



# Water use data charges

## What you need to know

---

*If you have a current consent to take water in Canterbury, you'll have received a letter from us informing you of upcoming charges for water use.*

*This is an annual fixed fee of \$230 charged to each consent to take water over five litres per second, and covers the previous water season from July to June. Every water take consent that is required to submit data is subject to this charge.*

### Keeping an eye on our water resources

Canterbury's alpine braided rivers carry billions of litres of water from the Southern Alps to the sea, recharging underground aquifers along the way.

This water has important value as an amenity for recreational, economic and cultural use, so we need to be careful how we manage the water in our rivers and below our ground.

With wide plains and proximity to fresh water sources, it's unsurprising that almost two-thirds of the country's irrigated land is in Canterbury, and ensuring that our water resources are sustainably managed comes at a cost.

### What's expected of us

From 2016, the Ministry for the Environment required all consents that take more than five litres of water per second to have an independently verified water meter installed, which provides an accurate record of water use to the regional council.

More recent regulations that took effect in September 2020 mean that over the next six years, if you have a consent to take more than five litres a second, you will need to ensure you have a water meter that is capable of measuring water use every 15 minutes, and this data will need to be sent to us.

### What does the charge pay for?

Our staff receive, process and store telemetry data from thousands of water use consents across the region – from Kaikoura down to the Waitaki River. This information needs to be verified, processed, stored, and assessed for compliance.

The water use data charge represents what carrying out this work costs us. Over the past few years, these costs have been absorbed through general rates. By charging directly, we're moving to a user-pays model of water charges, which allows us to focus on ensuring water users comply with their consents.

If you're a consent holder with a good history of compliance, then you may become eligible for a reduction in compliance monitoring, resulting in significantly reduced monitoring charges.

### We're here to help

Invoices for the July 2019-June 2020 year will be sent between March and June 2021.

The **Water Use Charges** page on our website [ecan.govt.nz/water-use-charges](https://ecan.govt.nz/water-use-charges) has detailed information surrounding this charge, and you can talk to your local land management advisor or call us on **0800 324 636** for more information.



# From Rakaia to Waimakariri Tana Luke

---

*Sometimes it feels like you were born for a job. For Tana Luke, when the role of Pou Mātai Kō at Environment Canterbury popped up, he knew it was for him.*

Pou Mātai Kō lead the way when it comes to mātauranga Māori / knowledge, and lend advice to urban and rural communities about how benefitting the environment could also benefit their way of life.

Although he's only been in the job for a few months and admits to still feeling the odd pang of imposter syndrome, Tana is settling in to life at Environment Canterbury and is looking forward to making a real difference across the region's three central zones – Selwyn-Waihora, Christchurch West Melton, and Banks Peninsula.

That means his takiwā (area of influence) extends from the northern side of the Rakaia River to the southern banks of the Waimakariri River, an area Tana is more than familiar with.

“When I think about my connection to the land – the word that comes to mind is ‘kaitiakitanga’, having guardianship of the land.”

“It's always been important to me, but since becoming a father, the concept of kaitiakitanga and protecting the environment for the next generation as the past generation did for me has become even more important,” Tana said.

Born in Blenheim and raised in Ōtautahi / Christchurch, Tana is a graduate of Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa and Whare Wānanga. He attended St Thomas of Canterbury College, before heading to the University of Canterbury for a Bachelor of Arts in Māori and indigenous studies, majoring in te reo Māori with a diploma in Te Pinakitanga ki te reo Kairangi.

“I'm super passionate about te reo, the culture and my whānau, so I feel like I was always going to find myself in a job like this one,” Tana said.

“This job aligns with my values and with my upbringing, which is really important to me. My aim in all of this is to cultivate a better understanding of mahinga kai and its value within Waitaha / Canterbury.”

Mahinga kai is the value of natural resources that sustain life, including the life of people. It is important to manage and protect these resources in the same way that ancestors have done before us.



Tana Luke, new Pou Mātai Kō at Environment Canterbury

It includes all living organisms in our region's waterways, along with the protection, cultivation and harvesting of things like harakeke / flax and inanga / whitebait.

“Mahinga kai can be a hard concept to grasp for someone who has never come across it before – but one of my favourite parts of the job is talking to a farmer who has done things a certain way for a long time, and within the conversation you can see their progression and the change in mindset.





“So, if I can go home and say that I’ve had a conversation with someone who has seen the importance of mahinga kai on their farm, then that’s a big success.

“I often find myself working alongside farmers to help educate and support them through integrating mahinga kai into their practices. Mahinga kai literally means ‘to work the food’ and relates to the traditional value of food resources and their ecosystems,” he said.

“It’s been really cool to see the work Environment Canterbury has done over the past few years to make mahinga kai a pillar of our work around the region.”

Tana is the third Pou Mātai Kō at Environment Canterbury after Makarini Rupene (who is leading work in the Waimakariri, Hurunui-Waiau and Kaikōura zones) and Rosemary Clucas (leading work in the Ashburton, Orari Temuka Opihi Pareora, Lower and Upper Waitaki zones).

Tana hopes the number of Pou Mātai Kō will increase across the organisation to maximise engagement with rural and urban audiences on how to reduce the impact our land use has on our environment.

“Environment Canterbury sees the value in Pou Mātai Kō and I enjoy working with the community to ensure they have a positive experience and see value in sustainable land management, rather than worrying about possible enforcement action.

“One of the best things is that everyone in the building genuinely cares about the environment and they’re working hard to reflect mahinga kai values in their own roles,” he said.

**If you want to get in touch with Tana for help with mātauranga Māori or mahinga kai practices, contact him at: [tana.luke@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:tana.luke@ecan.govt.nz)**

## Mahinga kai and you

*Mahinga kai refers to the traditional value of food resources and the ecosystems that support them, as well as the practices involved in producing, gathering and protecting these resources.*

### Identifying mahinga kai areas on your land

Mahinga kai areas are likely to be special areas of your property that you are already actively taking care of for their environmental or biodiversity significance.

As it refers to several species and whole ecosystems rather than something specific, there is no single list of exactly what is mahinga kai for any given property. But mahinga kai areas could include:

- Waterways, drains, wetlands and springs
- Riparian areas and areas with native vegetation
- Areas with specific mahinga kai species and their habitats



### Your responsibilities

There is something special about providing the best environment for these treasures and watching them thrive alongside your primary land use.

Farmers are now required to achieve a mahinga kai target when implementing Farm Environment Plans. This means you need to identify and understand mahinga kai values and risks on your farm, and respond to these when carrying out good management practice.

The management targets will not necessarily limit the way you use your land, but they do require you to manage the risks of farming to mahinga kai.

### What you can do

Fortunately, industry-wide good management practices contribute to restoring mahinga kai through improving water quality and native habitats. Some simple steps you should take include:

- Protecting mahinga kai species and habitats when waterways are managed or cleared
- Sustaining mahinga kai through management of remaining native vegetation and wetlands
- Managing your nutrient application to avoid nutrients entering groundwater, which will affect downstream springs and waterways.



# IT'S IN OUR HANDS Kai roto i ō tātou rīkarika

#toitūWaitaha #ourCanterbury

**Stepping up for the future of our region now...  
means asking more from all of us.**

Environment Canterbury needs your input into the draft Long-Term Plan 2021-31, which outlines the proposed actions that will help shape our region's future.

**Make a submission at [haveyoursay.ecan.govt.nz/LTP](https://haveyoursay.ecan.govt.nz/LTP).**