



The New Zealand Deerstalkers Assoc In



December Issue 2011:

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



**“The Tines”
Rotorua Branch Newsletter December 2011**



Rotorua N.Z.D.A. Branch Calendar

Ring coordinators for more information.

Phone numbers listed on inner back page.

Calendar of the Club's regular monthly events:

Committee Meeting	Last Monday of each month
Range Shoots*	3rd Sunday of each month
Socials	4th Wednesday of each month
Party Hunts**	4th Weekend of each month

** Regular Club Hunting & Trophy Shoots. For extra range shoots and 300 metre shoots please refer to Yearly Range Calendar.*

***Some Party Hunts may be on different dates, see programme.*

Our programme for this month:

Party Hunts	TBA.
Socials	TBA.
Range Shoot	Range itinerary for 2012 in this issue: Contact Malcolm Perry.

Cover Photo: Grant Piper (15) shot this nice eight point whitetail stag while hunting with his father, Garth Piper, in Michigan, USA, while they were visiting family last month. Grant saw two other small stags but waited to shoot Mr. Big. He used a twelve gauge with rifle barrel, solid slug. You can only use shotguns in that area because it's scattered farming area. The deer roam from property to property, living in the bush but eating crops, etc. Grant also shot a hind for meat for family (not ours, unfortunately!). The Pipers are back in NZ and looking forward to spending time hunting here in the beautiful bush again.

If you have a photograph that would be suitable for the cover please contact the Newsletter editor, Elvis Bowring on 350 3230 or ebowring@gmail.com.

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Presidents Report

Hi All

Well Christmas is only month away but I think have had my gift – a new pair boots and a trip down south for a thar hunt staying at a mates place. Will be taking along Mitch so he hopefully can score a thar and maybe chamois, the best thing will be the 2 week break from work.

No doubt a lot of you have been out already and have all the snarlers ready I suspect.

So what's been happening?

Well the Pistol Club have had the use of range for parking etc with their ITSC National Shoot going on, As far as I am aware it was all good with 168 entries from inside NZ, Aussie , some guys from US I'm told.

We held the 300 Deer silhouette shoot and awarded the Swazi prizes out, well done to the winners and thanks again to Malcolm for running this event.

Not the greatest turn out to the 300 shoot but was good practice for Mitch and I, wind was certainly a factor, well that's my story any how.

Wednesdays Social was game hunting videos supplied by Ron Marsden.

We watched hunting rams in Mongolia. My god these boys have huge heads, and in all was a great video to watch, extremely good footage.

Next was some Elk hunting by bow and finally hunting Rams in upper Canada I think. But god the country was huge. I explained to Mitch quietly that's what we are in for, I myself thinking god I hope my legs are up to it!

These videos of Ron's are top glass, real hunts and no fat arse yanks, or lame stuff you can see from some of our prominent TV shows.

Real good stuff Ron thanks heaps for helping out and I would like run some more in future.

Special thanks to the guy's that fronted, It is real disappointing to see so few guys front when I know we have so many members out there. If you think you have something to offer please come along and share the idea's it is hard to find stuff to cater for all.

I will be away for to weeks as I said so I will look forward to seeing some of you at the Christmas BBQ at the range on Saturday 10 DEC.

So may the best party win on 26th and you lot be safe out there!!

Cheers and Merry Xmas

Colin

NZDA SOCIAL(s) and PARTY HUNTS

No social until February next year.

The committee is considering having a late January party hunt. If you wish to be involved, please email Elvis at the club address to register your interest and for more information.

Volunteers/NZDA Rotorua Projects Updates

All projects are on hold until next year.

Whirinaki Deer pen removal

Waiting for word on the next lot of activities. If you want any further information, or are able to help, please contact Colin or another committee member.

Whirinaki Hut restoration

If you would like to be involved in the Whirinaki Hut restoration, please contact Colin or any other committee member. We will be doing one or two huts every year. Although we are working, there is ample time to get in some hunting as well.

Wanted
Good stories for newsletter.
Any interesting articles.
Any good photo's of your hunting trips.
Anything to buy or sell?
Send to editor – nzdarotorua@gmail.com
Or phone 021 066 7868

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Range report November 2011

Sunday 6th was 300M day, no 300M people turned up but one of our D.A. members stretched his barrel at 300.

Sunday 20th, Deer silhouette shoot. Five people turned up and as I had a lunch function to attend I left Colin to look after things for me and lock up, for that Colin thank you.

The range closure from Monday 21st to Sunday 27th went without too much incident, except for two characters who apparently cannot read and turned up wondering what all the fuss was about.

COMING EVENTS:

December 4th 300M shoot available, I will be there even if 300M people are not.

Saturday 10th .22 family fun day, novelty and paper targets. Bring your own .22's and I will have one or two available if people do not have one. The shoot starts at 10am to be followed by a B.B.Q. AT ABOUT MIDDAY. There should be more info elsewhere. This is our Christmas function so bring the family along for a great day.

January we do not have an organized shoot.

February 5th 300M day.

February 19th Deer silhouette shoot, 300; 200; 100; and 50M.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The club has been given the opportunity to get some earthworks done at a favorable cost. To this end I will need to do some setting out which will require stakes with information on them to be placed at certain points, these stakes are not to be used as targets and during discussion about the possibility of this happening the Committee suggested I should close the range if I found the stakes were being shot up, this will be over the Christmas January period. If this happens it will of course be the majority made to suffer by the few so if you see anyone doing what they should not advise a committee member and take rego numbers etc to identify the culprits. I can imagine people leaning targets up against the stakes, similar to someone having sat a target of some

sort on the seat of one of the chairs, leaning against the back of the chair, and proceeded to put bullet holes in the back of the chair. Their heads must be to keep their ears apart!

Now I have had my rant I hope it will help to curb unnecessary grief in the manner of having to close the range at this popular time, something I will not do without good reason.

Merry Christmas to you all.

Time to reload, Malcolm.

A Disappointing Range Visit.

Yesterday Sunday 6th Nov. I attended the range to provide a chance for a member to have a 300M shoot, which all went well. I was less than pleased however with the state of the range. It is just two weeks since the Central Regional Champs and the reasonably tidy 200M mound we left was far from tidy, the ladies toilet door was wide open and the toilet roll had blown outside entirely, the reason we suggest the doors are kept shut and although the men's door was closed the whole toilet roll had been thrown into the hole. The cost of these rolls is not huge and I generally pay for them myself, and try to keep the toilets provided at all times, sorry at the moment you are shit out of luck. There were several entries in the range book for Saturday and I am surprised members genuine enough to sign the book allowed this situation to exist. Two presidents reports ago Colin reported on the Tec Park and mentioned that it was likely there would have to be a R/O in attendance to use the range and how lucky we are that this is not the case on our range, well the way things are going that just may be about to change if things continue the way they are. Another thing that happens regularly for no good reason is the damage to the portable target backers, another member has kindly repaired some of the previous ones and returned them to the range, two of these had shots fired into the legs, and these shots are not accidental when they are right on one of the fixing bolts. If these backers were used correctly the legs would seldom be damaged. The moral of this story, jack your ideas up or there will be no private keys generally after March next year. If it is considered that trespassers are responsible then we may find this out in near future.

Christmas Shoot & B.B.Q. report

Well Saturday the 10th, a lot of people who might have been there were not but there were still a good number of people there and some new faces too that was good to see. There were 15 who took part in the shooting, (3 girls, 2 boys, 1 lady, 9 men) who all thoroughly enjoyed them selves, with the addition of another 5 for the B.B.Q. which gave us a total of 20. One very kind lady who we met for the first time, and comes from Papamoa, provided a chocolate cake which made a very nice dessert, thank you, Mrs. Midgely. The Saturday event suited some obviously and maybe not others.

Sunday the 11th, at fairly short notice Trevor Dyke came and surveyed the range to set in motion getting our certification, we will hear from him in near future with his recommendations.

To all members and particularly those who use the range, have a Merry Christmas and take care over the holiday season.

Malcolm Perry.



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Whataroa Tahr Trip – October 2011 by Cliff Graham

It is a long way to Franz Joseph, further for my mate from Tauranga. Six hours to Wellington, 2-3 hours wait for the ferry, 3 hours on the ferry to Picton, 8 hours from Picton to Franz Joseph. Whatever you do, don't go over 105km. 108km = \$30 and 10 demeritt points – we know!! We actually broke our trip up in Nelson, which was a good idea.

There were three of us from the North Island and we met up with my mate at Franz Joseph on the Sunday. We then had to wait for 2 days in perfect weather because of the winds and storms in Canterbury causing very strong winds to blow down the West Coast river valleys. The helicopter pilots refuse to fly in those conditions. Good on them, but boy its frustrating.

We were flying into the Top Butler Hut, as this was suggested as the best to go to at this time of the year. Having said that, we were too early. The hut is at 600m, well positioned and on DOC tracks with orange triangles, but the track to the ice lake is so dangerous that we bailed in the interests of our own safety.

The animals we saw were all up high. One chamois and 25 odd Tahr, all comfortable at 1,300 meters plus. They never came down below that level.

We spent two days sussing out their patterns and then went for them. We left the hut at 10.30am – straight line maximum 2.5km away. It's all uphill. No animals in the bush/scrub so we had to follow the river beds, ice flows and battle through the bush/scrub. We had all contingencies covered - wet weather gear, cooking equipment, food and drink – its going to be a long day. $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the way up, we found a mob of 8 tahr – 600m away and quite alert. We stopped and had a drink and a feed to let them settle down. It also gave us time to plan a route to approach them. This was either a different mob or the one's we were after but in a different area.

The climb started. That 400 meters to get in range took 1.5 hours. It was literally pulling myself up with the hebes, flax, tussock and spaniard grass. The closest we could get was 250 meters and uphill. The first shots missed – over the top. The range was then sorted and at the end there were 8 dead tahr. Of these, only one was recovered. He was up a

bluff. Too much ice stopped us recovering the rest. Three hit the snow and ice and dropped 400-500 meters in about 2 seconds. This country is real buttock clenching, heart in the mouth stuff. One thing in our favour was that we declined to take an ice axe, reasoning that if we needed one, we shouldn't be there!!

Calibres used were 308, 260 and 7mm Rem Mag. It was interesting that at 250-350 metres, the 260 and 308 required 2 hits to anchor animals, the 7mm Rem Mag only one. If the country is dicey, I think one needs to take that into account.

The trip back down the mountain was in drizzly rain and sleet for half the journey. We got back to the hut at 8.30pm, 10 hours for 4-5 km straight line and about 6-7km of walking.

One thing of note is the size of the rocks/boulders etc. Several are 2 & 3 shorey house size – absolutely massive. Another thing I found was the beauty of the schist – absolutely stunning.

When we came out, we were booked for 4.00pm. At 9.00am we used a satellite phone and requested 11.00am as the cloud was rolling over the tops. At 9:30am we phoned again and said to get in asap. The last 2 got out at 10.45am and the pilot said he wouldn't fly in again. If we hadn't got out then we have have been in for another week – just because of the wind!!

It was a really enjoyable trip even with the 11.30am – 7:30am return drive back home.


Next time, easier country to get in more hunting time.

Hint – you don't have to be super fit, but make sure you have plenty of time to do what you want.

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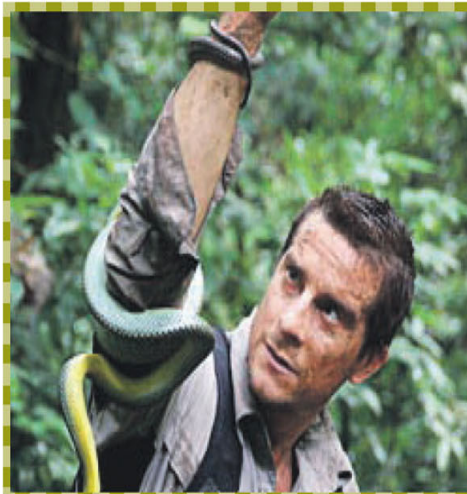
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Why we shoot deer in the wild (A letter from someone who wants to remain anonymous, who farms, writes well and actually tried this)

I had this idea that I could rope a deer, put it in a stall, feed it up on corn for a couple of weeks, then kill it and eat it. The first step in this adventure was getting a deer. I figured that, since they congregate at my cattle feeder and do not seem to have much fear of me when we are there (a bold one will sometimes come right up and sniff at the bags of feed while I am in the back of the truck not 4 feet away), it should not be difficult to rope one, get up to it and toss a bag over its head (to calm it down) then hog tie it and transport it home.

I filled the cattle feeder then hid down at the end with my rope. The cattle, having seen the roping thing before, stayed well back. They were not having any of it. After about 20 minutes, my deer showed up - 3 of them. I picked out a likely looking one, stepped out from the end of the feeder, and threw my rope.

The deer just stood there and stared at me. I wrapped the rope around my waist and twisted the end so I would have a good hold. The deer still just stood and stared at me, but you could tell it was mildly concerned about the whole rope situation. I took a step towards it, it took a step away. I put a little tension on the rope, and then received an education.

The first thing that I learned is that, while a deer may just stand there looking at you funny while you rope it, they are spurred to action when you start pulling on that rope.

That deer EXPLODED. The second thing I learned is that pound for pound, a deer is a LOT stronger than a cow or a colt. A cow or a colt in that weight range I could fight down with a rope and with some dignity. A deer-- no chance. That thing ran and bucked and twisted and pulled.

There was no controlling it and certainly no getting close to it. As it jerked me off my feet and started dragging me across the ground, it occurred to me that having a deer on a rope was not nearly as good an idea as I had originally imagined. The only upside is that they do not have as much stamina as many other animals.

A brief 10 minutes later, it was tired and not nearly as quick to jerk me off my feet and drag me when I managed to get up. It took me a few minutes to realize this, since I was mostly blinded by the blood flowing out of the big gash in my head. At that point, I had lost my taste for corn-fed venison. I just wanted to get that devil creature off the end of that rope.

I figured if I just let it go with the rope hanging around its neck, it would likely die slow and painfully somewhere. At the time, there was no love at all between me and that deer. At that moment, I hated the thing, and I would venture a guess that the feeling was mutual.

Despite the gash in my head and the several large knots where I had cleverly arrested the deer's momentum by bracing my head against various large rocks as it dragged me across the ground, I could still think clearly enough to recognize that there was a small chance that I shared some tiny amount of responsibility for the situation we were in. I didn't want the deer to have to suffer a slow death, so I managed to get it lined back up in between my truck and the feeder - a little trap I had set before hand... kind of like a squeeze chute. I got it to back in there and I started moving up so I could get my rope back.

Did you know that deer bite?

They do! I never in a million years would have thought that a deer would bite somebody, so I was very surprised when I reached up there to grab that rope and the deer grabbed hold of my wrist. Now, when a deer bites you, it is not like being bit by a horse where they just bite you and slide off to then let go. A deer bites you and shakes its head--almost like a pit bull. They bite HARD and it hurts.

The proper thing to do when a deer bites you is probably to freeze and draw back slowly.. I tried screaming and shaking instead. My method was ineffective.

It seems like the deer was biting and shaking for several minutes, but it was likely only several seconds. I, being smarter than a deer (though you may be questioning that claim by now), tricked it. While I kept it busy tearing the tendons out of my right arm, I reached up with my left hand and pulled that rope loose.

That was when I got my final lesson in deer behavior for the day.

Deer will strike at you with their front feet. They rear right up on their back feet and strike right about head and shoulder level, and their hooves are surprisingly sharp ... I learned a long time ago that, when an animal - like a horse - strikes at you with their hooves and you can't get away easily, the best thing to do is try to make a loud noise and make an aggressive move towards the animal. This will usually cause them to back down a bit so you can escape.

This was not a horse. This was a deer, so obviously, such trickery would not work. In the course of a millisecond, I devised a different strategy. I screamed like a woman and tried to turn and run. The reason I had always been told NOT to try to turn and run from a horse that paws at you is that there is a good chance that it will hit you in the back of the head.

Deer may not be so different from horses after all, besides being twice as strong and 3 times as evil, because the second I turned to run, it hit me right in the back of the head and knocked me down..

Now, when a deer paws at you and knocks you down, it does not immediately leave. I suspect it does not recognize that the danger has passed. What they do instead is paw your back and jump up and down on you while you are laying there crying like a little girl and covering your head.

I finally managed to crawl under the truck and the deer went away.

So now I know why when people go deer hunting they bring a rifle with a scope.....to sort of even the odds!!

All these events are true so help me God... An Educated Farmer.



COP



In the news

DOC CUTBACKS 'WILL LEAD TO EXTINCTIONS' BY KIRAN CHUG – STUFF.CO.NZ (08 DECEMBER 2011)

Animals teetering on the edge of oblivion will be pushed into extinction by further cuts at the Conservation Department (DOC), a group of scientists has warned.

More than 100 conservation biologists and scientists wrote to Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson and DOC director-general Al Morrison yesterday, warning that cuts would send more species to extinction and cost the country its "100% Pure" brand.

"Recessions come and go: extinction is forever," they said.

In September, DOC confirmed it would cut 96 jobs over six months to save \$7.5 million.

The department was unable to guarantee that more jobs would not be cut as the Government puts pressure on the public sector to increase savings.

However, Mr Morrison told The Dominion Post yesterday that DOC remained committed to science-based conservation.

"DOC is not reducing its science spending and the organisational changes are designed to deliver more effective support services for our priority conservation programmes."

It was looking for "ongoing savings" to deliver cost-effective conservation, he said.

The letter, signed by 107 scientists, was sent while international scientists gathered in Auckland for the 25th International Congress for Conservation Biology.

It said job losses would seriously erode DOC's efforts in conservation management, while many species and ecosystems "teeter on the edge of oblivion".

In its 2011 annual report, DOC lists both the number of at-risk species (2950) and threatened species (672) as having risen since 2007.

Most changes resulted from improved coverage of groups not previously assessed, but 57 species had declined so much that they were moved to a more severely threatened category. Only seven species had recovered enough to move up a category.

One of the signatories, Massey University postdoctoral fellow Kevin Parker, said DOC had successful programmes, such as its kakapo recovery efforts, and there were other successful community conservation projects.

"But other species are not particularly charismatic, or the ecosystems are not particularly accessible. For those, DOC has to be there."

He acknowledged current economic challenges, but said conservation management should be funded as a strategic asset.

The scientists were dismayed at the "ongoing reduction in capacity, support and funding for New Zealand conservation".

"Conservationists are, by necessity, a dedicated and determined group of people. But we cannot say that this commitment is reflected by our Government."

Ms Wilkinson said the Government was "absolutely committed" to conservation. "Funding for species recovery has been maintained and DOC's restructure is focused on removing duplication in and streamlining the back office so field staff can continue their work on the ground."

It was easy to call for more funds, but New Zealand needed "to be smarter than that", she said.

In the 2009 Budget, DOC had \$54m shaved from its budget, and it has looked for savings since.

Forest & Bird advocacy manager Kevin Hackwell said he hoped the Government would rethink conservation cuts.

Public Service Association national secretary Brenda Pilott warned DOC would be looking at further cuts.

"This is just the beginning."

- The Dominion Post

INTERNET PLEA KEEPS 'IN LOVE' SHEEP, DEER TOGETHER – NZHERALD.CO.NZ (09 DECEMBER 2011)

Chinese web users have flooded a wildlife park with pleas for an amorous male sheep and female deer to be allowed to stay together after their mating habits raised concerns.

Staff at the wildlife park turned to the country's half a billion web users for advice after the deer and the ram - whose Chinese name Changmao means Long Hair - began their unconventional liaison.

Their romance made headlines in China after a local television station in the southwestern province of Yunnan picked up on the story, reporting that attempts to separate the pair had been unsuccessful.

By Thursday, the story of the inseparable pair had inspired more than 1,700 comments on China's weibos - microblogging services similar to Twitter that have taken the country by storm in recent years.

"I cried when I watched the video, this is love... they have overcome the obstacles and are finally together," posted one user under the name Qianjiang.

Another, posting under the name timm_tina, said the story of the inseparable pair had "made me trust love again".

"Love between a sheep and deer is wonderful, perhaps something strange will be produced, I urge everyone to watch this closely," said another, posting under the name beibei5332.

- AAP

BODY MAY BE MISSING TRAMPER – NEW ZEALAND HERALD (07 DECEMBER 2011)

A body believed to be that of missing trumper Sharny Abbott, 23, of Richmond, was found by police in the Richmond Ranges.

Nelson police search and rescue teams found the man's body about 5.50pm in the Roding River, about 400m downstream from the Hackett junction after scouring the area all day.

Mr Abbott was last seen at the Starveall Hutt about 1pm on Sunday. Police said he was well-equipped and had outdoor experience, having previously been in the army. A formal identification is yet to be made, but Mr Abbott's next of kin have been notified.

TRIBUTES FLOW FOLLOWING TRAMPING DEATH BY ANNA PEARSON – STUFF.CO.NZ (12 DECEMBER 2011)

It was a tramping trip with friends that went horribly wrong.

Nelson's John Hannah, 63, was negotiating difficult terrain with former Tasman District Council chief executive Bob Dickinson and Nelson Symphony Orchestra chairman Richard Wells in the Adelaide Tarn area in Kahurangi National Park when he fell about 20 metres to his death.

It was Friday and they were on day three of a five-day trip, which they had been planning for several months – from the head of the Cobb Valley to the Aorere Valley.

It is a challenging trip – for experienced trampers only – and day three is said to be the hardest, with no marked track.

They were anticipating up to an 11-hour day, but the journey started to go wrong about 10.30am.

A fourth member of their party, Dr David Low, slipped and broke his ankle and was picked up from near Lonely Lake by the Summit rescue helicopter.

Mr Hannah, Mr Dickinson and Mr Wells continued on towards their evening destination, a four-bunk hut at Adelaide Tarn.

Mr Dickinson said they made good time, carrying on up the Anatoki Valley and over a saddle when Mr Hannah, who was walking behind them, slipped and fell.

"We were climbing up the side of a steep snow tussock hill. You had to use the tussock as hand-holds to steady yourself. We were above him, higher up the hill, and we couldn't actually see what happened. We climbed back down and did what we could, which wasn't very much. He was in a very serious condition," he said.

They set off an emergency beacon about 7pm, their second call for help that day, and Mr Dickinson said the Summit rescue helicopter arrived amid swirling mist about an hour later.

Mr Dickinson said Mr Hannah had a dry wit about him and loved tramping and the outdoors.

"We got on very well and sorted out the affairs of the world while we were away. I have known John for 30 years. We climbed quite a few peaks together," he said.

"He used to practise carrying packs up and down the Grampians. He trained quite hard for this trip, because he knew it was a hard trip. We thought we were well prepared," he said.

"He was a great family man. He was a great bloke."

Mr Hannah joined Sealord in 1988 as a business development manager and was said to be responsible for the company's successful move into aquaculture. He went on to take the helm at the New Zealand School of Fisheries, as the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology's marine studies chief.

Nelson-based consultant Alec Woods led New Zealand School of Fisheries before Mr Hannah took over in 2003. He stayed on at the school after Mr Hannah became head and they worked together for four years.

Mr Woods said Mr Hannah was "a marvellous guy" and a loyal, approachable and quiet leader, who pushed staff from behind "and it worked well".

"The seafood industry needs strong individuals – a lot of people in the industry need to be encouraged from the bottom up," he said. "John got a lot of respect and allegiance from his staff. He let people explore their potential and encouraged [them] to excel in what they were good at. He treated everybody the same. When you were with John, you were an important person."

Former Sealord chief executive Brian Rhoades said Mr Hannah was responsible for Sealord's role in the mussel industry.

He recognised the business potential, buying, running and enlarging its Tahunanui shellfish processing factory and making Sealord the largest New Zealand processor for some time. "He galvanised his staff into a team. He was a very good team leader and everybody loved him."

Dr Rhoades was chairman of the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology board when Mr Hannah joined the School of Fisheries and said he had done a very good job there too, despite some frustration with bureaucracy.

"He liked to tread a very independent path."

Mr Hannah was "a really great guy" who maintained a wide range of contacts, and had continued to be intimately involved in the mussel industry after leaving NMIT, Dr Rhoades said.

He was also a former chairman of the New Zealand Mussel Industry Council. Aquaculture New Zealand chairman Peter Vitasovich worked closely with him for 15 years and said today Mr Hannah was "a gentle man who had a lot of foresight".

"He was the driving force in the back room," Mr Vitasovich said.

Mr Hannah was a Rotary member for more than 20 years and his friend and long-time neighbour Alan Winwood said he was one of the leading lights in Rotary cricket circles, with a trip to India with the New Zealand cricket team planned for next year.

Mr Hannah is survived by a wife and three children. His death was the second tramping death in the Nelson region last week.

Sharny Abbott's body was found on Tuesday in Mt Richmond Forest Park.

He is believed to have lost his footing and drowned in Hackett Creek.

- The Nelson Mail

CELLPHONE SAVES TRAMPERS – STUFF.CO.NZ (13 DECEMBER 2011)

Two friends faced the prospect of a cold, wet night in the Waingaro bush after losing their way while tramping yesterday afternoon.

The mayday call came in about 5pm.

Search and rescue responded and based themselves at Waingaro marae, west of Ngaruawahia.

The rescue team were considering whether to call off the search for the night but the trampers were found and escorted safely from the bush at about 1am.

Police said the man, woman and dog were lucky to have a cellphone and reception.

They had also reportedly managed to start a fire.

- Waikato Times

CALL TO SAVE NEW ZEALAND'S RIVERS BY KIRAN CHUG – STUFF.CO.NZ (06 DECEMBER 2011)

A lack of protection and an emphasis on development have brought about the degradation of New Zealand's pristine rivers – and now a single government agency must urgently take responsibility for them before they are beyond saving.

That's the clarion call being made today by the Conservation Authority, the independent body that provides advice to the Conservation Department and minister.

The authority is releasing a special report outlining how the country's rivers have suffered from a lack of protection while too great an emphasis has been placed on their use and development.

Chairwoman Kay Booth said the unusual move of publishing the report was taken because the authority believed doing nothing was "not an option".

The report found no single government agency had specific responsibility to protect rivers – but that one was needed. It also raised concerns that DOC's advocacy capacity was stretched. "River protection is slipping through the cracks between agencies."

If action was not taken, Dr Booth said rivers would inevitably be used more for development.

"Ultimately, in the long term, there won't be anything to protect."

Protection was a "poor cousin" to the use and development of rivers and the imbalance needed to be addressed, she said.

"The authority thinks we need to strengthen the protection of our rivers and that we need to act now."

Surveys showed people were becoming increasingly concerned about the issue and the authority wanted the Government to respond and act on the report.

"What we found was that we fall short of what is desirable in terms of protecting our rivers."

The report said water quality in major rivers had declined since 1989, largely because of increased agricultural intensification and development of farming.

Last year, under the Land and Water Forum, interest groups from across the conservation and industrial spectrum came together with recommendations for improving water management and the Government released its national policy statement on freshwater to guide regional councils.

However, the authority felt a stronger voice was still needed for the protection of rivers.

"We just feel that the use and development aspects are moving more quickly and are out-stripping the protection aspects."

The authority is calling for a system of protected rivers to be established, similar to the national parks system. In the management of rivers outside that system, attention still needed to be paid to protection as well as development.

The authority was not seeking to protect all rivers, and accepted that development needed to happen, Dr Booth said. She hoped the report would encourage debate.

Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson said tackling water quality and better protecting waterways were big challenges.

"It's great to have the authority sparking up a discussion on new policy ideas. The more debate the better really and I look forward to having a closer read of the report and talking it through with them."

Fish and Game chief executive Bryce Johnson said he was pleased to see the authority stepping up and getting involved in the river conservation debate.

He supported the idea of a single agency being made to take responsibility for the protection of New Zealand's rivers.

"They're an essential part of the New Zealand brand and Kiwi identity."

- The Dominion Post

DOG SHOOTS BIRD HUNTER IN BUTTOCKS – NZHEARLD.CO.NZ (01 DECEMBER 2011)

A bird hunter was shot in the buttocks after his dog stepped on a shotgun laid across the bow of a boat.

Sheriff's Deputy Kevin Potter says the 46-year-old Utah man was duck hunting with a friend when he climbed out of the boat to move decoys.

Potter says the man left his 12-gauge shotgun in the boat and the dog stepped on it, causing it to fire. It wasn't clear whether the safety on the gun was on at the time.

Potter says the man was hit from about 10 feet (three meters) away with 27 pellets of birdshot. He says the man wasn't seriously injured, in part because he was wearing waders. The man was treated at a nearby hospital.

-AP

ROTORUA STREAMS TO OPEN FOR FISHING – DAILY POST (24 NOVEMBER 2011)

Upper streams around the Rotorua district are opening for summer fishing.

Waterways opening on December 1 include the upper Ngongotaha, Utuhina and Waiteti streams.

Fish and Game officer Matt Osborne said they were closed over winter to allow fish the best possible chance to spawn undisturbed.

Only fly fishing is permitted in the upper streams. Spinning is not permitted and there is a bag limit of eight fish, including no more than two brown trout.

From about the middle of November, the streams were expected to start providing some excellent fishing as Lake Rotorua warmed up and good numbers of trout began to make their way up the streams in search of cooler water, Mr Osborne said.

"These fish, some big browns in particular, are targeted by anglers from the December opening. Anglers who go and fly fish these streams from early December, using their knowledge of what summer bugs and insects the trout are now feeding on, can do very well."

Summer evenings could also provide some excellent fishing conditions.

Fish and Game had done a lot of work in the lead up to the December opening to ensure good access to fishing spots along the streams and rivers, including grooming tracks leading to the Ngongotaha and Waiteti streams and spraying for blackberry and gorse.

Mr Osborne said anglers keen to fly fish some more secluded spots also had rivers and lakes on the East Coast from which to choose. Lake Waikaremoana's tributary streams, including the Mokau and Hopuruahine, were open from the beginning of December.

He urged anglers to check their Sport Fishing Regulations 2011-2012, as some streams and sections of others remain closed.

Club Contacts

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Range Keys

Any person who wishes to have a range gate key for the private use of our range must be a CURRENT FINANCIAL MEMBER of the Branch and must obtain a key from Hamills, Outdoorsman HQ or Serious Shooters at a cost of \$20.00 per year. Your membership card must be produced at the time of key purchase. Keys may not be lent or passed on to other persons, whether they are members or not. Non-Members can only enter the Range if accompanied by a current Financial Member. Any use of the range by non-members requires prior approval of the committee.

Membership Costs (Rotorua Branch)

Senior = \$90 (full benefits at local and national branch level)

Associate = \$60 (Unable to vote or enter national competitions. Does not receive H&W)

Junior = \$25 (Must be less than 18 years of age as at March 1st 2011. Full benefits apart from voting rights.)

Student = \$40 (Must be attending a tertiary institute or undergoing an apprenticeship. Proof must be provided.)

Superannuant = \$50 (Over 65 as at March 1st 2011. Full benefits)

Family = \$5 (Children or grandchildren)

Sender: Rotorua Branch NZDA
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ROTORUA

