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RUNNERS AND BIKERS URGED TO KEEP SAFE AND FOLLOW THE OUTDOOR SAFETY CODE

The New Zealand Mountain Safety Council is urging anyone going into the great outdoors to use the Outdoor Safety Code, following an increase in the number of track runners and mountain bikers in remote areas requiring an emergency response by Search and Rescue.

“Track running and mountain biking are becoming increasingly popular in remote regions. People going into these regions need to apply the Outdoor Safety Code to their pursuits,” said Mountain Safety Council Bushcraft Programme Manager Chris Owens.

“The hazards are the same whether you are running, tramping or biking, so you need to take adequate care and be prepared. That way you can discover and enjoy the outdoors safely.”

This morning Search and Rescue located a missing track runner in the Lake Rotoiti area who had become disorientated during his run. As the light faded, he found he was well away from his starting point on the lakeshore and had to spend a cold night out waiting for the sun to rise. At daylight he back-tracked his route, and was shortly seen by the rescue helicopter.

Mr Sherp Tucker, Assistant Search and Rescue Co-coordinator for Nelson said that Search and Rescue are seeing more and more track runners and mountain bikers in their area. These users are now adding to the figures of rescues attended to by local Search and Rescue teams.

The Outdoor Safety Code

- **Plan your trip.** Seek local knowledge; plan the route you will take and the amount of time you can reasonably expect it to take.
- **Tell someone.** Tell someone your plans and leave a date for when to raise the alarm if you haven't returned. Complete an intentions form and leave it with someone you trust.
- **Be aware of the weather.** New Zealand's weather can be highly unpredictable. Check the forecast and expect weather changes.

- **Know your limits.** Challenge yourself within your physical limits and experience.
- **Take sufficient supplies.** Make sure you have enough food, equipment and emergency rations for the worst case scenario. Take an appropriate means of communication.

For further information about safety in the outdoors, courses and training, information on intentions forms or communication devices, please visit www.mountainsafety.org.nz

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ABOUT THE NEW ZEALAND MOUNTAIN SAFETY COUNCIL

The New Zealand Mountain Safety Council was formed in 1965 in response to the increasing number of mountain, bush and firearms fatalities. Today, NZMSC is a national organisation responsible for safety in land based outdoor activities. We facilitate the setting of standards, offer training, distribute resources, lead public awareness campaigns and foster positive support in the community so that more people can discover and enjoy New Zealand's outdoors safely.

www.mountainsafety.org.nz