

**30 December 2011**

## **MOUNTAIN SAFETY COUNCIL URGES CAUTION IN THE OUTDOORS AS HEAVY RAIN FALLS**

As heavy rain falls in parts of the country, the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council strongly recommends that trampers, hunters and other back country enthusiasts carefully consider their choices before venturing into the outdoors.

Mountain Safety Council Chief Executive, Darryl Carpenter, says the continued heavy rain and flooding could make outdoor conditions treacherous.

“In light of the recent tragedies where trampers have died in river crossing situations, we strongly recommend people reconsider any planned trip into the outdoors, especially in the worst affected areas, until weather conditions have improved.

“The largest amounts of rain over the next few days are expected about Taranaki, the central North Island high country around the Tongariro National Park and in Bay of Plenty.

“Significant heavy rain has already fallen in the Nelson region and northern Marlborough, and further heavy rain expected again today. Significant rain is also expected in Wellington and Kapiti today.

“We are particularly concerned about people attempting to cross swollen streams and rivers. Anyone going into the outdoors should keep up to date with the latest forecasts and warnings and watch for rising or already swollen streams and rivers.

“You should never cross a flooded or fast-flowing river or stream. If in doubt, stay out. If you are already out, then the best plan when faced with poor or deteriorating conditions, or a swollen stream or river, is to wait it out until the weather or the water level improves.

“Make sure you take extra food, a communications device such as mountain radio or personal locator beacon and other equipment appropriate to the terrain and conditions so you are able to wait until river crossing is safe,” said Mr Carpenter.

Before heading out outdoors the Mountain Safety Council advises everyone to follow the 5 simple rules of The Outdoor Safety Code.

## The New Zealand Outdoor Safety Code

### 1. Plan your trip thoroughly

Seek local knowledge and plan the route you will take and the amount of time you can reasonably expect it to take.

### 2. Tell someone

Tell someone your plans via the Outdoors Intentions process and leave a date and time for when to raise the alarm if you haven't returned.

### 3. Be aware of the weather

New Zealand's weather can be highly unpredictable. Check the forecast and expect weather changes. Check track and hut conditions. Beware of rivers – if in doubt STAY OUT.

### 4. Know your limits

Challenge yourself within your physical limits and experience.

### 5. Take sufficient supplies

For more information please visit [www.mountainsafety.org.nz](http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz) or for more tips and advice or to complete your Outdoors Intentions please visit [www.adventuresmart.org.nz](http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz)

## Ends 300 words

*Sent by Gary Johnson on behalf of NZ Mountain Safety Council*

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### Notes to Editor:

Download a print quality copy of the Outdoor Safety Code from [www.adventuresmart.org.nz/media](http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz/media) or use the full text below.

### For further information regarding this media release or to arrange an interview please contact:

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### About the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council

The New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (NZMSC) 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](http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz)  
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