

Valued characteristics

Summary of Culturally Significant Features of Streams and Reaches within the Opihi Catchment

Zone name and important streams	Valued Characteristics of Zone and Stream
<p>Headwaters – including</p> <p>Opihi down to gorge</p> <p>North and south Opuha</p> <p>Opuha down to Opihi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper reaches of Opihi catchment are largely unmodified with tussock lands and remnants of native bush. • Mix of wetlands of varying sizes still found in the headwaters, some have been protected. • Source waters therefore are considered to be largely unmodified • Only the Opuha is dammed which means that the fish populations in the Opihi reflect access throughout most of the system. There is a need however to examine the impact of culverts, bridges etc. • Diverse habitats – instream, riparian and terrestrial are generally of good quality with some tributaries being classed as high quality fisheries. • Still a long fin eel population – although size and numbers are seen to be in decline. • Water appears to be clear and of good quality. • The limestone rock features create important cultural landscapes with rock shelters and rock art found throughout the catchment. • Source waters give appearance of limited hydrological alteration • There is a mix of pools, riffles, runs. • Modifications don't really start until come through the Fairlie Basin.
<p>Mid catchment – the tributary catchments – including</p> <p>- Temuka</p> <p>- Te Ana Wai</p> <p>- Waihi</p> <p>- Hae Hae te Moana</p> <p>- Lower Opihi to SH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many reaches of tributary streams appear unmodified – for example Te Ana Wai have reaches surrounded by indigenous vegetation • The tributaries were highly productive mahinga kai – for example of the Temuka and the Kakahu have been significant eel fisheries historically • Variety of habitats present sustaining many taonga species including long fin eel, koura, waterfowl • River channel comprises pools, chasms, rocky outcrops, waterfalls, drops etc. – all contributing to the cultural landscape • Numerous taonga bird species. • Upper reaches of streams give appearance of limited hydrological alteration. • Pool is tributaries can be 2m deep. • Good swimming holes. • Banded kokopu in Te Ana Wai • Upper Waihi good water quality.
<p>Opihi in and around the marae down to the lagoon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarua spring is vitally significant to the cultural landscape that includes the marae. Protecting its quality is fundamental. Its levels are to be protected. The runanga is restoring the adjacent wetland. • Water generally appears clear even though quality deteriorating • Historically area covered by significant wetlands. Restoring the marae wetland is a priority. • Eels still found both shortfin and longfin.
<p>Lagoon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important mahinga kai • Short fin eels and black flounder important. • It has a history of use that needs to be recognised and re-established. • Reserves in the area mean that whanau still live in the catchment and the river is a key feature in their livelihood. Clean water of sufficient quality, supporting abundant populations of kai species is vital. • Orakipaoa represents a significant cultural landscape.

Opportunities sought

In the following table we summarise in general terms the opportunities sought by Tangata whenua.

Summary of Current and Future Cultural Opportunities for Streams and Reaches of Significance in the Opihi

Zone name and important streams	Opportunities Sought
Headwaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant populations of taonga species, especially abundant mahinga kai (most notably eel fishery) restored to their historic range – this requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to traditional sites restored ○ Ability to camp and gather and use resources in close proximity to traditional sites ○ Protect existing wetlands ○ Restore lost wetlands using historic distribution as a reference. ○ Protect headwater streams as refuges. ○ Protect access throughout the catchment. • Prioritise maintaining and or restoring connections and river flow ki uta ki tai <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No further hydrological alteration to streams in the headwaters and in the inland basin ○ Protect all spring heads. • Retain existing indigenous vegetation – riparian and terrestrial • Retain landscape features that are largely unmodified and important to cultural landscapes. • As a priority retain character of rivers – pools, riffles, runs, rock features, gorges etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No impoundments in traditionally significant streams and reaches • Provide sufficient flows for fish passage - requirements need to be determined at the shallowest riffle in the stream. The recommendation for eels is for the depth being 300mm (based on the measure being 1.5 X 200mm body)¹. Flows are to be provided October to May. • Protect the features of the gorges. • Retain water quality and clarity • Retain the cultural symbolism of the landscapes and landforms in this part of the system (values of mahinga kai, taonga species, rock art, rock shelters, wetlands, trails etc). • Protect streams from the introduction of glacial flour.
The tributary catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant populations of taonga species, especially abundant mahinga kai (most notably eels) restored to their historic range • Access to traditional sites to gather kai and natural resources • Retain landscape features that are largely unmodified and important to cultural landscapes – flows, clarity, quality, indigenous vegetation, taonga species, and channel morphology. • Restore access to resources gathered historically Retain indigenous vegetation especially on riparian margins • Flow variability introduced to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ address issues of extended low flows ○ ensure flows at the right times to trigger crucial life cycle stages • Through restoration connect the mosaic of very healthy sites and extend these downstream

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect flows ki uta ki tai • Maintain passage so that species can reach habitats in headwaters. Provide sufficient flows for fish passage - requirements need to be determined at the shallowest riffle in the stream. The recommendation for eels is for the depth being 300m (based on the measure being 1.5 X 200mm body)². Flows are to be provided October to May. • Protect the features of the gorges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No impoundments in traditionally significant streams and reaches e.g. Te Ana Wai
<p>Opihi in and around the marae down to the lagoon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant mahinga kai populations, especially eel fishery • Provide sufficient flows for fish passage - requirements need to be determined at the shallowest riffle in the stream. The recommendation for eels is for the depth being 300m (based on the measure being 1.5 X 200mm body)³. Flows are to be provided October to May. • Protect the features of the gorges. • Access to traditional sites to gather kai and natural resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water quality improvements to enable safe use and kai safe to eat. ○ Environmental flows that address flow variability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the maximum cannot be the minimum – flows trigger crucial life cycle stages ○ Drains managed as mahinga kai habitats with flows and quality standards set ○ Connections restored (culverts etc all examined to ensure passage not impeded) • Reestablishment of lost wetlands – using historic distributions as a reference • Enhance the water quality to make it a desirable place to visit, gather from, and for whanau to swim and enjoy • Ability to use reserves and whanau owned lands. • Management of the lower part of the Opihi by Te Runanga o Arowhenua Mataitai Komiti – their application for a mataitai is successful.
<p>Lagoon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant mahinga kai populations – birds, plants and fish • Enhanced water quality make it a desirable place to visit and gather from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ quality is fit for gathering and contact recreation • Flow variability ensures the river mouth is open at crucial life cycle stages • Management of the lower part of the Opihi by Te Runanga o Arowhenua Mataitai Komiti – their application for a mataitai has been successful.

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