zone" applications. The decision indicates that the independent commissioners really don't know what water is available and are advocating a "suck it and see" approach, ignoring professional technical evidence. How irresponsible is this?

We have very few entries into our NZSAA competition. There are good prizes to be won so, if you do catch a salmon, gut and gill it, take it along to a shop for weighing and fill in a competition form. Most retailers are happy to weigh your fish: fish shops, dairies, greengrocers, etc - they all have government-tested scales. And don't forget to take a sample of the other sort of scales from the salmon, and send it in to us for analysis.

The activities of NZSAA, particularly at Montrose for a good part of the year and with ova planting later in the year, depend very much on the voluntary efforts of our members and supporters. Each year when we send out the subscription account we ask for an indication of availability to help out with stream improvement, etc. and we rely on this to update our list of helpers. However our list of willing helpers is dwindling, relying heavily on a small core group. We intend to canvass members and also approach other fishing clubs to widen our volunteer base if possible. There are many tasks that can be undertaken by volunteers, not only by the young and fit group but also by the older members and supporters. We will be keen to hear from anyone who can offer a day every now and then, and also to know of any special trade or other skills or equipment that will assist our activities. So give us a call if you or anyone you know can help.

All from me, for now. Tight lines.

*Neville (Tim) Ellis*

**PRESIDENT**



◆ ANGLERS OUTFITTERS ◆

**359 Lincoln Road, Christchurch**

Phone (03) 338 3131 Fax (03) 338 3535

Email: [info@fishermansloft.co.nz](mailto:info@fishermansloft.co.nz)



## **OBITUARY**

### **BARFORD WILLIAM BADLAND**

NZSAA Life Member, Bill Badland, passed away on 7 March 2007 in his 91<sup>st</sup> year, following a short illness. Bill had a long association with NZSAA having joined as a member in 1973. His enthusiasm for the promotion and survival of the salmon fishery was reflected in his contribution to the Association by Committee membership commencing in 1979. Bill's particular interest and responsibilities were in organising work parties to undertake stream improvement and ova planting, mainly in the Waimakariri Basin, Kowai River, Cabbage Tree Flat, Hacketts Creek and Coutts Island.

Bill was an environmentalist, being an Honorary Ranger for National Park Marlborough Sounds. Bill was a man of many parts: family man, keen gardener, industrial machinery engineer, ex serviceman RNZAF, musician, self employed shoe repairer. He was also a traveller, covering thousands of kilometres in a VW Kombi. Above all he was an angler, having a bach at Lake Clearwater and fishing in many areas including Wanaka, Cromwell and Clutha.

Bill held very strong views on the protection of our rivers and streams and was an active submitter, both written and orally, to many applications and hearings on water issues, the most recent of these being the Rakaia and Rangitata Conservation Orders and Project Aqua on the Waitaki. He was suspicious of bureaucrats and made his opinions very forcefully to them on the environmental matters he held so dear.

For his services to stream improvements, Bill was awarded the Athol Price Plaque in 1993. He was made a Life Member of NZSAA in 1995 and served as the Association's Patron from 1993 to 1996.

NZSAA President and members attended Bill's funeral service at Rangiora on 12 March to farewell their fellow angler and friend. We extend our condolences to Bill's daughters and families.

A quotation by *John James Audobon (1785-1851)* is a fitting tribute

*"A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not  
given by his Fathers, but borrowed from his children"*

Bill Badland was such a man.

# **VOLUNTEERS WANTED TO ASSIST WITH THE SALMON RECOVERY PROGRAMME**

## **MONTROSE HATCHERY**

Routine maintenance (vacuum cleaning of raceways, replenishing feeders) and other hatchery management tasks. Working with a team. Transport provided.



## **OVA PLANTING**

Annual event using Scotty Boxes, planting eyed salmon ova in spawning streams and subsequent retrieval.



## **STREAM IMPROVEMENT & TRACK MAINTENANCE**

Clearing overgrowth, improving spawning stream habitat; river access tracks.



Can you give a day occasionally to help out with one or more of these tasks? Do you have some trade or other skills, or equipment, that would be of assistance to our salmon recovery programme?

If you can help, or have friends or supporters who could help, please let us have your name, contact details, times available and a note of any trade or other skills. For those members who are already helping out, it would be helpful if you could reconfirm your availability so that we can update the database.

Please contact the President, Secretary, or any of the Committee members listed on the inside cover of this newsletter.

## **ANGLER ACCESS TO LOWER WAIMAKARIRI RIVER**

NZSAA recently wrote to Environment Canterbury expressing concerns raised by members at the limited times of access for anglers to the Lower Waimakariri River, particularly through Lorimers Road, West Coutts Island, Haul Road and Chattertons Road. The gates are open only between the hours of 7 am and 8 pm daily. While we understand the need to control access by some sections of our community, it does unfortunately cause difficulty to recreational anglers many of whom seek access to this part of the river outside the above hours.

ECan has assured us of its commitment to providing access to the Waimak River Regional Park for legitimate recreation users. They have started to upgrade lock and key security in order to reduce the antisocial behaviour and fire risk to the river and forest areas. However, they have integrated an Angler's Key into this system and these are available from the Kilmore Street Office so that licensed anglers can have access through specific gates outside the public closure times. There is no charge for the key but a \$30 refundable bond is payable. ECan and Fish & Game are identifying gates through which anglers may require access and this will be ongoing.

ECan has also produced an information brochure on this subject and gate locations will soon be provided on the ECan website [www.ecan.govt.nz](http://www.ecan.govt.nz) In the meantime, if you want a key, contact Parks and Reserves Officer (Greg Byrnes). We expect you will be asked to show your fishing licence to prove you are a bona fide angler.

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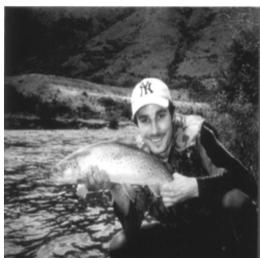
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# BALLINGERS

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*Jeremy Burke will be well known to Canterbury anglers through his passion for fishing and the positions he has held in other prominent Christchurch retail stores. Now he complements his expertise with the buying power & focus on quality that all Hunting & Fishing NEWZEALAND™ staff bring to this franchise. Catch Jeremy at Ballingers – Christchurch.*

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Chev 350 and Hamilton 212 jet unit.  
Transplanting from existing boat is also an option.





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## **RAKAIA SALMON FISHING COMPETITION**

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Salmon Fishing Competition was held over the weekend of 23-26 February 2007 inclusive. 639 adults entered, and 40+ children. The weather was low cloud, cold sou-west wind, with drizzle, for the Friday, with the odd patch of heavy rain. Gradually cleared to low cloud and overcast with some patchy drizzle on Saturday. Sunday was hot, bright and clear.

The Rakaia River was low, clear and fishable, reportedly too clear for fishing by Sunday. By Sunday, the only real successes came with those that fished light (trout gear on lighter weight lines, etc.)

In total, 65 Quinntat Salmon were weighed in. This figure included 14 AR (Adipose Removed) salmon – but still mistakenly called “tagged”. I see that Fish and Game is asking for volunteer help to clip the salmon at Montrose. Without wishing to be critical, and accepting that some salmon flinch when clipped, I would ask that the clippers clip a little slower and try to do a really good job, as some (more than one or two) of the salmon amongst the 14 we handled had partially removed fins, leading to much discussion. I erred on the side of the fact that the fish had been clipped.

### **Tentative Results:**

Total all salmon 65 (22 males, 43 females)

Average 690 mm – 5003 gms (all fish)

13 + 1\* AR fish = 21.5% of all fish landed

(5 male, 9 female)

Average 733mm – 7001 gms

(\* I removed 1 AR female from the tally. I felt that it was a fish that had somehow remained at Montrose until recently moving out (410mm, 1120 gms immature) and had not, in my opinion, been to sea at all.)

There were sufficient 2-year-old fish to indicate good things for next year.

Didymo: Generally the attitude was very good and much attention had been paid, but the sucky attitude of a small group of jet-boaters left me wondering. It will only take one parcel of viable spores to set it off. Some jet boats had been to the Waitaki, Rangitata and then to the Rakaia (within a fortnight).

If all the reports of fish seen, fish lost and the number of trout caught and kept, are any indication, it could be that things are getting a little better, but time will tell. If I had anything to suggest, it would be that to fish with lighter – different fishing gear. I used to catch salmon on brass/orange trout smolts, trout zeds, etc. When the water is low and clear, the salmon can see the thicker line. Maybe fish in the twilight.

*Ron Dougherty*

**Weighmaster  
Rakaia Fishing Competition**

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(v  
cc

**PRIZE WINNERS**

**Heaviest Salmon Overall    Rick Wills                    8.85 kg**

**Daily Winners:**

Friday 23 February	1.	Bryce Marshall	8.68 kg
	2.	Phil Adam	7.87 kg
	3.	Nick Christidis	7.82 kg
	4.	Tim Watkins	7.46 kg
Saturday 24 February	1.	Alastair Taylor	7.73 kg
	2.	Tim Castle	7.56 kg
	3.	Paul Worley	7.47 kg
	4.	Brent Duncan	7.12 kg
Sunday 25 February	1.	Paul Watts	8.83 kg
	2.	John Wellman	7.12 kg
	3.	Christopher Kelleher	6.85 kg
	4.	Leslie Gordon	6.05 kg

**Grand Prize Draw:** (4x4 Four Wheel Motorbike and Trailer)

Phil Strangman

## CENTRAL PLAINS WATER

Selwyn District Council received approx. 600 submissions, 450 in opposition, to CPW's land use and designation applications. Environment Canterbury received approx. 1600 submissions, 1400 in opposition.

Environment Canterbury also made a submission to Selwyn District Council opposing the granting of the designation because the applicant has not secured the water required for the proposed scheme, and the requiring authority cannot be certain therefore that the works and designation requirement are necessary. Environment Canterbury considers that Selwyn District Council lacks sufficient detail to progress any further without further information about the scheme, its effects, and proposed measures to avoid, remedy and mitigate those effects.

And we now hear that the Central Plains Water Scheme is taking on a new look with the introduction of a tunnel to convey water across the district. This reduces the amount of open canals required and eliminates the loss of much farmland. Will this reduce the amount of water required from the river? Will new water and other consents be necessary? **Watch this space.....**

The Malvern Hills Protection Society has sent us a copy of a painting entitled "The Trojan Horse", painted by Mike Glover, an artist who lives at Te Waihora, Lake Ellesmere.



This painting won a Selwyn District Council Art Award last year (awarded by an independent judge). The Council takes ownership of paintings that win the Award and it is now hanging in the Selwyn District Council reception, Darfield Service Centre. Note the CPW eartag. The cow also has one sad eye and one angry eye. There is a certain irony in SDC making this award, an irony missed by most Councillors! Mike Glover has made a generous donation to the MHPS from the proceeds of the Award.

## FISH AND GAME NEWS



### **Salmon Enhancement Programme**

60,000 salmon continue to grow well at Montrose along with approximately 40,000 rainbow trout. Seven salmon went through the Montrose Stream to the settling pond before the barrier and trap were installed. This is one month earlier than has previously been seen.

### **Salmon - Commercial By-Catch**

The Fish & Game salmon verifier programme started in December 2006 using a paid verifier. There has been very little fishing activity in the Salmon Conservation Area and the few trips that have taken place have resulted in a minimal by-catch of salmon. The programme finished on 14 February.

### **Lake Coleridge Salmon Releases**

Staff and volunteers transferred 40,000 22gram salmon smolts from Silverstream to Lake Coleridge in mid December. These were donated by NIWA as they were surplus to their requirements.

### **Resource Consents**

#### *Central Plains Water*

Submissions lodged in opposition to all land use consent applications and seeking that the designation application be withdrawn.

#### *Ngai Tahu Property Ltd*

The long-running appeal of Ngai Tahu's proposed water intake at Browns Rock on the Waimakariri will continue until at least March. Jason has worked with Ngai Tahu towards an agreement which will see two fish experts present a joint statement of evidence to the next stage of mediation. It is hoped this joint statement will give both parties sufficient clarity to agree on conditions which will suitably protect salmonid fry from being sucked into, or entrapped upon, the fish screen.

#### *P&E Ltd*

Submission lodged in opposition to this proposed 480 l/s take of Waimak water at or about Bleakhouse Corner. While not a lot of water in the context of the Waimak, it is difficult to believe any more water could possibly be allocated from the Waimak given the amount of water currently allocated, or that could potentially be allocated in the future. Aside from the cumulative effects of the take, concerns were raised about the proposed fish screening and effects of river works, structures, discharges and movement of water up the river terrace.

## **“FISHY NEWS’ FROM NZSAA SOUTH CANTERBURY**

How things can change over the space of a year. The fishing season at the Rangitata River at least, has improved markedly on last season with good catches being recorded from late November. A quick look at some statistics provided by Bill Whipp on the season at the Rangitata makes interesting reading:

To 18th February, 266 salmon have been landed on the south side of the Rangitata mouth below white poles and approx 140 on the north side. 24 fish taken were adipose fin-clipped indicating they were Montrose hatchery reared fish. Average weight 7.5 kg with the heaviest so far weighed in at 10.6kg (2 of these). It has been the best season since 2000.

A breakdown of the last few years is as follows:

Year	Weighed In
1999-2000	701
2000-2001	145
2001-2002	47
2002-2003	253
2003-2004	83
2004-2005	242
2005-2006	61

(south side below white posts)



### **SALMON ANGLERS CAPS**

**Promote your Association  
Buy a Cap and Wear it on the River**



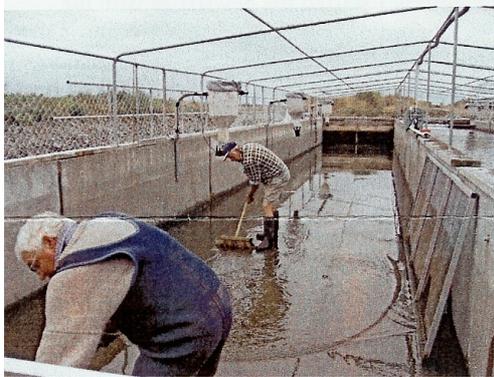
The caps are navy blue, with a silver/grey salmon, orange print with white and gold stripes. Cost \$20. Each cap you purchase includes a small donation to the Salmon Recovery Programme.

**Order by mail from the NZSAA by sending \$20, plus \$3 for postage,  
to P O Box 1113, Christchurch 8140,  
or call the Secretary on 383 0900 to pick one up.**

## **RANGITATA HATCHERY**

Donations to the Salmon Enhancement Trust have been steady and have enabled progress of the hatchery project to the next stage. Anglers have donated upwards of \$15,000 which shows a commitment to improving the salmon returns to our rivers.

The next phase is to install a container on site for storage and to build a shed to contain the hatching incubator and tanks. Work has continued over the past couple of months with the weekend cleaning teams working well. A working bee will be held soon to fin-clip the fish prior to release.



*Cleaning out the second race*

The second race has been cleaned out and filled. A number of the fish were transferred to this race on 18 February. This will give them more room to grow to the target weight of around 80 grams at release. This is the optimum weight for survival at sea and release should be about July or August. A walkway has been erected along the eastern race.



*Weighing buckets of fish prior to transfer*

## **FIN CLIPPING AT MONTROSE**

**10 & 11 MARCH 2007**

For some of us the day started at 8 o'clock at the Yaldhurst Hotel carpark. For others it was make your own way to Montrose via the Waimak River or a dabble in the Rakaia en route. Whatever, the days were fantastic with the absolute best of high country weather, but mostly I speak of the Saturday as that was the day I got involved. The Rakaia was pristine with that lovely glacial blue colour.

The journey to and from was interesting as a passenger in Steve Terry's vehicle, in as much as we were able to have a relaxed chat about recent activities he is involved in and some of his experiences in the job. For some of us we often wonder how their day evolves, but from the conversations we had during our journey, there is never a moment without some activity and these guys need to be so diverse communicating with fisherman and property holders, organising fish welfare including relocations, water care, preparing news articles and radio reports, doing F&G reports, numerous statistical data, ensuring F&G regulations are being upheld as well as heaps of PR. It is a job as I see it that involves heaps of practical field work, being an encyclopaedia on regulations relating to legal and environmental matters and being a computer whizz. Try that lot for a job we see as fishin', huntin' & shootin' eh? Not a dull moment, but the most disappointing thing that I gleaned from Steve was the abuse some ignorant buggers hurl at him out of their own greed and selfishness. This seems to come from quarters that those so doing ought to know better.

On arrival at Montrose it was most pleasing to see the number of volunteers that turned up, around 30 in all on the Saturday. Each person got right into doing something productive and it was only a short time before the tables were out and clipping commenced.

One aspect that I thought was very good is that there are a couple of pairs of waders on site and only these are to be used anywhere there is contact with Montrose water. You know, the Didymo thing. What a sensible application and for further site protection F & G have given assurance to the property owners that only F&G personnel will enter any water area. This is very good practice and shows good leadership over such a threatening issue.

To cater for the digestive activities of all those people that visit Montrose over the year F&G invested in a nice new barbecue (which was purchased by Steve at a bargain price) and this will stay on site for future use. My self-appointed job was to assemble this unit so we could have a cooked lunch. I was ably assisted by a gentleman who had great patience and maintained an air of decorum.

If any of you out there are going to put a barbecue together it's a good idea to read the instructions first, not last, when you've got four bits of important stuff left over and they fitted where we started. Anyhow we got the unit working like a dream and had hot onions, sausages and patties ready for a 12:15 lunch, along with buttered bread, the compulsory tomato sauce and juice. The smell was so great and the food so tempting that many of the assembled left their sandwiches in their lunch boxes. (Hope you guys dumped them before you got home!)



*We're movin' them fish on  
and what a great day!*



*Our newly elected F&G  
Councillors, Peter & Steve,  
doing their bit too.*

Our volunteers worked so well that our target of clipping 30,000 salmon was achieved, which almost cleared one race, and I guess Sunday would have produced similar results. The diversity of volunteers was interesting made up of fisherman from the Waimak, Rakaia and a good number from the Rangitata. A family of two adults and six kids turned up and boy did they have a great time, The kids mostly carted the nets of fish from the race to the clipping basins and there was not much time for a rest, plus it was good watching them getting their fronts soaked for a good cause.



*The skeletal remains of 2 shags  
that tried to get at our fish and  
died. As they rotted, the flies blew  
them and the fish below had an  
entrée of fresh maggots. **Yum!***



*An example of not such a good clip  
as the adipose fin will grow out  
again and will be distorted.*



*A good fresh and appropriate clip  
coming up.*

The site looked really good, with clean races and troughs, the grounds were tidy and more work had been done in the shed to provide good storage for the fish tucker. It is a credit to those that work away during the weeks to maintain such a good standard. When you visit Montrose as a volunteer, spectator or guest I get a sense of pride in the work that is being done to enhance our salmon fishery and thanks to all you girls and guys that support this facility and concept. Next time you are out fishing and some so called expert is moaning his arse off about the state of our salmon fishery just ask the question "What are you doing to improve or support our fishery?" Guess the conversation with that person will be short lived.

On the way out of Montrose Steve took us to view some salmon and trout being cultivated for release at the Groynes as part of the Take a Kid Fishing Programme. If you want to make a kid happy take them fishing to this location over the next few weeks because there are some fine trout and salmon being released which will be just hanging out for a worm or lure. These fish are going on for 3lb or more and by the time your kid lands one it will be 100lb and 10 foot long.

There were several salmon in the pond below the farm, but the main fish trap is further down the stream towards the river, so I guess there are many more fish waiting there. It is pleasing to learn that the majority of fishermen are not pulling them out of the river at the mouth of the stream as it is essential we get a good return for next season's breeding. But if you do come across the odd poacher ask them to move on and of course be very polite and the only four letter word to be used should be FISH.

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to do some jobs at Montrose, so if you can help out how about giving Steve, Rusty or Tim a call as even though we've got lists it makes the job easier if a call comes from you and you'll never regret having a day in the Salmon Anglers' Paradise.

Put a note in your diary as release day is scheduled for 5 August and this promises to be a good one, going on the growing support it is getting.

*Presented by Ron Stuart*

*Vice President NZSAA*

## **HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION WESTLAND**

**Lake Kaniere** via Hokitika    **Jackson Bay** via Haast

**Bruce Bay:** Half-hour Drive South of Fox Glacier

All baches are self-contained with pots/pans, cutlery, power, shower, fridge, washing machine and freezer (except Kaniere, no freezer). All baches sleep 8 people.

You need to supply all disposable items including wood and coal for the Yunka fire (except Kaniere, electric heating), sheets, pillowcases, sleeping bags, etc. On leaving, a clean and tidy bach would be appreciated for the next people.

Rates:    **Kaniere:** \$65 per night up to 4 people. \$20 per person above this.  
          **Bruce Bay & Jackson Bay:**        \$50 per night

For more information and bookings you can call:

The Hokitika Angling Club  
C/o Hokitika Cycles & Sportsworld  
Phone 03 755 8662 (shop hours)

## **Waitaki River: Under threat again**

**Jerry Walton, NZSAA member from Otago, voices his concerns at Meridian Energy's latest proposal to take water from the Waitaki:**

The news that Meridian's consent application for their Waitaki North Bank Hydro Scheme is likely to be advertised in March [ODT 20.02.07] should set alarm bells ringing for anyone concerned about the future of the Waitaki River. Three years ago there was great interest in this river supported by the fact that there were over 6000 submissions on Meridian's Project Aqua hydro scheme, with 95% opposing it. By contrast Meridian's Project Hayes wind farm proposal recently attracted around 1000 submissions with a small majority in favour of it.

Many will remember the water allocation process which the Government initiated after Project Aqua was cancelled in March 2004. The Government appointed Board produced a final plan which opened the door for more hydro development on the Lower Waitaki River and set environmental conditions designed to give some protection for the river.

Meridian Energy has exploited to the full the opportunity provided for more hydro development. The water-only consent which the company recently lodged with Environment Canterbury, violates the plan's fundamental requirement, namely the minimum flow of 150 cumecs. Meridian Energy has the nerve to want the minimum flow reduced to 110 cumecs for part of the year. This greedy request is unbelievable considering all the work and consultation that went into developing the water allocation plan.

The North Bank Scheme is deceptive in its implications. Sure an underground tunnel would be much easier on the landscape than Aqua's huge elevated canal. But for the segment of river involved, which is from the Waitaki Dam to just below Duntroon, the amount of water to be removed is much the same as Aqua, amounting to about two thirds of the mean annual flow of the river. This segment of the river is nearly as long as that targeted for Aqua because it goes right up to the dam.

Shifting the proposed power scheme to the north bank of the river has very important effects. Firstly, Meridian Energy has been able to link its power scheme with the Hunter Downs irrigation scheme. Now anyone opposing the power scheme will appear like an enemy of the rural farming sector.

Secondly, this proposed power project is now totally in Canterbury with Otago interests largely excluded. Otago people have long regarded the Waitaki River as their river. This is reflected in the fact that most of the submissions on Project Aqua came from Otago.

Canterbury, unlike Otago is blessed with several big, braided rivers that connect with the sea. These rivers are threatened by hydro development but two of them, the Rakaia and the Rangitata are now protected by water conservation orders. With any future Waitaki power likely to be sent to Canterbury and further north, the Canterbury attitude could well be that it does not matter if the Waitaki is lost.

To its credit, Environment Canterbury facilitated the formation of the Lower Waitaki River Management Society, which is a local community group that is now an incorporated society. This group's mission statement "To protect and enhance, in a sustainable way, the Lower Waitaki River System", and the goals, objectives and actions necessary to achieve this are very reassuring. The danger is that Meridian's precipitate and impatient consent application will find this group not fully prepared to argue the case for the river at a hearing. Usually other parties do not have the means to hire experts of their own and even if they could, they might well find that all the experts in New Zealand are already hired out to Meridian Energy.

This brings me to a real concern that I have about a future hearing on the North Bank Power Scheme. That is, the type of evidence that will be presented by experts on behalf of Meridian. Sometimes the necessary knowledge is just not there and when this is the case the consent authority should allow a safety margin of maybe 20%. Once allocated it is very hard to take water back! Other times the knowledge is there but only part of it is revealed.

The developer who pays the expert sets the terms of reference for scientific reports which means certain things can be considered in these reports and others cannot. Obviously, anything that might not favour Meridian's case is left out. For instance, the water quality report for the tunnel scheme only considers the potential effects from agricultural run-off from the Waitaki Dam to the outfall of the scheme. Yet Meridian and the experts who prepared this report were well aware from an earlier study that the effects of increasing agricultural development in the upper catchment would result in degraded water arriving at the Waitaki Dam. If the water is already contaminated by the time it reaches the Waitaki Dam then any more contamination could be more than the river can stand!

Another report focuses on the effects of a reduced flow on the movement of gravel in the dewatered section of the river. Downstream effects of the scheme on the transport of gravel are dealt with only in passing. It is to the credit of the writer of this report that he chose to highlight the fact that any additional removal of water downstream of the scheme would increase the risk that the river mouth would close at times. This prospect does not bear thinking about!

If there was any justice in the world this last remnant of the Waitaki River would now be protected considering the huge sacrifice the river has already made for the nations power needs. But the Government's water allocation board decreed otherwise. Carbon-neutral electricity is all very well but hydro itself takes a significant toll on a living river. Meridian's North Bank Power Scheme should be cut back with the maximum take reduced from 260 cumecs. This action alone would improve the flow and allow more variation in flow. But in addition flushing flows would need to be worked out such that the survival of a reasonably big, clean and healthy braided river is assured. Meridian would still be able to build a large power scheme with maybe a 20% reduction in power output, but this is entirely justified to protect the river.

People of Otago and elsewhere who care about the Waitaki River, please pay attention to what is happening and make sure you get a submission form and submit on Meridian's North Bank Hydro Scheme when it is advertised.

*J K Walton,  
Dunedin 9 March 2007*

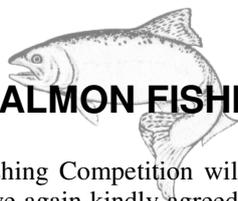
#### **And from an editorial in the Otago Daily Times 8 March 2007:**

#### **150cumecs -no less**

While no practical generation schemes so far in the public arena - be they hydro, wind generation or even wave energy - come without an environmental cost, it is not valid reasoning to claim that sound, carefully and exhaustively established rules need to be broken to build a profitable power scheme because expected electricity demand requires it.

It does not really matter, in essence, who the end user of the electricity will be - North Island or South Island consumers - because this is not the crux of the matter. What matters is what mattered with Project Aqua: how will electricity demand be met in the next two decades while the best efforts are made to preserve and conserve what remains of our great rivers? Although it is manifest the thresholds for acceptable power development are anything but clearly delineated, it is not the job of the people of North Otago to, in effect, design a viable north bank power scheme that uses a minimum of 150cumecs: that is Meridian's task.

The South has already paid a sufficiently high - and permanent - environmental price for hydro-electricity generation. It should not accept the final ruination of another of its rivers.



## NZSAA ANNUAL SALMON FISHING COMPETITION

The NZSAA Annual Salmon Fishing Competition will be run for the current 2006-07 season. The Fisherman's Loft have again kindly agreed to sponsor the contest and a \$50 voucher will be awarded to the winner of each of the following categories:

- Heaviest Salmon Overall - Aquarius Trophy
- Heaviest Salmon Rakaia - Alty Roscoe Trophy
- Heaviest Salmon Waimakariri - Cromb & Merritt/Fisherman's Loft Trophy
- Lucky Draw from Remainder of Entries

Trophies and prizes will be awarded at the NZSAA AGM in May 2007.

### COMPETITION RULES

1. Entrants must be financial members of NZSAA and hold a current sport fishing licence.
2. A scale sample must be provided.
3. All fish must be gutted and gilled with the head on.
4. Fish must be weighed at premises where Government tested scales are in use.
5. Declaration form must be completed and forwarded to reach the Secretary, NZSAA, P O Box 1113, Christchurch 8140, no later than 4 May 2007.
6. All panels on the entry form must be completed and the declaration signed.
7. In the event of a dispute the final arbitrators will be the NZSAA Committee. No correspondence will be entered into regarding the results.

### ENTRY FORM AND DECLARATION

Name.....

Angler's Address.....

.....

Licence Number.....Date Fish Caught.....

Weight of Fish (Gutted and Gilled with Head On).....kg.....gms

River and Location where Caught.....

Premises Where Weighed.....

Name and Signature of Person Weighing.....

**I certify that all the above information is correct**

**and that I am the Angler who caught this fish:** .....

Signature of Angler

