



**Presentation of Evidence in
Opposition to the
Central Plains Water Rights Application**

6th June 2008

**Robin Judkins
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1. Introduction

My name is Robin Judkins and I'm the Race Director and owner of the Speight's Coast to Coast multisport race.

I am vehemently opposed to the Central Plains Water application to take water from the Waimakariri River between Woodstock and Waimakariri Gorge Bridge because of the year round effect it will have on the Speight's Coast to Coast and the recreational opportunities it will deny all kayakers.

Later in my submission I will discuss these effects and the safety issues that are raised by this application.

2. History

Firstly though I would like to brief you on the history of the Speight's Coast to Coast and give you some background information.

The Speight's Coast to Coast is the longest running and biggest multisport event in the world. It involves 243km of road cycling, mountain running and kayaking from Kumara on the West Coast to Sumner on the East Coast.

The Speight's Coast to Coast takes place on the 2nd weekend of February every year.

It began in 1983 with 79 competitors and now has 1100 applicants for the 800 places each year. Speight's Coast to Coast entries open and close in June each year, eight months before the event. The mailing list now stands at 12,000 Kiwis and 1500 internationals. Between the finish of the last event in mid February and the entry forms going out at the beginning of June, four new people per day apply to be on the database.

The Speight's Coast to Coast traverses the South Island of New Zealand from Kumara Beach on the Tasman Sea to Sumner Beach on the Pacific Ocean. Over either two days or the one-day event competitors cycle 140 kms (three stages of 55km, 15 km and 70 km), run 36 km (including a 33 km mountain stage that crosses the Southern Alps) and kayak 67kms of the grade two Waimakariri River through the Grand Canyon of New Zealand, the Waimakariri Gorge.

Top competitors take ten and three quarter hours to cover the 243kms while the slowest time ever recorded was twenty-four and a half hours.

The average age in the event is 36 years and the oldest ever was 75. The minimum age to enter is 16 years and there is no upper age limit. There are \$240,000 worth of prizes and race pack goodies, finishers medals, two outrageous dinners, a quality event branded shirt and a cold can of Speight's for every finisher. Who could wish for more?

The event is divided into three races - the One-Day or Longest Day event is for individuals only while the Two-Day event is for individuals and two person teams. In the teams section the runner and the kayaker both do cycling stages. The only requirements for the Speight's Coast to Coast are that you meet the minimum age and provide a grade two kayaking certificate if you're an individual or a team kayaker.

In 2007 I introduced a school teams section (minimum age 16 years) in the Two-Day event. This has been very successful.

Since the Speight's Coast to Coast began in 1983 several industries have sprung up to support it and the emergence of other multisport events.

There are now kayaking shops in every major center in New Zealand. Canoe and Kayak alone have 10 shops in the North Island and Ferg's Kayaks have three, plus there are a myriad of other privately owned and operated outfitters.

There are now 10 kayak manufactures in New Zealand offering, at last count, 69 different models of river and ocean kayaks.

The kayak accessory business has also exploded with 20 plus large and small manufacturers offering everything from Kevlar paddles to bumfortable seats!

Seventy nine television documentaries have been made of the Speight's Coast to Coast. The Speight's Coast to Coast documentary screens in 120 countries each year. Six books and over 7000 articles have been written about the event. These documentaries have been shown throughout the world and several countries have sent film crews to New Zealand to film the event including the BBC from England, Channel 9 from Australia, three competing channels from Germany, two from Japan as well as French, American, Welsh, Brazilian and Chinese crews.

About 120 international competitors enter each year, from about 17 countries. The Speight's Coast to Coast has been won seven times by internationals from Australia, England, Canada and South Africa.

The Speight's Coast to Coast generates \$6.5M in direct spend over five days each year in the Westland and Canterbury regions of which Canterbury receives \$4M (APR Consultants July 2007). Over the last 26 years this event has injected over \$88M into the Canterbury economy without any infrastructure needing to be built!

The Speight's Coast to Coast is so popular for three reasons:

- 1. It's a great challenge because the course goes from Coast to Coast.**
- 2. The disciplines are even. If you take 18 hours, then 6 hours will be on the bike, 6 hours in the kayak and 6 hours on foot. The ratio doesn't change no matter how good you are.**
- 3. Anyone of any age and any fitness can do it because of the three events (One Day individual, Two Day individual and Two Day teams) that they can compete in. Witness the totally blind competitor from Ireland and the one legged West Coaster in the One Day event.**

Since 1983, 16,297 men, women and teenagers have competed in the Speight's Coast to Coast and all have had a fabulous, life changing experience, part of which has been finding out that they love the wilderness experience and they love New Zealand.

The Speight's Coast to Coast is the world's premier multisport event, and is the benchmark by which every other multisport event is judged, both here in New Zealand and overseas.

3. Awards

The Speight's Coast to Coast, its officials and associated community groups have won many awards relating to the event.

The Speight's Coast to Coast won the 1990 New Zealand Tourism Award for best Special Event and The Most Outstanding Event Promotion Award at the 1991 Canterbury Sportsman of the Year.

Robin Judkins was a finalist in the 1991 New Zealand Sportsman of the Year Awards in the Best Administrator category for his organization of the Xerox Challenge.

Robin Judkins was Canterbury Sports Personality of the Year in 1993 and won the 1994 Outstanding Achievement Award from the New Zealand Events industry.

In 1999 Robin Judkins won Best Promoter, Best Event and Best Sponsorship in the Sportzhub Multisport Awards. In 2001 the Speight's Coast to Coast won best Sponsor in the Sportzhub Multisport Awards.

In 2001 Robin Judkins was a finalist in the Canterbury Sportsman of the Year Awards for Best Promotion, and in 2002 was a finalist in the Canterbury Entrepreneur of the Year Awards.

In 2006 the Speight's Coast to Coast won the Champion Canterbury Awards, winning Champion Host and the overall Supreme Award. The Speight's Coast to Coast was also a finalist in the Canterbury Conservation Awards.

In 2007 the Speight's Coast to Coast won the Canterbury Conservation Award for its Blue Duck Recovery programme in the Arthur's Pass National Park.

In 2007 the Kumara Community Trust won Best Community Trust in Westland for its annual distribution of funds (\$45,000) raised from the Kumara pre-race banquet of the Speight's Coast to Coast.

In 2005, Dale Coulter, the Operations Manager of the Speight's Coast to Coast was a finalist in the Champion Canterbury Awards, Champion Host. In 2007 he was a finalist at the NZ Association of Event Professionals, winning the Best Emerging Event category and was a finalist in the Best Marketing and Best Partnership categories.

4. Community Support

The Speight's Coast to Coast has developed over 26 years a great relationship with a wide range of community groups across the South Island and has encouraged them to participate in the Speight's Coast to Coast for their own fund raising. Each year the following groups raise over \$120,000.

Kumara Community Trust – Kumara \$45,000

Order of St John \$12,000

NZ Red Cross \$5,000

Sports Med \$2,250

Rescue and Technical Support \$2,000

River Rescue NZ \$9000

Sumner Surf Club \$500

Rover Scouts \$3,500

Middleton Grange School \$500

Moana School \$5000

Sheffield School \$10,000

Springfield School \$5,000

Oxford Lions \$3,000

Malvern Lions \$2,000

Kumara Racing Club \$13,000

Rotary \$500

Amateur Radio \$3,000

5. Media Coverage

Television Broadcast

The Speight's Coast to Coast is a unique vehicle to promote Westland, Canterbury and New Zealand.

The course offers spectacular views of the South Island and with the added interest of competitor dynamics, is a winner in viewer stakes. Television is the most powerful medium of branding and promotion and I'm proud to give the Speight's Coast to Coast the opportunity to be seen both nationally and internationally.

National TV coverage includes Sky, CTV, One News and TV3 news.

Media Releases

A series of press releases prior to the event focuses on internationals, the top ten men and women, interesting regional competitors, the Blue Duck Recovery programme and charities raising funds for community groups.

Media releases with full results are distributed widely at the end of each day during the event.

Documentary Filming

Legge Work film the Speight's Coast to Coast each year and produce a half hour and one hour television documentary for Sky TV, TV1, TV3 and Air New Zealand In-flight as well as the international market of 120 countries.

Radio

Radio coverage includes Radio Sport, Newstalk ZB and Radio NZ and the local Canterbury radio stations.

Newstalk ZB provides live interviews and crosses over the two days of the Speight's Coast to Coast including live coverage for the One-day event.

Newstalk ZB Radio Coverage of the 2007 Speight's Coast to Coast was a finalist in the 2007 Qantas Media Awards in the sport category.

Print

350 newspaper and magazine articles are published each year and up to 60 photographers and journalists attend the Speight's Coast to Coast each year.

Website

The Speight's Coast to Coast website provides live and pre-recorded video footage with results and updates on competitors progress. This has a world wide audience.

6. Tourism

The New Zealand Tourism Board and Air New Zealand have been using the Speight's Coast to Coast in their marketing and promotion of New Zealand since 1986. Print media images and video images of the event have been used in magazines, billboards, newspapers and television programmes every year in every country that the New Zealand Tourism Board targets.

The New Zealand Tourism Board, The Christchurch City Council and Development West Coast have been regular cash contributors to the production costs of the live and recorded television documentaries. Their own television commercials have been imbedded in the national and international documentaries.

7. The Future

The growth areas for the Speight's Coast to Coast are participation by women (27 percent), North Islanders (45 percent) and internationals (15 percent).

The growth areas for media coverage are the internet, international adventure travel magazines and international adventure travel television programmes.

The growth areas for social benefits are the expansion of the Blue Duck Recovery Programme, the rollout of industry "wellness" programmes for staff supported by District Health Boards and ACC and the expansion of Outdoor Education Programmes involving kayaking in the syllabus in secondary schools.

8. Central Plains Water Issues

The Central Plains Water extraction scheme will have a catastrophic effect on the Speight's Coast to Coast.

Competitors practice on the Waimakariri River from Mt White Bridge to Waimakariri Gorge Bridge from September through April inclusive, and on the lower reaches throughout the winter.

The section from Woodstock to Waimakariri Gorge Bridge is the most heavily used because it is very accessible from Christchurch and offers an easy grade two section of braided river approximately 15 kms long that can take between 45 and 90 minutes to kayak depending on river flows and skill levels. It is perfect for practice and instructing and is in constant use.

Of the 1100 applicants for the 800 places in each years Speight's Coast to Coast, over half kayak the full kayak leg at least once every year before the event, with some kayaking it over five times (APR Consultants July 2007).

North Island competitors fly or drive down and participate in Canoe and Kayak Shop courses three times a year before the event (approximately 10 paddlers with two instructors per course).

TopSport, Canoe and Kayak World and Venture Out, all Christchurch based kayak instruction and retail outlets, run courses every weekend from September through April that include the Waimakariri River Gorge through to Waimakariri River Gorge Bridge. Each course has up to 10 paddlers with two instructors per course

Forty registered and qualified kayak instructors from Whangarei to Bluff train competitors each year for the Speight's Coast to Coast and all endeavour to bring their clients to the Waimakariri River at least once before the event.

The Arawa Canoe Club runs a kayak race for 150 kayakers from Mt White bridge to Waimakariri River Gorge Bridge every December as a preliminary for the Speight's Coast to Coast. The Brass Monkey kayak races are held on the lower reaches of the Waimakariri River ("pylons" to SH1 bridge) every two weeks throughout the winter. They cater for up to 80 paddlers per race!

Fifty four percent of all entrants in the Speight's Coast to Coast are new comers. That means over 400 have to learn to kayak for the Speight's Coast to Coast each year.

There are now 52 multisport events in New Zealand that compete with or compliment the Speight's Coast to Coast. All competitors in these events have to gain a Grade 2 Kayak certificate to enter.

There are now more adult multisport events than adult triathlon events in New Zealand. Everyone wants to do the Speight's Coast to Coast. It's replaced Outward Bound as the recreational qualification on their CV.

The Woodstock to Waimakariri River Gorge Bridge section is at its most dangerous when it is a single channel rather than a braided river, which occurs at lower flow levels. All the water is concentrated against the south bank or "true right" of the river. When this occurs, the kayakers are forced up against the willow trees by the current.

Willow trees and man made obstacles are the most dangerous features that kayakers face on a river.

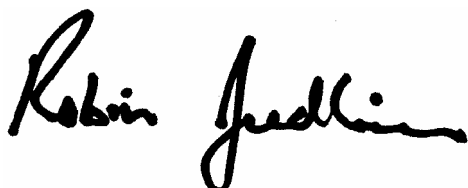
Central Plains Water plans for water extraction on that section of the river involve the creation of groynes, intake portals and the diversion of river flow by moving gravel with machinery to the true right of the river. Central Plains Water have stated that kayakers only need 10cm of water to paddle. This is ridiculous! Kayakers would be forced to portage any water that was only 10cm deep. They need half a meter to manouver safely in.

Central Plains Water plans for water extraction have changed so much and so often that I am now unable to determine what exactly they will do if their permit is approved.

It is very difficult to argue against something so deliberately ill-defined.

Finally I wish to express my concern at this blatant misuse of the Public Works Act. This Act was brought into being by Parliament for the Public Good, not for Private Greed.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Judkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robin Judkins