



Newsletter of the
NELSON TRAMPING CLUB
Founded 1934, Nelson, New Zealand

Nelson Tramping Club May 2011



PHOTO > RUTH



PHOTO > NORA FLIGHT

Vice President Jo Kay at Cupola Hut, Nelson Lakes National Park.

< MEMBER PROFILE : Jo Kay

- 1. Place of birth:** Spud-land, Pukekohe.
- 2. Occupation:** Relieving pharmacist, I only take on jobs that don't interfere with my outdoor adventures, sort of semi retired really.
- 3. Been a member for:** Nearly four years.
- 4. How I've benefited from NTC:** Making those trips happen that I used to only dream about and finding new places to go and of COURSE the cool people and friends I've made.
- 5. My best trip:** Mt Peanter with 'Patient Pat' Holland as the leader, my first time on snow with crampons, the sunny, cloudless day and views to die for. I was sooooo excited.
- 6. My worst trip:** Failed attempt to Mt Cupola when a member of the party took a wrong turning, causing grave concern about her safety, and sabotaged the trip. Talk about anti climax. I was lucky enough to make it there earlier this year. This time it was one of my *best* trips.
- 7. My stupidest moment:** Leaving my boots in the old Newmans bus depot when heading over to Marahau for my first trip to Abel Tasman. That was in the days when you didn't have to book the huts. I had an old external frame pack with seatbelt-webbing shoulder straps, and a woolen swanni. The wekas were abundant and I still looked good in short shorts.
- 8. My Favourite Hut:** Fenella Hut, at the head of the Cobb Valley. That hut has EVERYTHING: a loo with a view and a stained glass window, a fancy water feature for washing your hands just outside, all the cooking utensils you could ever need (I remember cooking up some tasty treats with Chef Alice) and a tin tub you can have a warm (sponge) bath in. Then just step outside and you're surrounded by some pretty cool peaks.
- 9. What wild place would I put at the top of my 'bucket list?'**
I would love to do a mixed tramping/kayaking trip in Fiordland.



Dion Pont's superb landscape entry > Cowin Spur trip sunset

2010 PHOTO COMPETITION > NOW ON-LINE!

View winning pictures from last December's competition on the NTC club web-site: <http://www.drupal.nelson-trampingclub.org.nz/files/galleries/gallery29.htm>.

Bucket List Adventure

Father & son tackle the South Coast Track, Fiordland

When I got an invitation from family to explore the southern Fiordland coast, especially as it was rising up the batting order of bucket list activities, then I was off like a shot.

A couple of weeks ago I joined my son Brett in Invercargill then from Tuatapere we helicoptered into Lake Hakapoa and Big River in south-west Fiordland National Park. Being a forester by profession I have heard much through the years about the wonderful pristine podocarp forest of this region and have always wanted to see it for myself.

The first night we stayed in Westies, a private hut and magical place, nestled under a huge arch of coastal rock and only 40 metres from the pounding surf.

As we hiked eastward towards the road end at Blue Cliffs Beach we traversed some amazing bush; coastal hardwood scrub and mighty southern rata and a little further inland, the mighty rimu. It was simply amazing to walk through the maze of these towering giants – for a forester, at least this was a spiritual experience.

Once we crossed the Waitutu River, then the Wairaurahiri River, the virgin forest gave way to twelve kilometres of logged over-forest and the famous Port Craig bush tramway.

The logging in this isolated spot began in 1918 and was thankfully stopped in 1928 as the world-wide Depression began to bite. Interestingly enough, the loggers came from the upper South Island, being the Marlborough Timber Company (the Resse family), that had logged podocarps between Havelock and Pelorous Bridge.

The settlement of Port Craig, or more accurately the remnants thereof, had a real feel of yesteryear. All that's left of this once thriving community of 200 people is the schoolhouse that now serves as a DOC hut, and scattered remains of an assortment of logging and sawmilling equipment.

In addition to the schoolhouse, still standing proud are the amazing Australian hardwood viaducts. The longest is the Percy Burn viaduct – a dazzling feat of engineering given the era in which these bridges were built.

Finally, hiking with a good mate was truly a treasured experience – which I'm sure is why many of us escape the pressures of our everyday lives – but in the process are enchanted and up-lifted by our backcountry experience.

President Lawrie

Lawrie on the longdrop



Private 'Westies' Hut on the South Coast Track, Fiordland National Park

PHOTO > LAWRIE HALKETT

TRIP REPORTS

March–April 2011

6–12 March – Ivory Lake Hut – Westland

Leaders: Mike Drake & Mike Glover

After lots of research and patiently waiting for a favourable weather window, four of us left at 5am on Sunday 6th March and made our way to Ross where we met Chris. We then left one vehicle in the Waitaha valley below Mount Allen as we intended to do a round trip, in via the Hitchin Range and out via Dickie Spur.

Due to a fresh dusting of snow and a cold southerly with cloud around the tops, we decided the Dickie Spur was our best entry point. We finally left the car at 2pm with extra heavy packs carrying ropes and a mountain radio along with lots of food.

After half an hour we crossed the Mikonui River and began a steep climb up to Truran Pass where we temporarily lost the track, so it was decided to stop and camp the night and let Tony catch us up.

Day Two dawned clear and calm. Tony was now with us and we had our full team of six.

As we slowly climbed higher on Dickie Spur it got steeper until we popped out of the bush onto tussock tops. After a half hour detour to Dickie Spur Hut to keep our Hut Bagger happy, it was a quick lunch and on towards the Top Tuke Hut. The rest of the day was spent negotiating steep tussock ridges and gullies, then a very slow boulder hop up the Tuke River, having to pass packs up and down several difficult sections – a longer day than expected.

Day Three was a 7am start. As we climbed higher towards the summit of Mount Beaumont, the weather slowly clouded in. It was now time to make the decision on whether to continue on to Ivory Lake.

After a short discussion it was decided to bring out the compass and GPS, and run them in tan-

WEBSITE: www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz

dem. This was the beginning of a long and extremely interesting navigational exercise. To add to the adventure, several places on the ridge were rugged and exposed, requiring the use of ropes. Mike and Ruth's rope skills were much appreciated. After burning up a lot more time than expected, we arrived at the final peak overlooking Ivory Lake. While making the last bearing change, I dropped my camera and it bounced down and disappeared into the cloud below us. With only 1.5 hours until dark, we had no time to go after it.

Slowly we moved on down the ridge until we spotted the shore line of the lake from about 30 metres above. We crossed the outlet river for the lake and spotted the ghostly outline of Ivory Lake Hut after a long day.

On Day Four, we all enjoyed a lazy day under a clear blue sky looking around Ivory Lake and having turns at sitting in the armchair. The hut is loaded with fascinating old scientific equipment that was used for monitoring weather and glacier movement – a very intriguing place.

Day Five brought more fine weather, and we decided to return via the same route due to excessive cloud build up in the afternoons. We would need perfect weather all day to attempt the Hitchin Range.

While travelling back to Top Tuke Hut, we found my camera and enjoyed views up and down the Southern Alps, including Mount Evans and as far as Mount Cook. We climbed to the summit of Mount Beaumont before descending into the cloud and down to Top

Tuke Hut.

Day Six dawned clear and quickly turned to rain, so it was a long wet trip all the way to Mikonui Flat Hut where we got a good fire going and settled in for a cosy night.

Day Seven: an easy one hour down the Mikonui River back to the car in nice, fine weather.

Intrepid adventurers were: Mike Drake, Ruth Hesselyn, Mike Glover (scribe), Wade Glover (hut bagger), Tony Stephens & Chris Abel.



PHOTO > RUTH HESSELYN

Mike Drake savours the luxury of Ivory Lake's legendary armchair

PHOTO > MIKE DRAKE



15-year-old Wade Glover relishes the glory of bagging Ivory Lake Hut – the holy grail of the hut bagger, in one of the most inaccessible locations.

4–6 March – John Tait & Cupola Huts – Nelson Lakes NP
Leader: Jo Kay

Nora Flight and I started our tramp from the Mount Robert Road car park and walked up the western side of the lake arriving at Coldwater Hut in time for lunch. The heavy rain earlier in the morning had not affected the crossing of the tributaries, unlike a poor German trumper who had tried to cross one the previous day and lost her pack and all her belongings.

After leaving the lake the track alternates between beech forest and open grassy meadows. The valley narrows as you approach John Tait Hut which was a welcome sight at 6pm.

The avalanche of trees that took out the toilet in the storm of 2008 was still very obvious.

A heavy deluge the next morning meant that we were tardy in setting off but still made it to Cupola Hut for lunch. The track climbs steadily on a surprisingly steady grade and passes an open meadow before becoming aerobically challenging as a steep zig zag route. Nora carried on to explore the grassy ledges above the hut while I took in the breathtaking scenery of the surrounding peaks. It's not hard to see why so many trampers regard Cupola as their favourite hut.

Sunday morning dawned with clear blue skies and a dusting of snow on the tops. We walked steadily down the valley, stopping to admire the surrounding mountains when we passed through the meadows. Another lunch stop and brew up at Coldwater Hut before walking the last leg down the side of the lake (on my last legs!)

13 March – Riordan's Hut – Kahurangi National Park
Leader: Tom Brown

The highlight of the trip is visiting the skilfully restored musterers hut. With the standard Forest Service deerculler-era huts now being replaced with DoC karaka-coloursteel architect-designed



Choosing a route to cross the St Arnaud tops from above our camp site

'facilities', it was great to see something with character still existing in the back country.

The party of seven was: David Sissons, Jocelyn Winn, Liam Sullivan, Andy Clark & daughter, Nicola, Graham Davey & Tom Brown.

27 March – Mount Malita – Mount Richmond Forest Park
Leader: Gretchen Williams

We all made an early start, probably on the only day of the month with a doubtful forecast. But the clouds were high and the day was lightening nicely – we suspected we might get away with it. We signed in at the caretaker's house – he warned of roaring deer needing to be respected at this time of the year and asked for feedback on any pig routing sightings.

About an hour up the forestry road it started to spit and continued till we reached the top, found shelter in the trees and ate an early lunch. We 'found' the hut, the rain stopped and we came back down with changing, misty, cloudy views and the odd glimpse of the western ranges.

There was interesting botanising and some photographing in

the native vegetation area above the exotic forestry blocks.

Trampers were: Gretchen Williams (leader & scribe), Uta Purcell, Val Latimer, Alice Paterson, John Faber, Alison Aaron, Brenda Griffin and visitors Maxine McNabb, David Sissons & Lorraine Knox.

3–4 April – St Ronans Creek to Hamilton River – Nelson Lakes National Park
Leader: Mike Drake

The weather held fine, with clear skies, until the afternoon of the second day. Whilst the temperature dropped overnight to below freezing, we were fortunate to have clear visibility over the St Arnaud Range. We were well down the valley before clouds rolled in from the west.

From Wairau Valley we walked up St Ronans Creek, following a marked track which became patchy in places. Given that the Department of Conservation stopped maintaining the track about ten years ago, it was in better condition than it might have been. Once above the bush line, cairns lead toward the lower of a number of tarns which populate natural indentations

below the St Arnaud Range on the Eastern side. We selected a tarn which offered comfortable tent sites amongst soft golden tussock and the option of a room with a view or shelter from the wind, in keeping with each individual's taste.

A relatively short climb in the morning, which was welcome for its warming effect, saw us over the St Arnaud Range tops to a different landscape on the Western side. From the sunny and soft, tawny colours and contours of tussock we entered a new world of metallic rocks, hard edged and blue/grey in deep shade.

A fresh breeze required a change of wardrobe for the descent down. Chunky rock strewn slopes led us past an impressively large and deep looking tarn, from which a pleasant creek flowed. We continued to follow this creek, making use of animal tracks and criss-crossing to avoid wind fallen trees, till it met the Hamilton River.

Once across the Hamilton a short stroll on a well-formed track took us to the Rainbow Valley Road. Then it was just a couple of kilometres to where the car was parked near St Ronan's Well.

The trip included a few steep places, both on the uphill and downhill sections, and the need for some careful footing, where rocks and ruts were disguised by grasses, however, there seemed to be plenty of time and the pace was comfortable for those of us needing to take it gently. Despite the cooler autumn weather, both Mark and Jocelyn had unfortunate encounters with wasps and sustained multiple stings.

I had wondered along the way who St Ronan was. *Wikipedia* lists a historic spa named 'Saint Ronan's Wells' in Scotland, where Victorians drank and bathed in the health giving waters. Sir Walter Scott frequented the spa as a boy and later wrote a novel, titled *St. Ronan's Well*. However, it is anybody's guess whether this St Ronan's Creek was named for its health-giving waters or because a Catholic passed through and named it af-

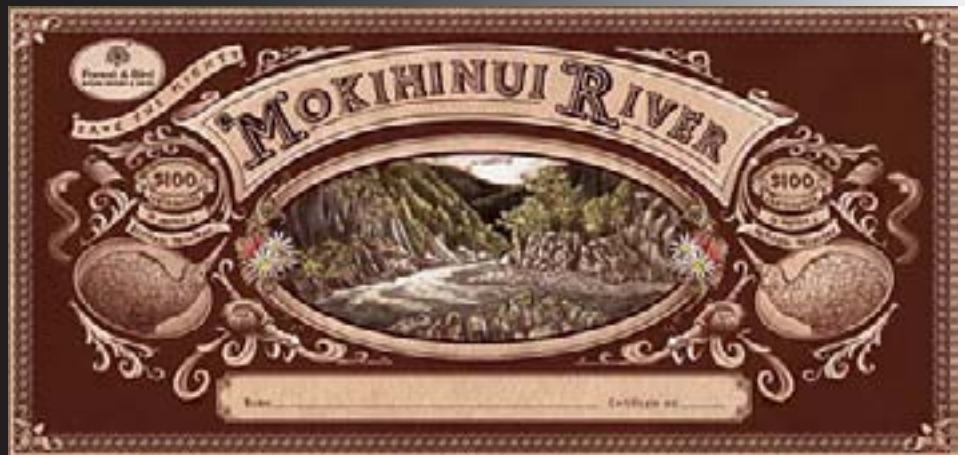
Club Night Report – Monday 4th April

Paul Kilgour > Trumper Extra-ordinaire

The Club had a great night on Monday listening to the exploits of Paul Kilgour. Paul is a real wild, outback kiwi who has had over 40 years experience tramping. He entertained us with stories of how he got into tramping (carrying a pack full of gear for 20 airforce men's cook up, steak eggs and frying pans). We enjoyed seeing an amazing variety of old back country huts that even the club's Hut Baggers didn't know about, (still some challenges for you Dion, Raymond and Wade.)

He also had photos of historical huts that don't exist nowadays. Paul then told us about his Southern Traverse starting from Puysegur Point in the deep south, to his home in Golden Bay. Thanks Paul for a sharing some of your life with us and for taking the time to come Over the Hill (which you are definitely a long way from becoming).

Jo Kay > Vice President



Saving the Mok River

Greetings to all *Save the Mokihinui* supporters!

Thanks for your efforts over the past few weeks to pass on the message to Meridian that damming the Mokihinui is unacceptable. Over 2600 emails were sent. March 31 was the last date for sending an ecard.

How else can you help us win the battle? To assist with the Environment Court case, we have just launched our Save the Mokihinui shareholding campaign.

You can **purchase one of 140 limited edition shareholding certificates** (featured above) of \$100 each – securing your part in the battle to save the Mokihinui River.

Beautifully illustrated, the certificate encapsulates all that is valuable in the Mokihinui – from its enigmatic great spotted kiwi to its earthquake-shattered limestone gorges.

We hope this certificate will be an important piece of Mokihinui memorabilia in years to come as a reminder of battles won!

To buy your certificate and virtual plot click here:

<http://www.savethemokihinui.org.nz/>

Warm regards,

Debs Martin

Regional Field Officer, Top of the South

Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of NZ Inc.

03-989-3355

ter one of the twelve Irish saints who also bear the name.

As for Hamilton, there are likewise many possible references to choose from, ranging from English noble men, an Irish physicist, and an United States economist. However, I suspect the river was *not* named after Lewis Carl Davidson Hamilton, the 2008 Formula One World Champion.

My appreciation goes to Mike and Mark for their excellent route finding and to Jocelyn for her hospitality. The hot cuppa and home-made sweet treats at Jocelyn's Top House bach were very welcome.

Trampers were: Mark, Carole, Jocelyn & Alison Aaron (scribe).

10 April – Blue Creek Gorge – Kahurangi National Park

Leader: Barry James

'Challenge yourself' read the programme for this trip, and emerging from Blue Creek Gorge, some 4.5 hours after setting out, our group of five certainly felt suitably challenged.

Starting for Courthouse Flat, we had initially followed the well-defined track beside Blue Creek, encountering a number of surprisingly well-preserved

PHOTO > LIAM SULLIVAN



Below marble bluffs on Blue Creek Gorge trip

relics from the 1870s gold rush in the area.

As the track began to climb away from the creek, we diverted right, onto a trapping line which linked back into the gorge proper, avoiding some inaccessible bluffs at its downstream end.

The gorge itself is flanked in places by impressive marble cliffs, some containing massive stalactites in areas where the cliffs overhung. As we boulderhopped up the mostly dry bed of the gorge, our minds were kept

active figuring out the best way to scramble up a series of small but awkward rocky bluffs.

Whilst we were enjoying ourselves, the same could not be said for a more pork spotted, whose quiet Sunday snooze on a sunlit branch was being rudely interrupted by an intimidating gang of squawking fantails. This poor fellow ended up being mobbed from one branch to the next until presumably, he had found a more peaceful hiding place.

Leaving the creek, we took a quick detour to view the Old Prospectors Hut, which now is unfortunately in ruins, then turned back along Granity Pass Hut track. On leaving the bushline and emerging into warm sunlight, we stopped to have lunch and soak up the magnificent scenery.

After lunch, a steady half-hour climb ensued, up the Staircase to a tussocked saddle at just under 1300m with a fine view of the surrounding Marino Mountains, then a descent following a well-marked track along the ridgeline back to our vehicle, around 8 hrs after setting out.

Trampers/Boulderers were: Barry James, Ray Caird, Silvano Lorandi, Dave Wheeler (visitor) & Liam Sullivan (scribe).

KAHURANGI BYLAWS >

In the FMC *Bulletin* of March 2010 (p17), we were alerted to some quite restrictive bylaws affecting our use of Kahurangi National Park.

Here is a brief summary...

- Groups of no more than 10 people cannot spend more than one night in the park.
- Tramping clubs need to be aware of the change, as do school groups and other outdoor education groups.
- No tramping club can camp for more than 14 days, even in a different place every night. Those on a long back-country trip need to

spend a night in a hut somewhere on route.

- No camping within 200 metres of a road is allowed, unless at a designated camping area. Tramping clubs often arrive at a road-end on Friday night, put up tents, then head off the next morning. This can no longer be done.

Your club committee wish to apply to the local DOC Conservator for an exemption to these absurd laws. (The WM&TC did this with success.)

We need YOUR FEEDBACK.

Phone Pat Holland: 539 1340

E-mail: p.t.holland@xtra.co.nz



The Banff Centre

BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR

Saturday 21 May

Venue: Annesbrook Church

Duration: 2.5 hours

Tickets: Rollos & other stores.

Price: \$25.00 (NZAC member: \$15.00)

Contact: chrishort@xtra.co.nz

RISK MANAGEMENT THEORY > part one

BY RAYMOND SALISBURY

WE had a tremendous, encouraging turnout at our recent 'Chew The Fat' evening. Our trip leaders and committee members mingled over free pizza, then discussed a range of issues regarding the organisation of tramping trips, and the management of people.

My contribution to this evening was a PowerPoint slideshow based on some excellent material from Mountain Safety Council.

Here, I have adapted their diagrams for our club. In the past I found this theory helpful in making critical planning decisions. For example, if the weather forecast was dodgy, should we still forge ahead with the planned tramp? Or, should I accept a complete stranger onto a hard trip?

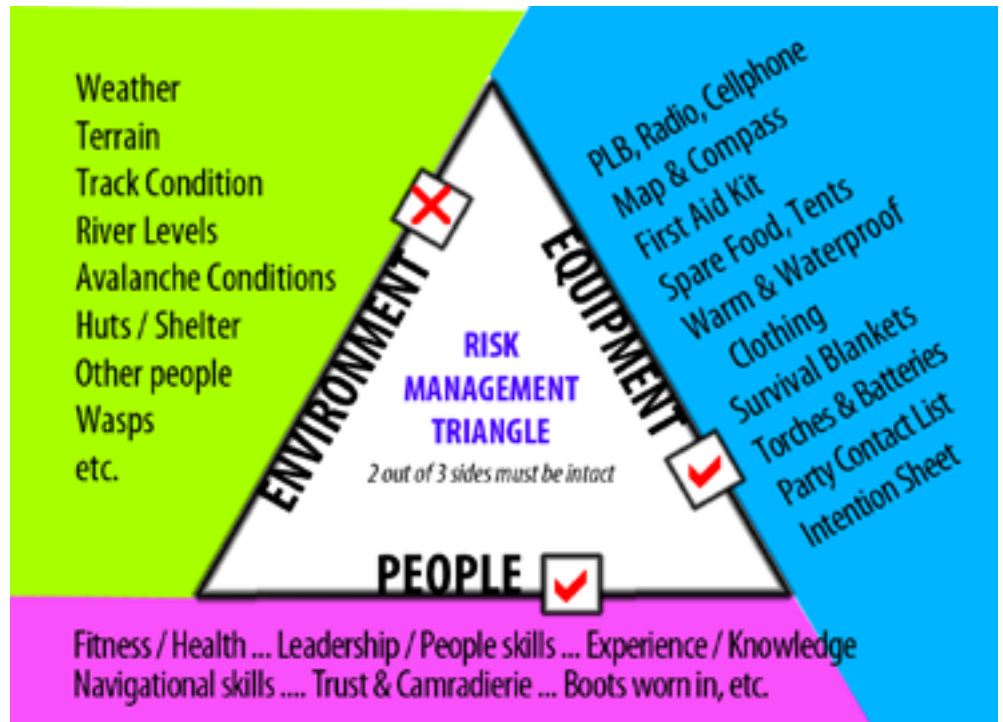


Fig. 2. Risk Management Triangle

1 > RISK MANAGEMENT TRIANGLE

The basic premise of this diagram, is that two out of the three sides must be ticked off.

In Figure 1 below, the tramping party have a good **environment** AND good **people**. So, if they forget some **equipment**, or if their equipment is not that good, it probably won't matter.

For example, if the weather is great, the terrain is easy and the tracks are marked really well, there is a wider safety margin for error. This forgiving environment, combined with competent leadership and experienced decision-making should hopefully negate the use of the safety equipment.

In Figure 2, above, the tramping party have good **equipment** AND good **people**. They can, therefore, enter a tougher **environment**. This might equate to attempting a difficult route, or risking adverse weather. They have the back-up gear (like first aid kit, locator beacon, warm clothing, etc.) and they have the combined knowledge and experience to prevent, or at least cope with accidents.



Fig. 1. Risk Management Triangle

RULE of 3's

If you have...

3 MINUTES to FIND AIR

3 HOURS to FIND WARMTH

3 DAYS to FIND WATER

3 WEEKS to FIND FOOD

... you will survive!

UPcoming CLUBNITES >

7:30pm Nelson Intermediate School, Tipahi Street. Gold Coin.

Monday 13 June

Silvano Lorandi
Italian Dolomites

Monday 8 August 'AGM'

Martin Rodd
Dept of Conservation

Monday 3 October: TBA



Mt Aspiring National Park:

Siberia Hut > Burnt down. Unfortunately, a fire destroyed Siberia Hut on the Young/Wilkin circuit on 16 March. Toilet facilities are still available, but carry your own shelter.

St James Walkway:

Anne Hut > Destroyed by Fire, winter 2010.

A full list of removed or destroyed huts can be downloaded from:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/.../backcountry-huts-removed.pdf>

COMMITTEE >

President: Lawrie Halkett

Vice President: Jo Kay

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Treasurer: Marguerite V

Minutes Secretary: Merrick Mitchell

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OUTDOOR SAFETY COURSES RUN IN NELSON

14 May > Cost \$25

Bushcraft: River Safety

This course is aimed at all who may travel in or across river or stream beds while travelling in the NZ outdoors. It will suit those who are looking for entry-level instruction

Prerequisites:

- Participants must be fit to travel 4+ hours across a rough surface (boulder riverbed) with a full pack
- Be 18 years of age (or younger if their attendance is agreed to by a guardian).

Learning outcomes:

On completion, participants will:

- Be able to understand basic river dynamics and hazards.
- Know the safety rules for assessing whether it is safe to cross a river or stream.
- Know that it is often right to choose not to cross.
- Be able to pick where it is safest to cross.
- Be able to organise clothing and equipment for travel/river crossing.
- Be able to use an approved method for solo crossing (if alone).
- Be able to use an approved mutual support method.
- Know how to float & recover if swept away.
- Know how to self-release from a trapped pack.
- Know how to safely retreat during a crossing.

25-26 June > Cost \$120

Risk Management:

Risk management is a foundation skill for all outdoor leaders and those managing outdoor programmes.

This course is training on:

- Risk management theory & principles
- Identifying, understanding and assessing risks and how to manage them
- Crisis management
- The practical application of the theory and principles of managing risk

13 August > Cost \$85

Outdoor 1st Aid: Revalidation course

Venue: Girl Guide Centre, Paretai Lodge, Lee Valley Rd, Brightwater.

Duration: 8 hours

The course is skills-based, 'hands on', involving scenarios and practicals, aimed at updating the holder of a current OFA certificate with the recent changes in protocol and to refresh their skills. Skill erosion is a recognised factor that develops if a first aider is not exposed to actual first aid incidents.

All participants must have an OFA certificate which is dated no less than two years previous.

10-11 September > Cost \$150

Outdoor 1st Aid: Full course

Venue: Paretai Lodge, Brightwater.

CONTACT DETAILS >

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Telephone: (03) 547 2426

Email: nelson@mountainsafety.org.nz