



NATURAL HAZARDS - POLICY

NH2.1 Introduction

A natural hazard means any atmospheric, earth or water related occurrence, (including earthquake, tsunami, erosion, volcanic and geothermal activity, avalanche, landslip, subsidence, sedimentation, wind, drought, fire, or flooding) the action of which adversely, or may adversely, affect human life, property, or other aspects of the environment. Traditionally natural hazards are assessed according to the risk that they pose to society. The concept of risk involves a number of components. These include the physical characteristics of the natural event, the probability of occurrence of the hazard, the magnitude of the event and the potential damage to infrastructure and personal property located within the affected area.

Avalanche and lahar hazards within the Ruapehu District principally occur within the Tongariro National Park, which is managed by the Department of Conservation.

Flooding hazards within the Ruapehu District have principally occurred within the Ohura Township. This township has been affected by numerous large flooding events over many years, which has resulted in dwellings being made uninhabitable and many requiring extensive repairs. The Ohura community has been presented with a flood prevention method in the form of a stop bank to prevent future flooding of the township. However, after a lack of support from the community, this stop bank was never constructed.

The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council has also modelled the flood risks for Ohakune and Taumarunui.

Fire is also a risk within the District. This can pose a risk to both people and property, but can also put in danger adjoining native bush and forestry assets.

Earthquakes are also a natural hazard which pose a risk within the District. Earthquakes can raise issues in term of fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, and landslides.

There are a number of active fault traces within the District, especially between Raetihi and Raurimu. These faults include the Raurimu Fault, the National Park Fault, the Ohakune Fault, the Raetihi Faults (north and south), the Oruakukuru Fault, the Shawcroft Road Fault, the Rangipo (Desert Road) Fault, and the Snowgrass Fault.

Information on the risk posed by natural hazards is sparse for the Ruapehu District. In conjunction with the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council, Council is developing a database of natural hazards.

Horizons 'One Plan' sets out the following responsibilities for natural hazard management relevant to the Ruapehu District:

- (a) The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council and Ruapehu District Council shall be jointly responsible for:
 - (i) Raising public awareness of the risks of natural hazards through education, including information about what natural hazards exist in the Region, what people can do to minimise their own level of risk and what help is available.



- (b) Territorial Authorities shall be responsible for:
 - (i) Developing objectives, policies, and methods (including rules) for the control of the use of land to avoid or mitigate natural hazards in all areas and for all activities except land-use activities in the coastal marine area, erosion protection works that cross or adjoin mean high water spring and land-use activities in the beds of rivers and lakes for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating natural hazards.
 - (ii) Identifying floodways and other areas known to be inundated by a 0.5% annual exceedance probability flood event in District Plans and controlling land-use activities in these areas

NH2.2 Issues

- (a) Threat to human life, property and other aspects of the environment from natural hazards.
- (b) Lack of information about natural hazards and their potential threat within the District affecting integrated management of the use, development and protection of land.

NH2.2.1 Objective

- (a) Avoidance, remedy or mitigation of the adverse effects of natural hazards upon human life, infrastructure, property and the natural environment.
- (b) To encourage communities to be resilient to natural hazards.

NH2.2.2 Policies

- (a) To manage development occurring on land subject to, or at risk from, erosion, avulsion, alluvion, subsidence, inundation, slippage, flooding (including lahars) that will be adversely affected by those events.
- (b) To control the use of land subject to or at risk from, natural hazards.
- (c) To promote public awareness and understanding of the threat of natural hazards.
- (d) To promote the provision of, and maintenance to, flood control schemes protecting significant areas of population within the Ruapehu District.
- (e) To take into account susceptibility to a natural hazard risk when considering any resource consent application. Generally, development in floodable areas shall be avoided unless the risk to life, property, and infrastructure is shown to be minimal.
- (f) To participate in regional planning initiatives to ensure emergency management is integrated with other agencies; and reduction and readiness is achieved.
- (g) In Ohakune and Taumarunui, to identify areas known to be at risk of inundation by a 0.5% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood event on planning maps and controlling subdivision and land use activities in these areas.
- (h) Controlling subdivision and land use activities in all areas known to be at risk of inundation by 0.5% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood event.
- (i) To take into account the operational, technical and functional constraints of an activity and the susceptibility to a natural hazard when considering any resource consent application.

NH2.2.3 Explanation of Policies

The policies seek to provide a strategy for the development and effective use of a database for the avoidance, remedying and mitigation of the adverse effects of natural hazards. Further, the policies integrate the various Council functions as they relate to natural hazards.



The Resource Management Act 1991 obliges Council to address the cause and effects of flooding within the District and avoid, remedy or mitigate the hazard. It is not practical, either through regulation or by other means, to provide total security against all natural hazards. However, within areas where risk can be defined, such as within the Ohura Flood Hazard Overlay, it will be necessary to avoid or restrict subdivision and land use development.