

Activities on the Surface of Water

Issues

- The need to protect the ecological, recreational, natural character and cultural values of the District's rivers from the adverse effects of activities on the surface of water, while providing for appropriate activities to occur
- Ensure consideration is given to the cultural values that Kāti Huirapa hold for the waterbodies in the District
- Provide clarity around what motorised or non-motorised craft are appropriate on different waterbodies
- Ensure provisions are clear and easy to understand.

Operative District Plan Approach

The objectives seek to provide for a diverse range of activities, whilst ensuring adverse effects on the natural environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated and that the integrity of the surface of water is safeguarded. Supporting policies seek to:

- Limit motorised craft use on the Rangitata River and Opihi River
- Mitigate the effects of motorised activities on threatened bird species
- Ensure that accessways to water surfaces by recreational craft are compatible with best environmental practice.

The following are discretionary activities:

- Commercial activities involving craft on the surface of the water, other than on the Opihi River
- The establishment and operation of areas for the recreational use of motorised craft on the surface of any water body, other than the Opihi and Rangitata Rivers.

The use of any motorised craft not provided for as a permitted or discretionary activity is prohibited.

Proposed Plan Approach

The approach builds on the operative Plan provisions by refining the current objectives and policies to include new policies that provide for the values that Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua hold for the waterbodies in the district, and to support the protection of high naturalness areas and indigenous flora and fauna from activities on the surface of water. The policy framework is focused on providing for activities in key areas that are appropriate, and restricting activities elsewhere based on anticipated adverse environmental effects. These provisions are supported by rules that clearly set out what is and is not permitted, with clearer direction that is easier to understand.

Changes

Type of craft	Where and when	Activity status
Non-motorised craft	Non-commercial recreational uses (all rivers, anytime)	Permitted
Motorised craft	Specified environmental management or search and rescue purposes (all rivers, anytime)	Permitted
	Rangitata River	Permitted – within specified area and times
	Orari River	Non-complying – outside specified area
	Opihi River	Prohibited – in fish spawning areas above Red Rocks on the Rangitata River
	Pareora River	
	On any other river	Non-complying
Both motorised and non-motorised	Commercial activities (all rivers, anytime)	Discretionary
Structures	All rivers	Discretionary

Reasons

The Council is required to manage the effects of activities on the surface of rivers and lakes under section 31(1)(e) of the RMA.

What it Means in Practice

- Protection of vulnerable waterbodies and ecosystem values at appropriate times of the year
- Slightly more opportunity for motorised craft than the current provisions
- The same activity status applies to all commercial surface water activities regardless of the river or time of the year.

Explicit acknowledgement of the cultural values of waterbodies that exist.