

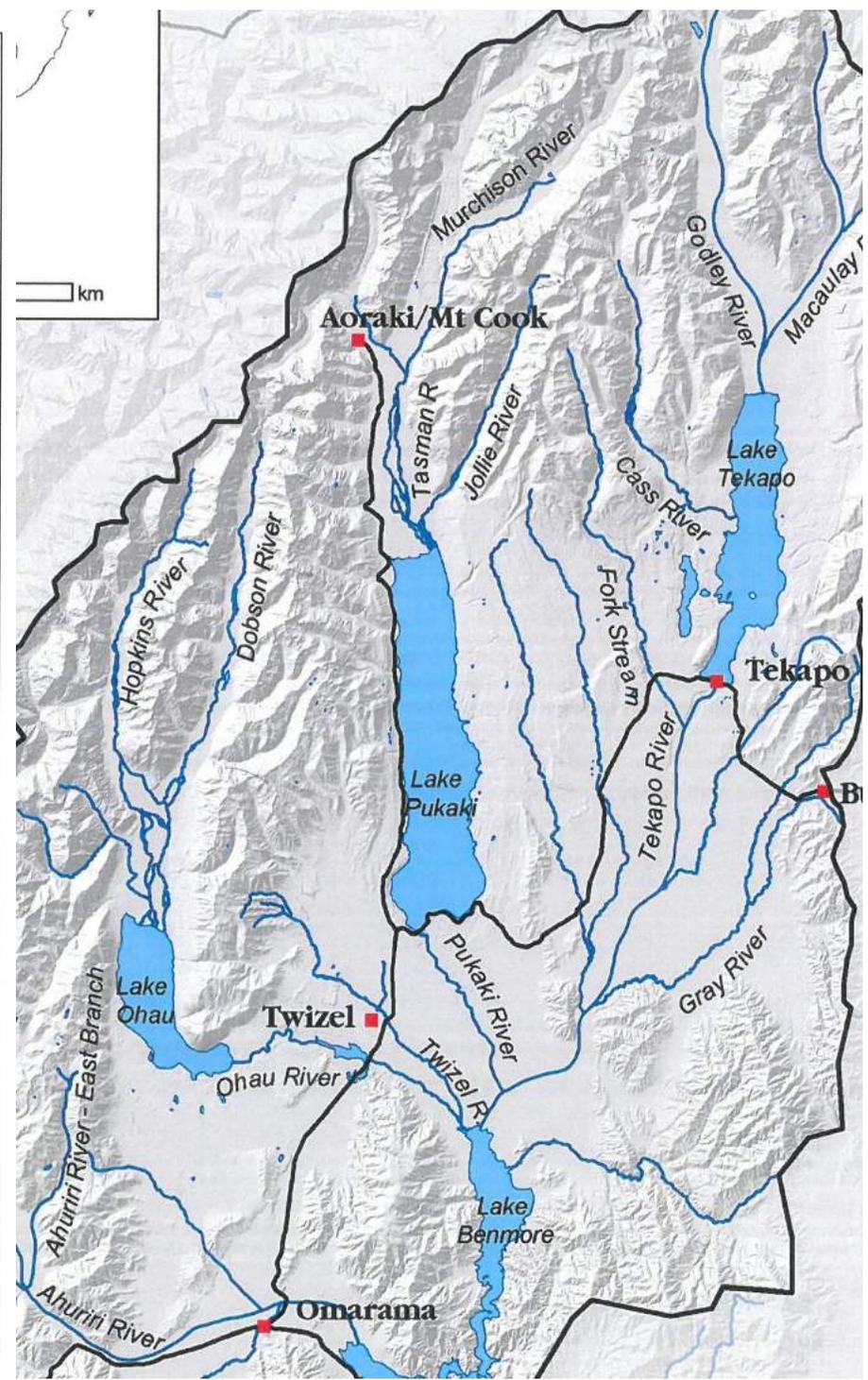
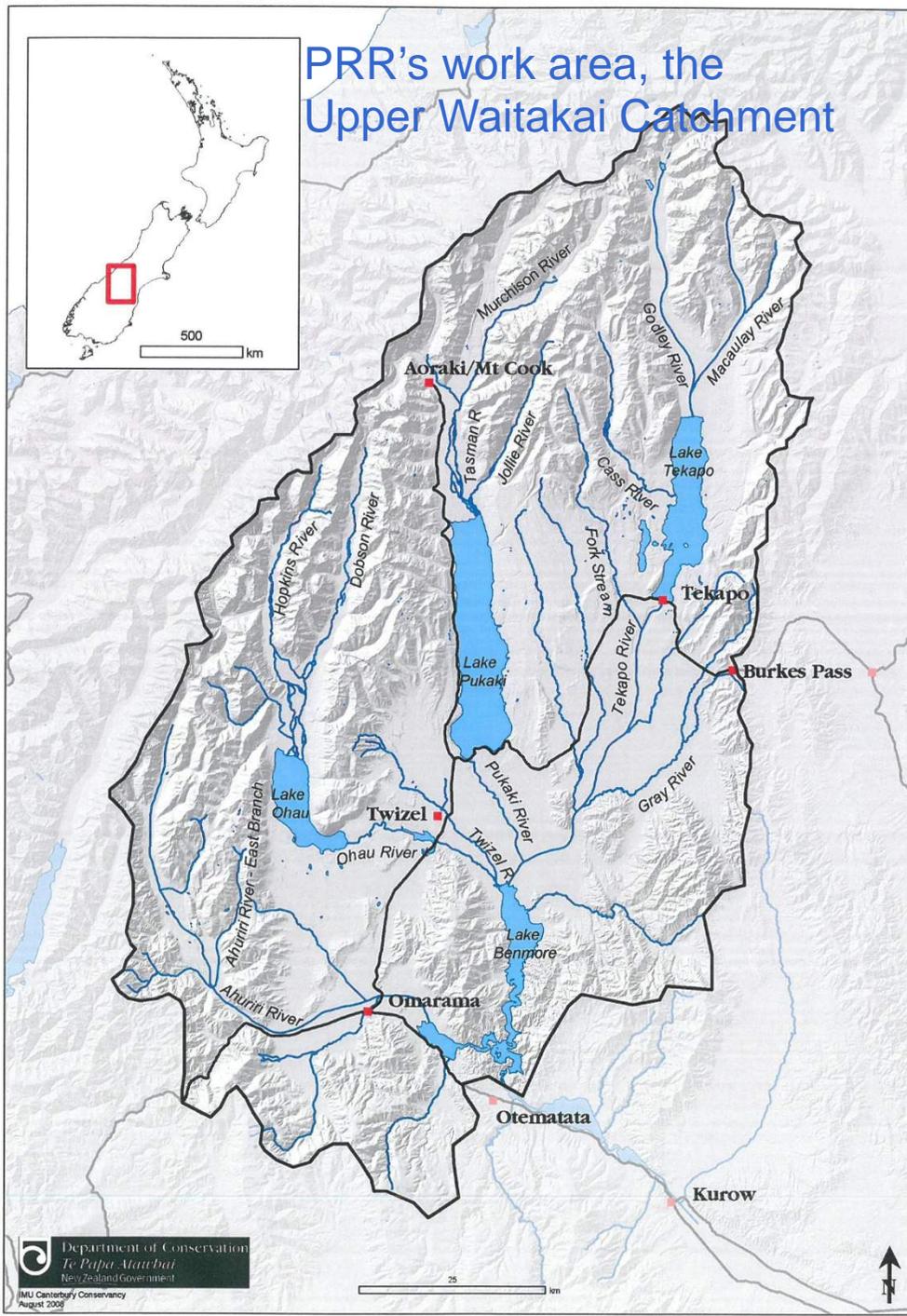
Project River Recovery after 25 years



What has changed?

BRaid, 31 May 2016
Aalbert Rebergen
Sr. Ranger PRR
Doc Twizel

PRR's work area, the Upper Waitakai Catchment



Project River Recovery

Strategic plan 2006-2012

PROJECT RIVER RECOVERY REPORT 04/05

Project River Recovery Strategic Plan 1998 – 2005

Project River Recovery Report 99/12

Kerry Brown & Mark Sanders

Department of Conservation, Private Bag, Twizel

December 1999

PROJECT RIVER RECOVERY REPORT 2015/01

Project River Recovery Strategic Plan

2012 – 2019

A.L. Rebergen and C.B. Woolmore

New Zealand Government

Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

 Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

PRR Strategic Plans:
? 1991-1998
Brown/Sanders 1998-2005
Woolmore/Sanders
2005-2012
Rebergen/Woolmore
2012-2019

PRR in the early days:

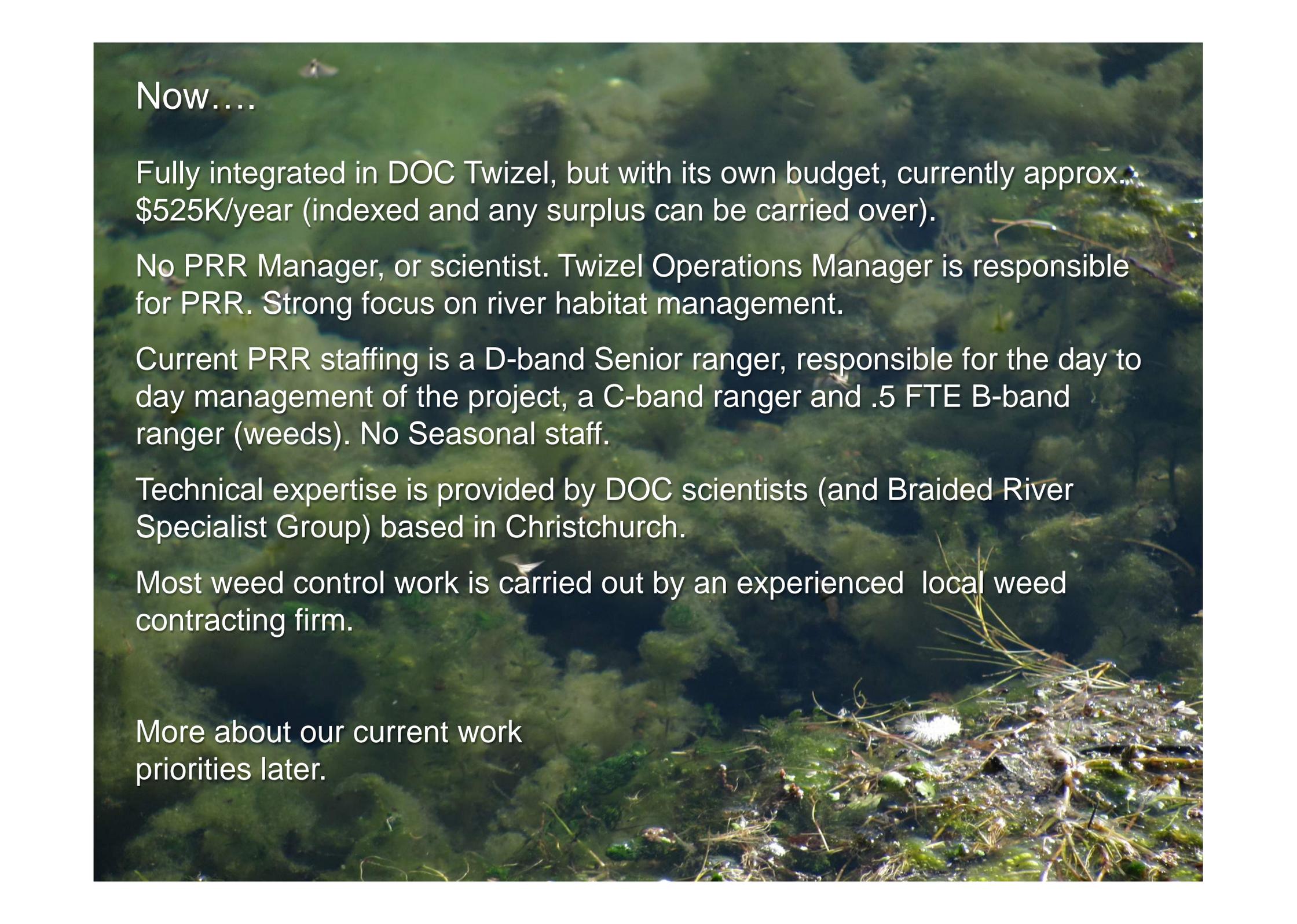
Run as an 'independent' project, with a PRR Manager, PRR Scientist and (up to four seasonal) staff. Bird focus.

Focus on research, survey & monitoring & ambitious large scale weed projects, often in compromised areas (Tekapo delta, lower Ahuriri).

All research published in peer reviewed journals. Strong participation from universities, students doing projects every year.

Some interpretation/education: media, signs, brochures.





Now....

Fully integrated in DOC Twizel, but with its own budget, currently approx. \$525K/year (indexed and any surplus can be carried over).

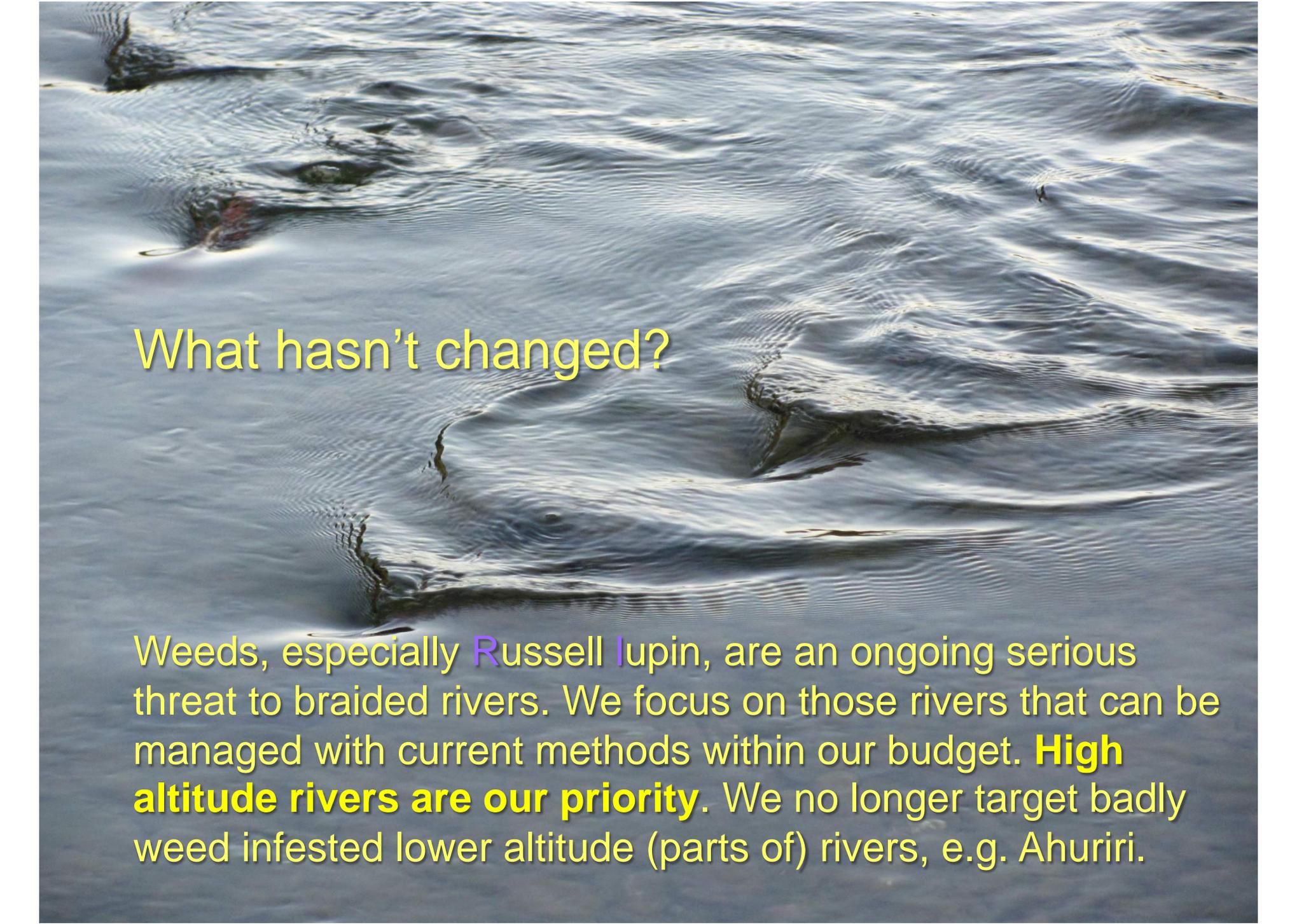
No PRR Manager, or scientist. Twizel Operations Manager is responsible for PRR. Strong focus on river habitat management.

Current PRR staffing is a D-band Senior ranger, responsible for the day to day management of the project, a C-band ranger and .5 FTE B-band ranger (weeds). No Seasonal staff.

Technical expertise is provided by DOC scientists (and Braided River Specialist Group) based in Christchurch.

Most weed control work is carried out by an experienced local weed contracting firm.

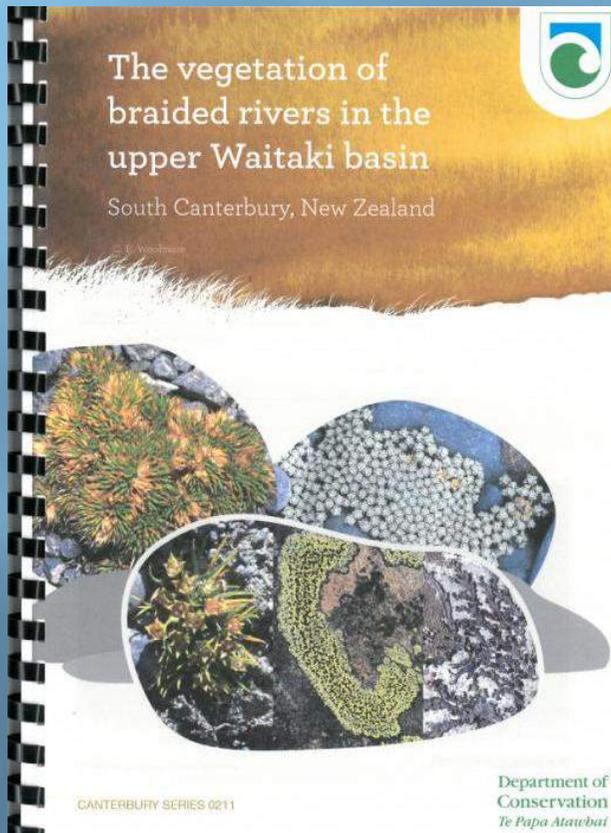
More about our current work priorities later.



What hasn't changed?

Weeds, especially Russell lupin, are an ongoing serious threat to braided rivers. We focus on those rivers that can be managed with current methods within our budget. **High altitude rivers are our priority.** We no longer target badly weed infested lower altitude (parts of) rivers, e.g. Ahuriri.

Quickly introducing some of our major rivers



Godley River

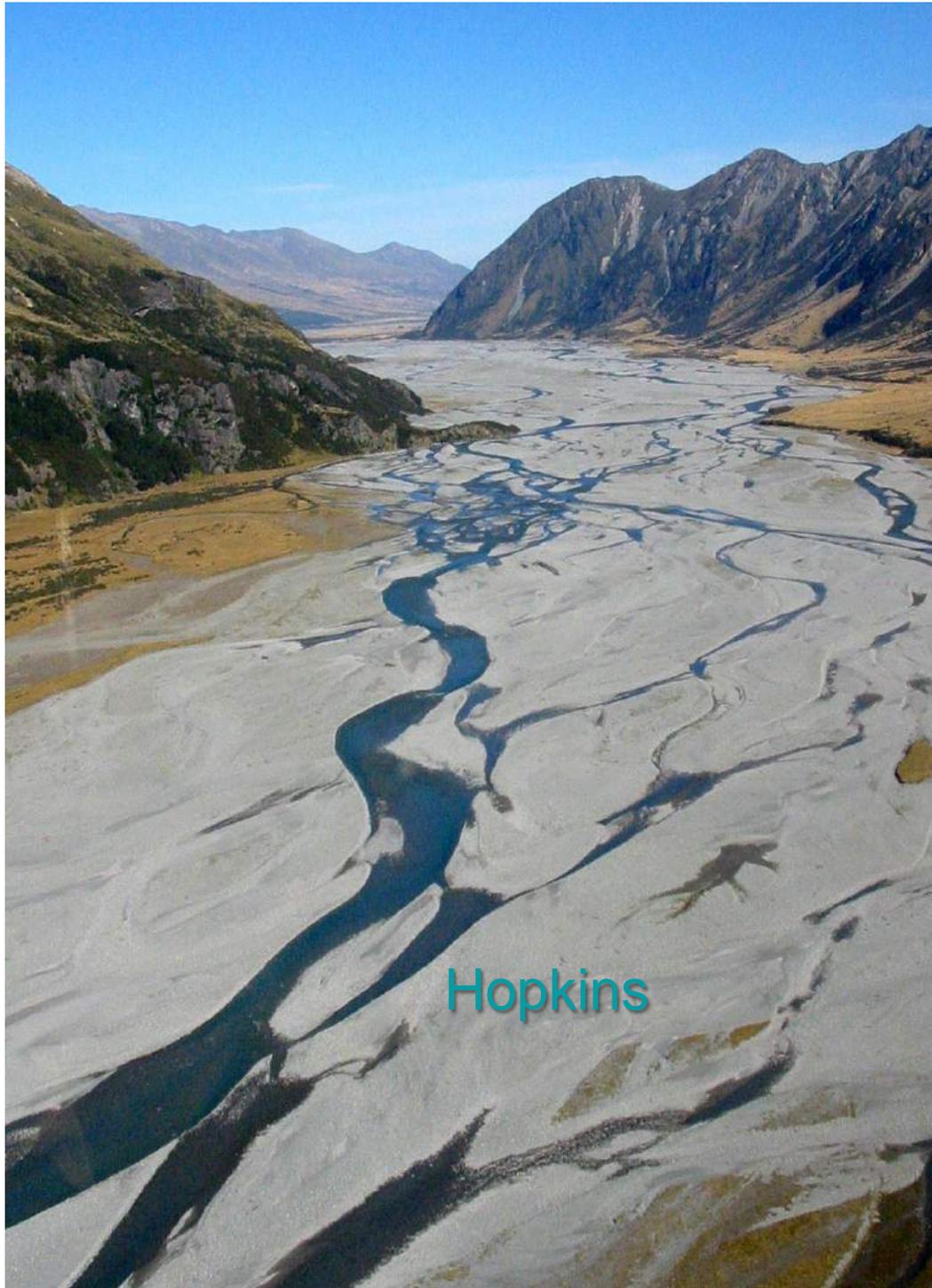




Upper Cass



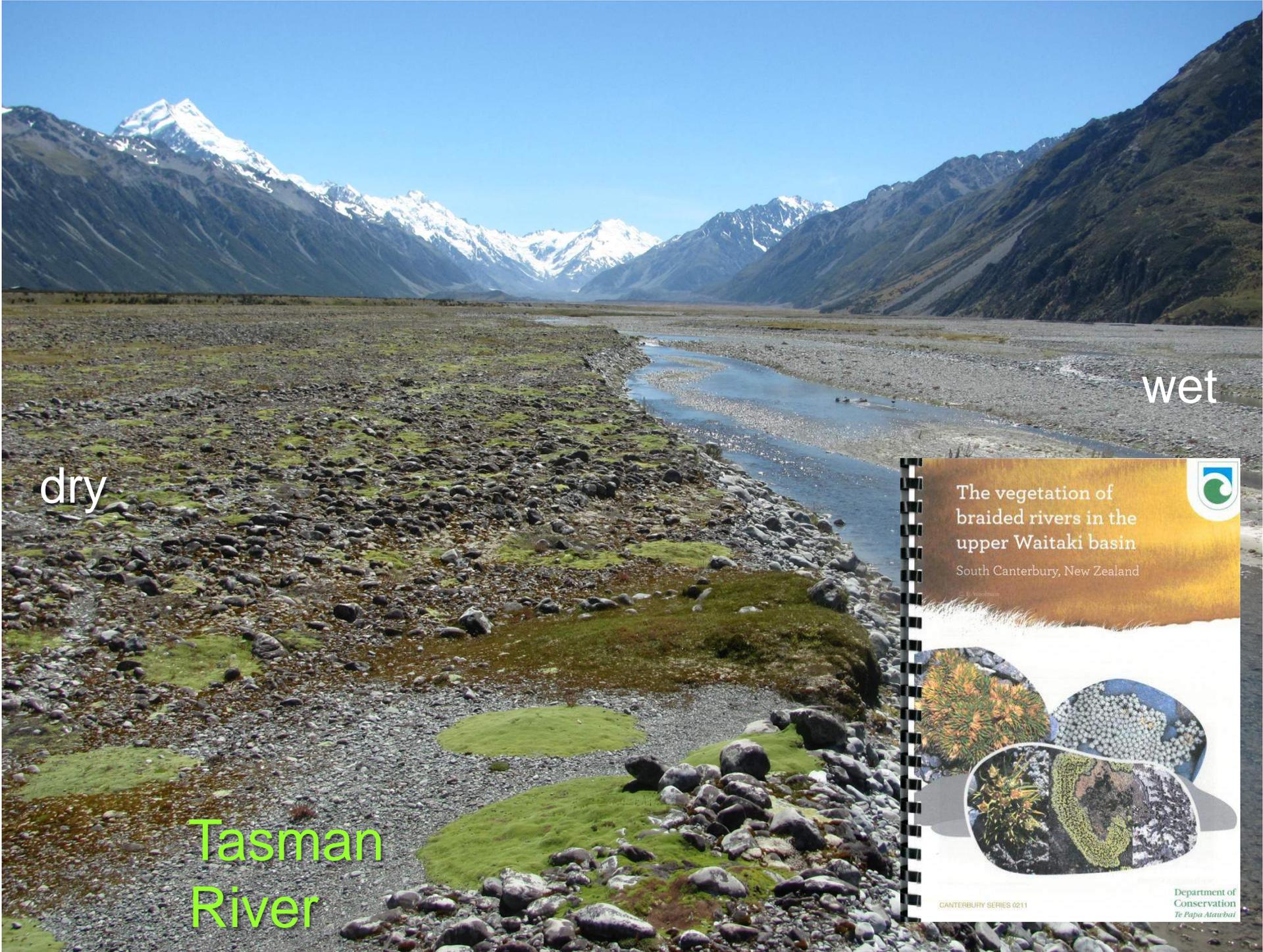
Lower Cass



Hopkins



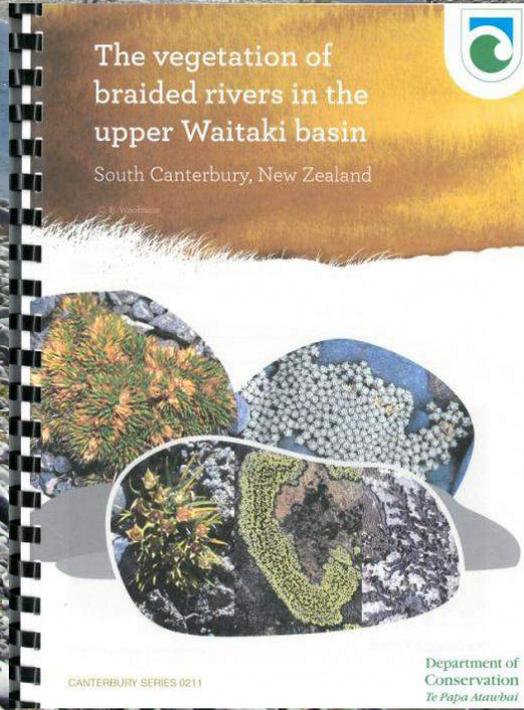
Murchison



dry

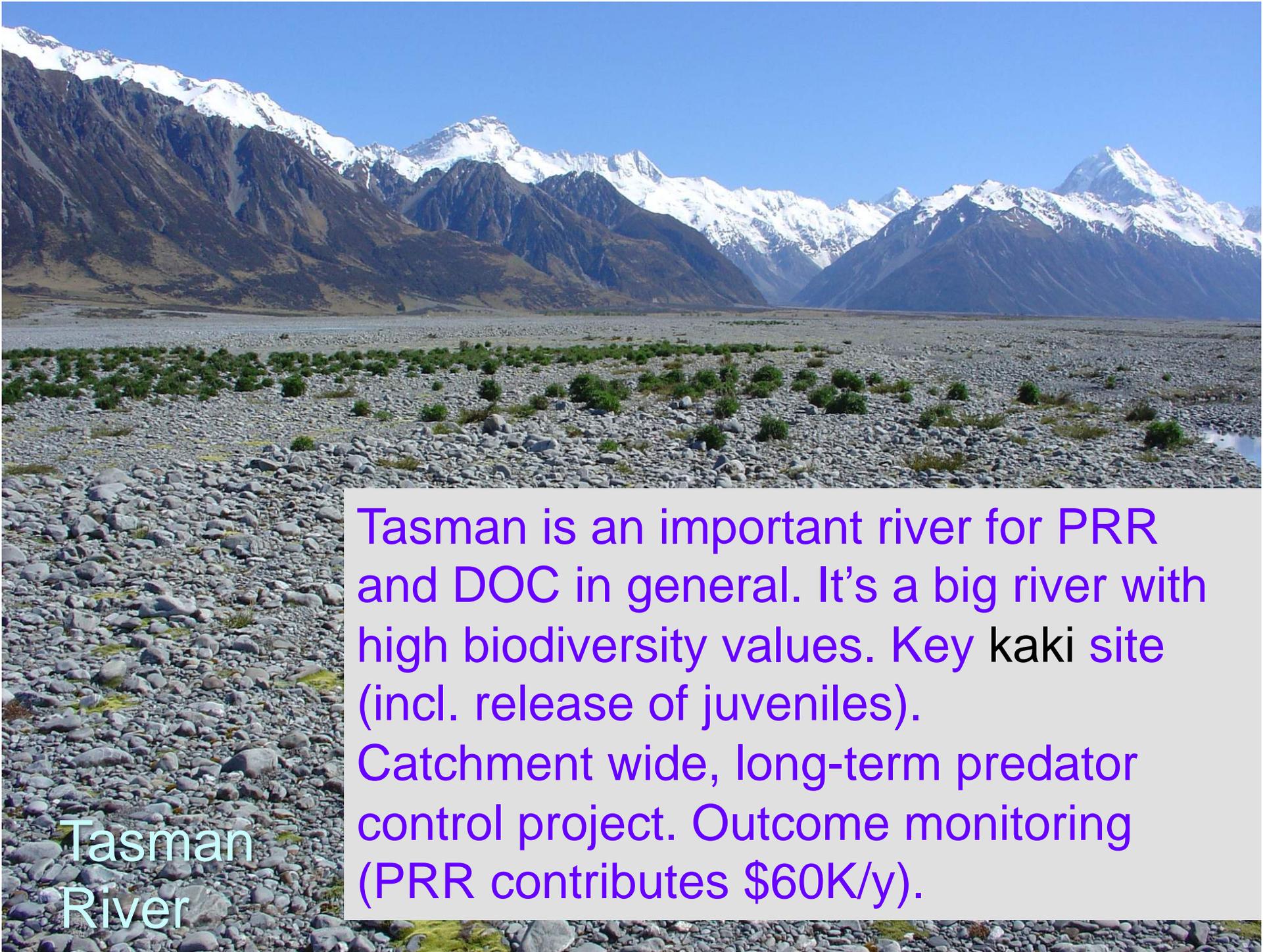
wet

Tasman
River



CANTERBURY SERIES 0211

Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Ataturangi



Tasman River

Tasman is an important river for PRR and DOC in general. It's a big river with high biodiversity values. Key kaki site (incl. release of juveniles). Catchment wide, long-term predator control project. Outcome monitoring (PRR contributes \$60K/y).

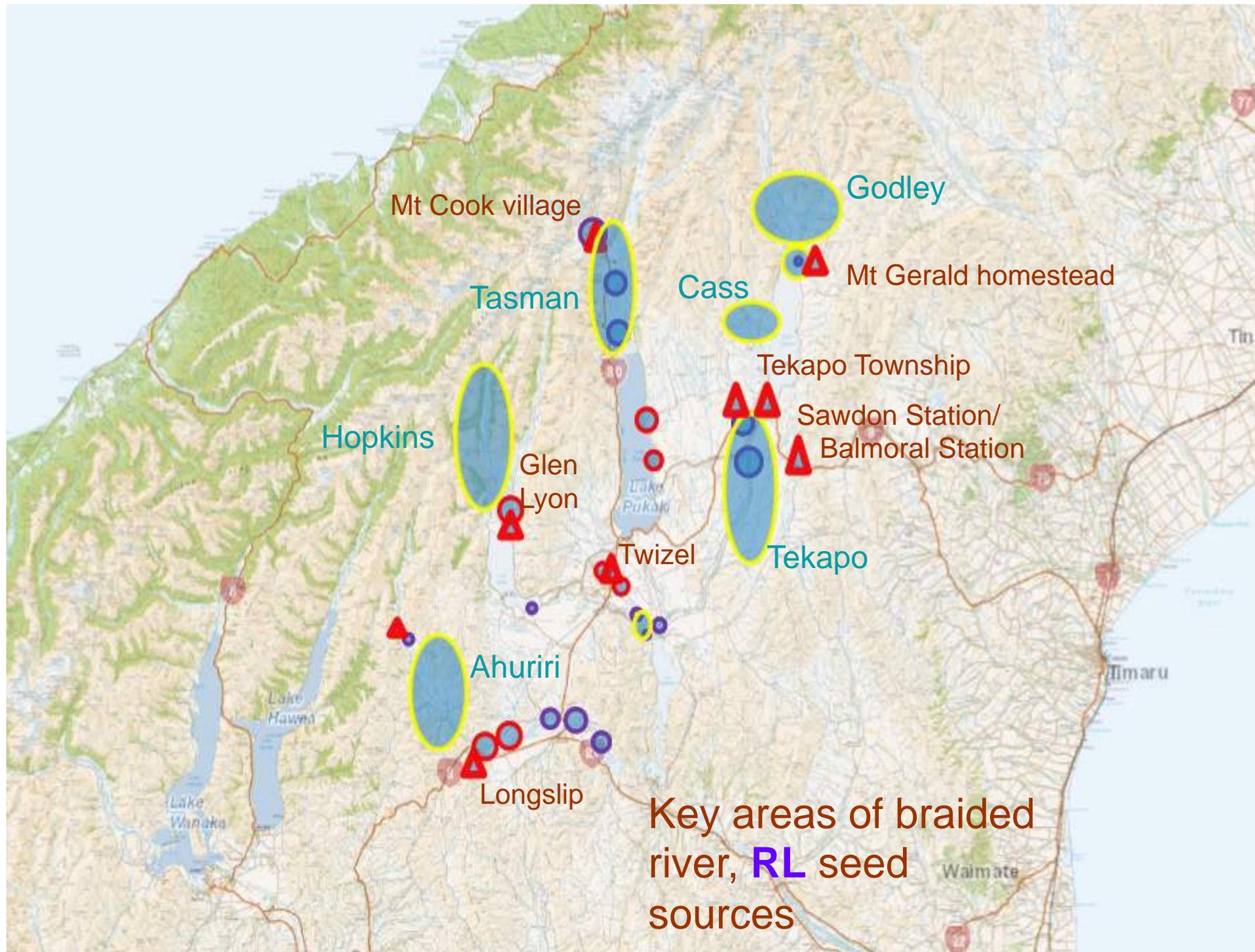


Tasman Russell lupins

PRR contractors \$40-\$50,000/y.

Plus additional DOC weed control

@ source = Mt Cook village

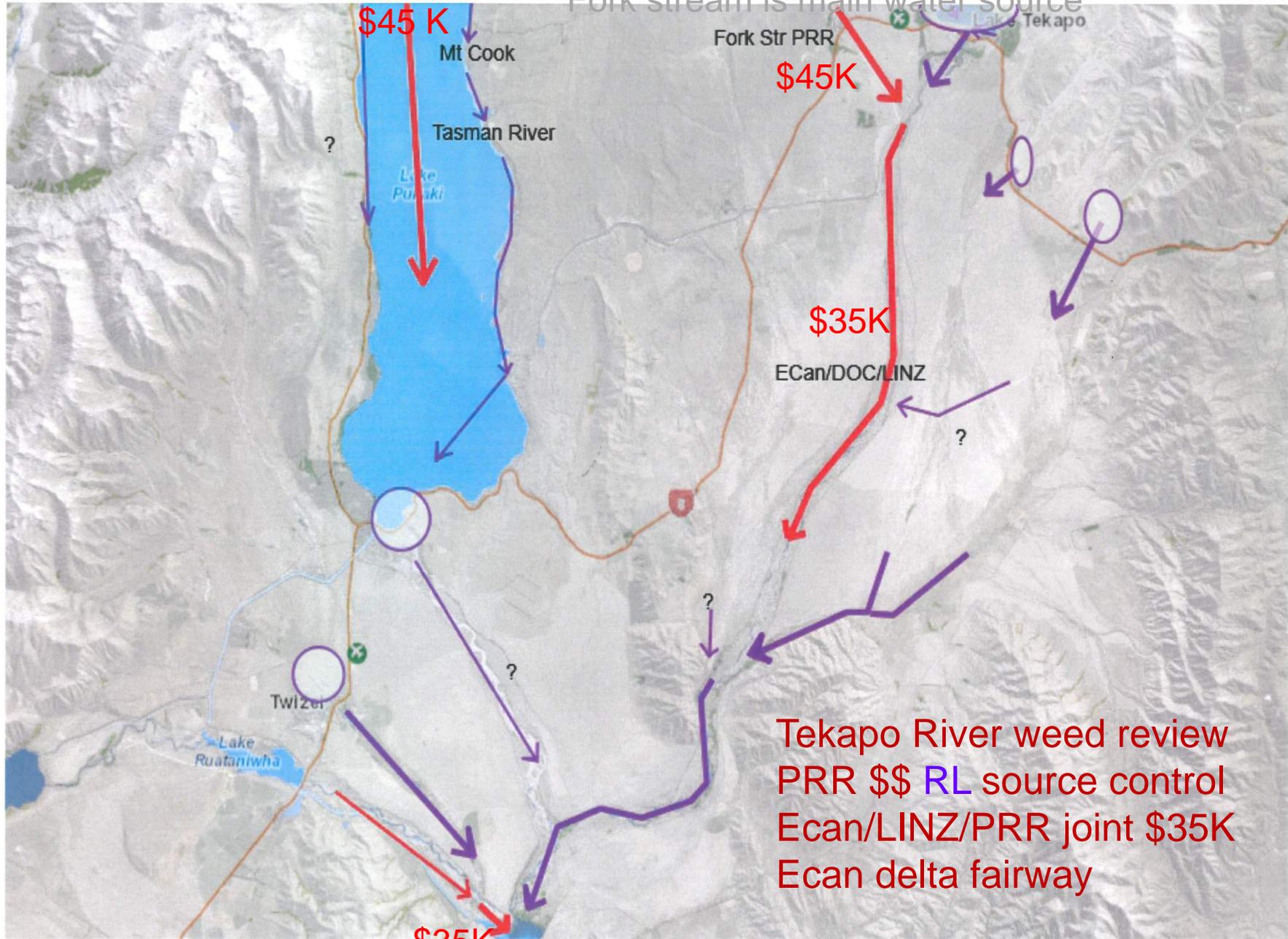




Lake Ohau southern lakeshore turf plant communities

Source of RL is Glen Lyon

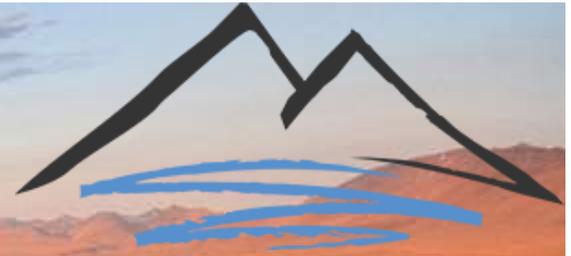
Fork stream is main water source



Tekapo River weed review
PRR \$\$ RL source control
Ecan/LINZ/PRR joint \$35K
Ecan delta fairway

\$35K

"10 reasons to love Lake Tekapo"



PLACES TO SEE
IN YOUR LIFETIME





Chicago Daily News - Wednesday, January 13, 1914

Tekapo lupins: 'A joy to behold'



When seeing Tekapo's lupines near Dunedin, photographer Richard Dainton the other day, was struck by the beauty of the scene.

The photograph, Tekapo Lupines, also won the gold medal in the landscape section of the competition. The photo was awarded by judges as an elegant synthesis of plants and nature, a kind of pastoral scene that is well by the hand of nature by the most beautiful fields in the Southern Alps.

According to the experts named as Mr. Bacon, the judges said the photo was "highly impressive and a joy to behold." In the opinion of the judges, the scene was the most beautiful of the kind in the world, with the most blue water to be found anywhere. It was the most beautiful of the kind in the world, with the most blue water to be found anywhere.

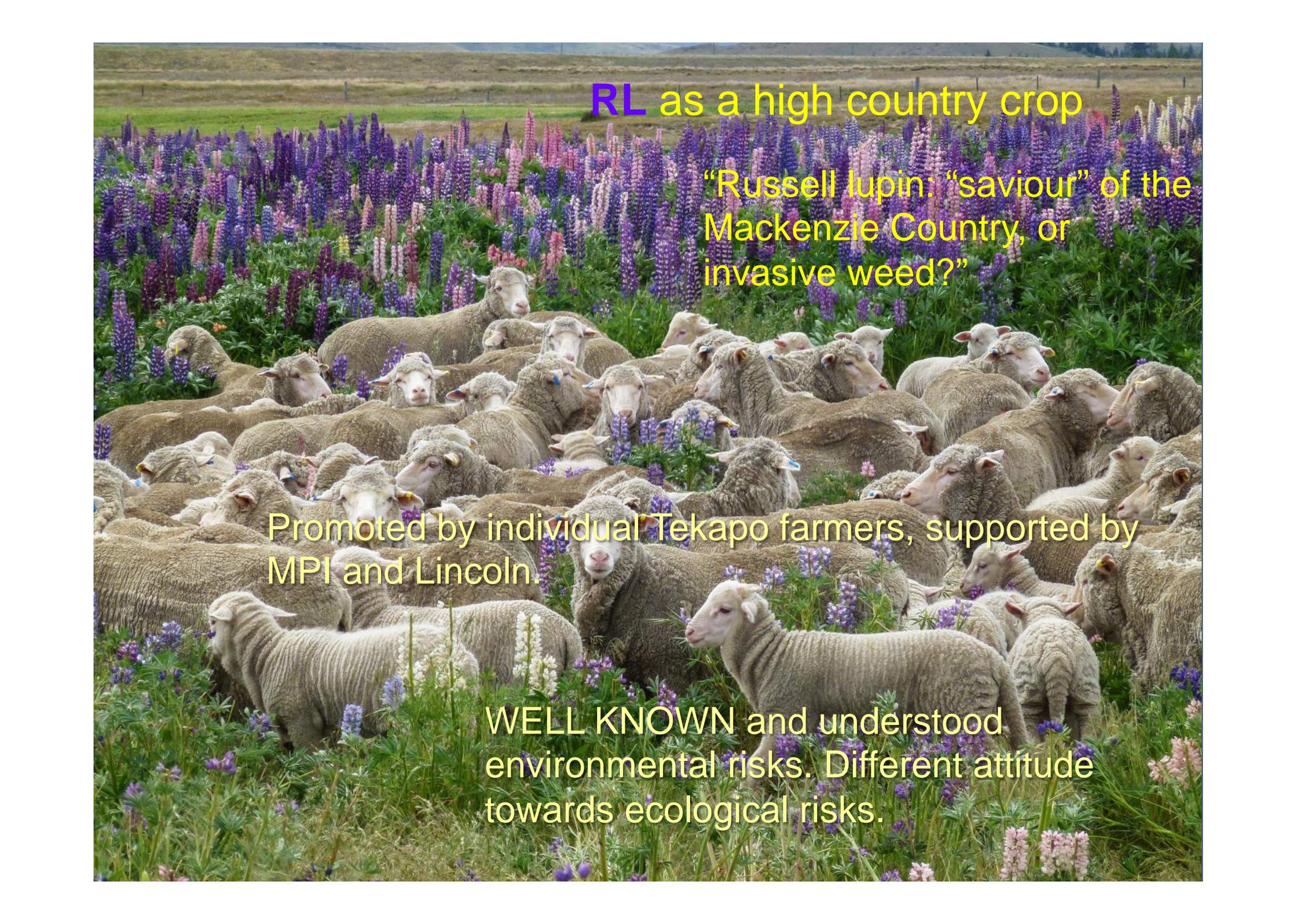
"A large number of such a prestige award," he said, "is a rare thing."

"It was the most beautiful of the kind in the world, with the most blue water to be found anywhere."

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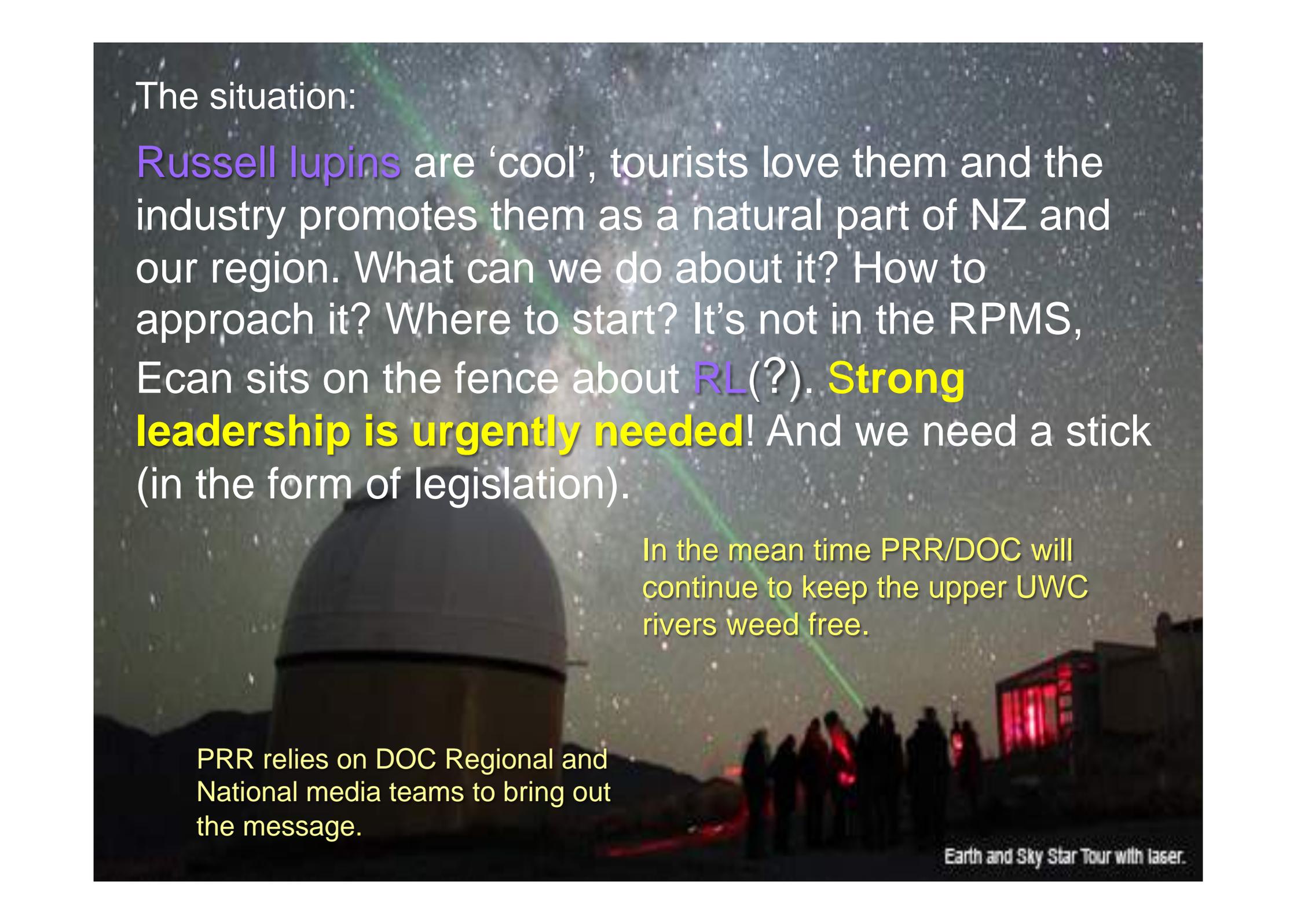
A large flock of sheep is grazing in a field of purple and pink lupines. The sheep are of various breeds, including some with horns. The field is densely packed with the flowers, and the background shows a rolling landscape under a clear sky.

RL as a high country crop

“Russell lupin: “saviour” of the Mackenzie Country, or invasive weed?”

Promoted by individual Tekapo farmers, supported by MPI and Lincoln.

WELL KNOWN and understood environmental risks. Different attitude towards ecological risks.



The situation:

Russell lupins are 'cool', tourists love them and the industry promotes them as a natural part of NZ and our region. What can we do about it? How to approach it? Where to start? It's not in the RPMS, Ecan sits on the fence about **RL(?)**. **Strong leadership is urgently needed!** And we need a stick (in the form of legislation).

In the mean time PRR/DOC will continue to keep the upper UWC rivers weed free.

PRR relies on DOC Regional and National media teams to bring out the message.

The RL challenge...

RL as a **high country crop**. Is it overrated?
Misrepresented? Irresponsible attitude by some
("I don't care", "it's already too late: the horse has bolted").

Icebreaker has acknowledged the threat of RL on rivers.

Key issue for PRR: HOW to keep them out of braided rivers and.... who's responsible to remove RL from braided rivers and dryland areas?

And...who is ultimately going to pay the \$\$\$?

How to stop the sale of RL seed to tourists;
how to prevent **the spread of seeds** in far away
places?

Remember the coastal rock cairns?

The locks on the Paris bridge?

Copy-cats. Social media.

The large influx in tourists
won't help our case.

Upper Ohau BFT project.

Intensive project, since 2009.

Predator control 1km radius from central BFT island colony.

Partly successful; but BFT predation events still occur on the island.

Colony size has grown since 2009 (to >350 nests).

Expensive (\$100K/y), labour intensive project, currently under review. To be completed prior to next season.





PRR's man-made wetlands

Ruataniwha Wetlands

Late 1990s, >10 ponds, spring-fed.
Kaki feeding & breeding
Bignose, lowland-longjaw galaxias

Ruataniwha wetlands

X

Upper Ruataniwha

Kaki captive breeding

Lower Ruataniwha

Ohau

Dysphania pusilla

Isolepis basilaris

Riccia cavernosa

Ephemeral wetlands:
Dysphania pusilla
Isolepis basilaris
Riccia cavernosa



PRR in 2016 (1 of 3).

- Weed control work – zero density high country rivers: Godley, Cass, Tasman, Hopkins, Upper Ahuriri.
- Key weed species Russell lupin, also false tamarisk, yellow tree lupin, willow, wilding conifers and.....?

- Immediately deal with any new infestations .5FTE plus contractors.
- Control weeds in significant habitat on other rivers, e.g. Tekapo, Ahuriri, Lake Ohau, Ohau River delta.

PRR in 2016 (2 of 3).

- Tasman River long-term catchment-wide predator control project. PRR contributes financially and technically.

- BFT project review and implement findings, e.g. continue scaled down Upper Ohau project and start new project on another river, e.g. Tekapo and/or Ahuriri.

- Improve man-made wetlands e.g. through better management.

(Re)Activate the PRR Liaison Committee, a stakeholder group

Lower Cass and Lake Tekapo

PRR in 2016 (3 of 3).

- 25 years PRR, book publication (author Neville Peat).
- Tasman River Invertebrate study – analysis and reporting.
- Ahuriri, Hopkins, Dobson River bird surveys, year 1 of 3.
- Godley River bird survey, year 3 of 3.
- investigate options & establish PRR Research Fund (\$20K).
- Promote relevant research, e.g. SBBG biology in UWC, work more closely with universities

Chenopodium detestans
Lake Tekapo





Thank
You

not forget that birds
depend >50% of their
habitat on braided rivers....

BRaid, 31 May 2016
Aalbert Rebergen
Sr. Ranger PRR
Doc Twizel