

3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

3.1 RESOURCES, ACTIVITIES AND VALUES

3.1.1 Definition of Recreation

The concept of recreation embraces all activities freely chosen by an individual, which give that person enjoyment, satisfaction and a sense of well-being. Recreational activities can be described as "active", including group sports or activities of a less formal nature, such as jogging or cycling, or "passive", including activities such as picnicking, nature watching or viewing the landscape.

3.1.2 Recreational Activities within the District

Waitaki District's range of recreational opportunities is extensive due to the natural environment and to the resources set aside for public enjoyment, and also the efforts of private groups and individuals.

The mountains, foothills, hydro lakes, rivers and streams of rural Waitaki provide the setting for a range of land and water based recreational activities such as mountaineering, tramping, hunting, skiing, camping, picnicking, gliding, scenic driving, fishing, jetboating, canoeing, waterskiing and sailing. The opportunities for gliding in the Waitaki Basin are well known, such that the area is now attracting international competitions. There are 15 formal lake and riverside camping grounds up the Waitaki Valley, most with limited facilities but having boat launching sites to the lakes. Elsewhere in the rural area land has been set aside as reserve for a variety of purposes, mainly along the state highways for the convenience of travellers. Such areas provide people with the opportunity to picnic, camp or otherwise enjoy the scenic or natural surrounds. The District's lakes and rivers are important recreational resources, providing opportunities for boating, swimming and fishing.

The most significant and popular scenic attraction on the District's coastline is the Moeraki Boulders, viewed by approximately 250,000 visitors annually. The public has numerous opportunities to enjoy the scenic qualities of the coast. Both the Council and the Department of Conservation manage numerous reserves along the coast. A coastal walkway runs from All Day Bay to Cape Wanbrow. There is road access and camping facilities, for example, at the mouths of the Waitaki, Kakanui, Waianakarua and Shag Rivers and in Campbells and All Day Bays.

Townships or settlements such as Ohau and Omarama are increasingly dependent on recreational and scenic opportunities. The District's towns provide a range of public indoor/outdoor recreational and community activities or facilities, such as libraries, swimming pools, halls, sports fields and public gardens or domains. Only the smaller settlements may be void of public reserves, however these typically have school grounds available for community use.

Privately owned areas also add to the recreational opportunities available in the District, such as golf clubs, bowling greens and squash clubs. Schools also often perform a valuable role in making open space and facilities available to the community in each settlement. Privately owned or leased rural land provides open space and plantings that are valued by the community for their visual amenity and, at times the opportunity for walking and tramping.

3.1.3 Functions of Open Space and Recreation Areas

Public open space and recreation areas serve a wide variety of functions within the District. Most areas of reserve and public land fulfil several of these functions, which can be divided into the following categories:

- i. Visual Amenity (such as garden and tree plantings, areas of indigenous vegetation and views);
- ii. Children's play (such as play equipment and neighbourhood parks);
- iii. Active Sports (such as team sports, running, skiing, tramping, golf and watersports);
- iv. Passive Use of Open Space (such as sitting, picnicking, enjoying a view);
- v. Waterfront Access (such as riverside walkways, access to lakes and rivers for fishing, picnicking and water-based sports);
- vi. Linkages (such as walking tracks and cycleways);
- vii. Built facilities (such as halls, clubrooms, swimming pools and libraries);
- viii. Historic Sites and features;
- ix. Nature conservation (such as water margins, wetlands and indigenous vegetation);
- x. Public utilities (such as cemeteries, public toilets and reticulated services).

3.1.4 Recreational Trends and Preferences

Recreational trends and preferences are continually changing with new activities being introduced and the popularity of others increasing or decreasing. Some of the trends relevant to Waitaki District are:

- i. An increased use of the outdoors for activities that involve interaction with the natural environment, combined with an increased awareness of resource and conservation values, such as walking, mountain-biking and photography.
- ii. With the increasing age of the population in the District, there is a change in the recreational and leisure needs of the older people. Although there is an increasing emphasis on the retention amongst the older people in the population, changing physical abilities and circumstances mean that recreational preferences are generally in more passive pursuits in more accessible locations.
- iii. As well as a growing level of "active" recreation there is also a growing interest in "passive" recreation. This is reflected in high use of facilities such as walkways and, in terms of indoor recreation, in the high use of libraries.
- iv. Continued use of privately owned recreational facilities such as tennis clubs, squash clubs, golf courses and bowling greens.

3.1.5 Ownership and Management

There are three main statutes relating to the provision and management of public open space and recreation areas - the Resource Management Act 1991, the Reserves Act 1977

and the Conservation Act 1987. With respect to recreation and open space, the Resource Management Act gives the Council responsibility for managing the land resources and the surfaces of the waterways in a way that people can meet their recreational and leisure needs without adversely affecting the environment in the short- or long- term. The District Plan can include policies and guidance for the short- or long- term provision of recreation areas and indicate areas for acquisition or disposal.

The Reserves Act covers the classification of reserves (as scenic, recreation, nature, historic, scientific, government or local purpose); specifies the general purpose for each class of reserve; prescribes a system of management, use and leasing of reserves, including public input into the preparation of management plans and the leasing of reserves; as well as setting procedures for changing or revoking of reserve status.

The Conservation Act is administered by the Department of Conservation and applies to all land held by the Crown for conservation purposes, including conservation parks, wilderness areas, marginal strips and stewardship areas. The Department is required by the Conservation Act to manage the lands held under this Act for the purpose of preserving and protecting natural and historical resources, in order to maintain their intrinsic values, provide for their appreciation and recreational enjoyment by the public, and safeguard the options of future generations. The Conservation Act provides for the preparation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for conservation areas, including opportunities for public input. Leases and licences of conservation areas must be in accordance with relevant management strategies and plans.

3.1.6 Activities on the Surface of Waterways

The Waitaki Lakes Area includes all waterbodies within the territories of the Waitaki, Waimate and Mackenzie Districts. The Area has water resources of national significance, both for electricity production, and for the recreational opportunities they provide. These range from the braided Ahuriri, Hopkins, Tasman, and Godley Rivers of the upper catchments, to the large sub-alpine lakes: Ohau, Pukaki and Tekapo, and the human-made hydro Lakes: Benmore, Aviemore and Waitaki, and finally extends to the Lower Waitaki River, and the other smaller rivers of the coastal plains. While significant natural and recreational resources were lost by the construction of the hydro dams, the lakes created during this process may have become scenic and recreational resources in their own right. However, an assessment has yet to be made of their significance.

The activities carried out on these waterbodies are as follows:

Lake Middleton is a small lake popular for water skiing and is frequently used for recreation and camping during the summer months.

Ohau River has a minimum flow between Lake Ohau and Lake Ruataniwha. This is not sufficient for most forms of boating except for canoeing or other similar activities, but does provide enough water to maintain a fishery resource. Between Lake Ruataniwha and Lake Benmore the river is dry, except for temporary flood overflows. This area of the river bed provides a significant habitat for the rare and endangered Black Stilt.

Lake Ohau is the District's only natural lake feeding into the hydro scheme and is maintained at a natural water level. Principal activities on this lake are fishing and jet boating.

Ahuriri River also provides significant habitat for the rare and endangered Black Stilt and also the rare Wrybill. The river is used for fishing and white water canoeing.

Lake Ruataniwha is a human-made lake lying partially within the District. It has a high recreational value as an international standard rowing and flat water canoeing course. The

lake is also used for water skiing and has an area in the Wairepo arm set aside exclusively for non-powered craft.

Lake Benmore is New Zealand's largest human-made lake covering 80 square kilometres in area and lying partially within the District. The lake level is maintained at a set level and fluctuates by less than 1 metre under normal conditions but may vary up to 5 metres under emergency conditions. The lake has boat launching areas and is popular for both powered and non-powered craft. The Ahuriri, Ohau, Pukaki, Tekapo and Haldon River deltas all provide significant habitats for the endangered Black Stilt and other wading birds and waterfowl.

Lake Aviemore is the second largest human-made lake in New Zealand, covering 31 square kilometres in area and lying partially within the District. Its level is maintained within a narrow range by ECNZ. The lake is very popular for powered and non-powered craft alike, with launching and other facilities at a number of sites. There are a number of camping areas around the lake which have high use over the summer months.

Lake Waitaki is another smaller human-made lake lying partially within the District. It is also used for powered and non-powered craft. There is a water skiing lane in the lake at Fisherman's Bend.

Lower Waitaki River is largely in its natural braided state, with a minimum flow level of 120 cumecs. The river is very popular for jet boating and fishing along its length.

Kakanui, Waianakarua and Shaq Rivers are fished but are not suitable for most forms of boating except for canoeing or other similar activities.

3.2 ISSUE 1 - Open Space and Recreational Opportunities

Availability and distribution of land and facilities for recreation in order to enable people to meet their needs.

3.2.1 Explanation

As the nature and requirements of residents and visitors to the District change over time, their needs for recreation may not be met if appropriate measures are not taken to ensure an equitable, accessible and diverse provision of land and facilities.

Land and facilities for open space and recreation need to be available to satisfy the wide-ranging needs of the District's population. Not all of these are necessarily provided for by the Council. However, the Council has traditionally been responsible for the provision of land within settlements to be retained essentially as open space, and of a wide variety of recreational areas ranging from small neighbourhood parks, to district-wide sportsfields; from indoor facilities to walkways. There will also be special areas that are specific to the District, that need to be kept in public ownership to protect their intrinsic values, such as the picnic areas adjacent to some of the rivers and the coast.

Overall Waitaki District has ample reserves held as public open space and recreation areas. Most settlements and rural areas of the District are adequately provided for with such land, particularly large domains and active sports areas. Other smaller areas in Oamaru and within some of the other settlements do not have ideal coverage at this stage. The Council is also continually maintaining and improving the quality of parks and walkways in the District. This is a large commitment for the Council.

3.2.2 Objective 1

Recreation areas managed by the Council that are equitably distributed, appropriately located, and adequately maintained to meet the needs of the community.

3.2.3 Policies

- 1 *To facilitate the development of a variety of open space types and recreation facilities, ranging from indoor facilities to local, district and regional reserves; and in particular, in locations that are convenient and accessible for the anticipated users.*
- 2 *To recognise the contribution of existing recreation areas to the District and where appropriate maintain the open space function of such areas.*
- 3 *To require contributions towards the provision and upgrading of public open space or recreation facilities (including streetscapes) from:*
 - i) *subdivision; and/or,*
 - ii) *development for residential and business purposes, visitor accommodation, commercial, service, mining, recreational, community and industrial activities;*

and/or to use the cash contributions towards:

- *the purchase of land for public recreation areas and facilities, including parks and sports fields or,*
- *the upgrading of existing public recreation areas and facilities, including parks and sports fields and streetscapes;*

and to take land instead of a cash contribution towards providing public open space and recreation areas, including parks and sports fields, from subdivision and development, where this will effectively add to the quality and diversity of open spaces and recreation areas in the District.

- 4 *In deciding whether to acquire or receive land for public open space or recreation areas, or whether to dispose of existing areas, to have regard to the following:*
 - i) *The levels of use likely to be achieved and whether they can be readily accommodated elsewhere;*
 - ii) *Accessibility in terms of terrain, availability of legal access and parking, proximity to user population within reasonable walking or driving distance depending on function;*
 - iii) *The amount of other usable land serving the same or similar functions within the same area and the capacity of such other areas to absorb additional use;*
 - iv) *The role of the land in providing linkages or potential linkages for walkways or cycleways;*
 - v) *The size of the land and its ability to accommodate its likely or intended use;*
 - vi) *The role of the land in providing open space and plantings as visual relief from a built or highly developed environment or in protecting valued landscapes or views;*

- vii) The role of the land and the buildings or structures on it in protecting historic and cultural values of significance to the District's communities;*
 - viii) The proximity of the land to river margins, lake shores, wetlands or the coast and its role in providing for public access along such waterways, for waterside activities, for the protection of the natural values of the water margins and the maintenance of water quality and aquatic habitats;*
 - ix) The role of the land in protecting and enhancing significant areas of indigenous vegetation, habitats of indigenous fauna or the margins of lakes, rivers, wetland and the coast.*
- 5 To recognise the operation of large-scale private open spaces and recreational facilities in the District.*
 - 6 To recognise and avoid conflicts between different types of recreational activities, whilst at the same time encouraging multiple use of public open space and recreational areas wherever possible and practicable.*
 - 7 To provide through appropriate zoning, gliding facilities based at the Omarama Airfield sufficient to cater for international gliding competitions, in a manner which limits any adverse impact on residents and visitors to Omarama.*

3.2.4 Implementation Methods

Achieve policies 1-7 through:

- 1 continuing to provide for, and where appropriate, upgrade a range of open space and recreational areas and facilities within the District;
- 2 continuing to maintain, and where appropriate, improve the visual amenity of public lands throughout the District, through planting, street improvements and the appropriate siting and design of buildings and facilities;
- 3 involving the community in decisions regarding the siting, use and design of open space and recreational areas;
- 4 using financial contributions received to acquire and develop or upgrade land for recreation and public open space;
- 5 designating Council reserves under the Plan to enable the continued recognition and function of the sites for recreational and open space purposes;
- 6 recognising through scheduling of private recreational facilities throughout the District where necessary to enable the continued functioning of the sites for recreational purposes;
- 7 requiring financial contributions towards public open space and recreational areas and facilities whenever subdivision occurs, or where development for business purposes occurs;
- 8 using resource consent procedures to enable the consideration of the effects of activities on the range of recreation opportunities available.

3.2.5 Explanation and Reasons

The District is well provided with land held as public open space and recreation areas. Most settlements and rural areas of the District are adequately provided for with such land, including large domains, picnic areas and active sports areas. Within Oamaru town, most areas are within reasonable walking distance of public open space and recreation areas, including schools. For these reasons, the emphasis is for the future upgrading or maintenance of existing recreational facilities unless there is clear evidence there is a need for the acquisition of land for neighbourhood reserves and such like.

The use of contributions by way of land or cash at the time of subdivision or development will assist the Council in upgrading, and where necessary, acquiring further reserves to improve the availability of these, or to improve the quality and facilities of existing recreation and open space areas including the upgrading of streetscapes. These new or improved recreation areas and facilities will serve the people who will be housed or work in the new subdivisions or developments.

There will be no differentiation in values of contribution between cash and land, as was the case under previous legislation, as there is no demonstrable basis for doing so. Similarly, there will be no differentiation between forms of tenure (such as cross lease and other types of subdivision) with the emphasis being on the effects of subdivision in terms of potential household units. This will result in infill developments being placed on an equivalent footing to greenfields subdivision.

The basis for the reserve contribution is the additional, actual or potential demand anticipated for recreational and open space land. The contribution will assist in maintaining, upgrading or purchasing local open space or recreational facilities in the District. The Council will seek land, as an alternative to cash contributions, where the land will meet the specified policies, in order to avoid acquiring unnecessary public land, which becomes a maintenance burden for the Council without providing recreational and open space benefits to the community.

The potential for multiple use of such land and facilities is restrained by the compatibility of various uses. However, the Council does not favour monopoly in use of public areas in general by particular recreational interests. The Council will encourage a high level of public consultation in all matters relating to the recreational use of land and water resources.

The Council recognises the international standing of the atmospheric conditions around Omarama which permit outstanding opportunities for gliding. They have therefore provided for a specific zoning which permits the establishment of gliding and aircraft related facilities adjacent to the Omarama airstrip, and have also provided for a specific amount of built and non-built accommodation to provide accommodation for people attending events based at the airfield.

3.3 ISSUE 2 - Public Access

Maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the District's rivers, lakes and coastal areas.

3.3.1 Explanation

The margins of the District's lakes and rivers in some instances are protected by a variety of mechanisms, including existing reserves, marginal strips on Crown land and formed or unformed public roads. Access to and along the coast is afforded by road, public reserves and public walkways. However, the continuing rise in tourism and recreation in the District

may see the need for further provision of public access in some locations.

3.3.2 Objective 2

A level of public access to and along the District's rivers, lakes and coastal areas which is adequate to provide for the current and foreseeable recreational and leisure needs of residents and visitors to the District, but which will not compromise public safety, adversely affect waahi tapu located on or adjacent to water courses or reduce the natural conservation or hazard mitigation values of these areas.

3.3.3 Policies

- 1 *To provide, where practicable, public access to and along all waterways within urban areas, to enable the higher density urban populations access to local recreational areas.*
- 2 *To provide, where practicable, public access to and along the Pleasant, Waikouaiti, Shag, Waianakarua, Kakanui, Maerewhenua, Waitaki, Ahuriri and Ohau Rivers and on lakes larger than 8 hectares.*
- 3 *To identify those areas adjacent to waterways which have significant conservation or recreational values, and assess the access requirements to those areas.*
- 4 *To maintain the current access points to the coast to ensure the public have the opportunity to enjoy the District's unique coastal environment.*
- 5 *To consult with appropriate parties of interest prior to the negotiation of access strips, including the landholders of the site, adjacent landholders and other parties who have caveatable interest in the land (which also includes the Crown), Otago and Canterbury Regional Councils, Department of Conservation, Fish and Game Council, Federated Farmers, takata whenua and recreational user and conservation groups, in order to establish access priorities and the most appropriate means of achieving long term legal and practical access.*
- 6 *When considering resource consents that come before the Council, to ensure that regard is given to any adverse effects of the activity on public access to and along, and public enjoyment of, the margins of the District's lakes, rivers and wetlands.*
- 7 *Recognise the ability of owners and occupiers to carry out their day to day activities on their land where esplanade strips are created unless there are significant conservation areas or values that require protection.*
- 8 *To maintain and enhance public access to natural and physical resources, in particular access along rivers, lakes and the coast, where they are important for recreational values, aesthetic values, and/or tourism opportunities except in circumstances where people should be excluded to:*
 - (i) *safeguard conservation values or significant ecosystems;*
 - (ii) *protect public safety; and*
 - (iii) *avoid conflicts with activities of land owners and occupiers.*

3.3.4 Implementation Methods

To achieve policies 1 - 8 through:

- 1 the ability to take esplanade reserves on subdivisions and major commercial, industrial or residential development within the urban areas of the District;
- 2 the ability to take esplanade reserves or esplanade strips on subdivisions of less than 4 ha, and on major commercial, industrial or residential development, on the Shag, Waianakarua, Kakanui, Maerewhenua, Ahuriri, Waikouaiti, Pleasant, Ohau and Waitaki Rivers and on lakes larger than 8 hectares;
- 3 considering the need for access strips to water bodies within the District where opportunities to create such access arise and an existing or potential need for public access is identified;
- 4 using the resource consent procedures to control activities that may have adverse effects on public access to and along, and public enjoyment of the margins of waterways;
- 5 identifying priorities for public access to and along waterways, and to use any available opportunities to negotiate and promote such access;
- 6 investigating and identifying priority areas for purchase or other acquisition of esplanade reserves or strips;
- 7 encouraging the Crown to ensure that marginal strips of 20 metres in width are reserved for public access when Crown land is subdivided or pastoral leases are renewed along the margins of the lakes, rivers and wetlands of the District.

3.3.5 Explanation and Reasons

Given the large number, length and nature of waterways within the District and the likelihood that the overwhelming majority of subdivisions adjoining these waterways will be for allotments greater than 4ha in area, the Council does not consider it to be cost-efficient to acquire esplanade reserves or strips for public access, unless a particular stretch of water way has special conservation or recreational value. The Council recognises that, in order to determine these margins of special value, an investigation is required to identify these margins. However, in the meantime the Council will consider any subdivision which adjoins the main rivers of the Shag, Waianakarua, Kakanui, Maerewhenua, Pleasant, Waikouaiti, Waitaki, Ohau and Ahuriri, in terms of whether public access to the river is desirable. In addition, the Council includes rules regarding the protection of nature conservation values adjoining, and on the beds, of waterways, and at the coast.

Council is also aware that such public access can compromise land use activities in these areas and would where possible ensure a minimum of disruption to these activities by way of conditions on any covenants placed over the land.

The District is fortunate that there are many access points to the coast, and there are many Council and Department of Conservation reserves along the coast. This is reflected by the fact that there have been no complaints to the Council concerning access to the coast. The Council will ensure the current access points are maintained.

Much of the high country of the District is Crown land held in various forms of tenure. If this land is ever subdivided, sold or pastoral leases re-negotiated, the Council will not have the opportunity to ensure that further marginal strips are set aside along the margins of

waterbodies that are not already so protected. The Council, when its opinion is sought on such matters will seek to encourage the Crown to reserve such marginal strips.

3.4 ISSUE 3 - Environmental & Safety Effects

Recreational activities can and do have adverse effects on the surrounding environment and on the safety and enjoyment of people partaking in other recreational activities in the vicinity.

3.4.1 Explanation

The variety of recreational activities taking place in the District and the numbers of people involved in these activities increases the potential for conflicts between the different activities or between the recreational activities and adjoining land uses. For example:

- noisy activities or late hours of operation can cause a nuisance for adjoining residential areas;
- large buildings such as clubrooms can be a visual detraction or cause shading on neighbouring areas;
- lack of car-parking space can cause problems with on-street parking and congestion in adjoining streets;
- mountain bikes and motor bikes can be a detraction to people walking or picnicking on reserves;
- commercial or club concessions can exclude private users from areas of reserves and create adverse effects relating to car-parking, litter and toilet facilities.
- recreational activities and developments can detrimentally affect areas of conservation value, as could be the case for recreational use of the riverbeds of the Ahuriri and Ohau Rivers which are a significant habitat for wading birds such as the wrybill, variable oystercatcher, black-fronted tern and black stilt;
- commercial operators with large groups of people can affect the enjoyment of other users;
- building developments, structures and roads can compromise the more remote experience otherwise sought by individuals within the same area.

3.4.2 Objective 3

Recreational activities and facilities which do not result in significant adverse effects on the environment of their surrounding area or the recreation opportunities available in the District.

3.4.3 Policies

- 1 *To manage those areas which are particularly valued within the District for providing opportunities for remote experience recreation and/or passive recreation and enjoyment of peace and tranquillity, in such a way as to avoid conflict between recreational activities.*
- 2 *To ensure that the undertaking of commercial recreation activities; the construction of tracks, roads and buildings; and aircraft landings associated with recreational activities do not adversely affect the range of recreation opportunities available in the District and the quality of the experience of people partaking of those opportunities.*

- 3 *To ensure that buildings associated with activities on public recreational areas do not unduly shade, obstruct sunlight or compromise privacy, outlook or views of surrounding activities.*
- 4 *To ensure that noise and lighting from activities on public recreational areas is appropriate to the level of amenity anticipated in the surrounding environment.*
- 5 *To ensure that the development of buildings and other structures, earthworks and plantings on public open space and recreation areas do not adversely affect the District's outstanding or significant nature conservation and landscape features.*
- 6 *To ensure that the development and use of open space and recreational facilities does not detract from a safe and efficient system for the movement of people and goods or the amenity of adjoining streets.*
- 7 *To control the extent of building and parking facilities on public open space and recreation areas to ensure that an open character is retained, there is opportunity for tree and garden plantings and land remains available for recreational use by the general public.*
- 8 *To design open space and recreational areas to complement visually, or to improve the visual amenity of, the surrounding area, including its natural, scenic and heritage values.*
- 9 *To avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of recreational use or development in areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.*

3.4.4 Implementation Methods

To achieve policies 1 - 9 through:

- 1 as for Issue 1 Implementation Methods (3.2.4); and
- 2 provisions in the Plan enabling various recreational activities to establish throughout the District, subject to compliance with prescribed standards or resource consent procedures.
- 3 the promotion of the Braided River Care Code.

3.4.5 Explanation and Reasons

These policies acknowledge the likely adverse effects of recreational activities and will form the basis for rules to set performance standards or require resource consents for activities which may compromise public opportunity to use and enjoy recreation areas and public open space. Conditions may also need to be imposed on recreation operations in order to ensure reasonable levels of public safety. The Council has designated the major public reserves, other than small neighbourhood reserves and showgrounds within the residential areas, which will ensure that all activities in these areas will be available for the future use of residents and visitors. General recreation activity is also provided for in residential areas and outdoor recreation is provided for in the rural areas. The Council also recognises that most public recreation and open space areas are controlled by other legislation such as the Reserves Act, and wishes to avoid unnecessary duplication of procedures by limiting controls under the District Plan to the control of effects beyond the boundaries of the public area itself.

3.5 ISSUE 4 - Surface of Waterways

Activities on the surface of waterways can have adverse effects on the amenity of their surrounding environment, recreational values, takata whenua values, nature conservation values, and public health and safety.

3.5.1 Explanation

Recreational activities on the District's waterbodies are frequent and varied. Fishing is undertaken throughout the District, with salmon and trout the most significant species. For boats, the hydro lakes are the major waterbodies used at present. Boaters also use Lake Ohau during the summer months.

Recreational activities have the potential to conflict with wildlife habitats and also with each other. The following potential adverse effects of water based recreational activities, have been identified:

- noise;
- reduction in navigational safety;
- conflict with other recreationalists;
- conflict with takata whenua values;
- degradation of river, lake and adjoining wildlife habitats;
- increased bank erosion caused by wave action or activity on the banks;
- contamination of lake shores due to waste and effluent.

The natural conservation values of the rivers and lakes in the District do not appear to have been adversely affected by the current levels of recreational activity. However, there remains a concern to ensure that these values of the rivers are not adversely affected by future growth in activity, particularly by more frequent commercial or organised activities. In particular, the Ahuriri River provides significant habitat for wading birds. Commercial use of motor craft on the river is controlled on this river during the bird-breeding season (August to February inclusive) because of its potential impact on bird breeding success. With regard to conflicts between different recreationalists on the District's waterways there are few evident difficulties, except occasionally at Lake Middleton where jet skis can be a problem. The Water Recreation Regulations limit speeds in proximity to other boats and swimmers and when adequately enforced have the potential to reduce conflict between water users.

With regard to navigational safety, the Water Recreation Regulations 1979 apply to all of the District's navigable waters. They are administered by the Maritime Safety Authority, and place controls on the speed of motorised craft, the age of drivers, the designation of access lanes and the noise from motor craft. The regulations limit the speed of motorised craft to 5 knots within 200 metres of the shore, or within 30 metres of another vessel or a person in the water. The Water Recreation Regulations may be modified by uplifting the application of certain sections of the regulations in specific areas of Lakes and Rivers.

The uplifting of the Water Recreation Regulations which have been gazetted in the Waitaki Lakes Area and the remainder of the District are:

- speed restrictions on Lake Middleton uplifted between 9:00 to 12:00 and 14:00 to 18:00 hrs;
- Lake Ruataniwha has reserved areas for a rowing course, water skiing, non-powered craft, and an area where speed restrictions are extended;

- Lake Benmore has the speed restrictions uplifted in the Ahuriri Gorge, and in two other areas for water skiing lanes; the first 1500 metres north of Sailors Cutting boat harbour and at Falstone boat harbour;
- Lake Aviemore has a reserved swimming area in Loch Laird, the speed restrictions uplifted between Loch Laird and Parsons Rock, and a reserved water skiing lane at Te Akatarawa;
- Lake Waitaki has a reserved water ski lane at Fisherman's Bend;
- the 5 knot speed restriction has been uplifted on the Waitaki River.

Wherever people gather for outdoor recreational activity, there is the potential for litter and human effluent to be disposed of in a way that adversely affects public health, water quality and the pleasantness of an area. Where recreational sites are frequently used and in public ownership, the Council or other community groups have usually provided toilet and rubbish disposal facilities. This problem has developed in the past around some margins of the hydro lakes. More isolated sites can pose difficulties with the disposal of litter and effluent and, where use is repeated or frequent, the above adverse effects can arise.

Commercial and organised club water-based activities have grown in popularity in Waitaki District over the last five years. The potential for such activities to increase in scale and intensity, and for new activities to be introduced exists, due to the general demand for water-based recreation by residents and visitors to this country.

The use of waterways inevitably involves demand for the construction of structures and facilities alongside or in the margins of the waterways. These can involve jetties, launching ramps, toilet and changing facilities and administrative facilities for commercial operations. Such facilities and structures can result in adverse environmental effects relating, for example, to their visual impact; the concentration of pedestrian, vehicle and boating activity; oil and fuel spillages; noise; and the alienation of the foreshore from general public use.

3.5.2 Objective 4

Activities being undertaken on the District's lakes and rivers, in a manner which avoids or mitigates adverse effects with respect to: nature conservation values and wildlife habitats, potential conflicts between recreational values, public health and safety, takata whenua values, and general amenity values.

3.5.3 Policies

- 1 To enable residents and visitors to the District to have access to a range of recreation experiences on the waterways.*
- 2 To avoid or mitigate the adverse effects of frequent, larger-scale, commercial recreational activities through Council assessment by way of resource consents, so that consideration may be given to potential adverse effects and the need to impose any conditions on their operation.*
- 3 To ensure that the use of rivers or lakes by aircraft, hovercraft or for overnight accommodation avoids any adverse effects on wildlife or conservation values and the public enjoyment and availability of the rivers and lakes and their margins.*
- 4 To seek the continued administration and control of navigational safety matters principally through Regulations or equivalent mechanisms under the Harbours Act 1950*

and its successor.

- 5 *To ensure that the location, design and use of structures and facilities, which pass across or through the surface of any lake or river or are attached to the bank of any rivers and lakes, are such that any adverse effects on visual qualities, nature conservation values, takata whenua values, safety and conflicts with recreational and other activities on the waterways are avoided or mitigated.*
- 6 *To co-ordinate control and administration with:*
 - *adjoining territorial authorities where activities on the surface of rivers or lakes cross territorial boundaries; and*
 - *regional councils where the activity also involves structures that, for example, are placed in the river or lake bed.*
- 7 *To control commercial motorised craft operations on the Ahuriri River during the breeding season (August to February inclusive) of wading birds in order to avoid the disruption to their breeding.*

3.5.4 Implementation Methods

To achieve policies 1 - 7 through:

- 1 continuing to support the application and enforcement of the Water Recreation Regulations 1979, and the current modifications to these regulations which have been gazetted in the district to allow certain recreational activities to be undertaken on the District's waterbodies.
- 2 the provision of rules to control commercial motor craft operations on the Ahuriri River between the months of August to February inclusive.

3.5.5 Explanation and Reasons

It is considered that the potential for adverse amenity and safety effects from intensive and frequent commercial operations on the Waitaki lakes and rivers is high. The Council considers that it is a real possibility that the demand for such operations will increase during the life of this District Plan and that this could result in changes to the character, scale and intensity of recreational activity on the waterways. Because of the variable nature of commercial waterway operations, the Council considers that these activities should require consent under the District Plan in order for their likely effects to be assessed and, if necessary, appropriate conditions placed on any consent granted.

The use of waterways for the landing of aircraft or for hovercraft use is considered to have a significant safety risk, and would also adversely affect wildlife and amenity values. Such activities are not permitted as-of-right on any waterway, in order that their effects can be assessed. The use of waterways for residential occupation in houseboats can have the effects of permanently alienating part of the shoreline for essentially private use, as well as visual amenity, noise and potential water contamination effects. The Council considers that applications should be required for all such activities, in order that their specific individual effects can be assessed.

The Council has considered a joint approach should be taken for the control of water based activities in conjunction with the neighbouring Mackenzie and Waimate District Councils.

This is because the Waitaki River and hydro lakes form the District's boundaries to these Councils.

The controls placed on water based recreational activities by the Water Recreation Regulations 1979 are considered to enforce suitable controls with respect to navigational safety. The current upliftings to these regulations which have been gazetted in the District are considered appropriate to allow for certain recreational activities on the District's waterbodies. Therefore the current management regime put in place by the Water Recreation Regulations will be retained.

3.6 ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS ANTICIPATED

- A diversity in the type and size of open spaces and recreational facilities, equitably distributed throughout the District, to produce the following outcomes:
 - provision of a wide range of recreational opportunities in recognition of the diversity of community recreational needs at local, District and regional levels;
 - provision and development of additional public open spaces and recreation areas where there is growth and development in the District;
 - open spaces and recreational facilities that are convenient and accessible to users.
- Maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the District's major rivers and lakes, where there are significant conservation or recreational values.
- Use of the District's rivers and lakes for a range of recreational activities, provided that these are consistent with the protection of significant natural conservation values, environmental amenity, recreational opportunities and public safety.
- Recreation activities undertaken and recreation buildings and facilities constructed in a manner which does not adversely affect the natural conservation, landscape or cultural values or general amenity of the surrounding environment, or reduce the recreational opportunities or experience of other recreational users.

