

## Kaikōura Water Zone Committee (KWZC)

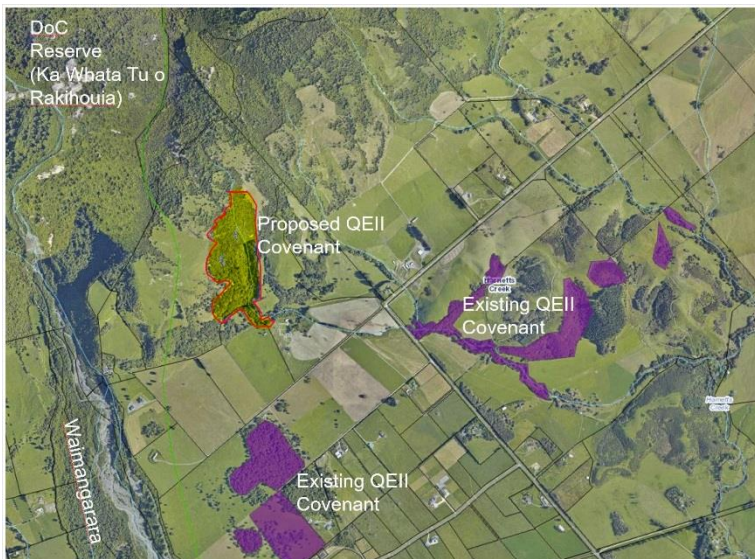
Kaikōura Water Zone Committee (KWZC) met on Wednesday 03 July. The group went through updates from immediate steps funding (including work in the wetland space), other projects supporting biodiversity in the Lyell/Waikōau catchment area and the 2019/2020 work programme.

[See the full agenda and meeting papers here.](#)

### Immediate Steps Update – Biodiversity

Immediate Steps is a funding package available for projects in the district that promote improved ecosystems, the protection of endangered species and wahi taonga (sacred and treasured sites), the protection of wetlands, as well as improving and maintaining the state of braided rivers which provide habitat for native flora and fauna.

The KWZC has provided over \$143k through Immediate Steps funding over 2018/2019 for a variety of different projects in the Kaikōura District, including Waiau Toa and Kowhai weed and predator management, the establishment of QEII covenants, data collection, riparian restoration, creek protection and Hutton’s Shearwater predator control. Private land owners have also been funded through the Kaikōura Water Zone Committee (KWZC) to protect and enhance areas of wetland on their properties.



1 - Environmental projects in the Harnetts Creek area. All projects work towards increasing biodiversity and ecological value.

Local projects in the wetland space all work towards increasing our district’s biodiversity and creating spaces that afford environmental protection and appreciation. As part of their funding criteria, KWZC aim to fund spaces that are visible and accessible to the public, promote long term protection and link with other related projects. Allowing public access is of high priority for the water zone committee, as they want to be able to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about our natural environment and the importance of protecting

them. This isn’t always feasible on private land, but many landowners are keen to provide managed access by appointment.

Harnetts Creek has been a focus in 2019 for the protection of the spring-head and surrounding native forest, with local land owners working with Ecan Kaikōura and QEII National Trust to identify an area worthy of a permanent QEII covenant and other areas where freshwater ecosystems could thrive, ultimately increasing native species for the surrounding area. A total of just over \$62k has been allocated from Immediate Steps funding to the upper reaches of Harnetts Creek, being used for resources such as deer fencing to keep livestock and feral deer out and weed control. QEII are also providing funding and monitoring of the site to see how it fares with browsing animals kept out.

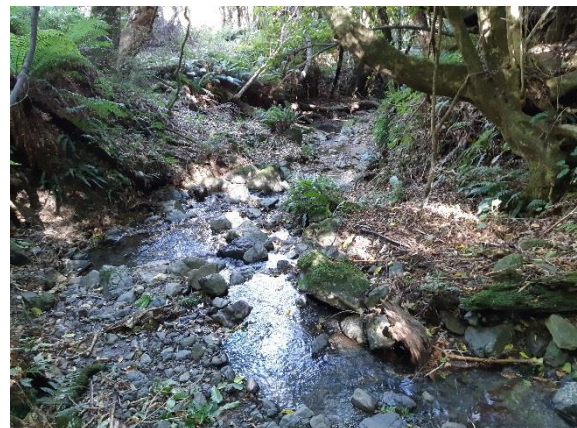


The initial survey by QEII identified over 40 fern species, alongside other plants such as matai, rimu and totara. The Harnetts Creek protection area has an ecological score of 32 out of 39, making it a highly significant area for protection. It is great to see local land owners and farmers providing opportunities for our native flora and fauna to flourish.

### **What are wetlands and why are they important?**

Wetlands are an area of land where water is the defining feature. Animal and plant life are highly dependent and controlled by the level and type of water that is present in these areas.

Wetlands are positive ecosystems for not just biodiversity, but also water quality and flood control. Wetlands can absorb heavy rain in storm events and release water gradually during and after, which helps build resilience in flood prone zones. Riparian planting of wetland species also helps with riverbank stabilisation and erosion. As well as this, the plants that exist in wetlands filter water as it flows through, improving water quality.



**Do you have a wetland or waterway that you would like to thrive? Contact Heath Melville at Environment Canterbury Kaikōura to find out more about funding and how to protect and enhance your wetland or other ecologically rich areas – [Heath.Melville@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:Heath.Melville@ecan.govt.nz).**

### **Useful links:**

- [Wetlands \(Department of Conservation information\)](#)
- [News and events](#)
- [Meet your water zone representatives](#)
- [News and events in Kaikōura's water zone](#)
- [Sign up to the latest zone news](#)
- [Information for Kaikōura farmers](#)