

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED ON BEHALF OF THE OTAGO
REGIONAL COUNCIL, CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL, AND
QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER	The Resource Management Act 1991
IN THE MATTER	of an application for resource consents for Suction Dredge Gold Mining on the Clutha River / Mata Au
BETWEEN	COLD GOLD CLUTHA LIMITED Applicant
AND	OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL (RM22.434) QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL (RM220834) CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL (RC220255) Consent Authorities
AND	TE RŪNANGA O MOERAKI KĀTI HUIRAPA RŪNAKA KI PUKETERAKI TE RŪNANGA O ŌTĀKOU HOKONUI RŪNANGA Submitters (Collectively Kā Rūnaka)

**SUMMARY OF THE CULTURAL EVIDENCE OF KORAKO EDWARDS
ON BEHALF OF KĀ RŪNAKA**

14 November 2023

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Correction to Evidence

1. On the cover page and table of contents I refer to my evidence as 'Planning Evidence' on behalf of Kā Rūnaka. This should refer to 'Cultural Evidence' on behalf of Kā Rūnaka.

Introduction

2. Ko wai au? He uri au o Kāti Huirapa rāua ko Kāi Te Ruahikihiki. Ko Korako Edwards tōku ikoa. He Kāiarahi Taiao taku tūraka mahi.
3. The Mata-Au is a wāhi tūpuna. Kā Rūnaka seek the preservation of wāhi tūpuna in a condition or state that would resemble what it would have looked like to the ancestors from generations past. Activities that alter the shape, behaviour, water quality or mauri of waterways will continue to degrade the condition of wāhi tūpuna.
4. Our vision for the management of wai māori in this area recognises that the Clutha Mata-au is a single connected system ki uta ki tai, and that the source of the wai is pure, coming directly from Tawhirimatea to the top of the mauka and into the roto (lakes) and awa (rivers).
5. We want to ensure that the high-quality waters of the lakes and the rivers those lakes feed are protected. I challenge the notion that the proposed activity contributes to the health and wellbeing of the Mata-Au.

Mauri

6. For Kā Rūnaka, the protection and restoration of mauri is the primary environmental ethic that governs decision making. Having been a facilitator of cultural health index studies, I have come to learn that mauri cannot simply be equated to a number or a sum of Cultural Health Indicators.
7. When mana whenua apply their own cultural indicators to a specific location it takes into account their values, memories and knowledge of the whakapapa of that waterway. Long form answers and the discussions that arise when cultural health assessors stand on the banks of a waterway are required to give full effect to the intentions of the cultural health monitoring methodology. It would not be appropriate to assess indicators of cultural health without having visited the site with appropriately qualified cultural health assessors.

The Importance of Tuna (eels) to Kāi Tahu

8. Mahika kai is a cultural practice that provides a connection between mana whenua and the lands and rivers.

9. Tuna have always been a taoka - a prized species to Kāi Tahu. Having the ability to gather and process eels is a practice which maintains and strengthens kinship within and between whānau and hapū.
10. Given the ongoing impact on the life cycle of eels within the Mata-Au catchment, mana whenua place great weight on looking after the remaining populations of eels and elvers that are able to move throughout the upper Mata-Au catchment. I believe the proposed activity has not adequately considered the effects of noise generated on elvers or adult eels.

Effects on Macroinvertebrates

11. When considering a Te Ao Māori approach to environmental management, we recognise the interconnections between different elements of an ecosystem. Macroinvertebrates are an essential part of the aquatic food chain providing nutrition to higher orders of biota in aquatic ecosystems.
12. From a cultural perspective the artificial removal of macroinvertebrate species from the streambed does not put the health and wellbeing of the Mata-Au first. This does not support the mauri of the Mata-Au and will not in any way support Kāi Tahu aspirations for a recovering Mata-Au or eel fishery.
13. The human induced process of entraining macroinvertebrates into the water column disrupts natural ecosystem processes.

Conclusion

14. Kā Rūnaka have a long and enduring relationship with the Mata-Au. Recognising the history of human pressures that have degraded the natural state and mauri of the Mata-Au, we assert the need to allow the recovery of this river from continued activities that do not support its health and wellbeing.

Korako Edwards
14 November 2023