

BEFORE THE OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Proposed Plan Change 5A (Lindis: Integrated
Water Management) to the Regional Plan: Water for
Otago

EVIDENCE OF DAVID THOMAS HIGGINS ON BEHALF OF

TE RŪNANGA O MOERAKI, KĀTI HUIRAPA RŪNAKA KI PUKETERAKI,

TE RŪNANGA O ŌTĀKOU AND HOKONUI RŪNANGA (KĀI TAHU)



HE WHAKAPAPA KI OKAHU ME OMAKO

Ko te roto o Oanaka, ka haere tonu ki Te Manuhaea, ki ka heke tonu o Hāwea.

From Lake Wanaka over to the Neck and onto Lake Hāwea.

Huri Noa ki te Pā o Turihuka.

Across the Lake to the ancient Pā site of Turihuka.

Ka huri ki te Kāika tua tahi ki Korotane me te Mauka o Kahui Tamariki

And on to the first campsite at the Breastburn Range and Mt Grandview

Ki Ka titiro ihu o te Kāika tua rua o Tautukua

We look to the second campsite at Breastburn

Ka here ki ka ara tawhito o Okahu

Climbing up to the top of the Lindis

Ka here tonu ki te Kāika tua toru o Omako

We travel down to the Omako River and the third campsite

Me te Kaika tua wha o Whamauka Kino

We look to Dalrachney Station and the fourth campsite

Ki te Mauka o Matakinui

And onto the Dunstan Range

Me te Maukatiketike

And onto Mt Prospect

Huri ki te pakihi o Te Wai Pakeke

We look over to Tarras

Ka huarahi ki te takiwa o Matau, he tipua ki Ko are are a Te Pahi ki ka puawa ki te Awa tapu o Mata-au.

We journey to the place of Matau the Taniwha who dwelled upstream of the confluence of the Lindis and Clutha Rivers.

Mata-au, Ki te wahine tua tahi ki ka Tupuna, Tamatea Pokai Whenua.

The name of the first wife of Tamatea Pokai Whenua, a famous ancestor from the Takatimu canoe.

Tihei Mauri ora!

I cough the breath of life!

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. My name is David Thomas Higgins.
2. I am the Upoko (Appointed Traditional Leader) of Moeraki and my marae is situated on the Moeraki Peninsula. I inherited the position of Upoko in the 1980s upon the death of my Pōua Rawiri Mamaru Renata and I have maintained this position ever since. Traditionally, the Upoko were the raketira (chiefs) and tohuka (high priests) of our people. The role of Upoko is generally a lifetime position.
3. I am also the Moeraki representative on the Ngāi Tahu tribal council - Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
4. I was a past board member of the former Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board, the predecessor to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, and gave evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal as part of the Ngāi Tahu Claim (Wai 27) in the 1980s.
5. My tīpuna are of Te Rapuwai, Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe and Kāi Tahu descent with hapū affiliations that extend across all of Te Waipounamu (the South Island).

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

My evidence will cover the following matters:

- Kāi Tahu association with the Lindis catchment;
- Impact of river flows on cultural values, beliefs and uses of the Lindis catchment;
- Kāi Tahu aspirations for the Lindis catchment.

KĀI TAHU ASSOCIATION WITH THE LINDIS CATCHMENT

Matau and Kopuwai

6. The Lindis Catchment is a wāhi taoka (treasured resource) for Kāi Tahu. The whakapapa at the beginning of my evidence describes some of the wāhi ikoa (place names) and traditions that are associated with the Lindis River and its catchment. These traditions and wāhi ikoa are an expression of the Kāi Tahu historical and contemporary relationship with this landscape.

7. Our traditions tell how the mischievous tipua (monster, taniwha) named Matau stopped at the confluence of the Mata-au (Clutha River) and Lindis Rivers to sleep. While he was sleeping, another tipua named Kopuwai with whom Matau often fought surprised him, and with the help of his two-headed dogs fought with Matau all along the Mata-au. They reached the place known to Kāi Tahu as 'Kā iwi o te weka', or 'the people of the weka', named because weka were plentiful there. Matau escaped Kopuwai here, because the two-headed dogs were distracted by all the weka.
8. The confluence of the Lindis River and the Mata-au is of special importance to Kāi Tahu because of the Matau and Kopuwai tradition, and because this is where the mauri of the Lindis and Mata-au rivers mix.

The Inland Routes (Ara Tawhito) and Mahika Kai

9. My whānau lived on the coast at Moeraki. Many whānau lived at the mouth of the Waitaki River. They made seasonal journeys inland to gather resources and mahika kai following ancient trails (ara tawhito) along the major rivers. One ara tawhito ran along the whole length of the Lindis River.
11. Mahika kai is an all encompassing term that literally means "food workings" and refers to food gathering or sources of food but also embodies the traditions, customs and collection methods involved with harvesting and processing the resources.
12. On these journeys, Kāi Tahu tīpuna (ancestors) used seasonal campsites (nohoaka) where they stayed for periods of time. They would replenish their food supplies from the surrounding area before continuing their journey, so all nohoaka were also food gathering sites. There are four well-known nohoaka between Lake Hāwea and the confluence of the Lindis and Mata-au. These are also acknowledged in the whakapapa at the beginning of my evidence:
 - a. Kokotane is on the eastern side at the bottom of Lake Hāwea, at Breast Burn;
 - b. Tautukua is at the top of the Breast Burn Range, further east away from Lake Hāwea;
 - c. Omako is at the lower Lindis Pass and the beginning of the Lindis River. This nohoaka was at the Omako River, which flows into the Lindis River;
 - d. Whamaukakino is at the top of Dalrachney Station, past Lindis Peak.

13. Other less well-known nohoaka would also have been used as tīpuna travelled along the Lindis River.
14. Travel inland in pursuit of pounamu (greenstone), and other resources was made possible by the abundance of mahika kai in rivers and streams. This is why ara tawhito followed rivers – they provided food for the journey. The resources gathered inland could also be transported easily along rivers in mōkihi (boats made mostly from raupō, bulrushes or flax). People never travelled inland and back to the coast by the same route. They would always travel back a different way so that there would be enough food to sustain them on the journey home.
15. Well known mahika kai species traditionally gathered in the Lindis catchment included aruhe (fernroot), papai (an edible plant), weka, kiore (Polynesian rat) and tuna (eels). Most of these are also considered to be taoka species.
16. On their journey back to the coast, our tīpuna would have stood at the confluence of the Lindis River and Mata-au and said karakia to acknowledge that they were leaving the realm of one tipua and entering the realm of another. Acknowledging this in karakia was very important so that the tipua did not get angry with them and cause misfortune.
17. Mahika kai practices are central to traditional Kāi Tahu culture, as much of the environmental knowledge that was built up during our occupation of the region centres on food gathering. Seasonal migrations to important food gathering areas and areas of important resources (for example greenstone) are an important aspect of Kāi Tahu culture and still survive through to modern times. However, much of the mahika kai activity that once occurred locally has ceased as traditional gathering areas and resources have been destroyed or altered. The river no longer supports travel in mōkihi and taking the younger generation on heke (journeys) to the Lindis catchment no longer produces the visual images that accompany the traditional stories and uses of the area. It is hard to image the stories of the taniwha when you are looking at a dry riverbed.

As Manawhenua [REDACTED] Kāi Tahu are kaitiaki in the Lindis catchment. Kaitiakitaka is fundamental to our relationship with the environment. As kaitiaki, Kāi

Tahu has an obligation handed down from our tīpuna to ensure that these values and the healthy resources that support them are passed on to future generations.

IMPACT OF FLOWS ON CULTURAL VALUES, BELIEFS AND USES OF THE LINDIS CATCHMENT

18. Over time, the Lindis catchment has undergone significant change and modification. This has adversely affected our cultural values, beliefs and uses in the catchment. The Lindis River has been so modified that most of the Kāi Tahu values it once sustained have disappeared.
19. Kāi Tahu thinks of resource management in a holistic way. This concept is called 'ki uta ki tai', which recognises that rivers flow from their source in the mountains to the sea, and that all things are connected. For Kāi Tahu the entire catchment is greater than the sum of its parts. Surface water and groundwater need to be considered within an integrated management framework. With this in mind, Kāi Tahu is supportive of a water management approach that takes into account the mauri of the entire catchment, not just individual sections.
20. The drying reaches of the river have a significant impact on our association and values in the Lindis catchment. We are concerned that the Lindis River cannot flow to the confluence, as this is such a big part of the mauri of the river and of the Mata-au. Currently, the river dries up, severing the flow of wai Māori (freshwater) ki uta ki tai. It is especially frustrating that this is an artificial situation caused by abstraction – the mauri of the river is being artificially controlled.
21. In summer, there is no water at the confluence and the Lindis River can no longer flow into the Mata-au. This is unacceptable. It is important that the mauri of the Lindis River flows into the mauri of the Mata-au because the whakapapa of the two rivers come from different sources. Their different whakapapa and mauri join and mix at the confluence on their way to the sea.
22. As I have said, mahika kai is an important part of Kāi Tahu identity. The knowledge of how and where to gather resources is a gift passed down from the tīpuna. It is crucial to our cultural wellbeing that we are able to continue these traditions and teach them to our children, and for them to be passed on down the generations.

23. Tuna is the only mahika kai or taoka species left in the Lindis catchment that I know of, and their numbers and quality have severely diminished. There is no longer any weka, papai, kiore or aruhe in the catchment as far as I know. As kaitiaki, we are aiming for optimum habitat for our mahika kai and taoka species, not a habitat that supports mere survival. It is very distressing to think that our mahika kai and taoka species are struggling and in some cases failing to survive in these conditions.
24. Kāi Tahu whānau keep our traditions alive by visiting the places of our old people and passing on the traditional practices and stories associated with those places. We often take our tamariki (children) along the trails of our ancestors and tell them the stories of those places. There is a real sense of loss when we go to places like the Lindis River and have to show our tamariki and mokopuna (grandchildren) that despite our kaitiaki role, this is what has happened to the river.
25. Teaching these stories and place names, keeping the traditions alive and passing them to our children is important to maintaining our sense of identity as Kāi Tahu, and instilling in our children who they are and where they come from – and what it means to be Kāi Tahu.
26. The loss of values and degradation of the mauri of the Lindis River and catchment are deeply upsetting. We cannot have a relationship and association with a river that is not flowing or that is unhealthy. Maintaining and restoring this relationship is important to us. A healthy mauri would allow our people to continue the traditions and histories of the catchment.
27. The continued degradation of our awa dramatically affects the ability of Kāi Tahu whānau to practice their traditional responsibilities as kaitiaki, a responsibility handed down from our tīpuna.

KĀI TAHU ASPIRATIONS FOR THE LINDIS CATCHMENT

28. We want to restore a meaningful continuity of flow in the Lindis River, so that it can travel ki uta ki tai – from the mountains to the sea. A healthy river with a strong flow at the confluence is fundamental to the restoration of our association with the river and is the ultimate aspiration for Kāi Tahu in the Lindis catchment.

29. A trickle at the confluence is unacceptable. You need to be able to see that the water is moving and has a good flow. We want a flow that actually shows a confluence with two separate flows coming together, not one small flow (Lindis River) being overwhelmed by a much larger one (Mata-au). We want to be able to see the mixing of the two rivers with different mauri and whakapapa. Having the Lindis barely reaching the Mata-au is unacceptable and the complete lack of water at the confluence in summer is even worse.
30. The ideal width of the Lindis River at the confluence would be at least 20 feet (6 metres wide). While this is not an exact measurement, this will give you an idea of how the river should look at the confluence to provide for our cultural values.
31. The Lindis River should smell and look healthy all the way down its length and especially at the confluence. A healthy river has a certain smell. Dry river beds also have a smell, like dust, which is not what we want for any part of the Lindis River.
32. Kāi Tahu want to be able to travel down the length of the Lindis River and be able to enjoy the fact that we have a healthy, clean, drinkable river system that sustains life and does not smell bad. We want the life of the river to return.
33. We are fortunate that it is not too late to restore the Lindis River to a much better state. I hope we will take advantage of this opportunity to restore the Lindis River to a state where it is healthy and can provide for our cultural values as it did for our tīpuna.

David Higgins

31st March 2016

