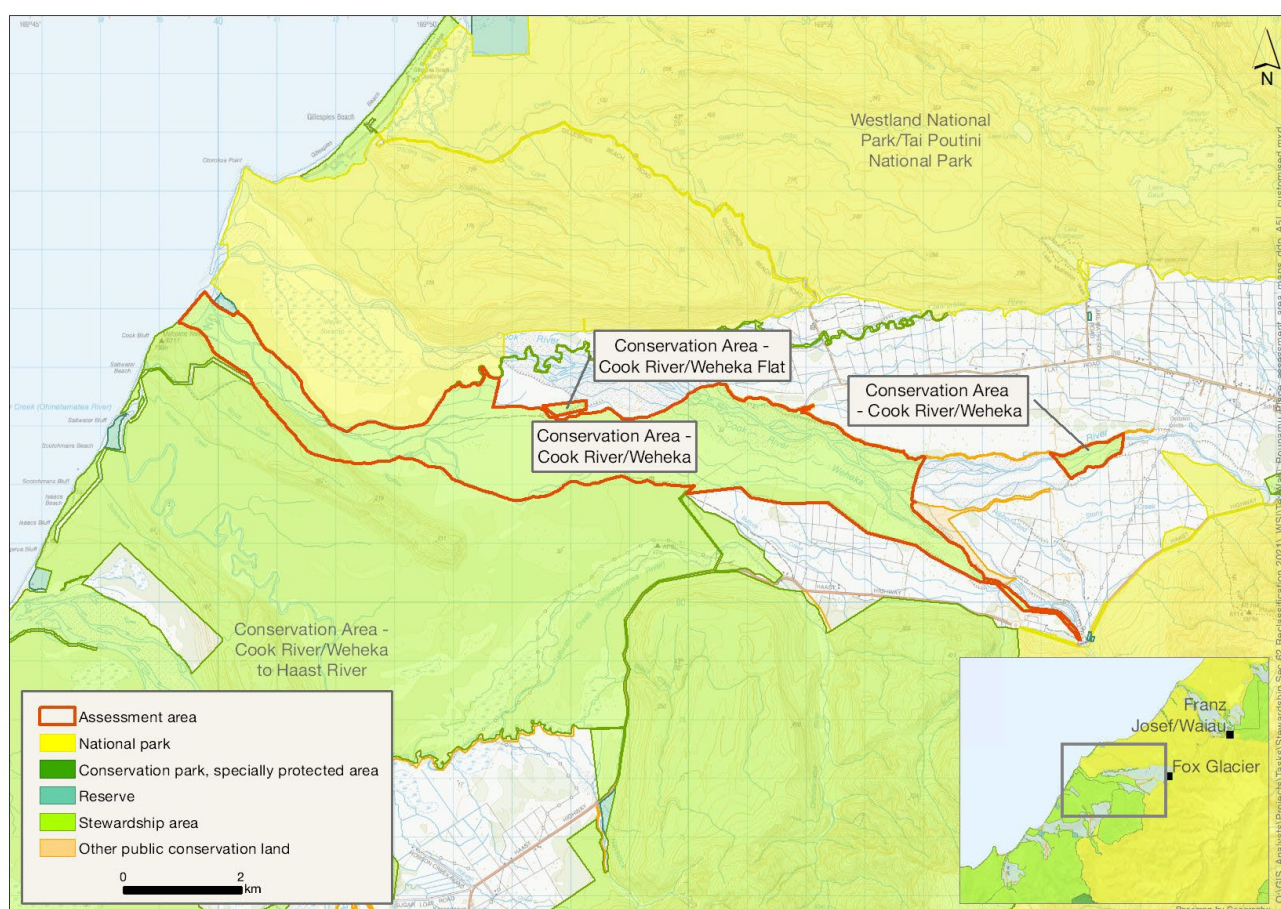


Stewardship Land Review: Recommendation

TWP_34 – Cook River/Weheka

Departmental Region	Management Place	Technical report	Assessment #	Held Under
Western South Island	Te Wāhi Pounamu	DOC-6913451	TWP_34	s62

Cook River/Weheka



Protected Areas	Area(ha)	NaPALIS #	# of Primary Parcels
Conservation Area – Cook River/Weheka	1617.174	2805318	6
Conservation Area – Cook River/Weheka Flat	11.1749	2805319	1

Recommendation on Reclassification

Western South Island National Panel Recommendation

The Western South Island National Panel recommends:

- The Conservation Areas ‘Cook River/Weheka’ (NaPALIS #2805318) and ‘Cook River/Weheka Flat’ (NaPALIS #2805319) are declared to be held for conservation purposes, pursuant to section 7(1) of the Conservation Act 1987, and are classified pursuant to section 16 of the Reserves Act 1977 as a section 23 Local Purpose (River Conservation) Reserve.
 - The pastoral area of the Conservation Areas ‘Cook River/Weheka’ (NaPALIS #2805318) and ‘Cook River/Weheka Flat’ (NaPALIS #2805319) are considered for disposal pursuant to section 26(1) of the Conservation Act 1987.
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Mana Whenua Panel Recommendation

The Mana Whenua Panel recommends:

- The pastoral components of Conservation Areas ‘Cook River/Weheka’ (NaPALIS #2805318) and ‘Cook River/Weheka Flat’ (NaPALIS #2805319) be disposed of.

The Mana Whenua Panel does not seek to make its own recommendation for the remaining part of these Conservation Areas and does not either support or oppose the Western South Island National Panel’s recommendation.

Western South Island National Panel Justification for Recommendation – Executive Summary

This conservation area contains riverbed and alluvial land along Cook River/Weheka, including riparian vegetation, developed pasture and shrubland. This area supports a diversity of freshwater species including kōaro and longfin eel (both At Risk: Declining). Parts of the area are modified by grazing and exotic species. The conservation area contains recreation values associated with a 4WD track that provides access for whitebaiters to Ohinetamatea River. The panel acknowledges that the coastal end of the Cook River/Weheka Conservation Area is adjacent to Māori Reserve in recognition of occupation within the area.

The classification of local purpose (river conservation) reserve is considered to reflect the identified values.

It is noted that consideration should be given to the potential disposal of stable areas of developed pasture within the assessment area.

Mana Whenua Panel Justification for Recommendation

The Mana Whenua Panel considers that the pastoral components of the Conservation Areas ‘Cook River/Weheka’ (NaPALIS #2805318) and ‘Cook River/Weheka Flat’ (NaPALIS #2805319) are highly modified and should not form part of public conservation land. Farming is important to the West Coast economy. Therefore, the pastoral components of the conservation areas should be disposed of.

For the remainder of the conservation areas, the Mana Whenua Panel has been provided with the opportunity to review the Western South Island National Panel’s reclassification recommendation and does not either support or oppose the Western South Island National Panel’s recommendation.

Notwithstanding this, the Mana Whenua Panel expressly reserves the right of Ngāi Tahu to seek to have the classification of this area reviewed in the future. There is a deep connection between Ngāi Tahu and all of the whenua in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā. The interests of Ngāi Tahu in this area may change over time which may require the classification to be revisited. In addition, more appropriate forms of protected area classifications from a Ngāi Tahu perspective may be developed through conservation law reform.

Western South Island National Panel Justification for Recommendation

1. *Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi Obligations*

The Western South Island National Panel is required to give effect to the principles of The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi, in accordance with section (4) of the Conservation Act 1987.

The panel acknowledges that the assessment area is within the Ngāi Tahu takiwā and the rohe of Poutini Ngāi Tahu, and as such appreciates the connection between Ngāi Tahu and the whenua. In making the above recommendation the panel has considered the values and interests of Ngāi Tahu as presented to them. This information has been considered in conjunction with the content provided in the corresponding technical reports.

The panel acknowledges that the coastal end of the Cook River/Weheka Conservation Area is adjacent to Māori Reserve in recognition of occupation within the area. In forming the above recommendation, the panel has endeavoured to take the identified values into account.

2. *Treaty Settlement Obligations*

No Treaty/Tiriti settlement obligations are identified in the West Coast Te Tai o Poutini Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) that specifically relate to this assessment area.

3. *Consideration of Adjoining Land Classification*

The panels are required to consider the classification(s) of adjacent and nearby public conservation land, enabling a 'landscape' approach to the reclassification work to be implemented.

This conservation area borders the Westland Tai Poutini National Park. It is not considered to contain sufficiently complementary conservation values to warrant classifying it consistently with that area. The entire area is included within the Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area.

4. *Conservation Justifications*

The panel recommendation is required to include clear conservation justifications. These conservation justifications are addressed in sections 4 (a), (b), (c) and (d), based on information identified in the corresponding technical reports.

a. *Identified Landscape Values*

This conservation area is a riparian and riverbed area following the Cook River/Weheka as it meanders across the Cook River flood plain. It provides for riverbed and riparian connectivity.

b. Identified Ecological Values

This conservation area contains riverbed and alluvial land along Cook River/Weheka, including riparian vegetation, developed pasture and shrubland. This area supports a diversity of freshwater species including kōaro and longfin eel (both At Risk: Declining). Parts of the area are modified by grazing and exotic species. The classification of local purpose (river conservation) reserve is considered appropriate to protect the identified ecological values.

c. Identified Recreation Values

The conservation area contains a 4WD track that provides access for whitebaiters at Ohinetamatea River.

d. Identified Heritage Values

No known heritage values are identified.

5. Current Land Use

Parts of this conservation area appear to be grazed although no concessions are recorded.

6. Consideration of the Climate Change Commission Report

The panel gave consideration to the objectives of the [Climate Change Commission report](#) and the recommended policy direction. The key focus of the advice is ensuring a shift to a low carbon and resilient Aotearoa. The panel does not consider the recommended land classification to limit future decision making over the land to mitigate emissions, adapt to climate change and sequester carbon.

7. Strategic Policy Direction

The assessment area is governed by the West Coast Te Tai o Poutini CMS. The CMS has been reviewed to identify all relevant provisions and conservation area-specific treaty settlement obligations when formulating the above recommendation, and the recommended land classification is considered to be consistent with the aims of the strategy.

The above recommendation has also been considered in conjunction with the Conservation General Policy and conforms with policy 6(b) regarding reclassification and 6(c) & (d) regarding disposal.