



CHARITABLE REGISTRATION # CC44052

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Proposed Canterbury Land & Water Regional Plan  
Environment Canterbury  
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Dear Sirs

EC161883 - EC284746

**Proposed Canterbury Land & Water Regional Plan - Submission**

This is a submission on behalf of the Ohau Protection Society Incorporated (OPS) on the above Plan.

OPS was formed in 2010 as a result of the significant concerns of local residents in the Ohau basin (i.e. the Lake Ohau catchment from the mountains to Lake Benmore) to inappropriate land development and resulting environmental degradation. OPS represents the views of local people who bear the brunt of adverse effects generated by such inappropriate developments.

Overall, OPS supports the Policies, Objectives and Rules outlined in the Plan. It is essential that the rules governing Canterbury's water quality are workable if they are to lead to tangible water quality improvements and not undermine the value and sustainability of Canterbury's water resources. However, there is one issue on which we would like to comment.

**Page 4-8, map of nutrient zones.**

We note that Lake Middleton is included as a "sensitive lake catchment". OPS agrees with this, as Lake Middleton is an ecological reserve. We also note that the Wairepo Arm of Lake Ruataniwha and the Kelland Ponds are also listed as

sensitive lake catchments. We agree with this too, as these waterways are under serious threat from groundwater and surface water pollution from nearby intensified farming operations, and aquaculture developments. These bodies of water are significant recreational resources, especially for picnicking, swimming and trout fishing, and they warrant the highest level of protection from human use intensification that the Plan can provide. OPS recommends that the whole of Lake Ruataniwha is included as "sensitive lake catchment". Without this, the enforcement and rehabilitation of Wairepo Arm and the Kelland Ponds, which are connected to the rest of the lake, would be impossible. Lake Ruataniwha itself is also under threat from nearby land intensification, especially groundwater pollution, as well as potential pollution from adjacent campgrounds.

OPS would also like to ask that Lake Ohau is included as a "sensitive lake catchment". This lake is ultra-oligotrophic and therefore highly sensitive to nutrient enrichment. Lake Ohau is the only one of the three major South Canterbury alpine lakes remaining in its natural state, Lakes Tekapo and Pukaki having been raised for hydroelectric development. The scientific value of Lake Ohau is demonstrated by the current three-year study of its undisturbed sediments by Victoria University PhD student Heidi Roop in conjunction with GNS Science. This aims to record weather patterns over at least a 1,000-year period, to create one of New Zealand's most detailed historic climate records. Initial results from this unique record are to be presented to the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco in December 2012. [See website [www.lakeohauscience.weebly.com](http://www.lakeohauscience.weebly.com)]

While Lake Ohau is currently not under threat, we would like to see this lake given the highest level of protection from future land intensification (and possibly other activities such as increased urban development or aquaculture). We suggest that Council considers including all lakes in the Mackenzie high country as "sensitive lake catchments", for the same reason.

**OPS would like to be heard in support of this submission.**

Yours faithfully



Eileen A McMillan

Secretary

Ohau Protection Society Incorporated