

**UNDER**

The Resource Management Act 1991

**IN THE MATTER OF**

Applications for resource consent by various applicants to take and use water from the Lower Waitaki River Catchment

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

Submissions by **Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, Te Rūnanga o Waihao and Te Rūnanga o Moeraki**

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF TE WERA EDWIN KING**

**Whakapapa**

1. Tribal connections and traditions with Aoraki and Waitaki River and tributaries

**Roles and responsibilities**

2. Upoko Rūnanga Waihao
3. Community Youth Mental Health Support Work

**Relationships with the Waitaki and its Rivers**

4. The Waitaki catchment is an intrinsic part of Ngāi Tahu identity. The numerous trails throughout the Waitaki catchment link settlements on the coast with our resources inland, particularly mahinga kai, whakapapa and our spiritual links to the land.
5. I know my whanaunga have shared their knowledge and experience of the Waitaki with you. I want to talk about the Hakataramea Valley, its significance to our tupuna and how it is today. I then want to talk about the

rangatahi or youth that I work with and how restoring their connections with the whenua is such an important factor in the mental and physical well being of our people, particularly the rangatahi.

6. Nā te hiahia kia titiro, a, ka kite ai tātou te mutunga  
*You must understand the beginning if you wish to see the end.*
  
7. Hakataramea Valley was known for its speargrass or Spaniard and a large number of trails cross through this region. Our people would walk into this valley from Te Tara o Te Kaumira (Hunter Hills) or from Temuka following the Opihi River and then Tengawai onto the Manahuna (Mackenzie Pass) down into Te Pakihi o Manahuna to collect the taramea. Ara (trails) would have led to Aoraki and Takapo or south to Omarama or the Waitaki.
  
8. The plant was heated and the oil that resulted was collected into containers/bags made from the skin of the Whēkau (Laughing Owl) to be worn around the neck or rubbed onto the skin when hunting. Whēkau is also said to have been eaten in large quantities in areas such as the Hakataramea Valley where large populations remained.
  
9. Wai repo (wetlands) were once abundant throughout this area. These areas would have formerly been used for fishing tuna (*eels*), kokopu (*galaxias*), Koura (freshwater crayfish), Waikakahi (*freshwater mussel*) and birding e.g. Putakitaki (*Paradise duck*). Water birds captured while nesting and moulting in these areas also provided a source of protein and feathers for clothing. Weka were also relied on.
  
10. Most of the wetlands have now been drained and converted to pasture. Ngāi Tahu were heavily reliant on the plant, bird and fish life these areas provided but have increasingly lost the basis of a traditional way of life through the loss of many species and the depletion of others as a result of drainage, pasture and stock grazing.

11. Raupō is the construction material for mokihi; it was also used for the walls of the whata, medicinally and as a food source. Raupō root (Koareare) was beaten and baked, and a type of cake was made from the raupō pollen (pukapuka). Raupō taken from this area would have built the mokihi to cross the Hakataramea River or float preserved kai down the Waitaki River for the wintertime.

12. Raupō also provides an important habitat for juvenile fish, birds and invertebrates within the waterways, ponds and wetlands, while holding the moisture during dry times.

13. The survival of our tūpuna was based on a thorough knowledge of the use of native plants. Mountain plants such as Taramea, Tikumu, tussock, Tane kaha and Hall's Totara were gathered at different times of the year for a wide range of uses.

### **My Experiences Working With Rangatahi**

14. Retaining our relationships with the whenua and the awa is an important factor in the mental and physical well being of our people. We are continually trying to restore and re-establish our relationships with the whenua, awa and mauka that we lost when we were forced off the land 150 years ago.

15. Mahinga Kai

16. Hīkoi

17. Ngāi Tahu

### **Concerns for the Hakataramea, Maerewhenua and other Rivers**

18. Kaitiaki are increasingly unable to sustain mauri, wairua and mana of the rivers. We are increasingly unable to carry out our kaitiaki role – part of

which is to come to hearings like this to put forward our concerns. We continue to participate in these resource management processes but we are continually disappointed in the outcomes. For instance, we assisted with the development of the Water Allocation Plan when the Waitaki minimum flow of 150m<sup>3</sup>/s figure was set. We thought this set a bottom line and would provide certainty– but yet here we are again today, and at the previous HDI and the NBTC hearings, arguing the same things - while it is proposed the bottom line is reduced by a third (to 100m<sup>3</sup>/s).

19. The Hakataramea and the Maerewhenua also had these minimum flows set – and they too are under further pressure to take their water

20. It seems that many past decisions have been made without enough information about the effects of the activities. It seems that many past decisions have also been made without enough accurate information. An ECan report on water quality in the Hakataramea River Catchment (ECan No U05/13) says that landowners were asked to identify irrigation areas on maps to help clarify actual land use practices. The area they drew on the maps was 25% more than the consented area. This does nothing to reduce my concerns with the increasing demands for water for irrigation.

### **Responsibilities to our mokopuna**

21. We have responsibilities to ensure that our mokopuna can return to the Waitaki, the Hakataramea and other rivers to catch tuna, collect raupō and Taramea and follow the trails of our tupuna. That is why we are here today.

22. Streams such as Station Stream do not have permanent summer flows to the main stem of the Hakataramea River now. Taking more water from this stream will further reduce this flow and the connection between these waterways will be lost. This will impact on the mauri of the river and our mahinga kai.

23. There is also talk about 'efficient use' of water although it seems this efficiency relates to details of how the water is used in the process of irrigation rather than considering whether it is an efficient use of water to irrigate large areas of a valley such as the Hakataramea in the first place.

24. The Resource Management Act and the Waitaki Water Allocation Plan say they will provide for and enhance our values, the mauri of our rivers and our mahinga kai. We await your decision as to how this will be done in the place of Aoraki, our maunga atua.

**Kua tawhiti kē te haereka, kia kore e haere tonu.  
He tino nui rawa āu mahi, kia kore e mahi nui tonu.**  
*We have come too far, not to go further.  
We have done too much, not to do more.*