

# Lower Clarence River/Waiau-toa navigation safety hazards – SPUTNIKS – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Sputniks are large concrete blocks with protruding steel beams that historically were used on rivers for bank protection. Many still exist on some rivers, including several in the lower Clarence/Waiau-toa. These are mostly in the vicinity of, and downstream from, the SH1 bridge. Environment Canterbury is presently working with NZTA, KiwiRail, and local boating groups to have these removed as they present a hazard for boats on the river. This removal is scheduled to be undertaken early this year (2015).

In the meantime, river users are urged to exercise caution in this area, particularly the section shown on the location photo below which has a large number of sputniks, railway iron, steel cables and other debris onto which the river flows directly. This site (see photos below) can easily be seen from upstream in good time to allow rafters or kayakers to exit the river above it to inspect the site and portage if required. Jet boaters are advised to not transit this braid as some sputniks exist below water level and cannot be easily seen— either find an alternate braid or exit the river above the hazard. For further information contact [harbourmaster@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:harbourmaster@ecan.govt.nz)



