

## MAW\_03 – Big River (70.2627 ha)

Protected Area(s)	Area (ha)	NaPALIS #	# of Primary Parcels
Conservation Area - Big River	1.5791	2806779	2
Conservation Area - Big River	45.243	2806780	1
Conservation Area - Big River	23.4406	2806785	1

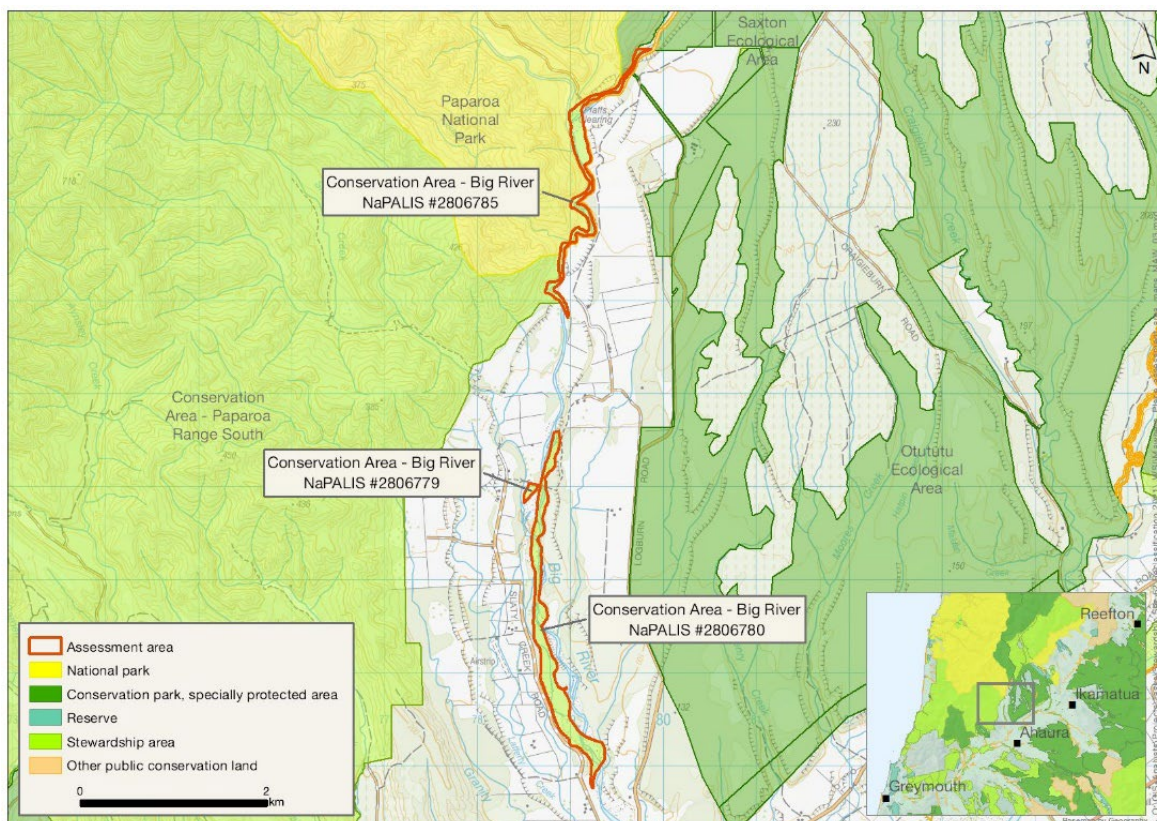
### Location

A main northern tributary of the Grey River/Māwheranui, north of Ahaura.

### Brief Description

Partly active riverbed and partly forested low river terraces adjacent to Big River. The northern-most part of the assessment area is adjacent to the Saxton/Otututu Ecological Management Unit. The assessment area is part of a dynamic river system including active riverbed and indigenous forest. A section of Logburn Road passes through the northern area and this road provides access to the Pike River Amenity Area and the Pike29 Memorial Track/Paparoa Track. Multiple grazing concessions are in place for this assessment area. Occasional hunting and fishing.

### Map



# Ngāi Tahu Values and Interests

*Mo tātou, a, mo ka uri, a muri ake nei – for us and our children after us*

From the preliminary desk top assessments, there do not appear to be any site specific Ngāi Tahu values identified. However, there is a deep connection between Ngāi Tahu and all of the whenua in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā, and the absence of site specific values in the preliminary analysis does not detract from that connection, nor does it confirm that site specific values are not present. Further, a section 4 Conservation Act and Te Tiriti principles perspective is required as well, and it may be that areas of land are significant to Ngāi Tahu from that broader perspective. To avoid doubt, nothing in the proposed classification affects, limits or derogates from the rangatiratanga of Ngāi Tahu over its takiwā, including in relation to freshwater; and/or any other rights or interests Ngāi Tahu may have.

## Ecological Values

### Representativeness

The assessment area is part of a dynamic river system including active riverbed, indigenous forest dominated by hard beech (*Fuscospora truncata*)/rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) forest, colonised islands reverting to forest cover, or seral species where the forest cover has been removed by floods most recently. This area has a high level of representativeness and naturalness. Forested islands within the braided river system are rare as they were historically converted to farmland and currently remain as part of the grazing regime of adjacent farms.

Two (+ one very small) conservation areas that cover a substantial and ecologically important reach of Big River. A high level of water quality is predicted. The true right of the northern-most parcel has indigenous forest, while the true left is private farmland, but with a largely intact and natural riparian margin/buffer. The southern-most parcel covers a similar length of Big River but is surrounded by private farmland. It therefore has a lower degree of naturalness, but an equally high diversity of freshwater species recorded.

### Diversity and pattern

Moderate diversity and pattern. The upper parcel is connected to larger tracts of indigenous protected forest. Provides a habitat corridor for species movement from higher altitudes down the river in the Grey River/Māwheranui valley.

Big River, including the stretch that both parcels cover, has a high species diversity with records of longfin eel (*Anguilla dieffenbachii*), dwarf galaxias (*Galaxias divergens*), torrentfish (piripiripōhatu, *Cheimarrichthys fosteri*), kōaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*), upland bully (West Coast) (*Gobiomorphus breviceps*), redfin bully (*Gobiomorphus huttoni*) and brown trout (*salmo trutta*).

### Rarity and distinctiveness

The assessment area includes indigenous forested "islands" within the riverbed. Habitat for freshwater fish, birds, lizards and invertebrates. The herb *Gratiola concinna* (Nationally Endangered) occurs in forest of the Grey River/Māwheranui valley and has been recorded nearby; it is likely to be present here. Braided rivers are classified as endangered ecosystems (Holdaway et al. 2012). Part of the assessment area is classified as a Nationally At-Risk land environment (Walker et al. 2015). There is little public conservation land in these ecosystems in the valley or the lower reaches of the main tributaries.

Big River, where it flows through these parcels, has multiple records of freshwater fish of conservation importance: longfin eel, dwarf galaxias, torrentfish, kōaro and bluegill bully (*Gobiomorphus hubbsi*) (all At Risk: Declining), upland and redfin bully (both Not Threatened) and brown trout (*salmo trutta*) (Introduced).

## **Ecological context**

This assessment area is composed of two disjunct linear shaped polygons of Big River Conservation Area (70.26 ha) over about 6 km of riverbed and is 40 m at its narrowest. The top parcel is adjacent to Paparoa National Park and Paparoa Range South Conservation Area. The area plays an important role in maintaining ecological connectivity from Grey River/Māwheranui into the national park and the uplands of eastern Paparoa Ranges.

The northern-most parcel borders the Otututu/Saxton Ecological Area and Paparoa National Park (to the west). Private land flanks the eastern edge of the parcel. It is contiguous with high value public conservation land. Both parcels cover stretches of Big River with a high resident diversity of freshwater species and are ecologically important. The southern parcel is surrounded by private land. Both parcels are within an At Risk land environment, braided river.

## **Recreation Values**

### **Setting**

Three areas in and adjacent to the bed of Big River. Located between Slatey Creek and Logburn Roads. The northern area is beside Paparoa National Park and the other two area are surrounded by developed farmland. The areas are in a Backcountry-remote zone. There are no tracks or facilities maintained by the Department in the area although the northern conservation area contains a section of Logburn Road, providing access to the Pike River site. Some of the area has been developed into pasture.

### **Visitor type and activities typically undertaken**

These are likely to receive low levels of recreation use. Occasional hunting and fishing.

A section of Logburn Road passes through the northern area and provides access to the Pike River Amenity Area and the Pike29 Memorial Track/Paparoa Track.

### **Access**

The areas can be accessed from Slatey Creek Road and Logburn Road.

## **Heritage Values**

### **Historical overview**

### **Sites recorded**

There are no sites recorded, although a 1942 survey plan (SO 4304) shows two cottages and a shed on the northern part of the conservation area, which are not visible on aerial photographs. There are also foot suspension bridges across both Big River and Slatey Creek on this plan (although these are outside of the area).

The 1942 survey plan (SO 4304) also shows a suspension bridge and ford across Big River to connect with the land designated as MAW\_03 Big River (1.5791 ha).

### **Heritage values**

No value statement possible.

## Permissions summary

- Grazing licence (WC-33307-GRA) for grazing dairy cattle 1.56 ha on Big River
- Two grazing concessions to enable grazing on Big River, approx 38 ha.
- Grazing licence for 1.6 ha grazing at Big River
- Grazing licence for grazing on Big River (Pfaff's Clearing)

## Map (aerial photo)

