

Lower Waitaki River Management Strategy



Prepared for:

The Lower Waitaki River
Management Society

March 2009



Introduction

In June 2004, a meeting at Glenavy attended by over 100 people, resolved that a Management Strategy was needed for the Lower Waitaki River, from the Waitaki Dam to the sea.

In a series of meetings the community identified the issues, listened to presentations from experts in a range of fields, and interested groups and individuals in the community who were invited to put forward their viewpoints, and wishes for the river.

Presentations were made as follows:

Land Tenure, Resource Consents, River Management, Weed Control Environment Canterbury	Irrigation North Otago Fraser McKenzie
Waitaki River Access Group & Vanished World Dr Helen Brookes	Access Issues John Acland
Hydro Management Meridian Energy	Water Use in the Lower Waitaki Dugald MacTavish
Tangata Whenua Anne Te Maiharoa-Dodds	Riverbed Nesting Birds Dr Ken Hughey, Lincoln University
Waitaki River Access Group Bruce Parker	South Canterbury Fish and Game Mark Webb
Public Water Usage Waitaki & Waimate District Councils	Interactions between the Flow Regime, Riparian Vegetation and Geomorphology Bronwyn Lowe
River Morphology Tim Davies, University of Canterbury	NZ Salmon Anglers Association Tim Ellis
Conservation Values and Land Management Department of Conservation	Ecology of the Lower Waitaki Kingett Mitchell
Irrigation Companies Chris Dennison & Robin Murphy	River Rating District Sid Hurst
Hut Holders Viewpoint Bruce Stringer	Jet Boating New Zealand Alan King
Adjacent Landowners Sandy Cameron & Clare Easton	Waimate Rod and Gun Club Bob Fenwick

Early in 2005, a Steering Committee was elected, comprising:

- irrigated farmers representatives
- landowners adjoining the river representatives
- environmental groups representatives
- recreational groups representatives
- community representatives

The committee meets regularly and has formed an Incorporated Society to manage and implement the strategy. The strategy was ratified in 2006, and was revised in 2008 in order to take account of new information and insights.



The Mission Statement is the guiding principle.
All the goals, objectives and actions must be in accordance with the mission statement.

The projects undertaken each year will be decided by the Society, taking into account their importance and the resources available.

Mission Statement

“To protect and enhance, in a sustainable way, the Lower Waitaki River System”

Goal 1

The community and Statutory Authorities work together to prepare, monitor, update and implement a management strategy for the Lower Waitaki River which integrates the environmental, social, economic and cultural values of the community.

Objectives

1. Community spirit and involvement fostered by consultation and communication.
2. Secure resources and finances to implement strategy.
3. Foster recognition of historical and cultural values.
4. Build and maintain strong relationships with all stakeholders.
5. Advocate for the sustainable allocation of water for irrigation, stock, domestic and fire-fighting uses.
6. Ongoing monitoring and revision of strategy.
7. Advocate for statutory mechanisms to achieve strategy outcomes as necessary.
8. Collate scientific data, and initiate research as required to provide a sound scientific basis for the Society's advocacy.
9. Develop and maintain a partnership with mana whenua.



Goal 2

To protect and enhance the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

Objectives

10. Maintain the “wild river” values: big water, open space and isolation.
11. Advocate for variable flow regime that achieves a sustainable braided river system and associated values.
12. Protect and enhance wildlife populations, diversity and habitats, especially of rare and endangered species.
13. Protect and enhance indigenous vegetation, particularly where rare species are involved.
14. Maintain and protect aquatic habitat for both native and introduced fish.
15. Protect spring fed tributaries and wetlands in the river system.
16. Ensure river control works are environmentally sensitive, and protect habitat, wildlife and recreation values.
17. Encourage better management towards enhancing water quality and habitat in the main stem, tributaries and hydraulically connected groundwater.



Goal 3

To provide for safe and balanced recreation.

Objectives

18. Negotiate pedestrian access to river for fishing/hunting with adjoining landowners at appropriate points.
19. Negotiate vehicle access for recreational and boat launching sites with adjoining landowners that protects environmental and natural values, and human safety.
20. Recreational users to be informed of access, picnic sites, and conditions of access.
21. Facilitate the development of recreation and picnic areas with appropriate facilities.
22. Minimise impacts of recreation/tourism use on natural and environmental values.



Photos courtesy of Bruce Parker

Action List

Goal 1

The community and the Statutory Authorities work together to prepare, monitor, update and implement a management strategy for the Lower Waitaki River which integrates the environmental, social, economic and cultural values of the community.

Objective 1

Community spirit and involvement fostered by consultation and communication

Performance measures

Number of events/releases made, compliments/complaints received by Society

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
1	All plan actions are accompanied by consultation with affected parties & possible funders	Society	High	Ongoing	Voluntary work
2	Public or Society meetings held	Society, ECan	High	Minimum 2/year	ECan
3	Newsletters/ press releases made regularly	Society	High	Ongoing	ECan
4	Information-sharing between user groups & Society	Society. Organised feedback to ensure plan objectives are being met	Med/High	1 meeting pa.	ECan

Objective 2

Secure resources and finances to implement strategy

Performance measure

High priority projects progress on schedule

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
5	Prepare cost estimates and priorities for actions	Society	High	As required.	Voluntary/ECan
6	Prepare propositions, identify and make applications to potential funding organisations/businesses for high priority projects	Society	High	Ongoing	Voluntary/ECan

Objective 3:

Foster recognition of historical and cultural values

Performance measure

Role identified

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
7	Identify values, assess current programmes, and identify role that Society should play	Society, in conjunction with other groups/organisations already active	High/ Medium	30/6/09	Voluntary work
8	Implement actions identified	Society	High/ Medium	Ongoing	Voluntary work

Objective 4

Build and maintain strong relationships with all stakeholders

Performance measure

Key stakeholders understand aims & functions of Society, and can identify at least 1 Society Committee member

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Preliminary Estimated Cost/ funding source
9	Prepare and publicise a simple descriptive statement of the Society and its aims	Society. To inform stakeholders, potential funders, and public	High	30/6/08	Voluntary
10	Keep list of key stakeholders, and ensure personal contact is established and maintained by Society members	Personal contact is the foundation of good relationships	High	Ongoing	Voluntary

Objective 5

Advocate for the sustainable allocation of water for irrigation, stock, domestic and fire-fighting uses

Performance measure

Applicants consult Society regarding consent applications

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
11	Ensure Society is aware of all proposals and applications for water abstractions	Society must be clearly identified as an interested party by all applicants	High	Ongoing	Voluntary

Objective 6

Ongoing monitoring and revision of strategy

Performance measure

Review/monitoring undertaken and recorded in minutes

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
12	Review plan annually, or more often if required, at Society Committee meeting	Society Committee	High	On-going	Voluntary
13	Monitor performance measures for each project under action	Society Committee	High	Ongoing	Voluntary

Objective 7

Advocate for statutory mechanisms to achieve strategy outcomes as necessary

Performance measure:

Enforcement enabled where plan objectives are not being met using education & persuasion

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
14	Identify linkages of plan with statutory documents e.g. Acts of Parliament, statutory plans, by-laws	Society Committee	High	Ongoing	Voluntary/ECan

15	Identify statutory mechanisms essential to achieve outcomes, and advocate that the appropriate authority adopts the mechanism	Society Committee. Co-operation, education and peer pressure are often insufficient to persuade people to change behaviour, and legal force is required	Med	As required	Voluntary
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Objective 8

Collate scientific data, and initiate research as required to provide a sound scientific basis for the Society's advocacy

Performance measure

Society has reference library

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
16	Collate scientific data, identify information gaps and initiate research and peer reviews as required	Society Committee	High	Collate data as received	Voluntary

Objective 9

Develop and maintain a partnership with mana whenua

Performance measure

Members of local runanga informed and involved in Society activities

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
17	Encourage trustboards and runanga to send representatives to meetings, consult and liaise with all local runanga	Society	High	Ongoing	Voluntary



Photo courtesy of Jacqui Foley

Goal 2:

To protect and enhance the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations

Objective 10

Maintain the “wild river” values: big water, open space and isolation

Performance measures

River flows maintained, weeds and trees controlled; berms area retained, minimal development inside stop banks

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
18	Advocate against abstractions over those currently permitted under the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Plan	Society Committee	High	Ongoing	Fund by joining with organisations with similar objectives.
19	Advocate for the preparation of a tree and scrub weed control programme to maintain clear islands and open space	Society Committee, in conjunction with River Rating District/ECan/DOC	High	Review annually	ECan and project manager
20	Encourage a coordinated and appropriate weed control programme for specific projects	Joint responsibility as above	High	Review annually	As required
21	Identify mechanisms to prevent further farm encroachment on the river	Society Committee/ECan/ District Councils/DOC Encroachment by adjoining landowners is ongoing	High	30/6/09	Society Councils

Objective 11

Advocate for variable flow regime that achieves a sustainable braided river system and associated values

Performance measures

Report on recommended flow regime completed, submissions made as appropriate

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
22	Prepare a report on recommended flow regimes that seek to maintain the natural values of river, and coastline	Society Committee, with joint venture partners e.g. Universities, NIWA, ECan	High	30/12/09	Unknown
23	Advocate implementation of report	Society Committee and Community	High	30/12/09	Voluntary

Objective 12:

Protect and enhance wildlife populations, diversity and habitats, especially rare and endangered species

Performance measures

Wildlife populations and diversity maintained

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
24	Identify key bird nesting, resting and feeding areas, and requirements for each species	Society Committee, in association with DOC, Forest & Bird, NZ Ornithological Society, Universities	Medium	30/6/10	Voluntary and schools
25	Prepare and implement strategy to protect bird life	Society Committee	Medium	30/6/11	Voluntary

26	Identify other wildlife and habitat requiring protection; prepare and implement strategy	Society Committee. e.g. Kurow turf land contains rare fauna.	Medium	30/6/11	Ecologist
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Objective 13

Protect and enhance indigenous vegetation, particularly where rare species are involved

Performance measure

Rare species identified, protection and enhancement programmes initiated at selected sites

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
27	Identify sites where protection and enhancement is required, identify measures needed, likely costs and prioritise	Society/DOC e.g. Kurow turf land contains rare flora and fauna	Low	Ongoing	DOC and ecologists
28	Initiate programmes at priority sites	Society/Community Groups	Low	Following completion of 27	Annual budget

Objective 14

Maintain and protect aquatic habitat for both native and introduced fish

Performance measures

Fish counts are maintained

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
29	Salmonid spawning areas are identified and protected	Society/Fish & Game/Rod and Gun Clubs/NZ Salmon Anglers	Medium	Ongoing	Society/Fish & Game/ECan/Meridian/NIWA
30	Whitebait spawning areas are identified and protected	Society/ECan/DOC/Runanga and Trust Boards	Medium	Ongoing	ECan/DOC/Meridian/NIWA
31	Native fish habitat is identified and protected	Society/DOC/ECan/Runanga and Trust Boards	Medium	Ongoing	Trust/DOC/ECan/Meridian/NIWA

Objective 15

Protect spring fed tributaries and wetlands in the river system

Performance measure

Flows, habitat, and biodiversity maintained in identified streams & wetlands

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
32	Identify spring-fed streams and wetlands in the river system	Society/DOC/ECan River Engineers/Adjoining Landowners	Med/high	30/6/08	Voluntary labour/Meridian Scientists
33	Identify actions required, costings and priority	Society, ECan Ecologist/DOC/ECan Engineers	Med/high	30/6/09	ECan/DOC/Society
34	Undertake actions identified above	Society	Med/High	1/6/10 ongoing	Environmental Organisations - project by project

Objective 16

Ensure river control works are environmentally sensitive, and protect habitat, wildlife and recreation values

Performance measured

Procedures developed and implemented

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
35	Develop management procedures for each facet of river control works in association with ecologists, ornithologists, and recreational users	Environment Canterbury River Engineering Section/ River Rating District	Medium	30/6/09	ECan/ River Rating District
36	Implement Procedures	ECan	Medium	1/6/09	ECan

Objective 17:

Encourage better management towards enhancing water quality and habitat, in the main stem, tributaries and hydraulically connected groundwater

Performance measure

Water quality and ecological monitoring

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
37	Ensure that suitable monitoring programmes are in place	Society/ECan/ORC	High	Ongoing	ECan
38	Develop and recommend programmes to remedy problems identified	Society/ECan/ORC	High	Ongoing	ECan
39	Advocate for responsible land management practice and accountability	Fonterra/Federated farmers/ TLA's/DOC/LINZ/ECan	High	Ongoing	Fonterra/ Federated Farmers/TLA's, DOC/LINZ/ ECan



Goal 3:

To provide for safe and balanced recreation.

Objective 18

Negotiate pedestrian access to river for fishing/hunting with adjoining landowners at appropriate points

Performance Measure

Pedestrian access satisfactory to landowners and users negotiated

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
40	Identify access points, contact adjoining landowners, and negotiate site-specific conditions and/or suitability of uses	Society. Access options could include: none, owners permission, key holders only, limited to times of year, etc	High	30/6/08	Voluntary
41	Discuss with user groups and representatives to ensure their requirements are met as far as possible	Society	High	30/6/08	Voluntary

Objective 19:

Negotiate vehicle access for recreational and boat launching sites with adjoining landowners that protects environmental and natural values, and human safety

Performance Measure:

Vehicle access satisfactory to landowners & users that minimises vehicle impact and protects human safety

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
42	Identify access points, contact adjoining landowners, and negotiate site-specific conditions and/or suitability of uses	Society. Access may be none, owners permission, key holders only, limited to times of year, etc	High	30/6/08	Society
43	Discuss with user groups and representatives to ensure their requirements are met as far as possible	Society	High	30/6/08	Society
44	Identify maintenance requirements and negotiate work required as necessary	Society, District Councils, DoC, Meridian Energy, LINZ, User Groups etc	High	Ongoing	Society



Photo courtesy of Bruce Parker

Objective 20

Recreational users to be informed of access, picnic sites, and conditions of access.

Performance measure

Access point's signposted, information sheet available

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
45	Upgrade access points to suitable standard	This will depend on site	Med/High	As required	District Councils, landowners, & community
46	Access points to be appropriately sign posted so that local knowledge is not necessary to find them	Society, Fish & Game, District Councils	High	Ongoing	Councils/Fish and Game
47	Information Sheet with Access points, recreation areas, and code of conduct to be compiled and available to visitors and locals	Society, District Council, Information Centres	High	1/10/08	Information Centres External Funding

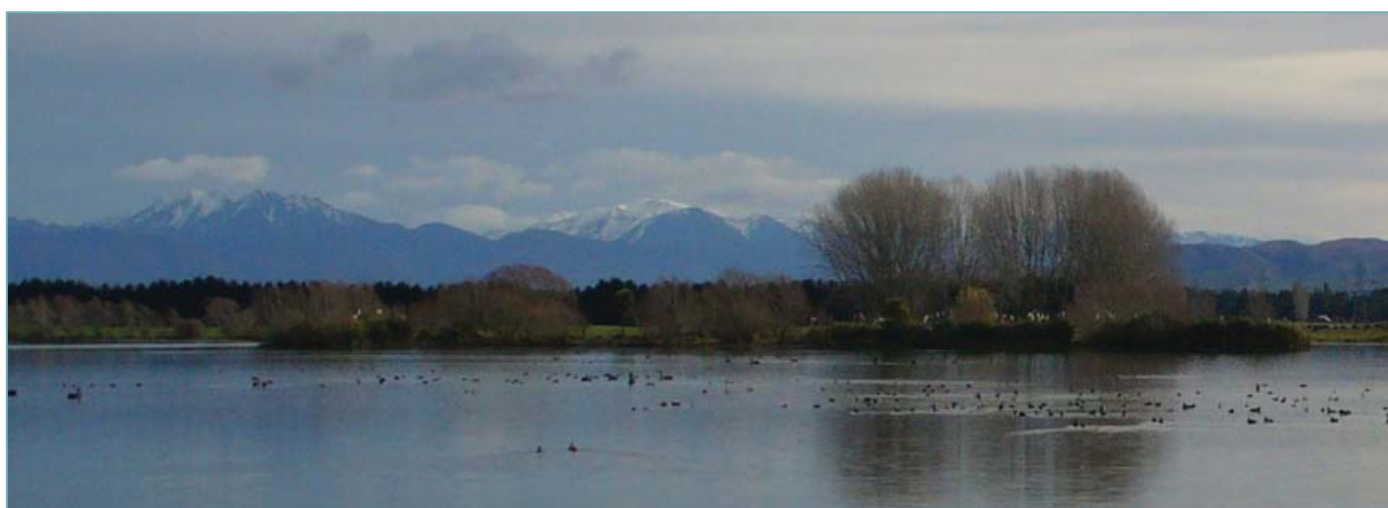
Objective 21

Facilitate the development of recreation and picnic areas with appropriate facilities

Performance measure

Recreation needs of locals and visitors are met

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
48	Identify sites suitable for development, predicted usage, facilities required, and likely management needs	Society, District Councils, Community	High	30/6/08	Society, Voluntary
49	Prepare development plans, costings, timelines and priorities, and explore funding options	Society, Community, District Councils	High	As required	Society, Councils
50	Encourage the development of identified sites	Society, District Councils, Service Clubs, Community Groups, DoC, Irrigation Companies etc	High	Ongoing	District Councils, Community (Potential high costs)



Objective 22

Minimise impacts of recreation/tourism use on natural and environmental values.

Performance measure

Development has minimal intrusion, motor vehicle use controlled, no litter, and existing values are maintained

No.	Action	Explanation/ Who is responsible.	Priority	Timeline	Possible funding and labour source
51	Identify areas where development is inappropriate, and explore protection mechanisms	Society Committee	High	30/6/09, then as required	Voluntary
52	Initiate protection of any areas identified in (50)	Society Committee, Landowners, District Councils, DOC	High	Ongoing	Legal, fencing, signs etc
53	Develop motor vehicle access policy in conjunction with Access Points	Society Committee, District Councils, Police, Landowners. Increasing use of 4WD,s ATV's, trail bikes in riverbed areas is a significant problem in other areas.	Med	30/6/09, then as required	Voluntary
54	Implement motor vehicle policy	Society Committee, District Councils, Police, Landowners	High	30/6/09, then as required	Signs, access gates, keys



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