

The Manuherikia needs you

How to have your say

Otago is blessed with astonishing beauty, natural resources and clean and abundant water. Our environment is the envy of other regions (and a driver of our economy), but we are systematically destroying it.

We must realize our actions impact on the quality of our environment. Further degradation of our environment cannot continue for short term economic gains. Beyond the broad societal benefits of a healthy and flourishing environment, Otago's long term future ultimately depends on the health of our environment.

We need proper safeguards to protect our waterways from further pollution and exploitation, so they are safe for swimming, fishing and gathering food. You need this, your family needs this, and the future generations of New Zealanders need this.

The Otago Regional Council is currently reviewing its water plan and in the process will be setting minimum flows for the Manuherikia River catchment area. It is vitally important that as many people as possible take part in the discussions so that the Manuherikia and its aquifers meet the needs of the whole community.

There are a number of ways to take part;

1. Attend a public meeting. September 26th at 12.30pm or 7.00pm at the Omakau Hall or on the 27th at 12.30pm or 4.00pm at the Freemasons Hall, Tarbert St, Alexandra. Space will be limited so you need to book on 0800 474 082 or emailing customerservices@orc.govt.nz
2. Answer the questions in the pamphlet that will be delivered to all residents in the area.
3. Answer the questions online at <https://yoursay.orc.govt.nz/manuherekia>

The ORC is very keen to hear what you value about the river. These values will be used to develop objectives and limits for waterways in the catchment.

It is vital that the Regional council holds firm on imposing regulation, and does not fall back to an industry self-regulation model. Industry self-regulation has, to date, fundamentally failed to protect our waterways.

If you want to have your say but sometimes struggle for the right words to express how you feel, we have come up with a series of values (in plain language) you might like to use when attending community meetings or making a written submission.

Value	Plain language description
Ecosystem Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All life in the river is catered for in terms of food, shelter and the ability to reproduce • Nutrient levels allow for a thriving (productive) and diverse community of organisms • Potential pollutants (excess nutrients, sediment, and harmful microorganisms) are excluded or minimized
Human health for recreation	<p><i>E. coli</i>, Cyanobacteria (harmful bacteria) and periphyton levels are below recommended levels for swimming and food gathering, even during low flow times in summer.</p>
Natural form and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The river should remain connected with other waterbodies • This connection should allow for fish passage and connection with other populations • The amount of alteration (removal or adding of water) away from the natural flow should be minimized to allow for the ecosystem to function properly • The landscape and riverscape should reflect the natural state (without alteration) as much as possible • The scenic importance to the community and visitors is important • Man-made structures and modifications to the stream bed should be minimised
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food production for all living organisms in the ecosystem should be abundant enough for the river to thrive not just survive. • Productivity has been moved out of the river and onto the paddock – time for a redress • There is often a bottleneck (limiting factor) of food production during summer low flows • The river needs to support abundant fish stocks for harvest
Resilience	<p>The resilience is related to how an ecosystem bounces back after a negative effect has impacted a system. Flatlining (maintaining a low, steady flow and removing natural fluctuations) will cause the resilience of a river to decline.</p>
Mahinga Kai	<p>Mahinga kai properly refers to Ngāi Tahu interests in traditional food and other natural resources and the places where those resources are obtained.</p>
Recreational opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of users and the variety of types of recreational use is large • The satisfaction of recreational users is closely related to ecosystem health • Recreational use and satisfaction increases when there is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ease of access ○ Scenic beauty ○ A large area of fishable water ○ Natural character

You are fighting for all Kiwis, including future generations, who want these taonga - our freshwater and environment – properly protected.