



## SURFACE OF WATER - POLICY

### SW2.1 Introduction

One of Council's functions under the Act is the control of any actual or potential effects of activities in relation to the surface of water, including rivers and lakes.

There are a large number of waterways within the District. However, the Whanganui River is the only waterway where there are a significant number of activities occurring on the surface of water. These activities presently include commercially guided canoe tours, canoeing, commercial jet boat operations, freedom jet boat operations and motorised tour operations, to name a few.

With respect to the Whanganui River, the Whanganui River Control Bylaws 1991 had effect until March 2003, in accordance with Section 424(3) of the Act. The bylaw lapsed at that time and has not subsequently been extended.

Council recognises that there are a number of other authorities which have management roles with respect to water bodies in the District. Council does not seek to duplicate any of the existing controls or the roles of other authorities. At present the other principal authority is the Ministry of Transport (Maritime Safety Division) which administers the Maritime Transport Act 1994.

As a general principle, regulation should only be utilised when there are adverse environmental effects which need to be avoided, remedied or mitigated and it is the most efficient and effective method available. Many of the issues associated with activities on the surface of water are safety related which are more appropriately addressed by requiring registration of boats and guides and controlling behaviour through the Maritime Safety Regulations outlined above.

Other environmental effects are, however, generated that may be more appropriately addressed through the Resource Management Act 1991, such as noise.

It is recognised that the Whanganui River Māori Trust Board has a claim which has been heard by the Waitangi Tribunal. It is anticipated that, once the claim is resolved, there may be different management arrangements around the River and, as such, only limited provisions have been proposed at this time.

These provisions specify that all commercial motorised activities on the River require resource consent as a controlled activity. However, this limits Council's control to ensuring that activities do not create noise issues.

Development adjoining the River, for example, car parking and any tourist facilities, will need to comply with the relevant Zone provisions.

### SW2.2 Issue

- (a) Activities on the surface of water creating adverse noise effects.

#### SW2.2.1 Objective

- (a) To ensure noise levels of activities on surface waters, especially associated with commercial motorised activities, do not adversely affect amenity values.

**SW2.2.2 Policies**

- (a) To control noise levels on the water bodies within the District.

**SW2.2.3 Explanation of Policies**

The Whanganui River is a scenic and peaceful location, which is becoming a more popular tourist destination. The policy is designed to ensure that the values associated with the River are not compromised by noise from commercial motorboat operators.

**SW2.3 Issue**

- (a) Activities on the surface of water degrading the quality of the environment.

**SW2.3.1 Objective**

- (a) To ensure sustainable management of the surface of water resource

**SW2.3.2 Policies**

- (a) To require that adverse environmental effects of activities occurring in relation to the surface of water are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (b) To ensure activities in relation to the surface of water safeguard the life supporting capacity of water and ecosystems and the adverse environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (c) To ensure that new surface of water activities do not have adverse effects on the character of the water resource.

**SW2.3.3 Explanation of Policies**

The policies seek to ensure that the surface of water is managed sustainably.

**SW2.4 Issue**

- (a) Activities on the surface of water compromising the social and cultural wellbeing of people and the community and their health and safety.

**SW2.4.1 Objective**

- (a) To enable people and the community to utilise the surface of water resource to provide for their social and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety.

**SW2.4.2 Policies**

- (a) To recognise and provide for the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral water.
- (b) To recognise and provide for the social and cultural wellbeing of people and the community undertaking activities in relation to the surface of water.
- (c) To promote the health and safety of people undertaking activities in relation to the surface of water.



### SW2.4.3 Explanation of Policies

The health and safety of individuals participating in activities on the surface of water is an important consideration. Within the Ruapehu District there are a number of tourism related activities occurring on the surface of water and this number may increase.