

My name is Rawiri Manawatu from Kaikōura, and I am seeking appointment as Deputy Kaiwhakahaere.

My commitment to our people comes from a lifetime of connection to my hapū, marae, and iwi. Growing up on Takahanga Marae, I was surrounded by leaders who worked tirelessly to strengthen Ngāi Tahu and create opportunities for future generations. Their dedication taught me that leadership is not about title or recognition, but about service, responsibility, accountability, and commitment to something greater than ourselves.

For more than 15 years, I have served my hapū and rūnanga in various leadership roles, and for the past four years I have represented our people at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Throughout this journey, I have been guided by manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, humility, respect, integrity, and accountability. These values shape every decision I make and every conversation I have on behalf of our people.

At the centre of my leadership is a simple belief: our people must always come first. I think of our kaumātua who carry the wisdom of those before us, our rangatahi finding their place in the world, and our tamariki and mokopuna who will inherit the outcomes of our decisions. As a father and grandfather to five mokopuna, this responsibility is deeply personal. I want future generations to be proud of who they are, connected to their identity, and supported to achieve their aspirations.

The Deputy Kaiwhakahaere role requires someone who can bring people together, build trust, strengthen relationships, and support sound decision-making. It requires leadership that values collaboration, shared purpose, and long-term outcomes for our whānau and Papatipu.

If appointed, I will focus on three priorities:

Strengthening Relationships

Building stronger connections between Te Rūnanga, Papatipu, and tribal members through open communication, trust, and engagement.

Supporting Whānau Success

Advocating for opportunities in education, employment, housing, cultural development, environmental stewardship, and economic participation, with wellbeing at the heart of success.

Protecting Our Legacy

Honouring the legacy we have inherited while creating opportunities that strengthen our culture, protect our environment, and secure the future of Ngāi Tahu.

I am not seeking this role for personal recognition. I am seeking it because I believe I can contribute to the continued success of our iwi. Together, we can build a strong, united, and thriving Ngāi Tahu that our mokopuna will be proud to inherit. I would be honoured to have your support.

Nāku noa, nā

Rawiri Manawatu