

# **Cultural Values Report**

**prepared by Sophie McGregor and Cathy Begley on behalf  
of Te Runanga o Kaikoura in response to the Awatere  
Riverbed Activity Guidelines Document**



Awatere, Taupae o Uenuku  
*Te Pōhā o Tohu Raumati, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura Environmental Management Plan, 2005*



## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper outlines the cultural significance of the Awatere River Catchment and its surrounds to Ngāi Tahu. It also outlines how the activities being proposed could impact upon the cultural values and provides some recommendations as to how the activities could be undertaken to ensure that any impacts upon cultural values are avoided or mitigated.

The Ngāi Tahu northern boundary outlines the boundary of Ngāi Tahu's takiwā as described in Section 5 of the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996, being:

All the lands, islands and coasts of Te Waipounamu south of Te Parinui o Whiti (White Bluffs) on the East Coast and Te Rae o Kahurangi (Kahurangi Point) on the West Coast.

Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura is the administrative and legal body of Ngāti Kurī, a hapū of Ngāi Tahu who hold manawhenua over Kaikōura. The Ngāti Kurī takiwā extends from Parinui o White in the north, to the Hurunui River in the south, to the main divide.

## **CULTURAL VALES**

The South Island inland interior is fundamental to what it means to be Ngāi Tahu. Before the time of European settlement, Ngāi Tahu moved around nearly the whole of Te Waipounamu hunting and gathering the island's resources. Their movements were according to the seasons - following the lifecycles of the animals and plants. The inland high country was a fundamental element of the Ngāi Tahu systematic seasonal food gathering patterns, with families and sub-tribes undertaking annual seasonal migrations to gather resources.

Over time Ngāi Tahu developed an extensive knowledge of the place-names, stories, food resources and resting places of Te Waipounamu. Many of the hills and mountains bear the names of the waka (canoes) and the members of their crews important to the hapū of Ngāi Tahu. Many of the rivers, lakes and plains are named to represent the movements and marks upon the land of these ancestral vessels and people. Smaller hills and rivers often bear names of later people and events. These might be events from the history of hapū or of whānau. And then, just as names of people and events were given to places, so names for people and events were taken from places.

The places and their names were part of a memory system in which religious beliefs, history and geography were combined. Any Ngāi Tahu who knew the tribe's traditions and histories about the land would have been able to find their way around the vast and varied Te Waipounamu landscape.

The combination of Ngāi Tahu values such as tribal significant mountains, large flowing rivers, the great inland lakes, pounamu and the trails makes the South Island interior a place of significance to Ngāi Tahu. Not only are all these values interlinked but when combined they tell us great stories that forms together a significant part of New Zealand's history. The descendants of those first people of Te Waipounamu, Waitaha, Ngāti Mamoe and Ngāi Tahu, are seeking to preserve these historical and spiritual sites, and areas of mahinga kai for future generations.

This extensive knowledge allowed Ngāi Tahu to develop a comprehensive network of travel routes throughout the island utilising the island's resources. These trails became the arteries of economic and social relationships<sup>1</sup>. These trails were from north to south and east to west crossing plains and following rivers, valleys and coastlines and followed the food and resources needed to survive. From the east coast Māori followed a number of different trails which led them inland to their seasonal food gathering sites, over to Te Tai Poutini (the West Coast) and to different areas around the South Island and vice versa from the north, south and west coasts.

Trails were memorized and passed on through careful learning and practice. After generations of walking along these trails Ngāi Tahu developed extensive knowledge of the place-names, stories, food resources, resting places and natural features on the trail.

Along these trails, Ngāi Tahu whānui established settlements, both seasonal and permanent, in strategic positions throughout the country to be used throughout the year on various mahinga kai or other resource expeditions. One of the most important expeditions throughout the interior was the expedition to Te Tai Poutini for the most important trade of all, pounamu. Pounamu was, and still is, a prized possession for Māori, and it is valued by Ngāi Tahu for much more than its economic worth. Traditionally it was used to make

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<sup>1</sup> Brailsford 1984:35

weapons, tools and adornments and was used in trade with other hapū or iwi. It is valued to highly as it is also regarded as having a significant life fore, or mauri. In early times pounamu was carried to the settlement at the Wairau River Lagoon (Te Waikawa o Omaka) from the south via trails in the Waihopai or Awatere Valleys. Both the Awatere and the Clarence Rivers / Waiau toa are described as subsidiary pounamu trails by Brailsford<sup>2</sup>.

Mahinga kai is defined in the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act (NTCSA) 1998 as “*the customary gathering of food and natural materials, and the places where those resources are gathered*” (s. 167). Mahinga kai may be birds or fish taken for food. It may also be plants such as pingao or harakeke, used for weaving, or paru (mud) used for dyeing fibres. The continuation of mahinga kai is of great significance to Ngāi Tahu, as it is intrinsically linked to the continuation and understanding of the culture. Mahinga kai was, and is, central to the Ngāi Tahu way of life, being an important social and economic activity.

The Awatere is one of the major river systems in Marlborough. It was one of the ancient travel routes used by Ngāi Tahu whanui to access the South Island interior, and historically, was a major resource zone and played a significant role in Ngāti Kuri<sup>3</sup> history.

The Awatere catchment holds important mahinga kai associations. The ancestors of Ngāti Kuri used the area as a seasonal food gathering site from the time of the moa until the battles with Ngāti Toa in the mid-1800s. The river, its tributaries, and associated wetlands ensured that mahinga kai resources such as tuna, waterfowl, harakeke and raupō were readily available. The river mouth provided kaimoana, and the grasslands and forests of the inland valleys provided birds and a variety of plant resources. Such resources were depended on to supply coastal settlements.

Food resources such as tuna (eels), putakitaki (paradise duck), parera (grey Duck), pāteke (brown duck), whio (blue duck) and pukeko (swamp hen) would have been gathered from inland lakes and wetlands, while birds such as weka, kaka, kea, kakapo, kereru and tui would have been readily available. Flora such as tikumu, ti kouka, taramea, aruhe (fernroot), rongo and harakeke among others would have been gathered either as a food

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<sup>2</sup> Brailsford 1984

<sup>3</sup> Ngāti Kuri is the sub-tribe of Ngāi Tahu centred at Kaikōura.

resource or use in clothing, hair ornaments or perfumes. Harakeke had numerous uses, such as clothing and shoes, mats, fishing lines and ropes, and therefore was heavily relied on by Māori.

The Molesworth area is of immense cultural significance to Ngāi Tahu. The major trails into Molesworth from the eastern coastline were along the major rivers, Awatere, Wairau and the Waiau-toa (Clarence River). There are significant Māori settlements located at the mouths of all these rivers. These trails provided access into the hinterland and connected with other trails leading to Te Tai Poutini and other areas of the island.

There have been several reports of the discovery of Māori remnants throughout Molesworth. In the 1850s explorers Mitchell and Dashwood found a quantity of firewood collected and the remains of a whare (house) in the Acheron Valley, which was certain evidence of an old Māori encampment<sup>4</sup>. Travers, who owned the Lake Guyon run, described his men finding stone axes (adzes), paua shells, remains of eel baskets and other articles left on the line of march<sup>5</sup>. In 1959 positive evidence was obtained of moas having inhabited Molesworth resulting from the survey of the route for the powerline leading to the Cook Strait cable. The site is on the western side of the Acheron Valley, half way between the Clarence-Acheron Junction and the Five Mile, and 300 yards from the river. Dr Roger Duff, Director of the Canterbury Museum, led a party to investigate the site and found a high concentration of bones in a swamp about 50 feet square. Due to the shallowness of the peat and the fact that the area had been trampled by cattle, the bones were in an indifferent state of preservation. Nevertheless identification was possible, and the commonest skeletons turned out to be those of *Dinoris torosus*, moa standing up to seven feet high, and of shorter, heavy *Pachyornis elephantopus*, two moas which figure hardly at all in the middens of moa hunters on the South Island east coast. Dr Duff believes that the information gained indicated that moas ranged through the area some thousands of years before the first human inhabitants came to New Zealand and that it provides the most convincing evidence yet obtained at the time of the mountain habitat of moas. He believes that they probably came up the Awatere and Wairau, avoiding the high passes on the Canterbury side<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> McCaskill, L.W. (1969). Molesworth. pp18-19.

<sup>5</sup> Molesworth Management Plan (2003). p1.

<sup>6</sup> McCaskill, L.W. (1969). Molesworth. pp15-16.

Maunga (mountains) play an important role in the spiritual and cultural beliefs of Ngāi Tahu Whānui. As the gateways to the Atua, they are considered the most sacred part of the landscape. Maukatere and Tapuae o Uenuku are two maunga within the Awatere region.

Maukatere, or Maungatere, was an ancestor who arrived in New Zealand aboard the Ārai-te-uru waka. The Ārai-te-uru landed first at Waipapa, at Kaikōura, before continuing her voyage southwards. It was here at Waipapa where Maukatere went overboard and swam ashore, and was changed into a mountain, Maukatere or Shingle Peak. Shingle Peak is 'the man'; Maukatere 'the floating mountain' (referring to the appearance of the peak in certain atmospheric effects in Canterbury). Maukatere is an ancestral mountain for Ngāti Kurī and is a landscape feature of special importance and value. Maukatere (Shingle Peak, 2089m) is located at the head of the Acheron and Castle Rivers, within the Awatere Valley, 100 kilometres south-west of Blenheim.

Tapuae o Uenuku is another ancestral mountain for Ngāti Kurī and is also a landscape feature of special importance and value. The name Tapuae o Uenuku refers to the sacred footsteps of Uenuku. Uenuku was one of the principal Ngāi Tahu atua (gods), who is represented as a rainbow. Uenuku is often found in tribal traditions as a tupuna (ancestor) who instigates migration from Hawaiiki to New Zealand. According to the traditions of Ngāi Tahu, Uenuku cursed his son Ruatapu, for an infringement on his tapu. The curse referred to the fact that Ruatapu's mother was of lowly origins, so that his younger brother, Paikea, was in fact his senior because of his mother's superior descent lines. Ruatapu's response was to attempt to kill all of the leading sons of the chiefs of Hawaiiki, including Paikea. Ruatapu took all of the sons out in a waka (canoe), then set about killing them with a spear. Paikea survived by diving overboard and swimming away. He was rescued by a whale and brought to New Zealand, where he eventually settled at Whangarā, on the East Coast of the North Island. There he coupled with a woman called Te Waiaruatatai, who bore him Tahu Potiki, who went on to become the founding ancestor of Ngāi Tahu. As well as being a reminder of the traditions of Paikea and Tahu Potiki, the mountain Tapuae o Uenuku is a manifestation of the tupuna Uenuku. Uenuku was more than just a human ancestor, he was an atua and thus is also seen manifested in the rainbow. In another Ngāi Tahu tradition, Uenuku is portrayed as one of the survivors of the Arai Te Uru waka which foundered at Moeraki, on the North Otago coast. These survivors are now manifested as the Southern Alps. Uenuku continued further north where he too eventually turned to stone on the spot where the maunga Tapuae o Uenuku now stands. Thus, when Ngāi Tahu refer to the old people's hair turning grey, they

are speaking of the snow which caps the Southern Alps, including Tapuae o Uenuku. In Ngāi Tahu oratory, Tapuae o Uenuku is likened to an overarching portal which must be crossed by all visitors from the North Island. For this reason, visitors to the takiwā of Ngāi Tahu are welcomed as “Nga Tapuae o Uenuku”—those whose feet have been made sacred by passing beneath Uenuku. The mauri of Tapuae o Uenuku represents the essence that binds the physical and spiritual elements of all things together, generating and upholding all life. All elements of the natural environment possess a life force, and all forms of life are related. Mauri is a critical element of the spiritual relationship of Ngai Tahu Whanui with Tapuae o Uenuku.

Because of the immense spiritual and cultural significance of Tapuae o Uenuku, the Crown granted Tōpuni<sup>7</sup> status over the area of the mountain Tapuae o Uenuku as part of the Ngāi Tahu Deed of Settlement.

These physical and enduring manifestations of tupuna represent the links between the cosmological world of the gods and present generations. Creation stories and whakapapa recall links of fifty or more generations from the time of the Hawaiiki Pacific migrations. These traditional histories reinforce tribal identity and solidarity and are frequently woven around major landscape features. They reinforce the continuity between generations, and document the events which shaped the environment of Te Wai Pounamu and Ngāi Tahu as an iwi.

Although Ngāi Tahu use and occupation has diminished since the land purchases by the Crown in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Ngāi Tahu spiritual, cultural and historical values are still present in the South Island interior today. The locations of ancient settlements deemed in Ngāi Tahu traditions and stories are still standing, while the ancient place names and whakapapa that is entrenched in the landscape still exist.

Increasingly the concept of cultural landscapes is being used in land use planning and heritage management. Quite simply a cultural landscape is an area that contains a mosaic of

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<sup>7</sup> The concept of Tōpuni derives from the traditional Ngāi Tahu custom of rangatira (chiefs) extending their mana (power and authority) over areas or people by placing their cloaks over them. Tōpuni status therefore confirms the overlay of Ngāi Tahu values on these public conservation areas. The Tōpuni does not override or alter the existing status of the land, but ensures that Ngāi Tahu values are recognised, acknowledged, and provided for. The Tōpuni provides a public symbol of Ngāi Tahu manawhenua and rangatiratanga over the most prominent features of these public conservation areas. It is an enduring symbol of the tribe's commitment to conserving areas of high natural and historic values as well as ensuring an active role for Ngāi Tahu in the management of the area.

values that are of cultural significance to that when combined make an area of immense significance. A cultural landscape is not only characterised by its natural and physical aspects but also its sites, whakapapa, stories, mahinga kai, rock art and wāhi tapu. A landscape maybe outstanding from a cultural point of view even though it may not qualify as an outstanding natural landscape.

The Awatere River and its surroundings is an area of cultural significance to Ngāti Kurī. The combination of the Awatere River itself, mahinga kai on the river and in the surrounding area, indigenous biodiversity, trails, maunga and all the stories and traditions associated with these sites makes this area of cultural significance to Ngāti Kurī and Ngāi Tahu.

### **AWATERE RIVERBED ACTIVITY GUIDELINE**

The Awatere Riverbed Activity Guideline aims to provide some practical guidance as to how the following works can be undertaken to ensure that the impacts upon both the environment and the users of the river are avoided or at least minimised. The guideline cover the following works:

- Installing water intake galleries;
- Maintaining water intake galleries;
- Diversion channels and coffer dams;
- Removal of gravel; and
- Removal of vegetation.

Working within rivers can have negative impacts upon the cultural values of the waterway. Both traditionally and more contemporary waterways are valued for the Mahinga Kai they provide. In a resource management context Mahinga Kai is often only thought of as the aquatic resource (e.g. fish) of the waterway. However as outlined above, for Ngāi Tahu Mahinga Kai is not only the what is within the waterway but also the natural resource surrounding it (e.g. flax etc.) and the associated sites, maunga, trails etc.

The likelihood of works within water having negative impacts upon cultural values is highly dependent upon how the works are physically undertaken. For example, installing a gallery under the bed of the river. If such works are undertaken in the dry then the impacts upon cultural values will be significantly less than if the works were undertaken within the water of the river.

As the guideline highlights increasing sedimentation is of particular concern when undertaking the proposed works. From the irrigators perspective an increase in sedimentation can mean that they are unable to take water for irrigation when otherwise they would have been able to. From a cultural perspective increased sediment within the river can also impact upon cultural values, especially where the river flows into a hāpua at its mouth, such as is the case with the Awatere River. Hāpua are highly valued as these are often places where traditionally and more recently Mahinga Kai is gathered. Increasing amounts of sediment within these environs can have significant impacts upon the aquatic ecosystem and therefore the cultural values associated with them. Thus limiting the amount of sediment generated when undertaking the proposed activities would ensure that the impacts upon the hāpua are kept to a minimum.

Of particular concern is diversion of water and the associated creation of diversion channels along with the removal of vegetation from the riverbed and its margins. A species which is particularly valued for Mahinga Kai is tuna (eel). Tuna live both within the main river, but more often they live within the smaller tributaries and use the main river as a 'highway' allowing them to moving from the tributaries to the sea to spawn and back again. To move up and down the river tuna generally use the smaller side braids as these braids don't flow as fast at the main river channel. Additionally they may use the smaller side braids and backwaters as refuges. These side braids are also often valued by irrigators and are used to supply water to their intakes. These braids are used as they generally don't carry as much water and are therefore easier for 'move'.

Therefore, care should be taken when dewatering any braids of the river to ensure that the fish species do not become stranded within the dewatered braid. To achieve this, braids should be dewatered slowly over time. Additionally, the dewatered braid should be visually inspected and any fish found within 'pools' removed. It is noted that the guideline does propose measures such as this.

Where the works are to create a diversion channel, firstly, it is recommended that the majority of the works to create the channel should be undertaken within the dry. Secondly, care should be taken to ensure that the batter of the banks of the diversion channel aren't vertical rather they have a profile of being 'flatter' near the top and then deepening towards the centre of the channel's cross section. Thirdly, where possible 'bends', pools, runs and riffles should be provided. Pools within river channels provides places for migrating fish species to rest during their journey upstream.

Lastly, side braids on braided rivers are often the channels which connect the main river to wetlands located on the margins of the waterway. While low flows within the river will at times mean that the wetland is 'cut off' from the main river, care should be taken to avoid 'moving/using' and braids which are connected to wetlands. Wetlands located on the margins of braided rivers are often places where native species live within braided river systems. Culturally wetlands such as these are significant, prized and valued as a great source of mahinga kai. Thus the moving of braids for them to be used to 'feed' irrigation intakes would have significant negative impacts upon cultural values.

If the diversion channel is located within the riparian margin of the river and will be of a 'permanent' nature, tuna holes may be provided. These can be simple hollow tubes/pipes put in the bank, below water level, to provide 'tuna homes'.

Riparian vegetation is also of great cultural value. The removal of riparian vegetation, especially native, can have significant impacts upon the cultural values. Inanga spawn near river mouths (around the salt/freshwater interface). They rely upon there being long vegetation 'hanging over' the banks upon which they can lay their eggs. The removal of such vegetation can impact upon the ability of species such as inanga to spawn. In saying this it is recognised that native bird species require vegetation clear islands within the river to breed on. As such, the removal of 'weed' species from such islands can have a significantly positive impact upon increasing bird breeding habitat.

Lastly, there are a number of actions which if not undertaken could have negative impacts, not only upon cultural values but also upon the ecological values of the river system. We note that the guideline sets out measures to ensure that pest species such as didymo is not brought inadvertently into the catchment. measures include ensuring that all vehicles, trailers and machinery etc. are cleaned, checked and dried before undertaking works within the river system. Such measures are strongly supported. Further, the guideline outlined that refuelling shouldn't occur within 20m of a waterway, and when onsite, contractors should have a spill kit so that should a fuel spill occur they have the necessary equipment onsite to enable an effective clean up. Once again such measures are strongly supported.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Outlined below are some recommendations which if included within the guideline would enable the protection of cultural values of the Awatere River when undertaking the proposed works.

1. Works within water are avoided, however, should works need to be undertaken within water, they are undertaken when the river is naturally turbid. Should works within water need to be undertaken whenever the river is clear, the length of time where the works are being undertaken is limited to no more than 30min.
2. Diversion Channels
  - a. The size (i.e. cross sectional area (width, depth and length)) of the diversion channel needed to 'feed' and intake is limited to that which is necessary.
  - b. The 'banks' of the diversion channel should be battered flatter at the top to slow water velocities and enable species to use the diversion channels as migration pathways.
  - c. Where possible diversion channels should have bends, pools, runs and riffles.
  - d. Care should be taken to avoid 'moving' and side braids which connect river margin wetlands to the main river system.
  - e. When dewatering braids this occurs overtime to allow aquatic species to move out of the area being dewatered. Once the channel has been dewatered, it is visually inspected and any aquatic species removed;
  - f. When constructing a diversion channel, as much of the physical works as possible are undertaken on the 'dry' or outside of flowing water.
  - g. Where possible tuna holes are provided within diversion channels which are located on the margins of the waterway and are of a more permanent nature.
  - h. Where possible works should be undertaken outside the tuna migration times. Should works be undertaken within water during these time, then all practicable measures should be employed to ensure that the works are undertaken as quickly as is possible.
3. Fish screens are designed and installed (where necessary) on intakes to ensure that native species, such as glass eel, are not 'sucked into' intakes;
4. All vehicles, trailers and machinery are to be cleaned before being used within the river system to minimise the risk of weed species being brought into the river.
5. No refuelling is to occur within 20m of the banks of the waterway. If refuelling is to occurring then the contractor must have a 'spill kit' on site at all times.

MAP OF THE AWATERE RIVER CATCHMENT

