

Description of the District

The Waitaki District covers 7,151.94km² with a population of approximately 23,000 (June 2018). The District is bounded by the coast to the east and stretches almost to the foot of Mt Cook, Aoraki where it meets the Mackenzie District and Westland District boundaries. It is bounded to the north by the Waimate District and to the south by Dunedin, Central Otago and Queenstown Lakes Districts. It is the only district in the South Island that straddles two regions, lying within both the Otago (41%) and Canterbury (59%) regions. Of the 67 territorial authorities, Waitaki is the 11th largest in land area.

Ōamaru is the largest centre, with other centres in Palmerston, Kurow, Otematata and Ōmārama along with a number of small townships throughout the District. The District has a varied landscape with coastline, downlands, and floodplains in the east through to hill and high country in the west, much of which sits within the Mackenzie Basin/Te Manahuna.

Traditionally a rural and farming district, today the economy has diversified and includes ski fields, the wine industry, mining and outdoor pursuits including the Alps to Ocean cycle trail. Tourism is an important contributor to the District's economy with visitors attracted to the extensive Māori and Victorian heritage, wildlife, geological features, outdoor pursuits and award-winning restaurants on offer within the District.

The kaitiaki rūnaka, who hold mana whenua for the Waitaki District, are Te Rūnanga o Moeraki, Te Rūnanga o Waihao, Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua and Te Rūnanga o Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki. Their history and values are outlined in the Mana Whenua Chapter.



Description of District – Figure 1: Area under the responsibility of the Waitaki District Council