

Before the Canterbury Regional Council

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER Applications by various applicants for resource consents to authorise various diversions, takes, discharges, dams and uses of water, excavation and disturbance of river bed and all other associated activities within the Upper Waitaki River Catchment.

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**Presentation in support of the submission and in opposition to intensification of the  
Upper Waitaki Catchment**

Ines Stäger – representing Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board

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Date: 09 December 2009

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## **Introduction**

1. My name is Ines Stäger, I am representing the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board and am presenting a statement in support of the submission to resource consent applications as listed in the submission documents.
2. I have been a Conservation Board member for 6 years, and have been the convenor of land and concession sub committees.
3. The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board (CACB, referred to as 'the Board'), Is an independent statutory body appointed by the Minister of Conservation. The Board advises on the Department of Conservation's policy and activities at a regional level.
4. The Board represents the community interest in the work of the Department of Conservation. The board's area of concern has the same boundaries as the Canterbury Conservancy.
5. The function of the Board is set out in Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 and in the National Parks, Reserves and Walkways Acts. The Board focuses on planning and strategic direction, not the day-to-day operational details of the Department's work.

A major responsibility for the Board is overseeing the Conservation Management Strategy for its region. A Conservation Management Strategy is a 10-year plan for managing and protecting the natural and historic features and wildlife of the region. Under Conservation Act Section 6N (2)a the Boards is to advocate its interest at any public forum or at any statutory planning process.

As per Sections 61(2)(a)(i) and 66(2)(c)(i) Regional Councils shall have regard to this Strategy.

## **Submission**

6. CACB submitted to the Upper Waitaki resource consent applications in September 2007, specifically consent application numbers listed in the submission. The Board further submitted in November 2008. The Board has asked to speak on the submission at the hearing and was represented at the pre-hearing meeting in Twizel.

7. The Board considered the applications inappropriate given the potential impact from the proposed activities in relation to section **6. Matters of national importance**; part II of the Resource Management Act 1991 in particular:
- 6(a) the preservation of natural character of wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the development of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development:
  - 6(b) the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate use and development:
  - 6(c) the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna:
8. The Board considers that Part II Matters, particularly extensive and intensive irrigation proposals on landscapes with valued naturalness to be inappropriate. Many of the effects of concern cannot be adequately addressed by mere mitigation measures.
9. The Mackenzie Basin has been identified as an Outstanding Natural Area in the Canterbury Regional Council Landscape Study. It has been widely recognised and is a major tourist attraction and provides a magnificent foreground and context to the Aoraki Mt Cook National Park and various Conservation Areas through the Basin.

### **Conservation Management Strategy**

10. The Canterbury CMS is a statutory requirement of the Conservation Act 1987. The Canterbury CMS implements general policies and established objectives for the integrated management of natural and historic resources, including any species, managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) under the:
- Conservation Act 1987
  - Wildlife Act 1953
  - Marine Reserves Act 1977
  - Wild Animal Control Act 1977
  - Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978
  - National Parks Act 1980
  - NZ Walkways Act 1990
  - and for recreation, tourism and other conservation purposes.

11. The Canterbury CMS, a public document, has undergone extensive public consultation. The document was scrutinized by the New Zealand Conservation Authority to ensure it met national standards and subsequently it has been approved by the Minister of Conservation.

12. Canterbury Conservancy is in the process of reviewing the current CMS and the Board has been involved in this process. Initial public consultation has taken place, however nationwide the CMS review process is currently on hold.

### **CMS - Waitaki Place Unit**

13. The Waitaki is the second largest place unit within the Canterbury Conservancy (after the Canterbury Plains). It follows the Conservancy boundaries of the Hawkdun and Kakanui Ranges in the south, and extends along the main divide to the Te Kahui Kaupeka Conservation Park (Two Thumb Range).

14. The Waitaki landscape is described in the CMS as a vast, open landscape that exhibits a distinctive tussock grassland character. This landscape character is outstanding as a whole. It attracts high numbers of visitors to the area and is sensitive to inappropriate development. 'Landscape Protection' has been identified as one of the key priorities for the Waitaki Place Unit.

It further states that:

- exotic tree planting, wilding tree spread and tracking require careful management.
- Development needs to ensure that the wider landscape values are protected;
- and that the character of major travel routes are maintained

15. The **Objective** of the CMS is to identify, maintain and seek to enhance the natural landscapes and natural landscape values of the Waitaki unit.

16. The CMS suggests implementation strategies to protect, maintain and enhance the heritage landscape and heritage landscape values of the unit., through appropriate

planning methods. To prevent land use change from having adverse effects on landscapes, the provision of advice on land management methods is also proposed.

### **Related issues**

17. Due to the importance placed on this area, the Board has submitted on other issues in the Upper Waitaki, such as:

- Waitaki Water Allocation
- Waitaki District Council PROPOSED VARIATION NUMBER 2 & 3 AND PLAN CHANGE NUMBER 2 on Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Mackenzie District Council Variation 13
- Resource consent applications in the Mackenzie area

### **Technical evidence**

18. CACB adopts the technical evidence of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society, Ms Cameron, and also Ms Maturin's statement to the hearing committee on 7 December.

19. CACB adopts the technical evidence presented by Central South Island Fish & Game

20. CACB adopts evidence presented by expert witnesses for the Mackenzie Guardians Inc., Ms Walker, Ms Steven and Ms Lucas.

21. The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board asks the hearing panel to consider the evidence and the Board submission regarding inappropriate effects in reaching their decision