COLERIDGE

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT TRUST

Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust

Annual Summary of Activities

2025 – 2026

Table of Contents

Document Quality Assurance 3
Quality Statement 3
Executive Summary 4
Trust Background 4
The Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust 4
Objectives of the trust 4
Summary Details of the Trust 5
Functions of the Trust 7
Coordinator 7
Secretary 7
Chairman 7
Trustees 7
Financials 7
Project Development 7
Project Status Abbreviations 8
Project Summary 8
Scamander Wetland 10
Overview 10
Scamander Wetland Biodiversity 10
Scamander Wetland Financials 11
Lake Selfe Willow Eradication 12
Lake Selfe Financials 12
LINZ Braided River Weed Control 13
BRFP Coleridge Financial Information 13
Ecan Rakaia Gorge Biodiversity Protection Weed Project 14
Rakaia Gorge Funding 14
Predator Control 15
CHET Trapping 15
LINZ - Predator Control Programme 16
Lake Coleridge Aerial Pest Control 16
CHET Predator Control Funding 16
Relationships 16
Australasian Crested Grebe nesting platform 17
Eel protection 17
Signage/Interpretation 17
Thank you to Farm Managers and Volunteers 18

Document Quality Assurance

This document has been prepared for the benefit of the Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust (CHET). No liability is accepted by the Trust or any employee or sub-consultant of the Trust with respect to its use by any other person.

This Annual Report highlights the activities carried out by the Trust for the year 2025/2026; the CHET audited accounts are managed by the Selwyn District Council audit process.

The Financial Statement is prepared by the CHET Secretary, and this Annual Report is prepared by the CHET Co-Ordinator.

This report is as per Ther Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust Deed; 8.0 *Annual Report and Accounts.*

This disclaimer shall apply notwithstanding that the plan may be made available to other persons for an application for permission or approval to fulfil a legal requirement.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, the financial information provided in this application accurately reflect the financial position of The Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust as of 31 August 2026.

The projected budgets and forecasts are based on reasonable assumptions current at the time of preparation. While all reasonable care has been taken to ensure accuracy, The Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust accepts no liability for any inadvertent errors or omissions contained herein.

Quality Statement

CHET Coordinator		Project Management Officer
Andrew Welsh		

Prepared By		
Andrew Welsh	----------	……/……/……

Reviewed By		
Donna Field	----------	……/……/……

Revisions to this Report

Revision Number	Date	Description	Signature or Typed Name		
			Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By
1	9/26	Amended Draft	AW	AW	

Executive Summary

Trust Background

On the 29th June 1998 an agreement was negotiated between the Electric Corporation of New Zealand (ECNZ) and stakeholders for the formation and support of a Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust (the 'Trust'). A deed document set out the details of the Trust, including its objectives, membership, funding and administrative structure, powers and a potential work plan.[1]

The formation of the Trust evolved from a process undertaken by ECNZ-the then owners of the Lake Coleridge power scheme - to renew its legal authority to operate under the Resource Management Act (1991). This process required the Corporation to secure a series of resource consents from the Canterbury Regional Council and the Selwyn District Council.

These consents required explicit attention to be given to the impacts of the Coleridge power scheme on the local environment. Through a pre-application working party process it became apparent that a number of concerns expressed by affected parties would be best managed through the support of enhancement initiatives. This situation encouraged ECNZ to negotiate the formation and upfront financial support of a habitat trust as an extra-consent project.[2]

The Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust

The Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust comprises key environmental stakeholders of the Coleridge area. They are the consent holder Contact Energy/*Te Mata Hiko*, Minister of Conservation/*Te Papa Atawhai,* Selwyn District Council/*Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o Waikirikiri,* the North Canterbury Fish and Game Council, the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society/*Te Reo o te Taiao*, North Canterbury Federated Farmers (Inc.) representative (chosen from a local Landcare group) and a *Te Runanga Ngai Tahu* nominee. Although established during a resource consent process the Trust is not the subject of any specific conditions. This means that the Trust has autonomy from the resource consent process and may exist beyond their expiry date, which is in 2031.

Objectives of the trust

The objectives of the Trust are described in Section 3 of the Trust deed. In summary they are:

1. Support projects within the Lake Coleridge catchment that create, enhance and /or maintain habitat for freshwater flora and fauna:

    (a) The identification and evaluation of areas deemed worthy of protection, restoration, improvement, creation or procurement primarily as freshwater flora and fauna habitat within the Lake Coleridge area, and which safeguards the life supporting capacity of the Harper, Acheron, Wilberforce and Rakaia rivers and lake Coleridge itself.

    (b) To negotiate, where appropriate, to secure the protection, restoration, improvement, creation, or procurement of freshwater habitat with landowners.

    (c) Adopt further measures, where deemed appropriate, to provide for matters set out in Section. 5(2)/a), 5(2)/c), 6(0), 6(c), 6(d), 7(a), 7(c), 7(f) and 7(h) of the Resource Management Act (1991), in recognition of the effects of the Coleridge Power Station.[3]

---

[1] The Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust 29 June 1998

[2] Lake Coleridge Opportunities and Strategies for Habitat Enhancement (McCallum 2009)

[3] RMA 5(2)(a) refers to "Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonable foreseeable need of future generations"; 5(2)(c) to "Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment"; 6(a) to "The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment(including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development"; 6(c) to "The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna"; 6(d) to "The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers"; 7(a) "Kaitiakitanga "; 7(c) to "The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values"; 7(f) to "Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment"; and 7 (h) to "The protection of the habitat of trout and salmon".

Summary Details of the Trust

History: Legal agreement with ECNZ lead to declaration of the Trust in June 1998

Membership: Limited to seven representatives, members from the consent holder, Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu, North Canterbury Fish and Game Council, Minister of Conservation, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, Selwyn District Council and North Canterbury Federated Farmers (selected from membership of a local Landcare group).

Funding: $240,000 at inception.

Focus/Objectives: The identification, evaluation and support for activities that promote the freshwater flora and fauna habitats of the Coleridge area and the associated life supporting capacity of the lake and surrounding riverine systems.

The Trust was specifically formed to mitigate impacts of activities permitted by the Resource Consents. These Resource Consents relate to the taking and diverting of water, discharging of water, disturbing the beds of rivers, managing the levels of lake Coleridge and using water for hydroelectric generation purposes.

In addition the Rakaia Water Conservation Order (WCO) was amended in 2013 which allowed for water storage in Lake Coleridge for both hydroelectric power generation and irrigation, provided certain conditions were met. This change was made to support The Lake Coleridge Hydroelectric Power Scheme which connects to irrigation schemes like Central Plains Water.

Man-made changes affecting the surrounding braided rivers for the Power Station operation are highlighted in the Trust Deed along with the proposal to mitigate the impacts of activities permitted by the Resource consents.

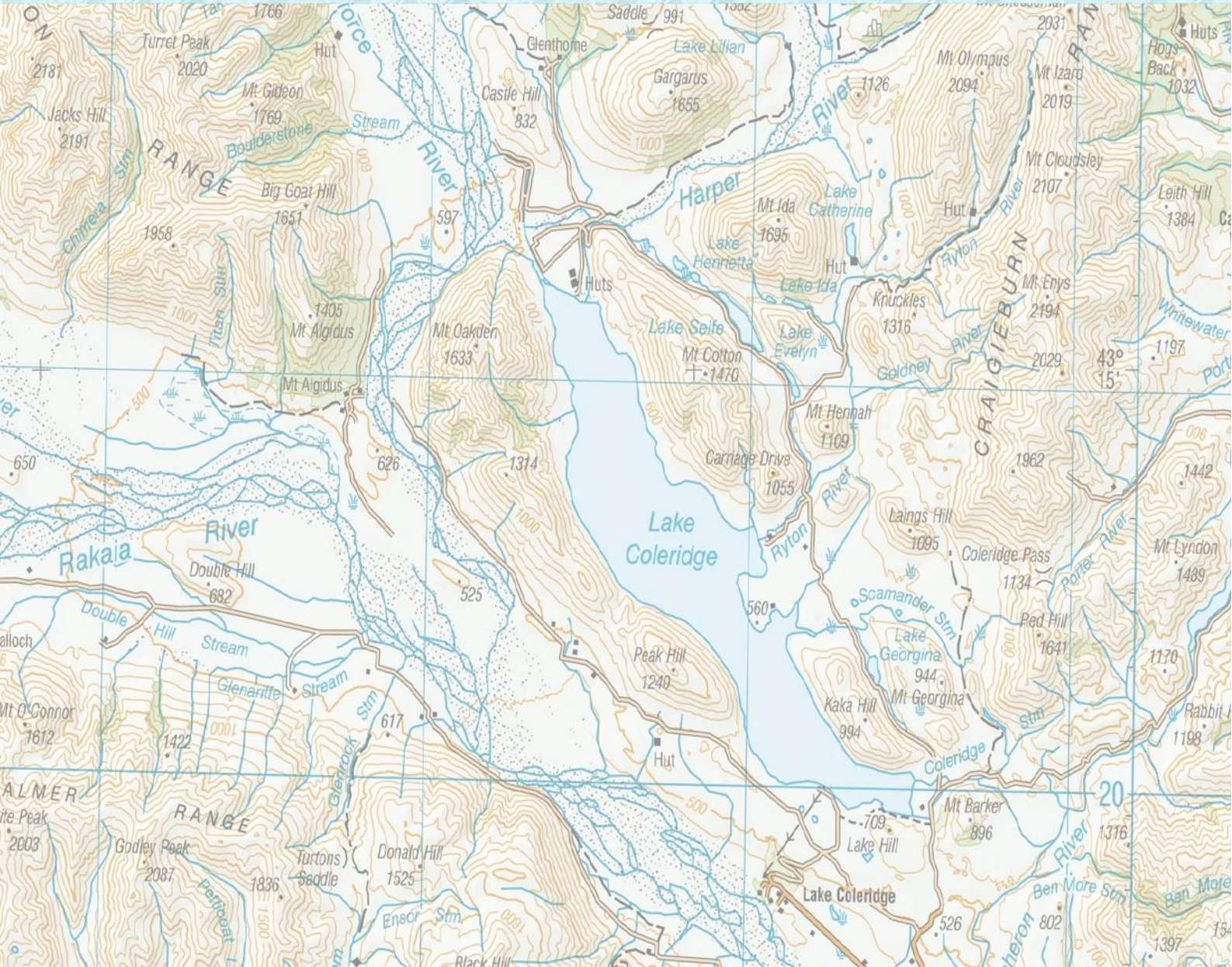
The geographic boundaries of the Trust are not specified in the deed beyond reference to Lake Coleridge and surrounding waterways. The habitat focus is broad and emphasises enhancing the life-supporting capacity of freshwater flora and fauna in both Lake Coleridge and the surrounding natural systems.

The key works (recommended through the original AEE) to be undertaken by CHET are to mitigate some of the environmental effects identified as a result of the hydroelectric power scheme.

CHET is committed to its core role of protection, restoration and improvement of freshwater habitat in the Lake Coleridge area and looks forward to continuing this essential work.

Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust

'To identify and evaluate areas worthy of protection, restoration, improvement, creation, or procurement primarily as freshwater flora and fauna habitat within the Whakamatau/Lake Coleridge Catchment and to safeguard the life supporting capacity of the Harper, Acheron, Wilberforce and Rakaia Rivers and Lake Coleridge'



Functions of the Trust

The CHET Summary of Activities is for the period 2025 – 2026.

Coordinator

Andrew Welsh was employed as the Coordinator in 2023; the key deliverables for the coordinator are stakeholder relationships, funding (including contract management), predator control, weed control, communication and signage.

Secretary

CHET has engaged the services of a secretary from its inception until present. Yvonne (Evie) Cookson was employed as CHET Secretary following the resignation of Judith Pascoe 2025.

Chairman

The previous Chairman was Bob Mugford, Bob served two terms on the Malvern Community Board prior to three terms as a Selwyn Councillor. Bob did not stand for re-election in 2025 and therefore stood down from his role as CHET Chair. Donna Field (CHET representative for Forest and Bird) was voted in by the CHET Trustees following Bobs resignation.

Trustees

• Selwyn District Council	Councillor Samuel Wilshire
• Manawa Energy	Ryan Kane
• Department of Conservation	Dean Turner
• Landowners	Rebecca Rose
• Fish & Game	Matthew Garrick
• Forest & Bird	Donna Field (Chairperson)

Financials

CHET invested the Trust Deed Funds with Peak Solutions Financial Advisors (Christchurch). Historically the Trust's investments were comprised of a Fisher Funds Growth portfolio, offset by a custom portfolio with mainly income investments, i.e. fixed interest and cash. The net position in terms of overall Asset Allocation was a portfolio somewhere in-between Moderately Conservative and Balanced.

This Annual Report highlights the activities carried out by the Trust for the year 2025/2026; the CHET audited accounts are managed by the Selwyn District Council audit process and the Financial Statement is prepared by the CHET Secretary and presented to the Trustees at the AGM.

Project Development

In 2009, the Trust commissioned a report by Wayne McCallum that would allow CHET to “adopt a more focused and strategic approach to its work”.

The report was organised into 4 sections:

1. Background introduction to the Trust and Lake Coleridge.

2. An identification of key species, their habitats, threats to them, and enhancement opportunities.

3. Discussion of ideas and approaches for organising the Trusts future activities.

4. Conclusions and recommendations.

The CHET Coordinator has previously enabled the Trust to develop a project and priority order list for projects which included development of management plans for each site where the Trust supports habitat work.

The project list (developed in 2019) was ranked (1 being the highest priority) as follows:

Project	Description	Priority	Status
Wetland/lake/stream Restoration	Scamander Wetland – wilding pine spraying	17	COM
	Scamander stream – weeds, fence, no more sports fish	4	WIP
	Lake Stream restoration	22	WIP
	Catchment Wetlands – general conservation	10	WIP
	Crested Grebes – re-intro habitat around water edge	7	WIP
	Willow eradication and replanting in LC Stream (Acheron)	12 4	WIP
Forest remnants	Acheron Bush – pest control, fencing, legal protection	15	NS
	Forest remnants – identify and protect	3	NS
Pest control	Pests: general control in catchment	5	WIP
	Crested Grebes – use of nesting platform	23	WIP
	Crested grebes – increase trapping	18	WIP
Weed control	Catchment-wide willow and pine control	11	WIP
	Riverbed weeds – Lower Harper and Wilberforce[4]	13	NS
	Common weeds – control in catchment	14	WIP
	Less common weeds – control from spread	21	NS
Signage	Crested Grebes – signage at Lake Selfe	24	COM
	Signage for river birds	8	COM
Fish	Long & short finned eels[5]	5	NS
	Sports fish	19	NS
	Native fresh water fish	2	NS
Surveys	Crested grebes – surveys	9	COM
	Lizards and terrestrial invertebrates: surveys	1	COM
	Knobbled weevil – survey, spear grass protect, pests	1	COM
Wider area habitat protection	Lake Coleridge Island restoration	20	NS
	4WD use – control in sensitive habitats	16	NS

Project Status Abbreviations

WIP	Work In Progress	*Active Work Underway.*
NS	Not Started	*The project is scoped but work has not begun.*
PLN	Planning Underway	*Planning/Scope is underway.*
NS	Not Started	No planning/Scope works have started.
COM	Completed	*The project, as initially scoped, is formally closed.*

Collaborating and partnering with local landowners, Contact Energy, the Department of Conservation, Environment Canterbury, Land Information NZ, Fish and Game, and the Selwyn District Council is essential in the work that CHET undertakes to to protect and enhance the natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and habitats in the Lake Coleridge and surrounding braided river areas of the area.

Project Summary

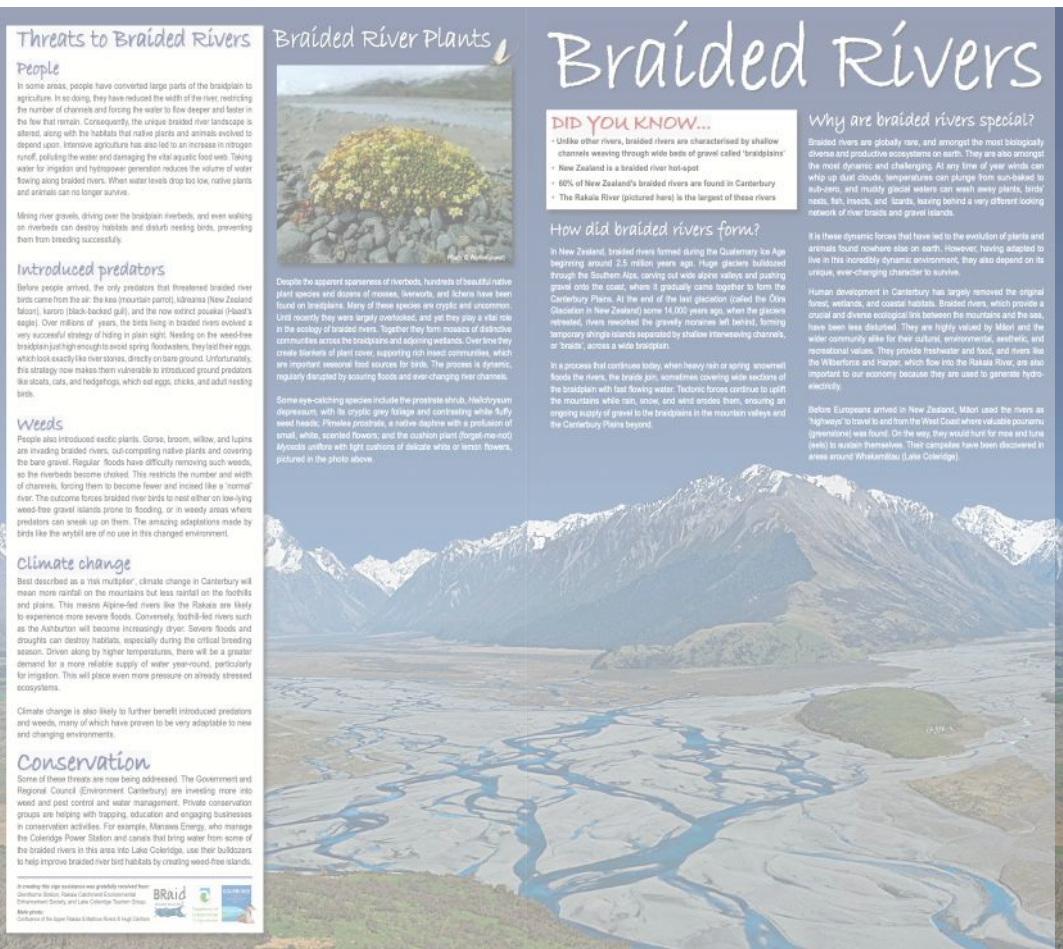
The following section lists the key projects that CHET has supported and/or undertaken for the period 2025 – 2026.

[4] Currently part of the Upper Rakaia Weed Management Strategy
[5] Work is currently being undertaken by Contact Energy

Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust

Project Funding

2025-2026



Scamander Wetland

Overview

This project is the key CHET 'Flagship' project which has been undertaken in collaboration with Ecan.

This project represents the key objectives set out in the Trust Deed, has required significant investment and highlights the commitment of the Trust to protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment within the Lake Coleridge area.

The Scamander Wetland sits on the south-eastern edge of the Lake Coleridge/Whakamatau, one of Selwyn District's most popular high-country lakes.

It is an ecologically significant, scenic wetland which serves as a vital habitat for indigenous vegetation and native wildlife, functioning as an essential part of the broader braided river system of the region.

The Coleridge catchment, specifically that in the immediate locale of the Scamander Wetland segment, has historically been dominated by sheep and beef high-country station operations. Aggressive invasive species like crack willow and wilding conifers began dominating the wetland edges, outcompeting indigenous vegetation, altering natural hydrology, and threatening native wildlife habitats.

To combat environmental degradation, CHET and Ecan have undertaken targeted weed eradication programs. Backed by initiatives that include CHET funding, the Ecan CWMS Action Plan Fund, the Ecan Wilding Conifer Delivery Lead and Ecan Zone committee funding, investment and efforts are continuing with the aim to restore the wetland's natural function and biodiversity.

Scamander Wetland Biodiversity

Invertebrates

- Ranger dragonfly - *Procordulia smithii.*
- Kerewai - Mānuka beetle - *Pyronota festiva.*
- Mayfly – *Delitidium spp.*
- Caddisfly (cased) – *Hudsonema.*
- (Stonefly) – *Austroperla*.
- *Austropeplea tomentosa.*
- *Gyraulus corinna.*
- *Lynmaea stagnalis.*
- *Pisidium casertanum.*
- *Eylais waikawae.*

Hemiptera

- *Microvelia macgregori.*
- *Anisops.*
- *Sigara.*
- *Aphididae.*
- *Cercopidae.*

Trichoptera

- *Leptoceridae.*
- *Triplectides cephalotes.*
- *Pycnocentrodes sp.*

Avian Fauna

- Pūtangitangi - Paradise shelduck - *Tadorna variegate.*
- Kārearea - New Zealand falcon - *Falco novaeseelandiae.*
- Korimako - Bellbird - *Anthornis melanura.*
- Crested Grebe - *Podiceps cristatus australis.*

Fish

- Longfined eel - *Anguilla dieffenbachii.*
- Shortfinned eel - *Anguilla australis.*
- Common bully - *Gobiomorphus cotidianus.*
- Upland bully - *Gobiomorphus breviceps.*
- Galaxid - *Galaxias brevipinnis.*

Scamander Wetland Financials

Between 2025 and 2026, CHET has contributed $20,000 to the Scamander project, an additional $30,000 has been granted by the Ecan CWMS Fund for the period 2026/2027 and the Ecan Wilding Conifer Delivery Lead have agreed in principal to an additional $30,000 towards the weed eradication programme

Date	Description	Amount
2025	Willow & Conifer invasion of Scamander Stream within the wetland	$20,000 (CHET)
2026	Willow & Conifer invasion of Scamander Stream within the wetland[6]	$33,000 (CWMS)
2026	Conifer invasion of Scamander Stream within the wetland[7]	$30,000 (Ecan Wilding Conifer)

[6] CHET was successful in securing $33,000 from the contestable Ecan CWMS fund. For FY 26/27.
[7] The Ecan Wilding Conifer Delivery Lead have agreed in principal to an additional $30,000 towards the weed eradication programme for the FY 26/27

Lake Selfe Willow Eradication

Lake Selfe is a small (81 acres) long and narrow lake, set between Mt Ida and Mt Cotton; its altitude is 1,950 feet and it very seldom freezes over. Lake Selfe It differs from the other lakes in this series being particularly deep and without extensive shallow marginal wetlands.

The lake is a Wildlife Refuge and is considered the most important of the 'Lake Coleridge lakes' as grebe habitat (Cromarty & Scott 1995) and is a highly fished trout fishery. Steep banks limit the extent of fringing wetlands. About 40% of the catchment is low producing grassland.

Lake Selfe is largely in good ecological condition. However, the Southern/road edge of the lake had a thick lining of crack willow and it was foreseen for this continue spreading if it was not controlled; the control of crack willow allows for native regeneration to occur and further provide habitat for native birds and invertebrates.

This was one of the first CHET 'directly managed' projects; Norton Contracting were engaged to undertake the works which consisted of drill/fill (using Glyphosate) all mature trees. Follow up work (regenerating stems etc) has been undertaken by Downers who are engaged by LINZ for the BRFP.

Lake Selfe Willows prior to Control

Lake Selfe Willows post Control

Lake Selfe Financials

This project is fully funded by CHET.

Date	Description	Amount
2025	Willow maintenance of Lake Selfe	$5,000

LINZ Braided River Weed Control

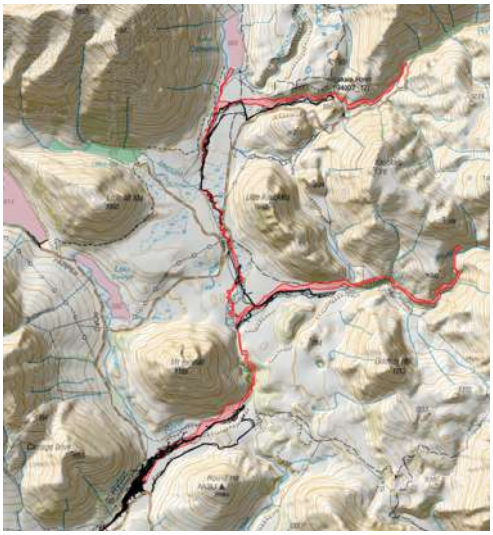
Since 2013, coordinated weed control within the riverbeds of the upper Rakaia River catchment, tributaries and adjacent land has been delivered under the Braided Rivers Flagship Programme. (BRFP) funded by multiple agencies: Toitū te Whenua | Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), Environment Canterbury (ECan), Te Papa Atawhai | Department of Conservation (DOC), and the Rakaia Catchment Environmental Enhancement Society (RCEES).

In the 2025/26 season, LINZ/Boffa Miskell Limited received a grant from the Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust (CHET) of $40,000. This funding enabled the BRFP to continue with control works in the Coleridge-Acheron catchment. Previously, the BRFP hasn't had the funding to be able to undertake any control in this area, but the CHET funding is earmarked for this geographical area.

Expanding the BRFP control area to around Lake Coleridge also aligns with the Upper Rakaia Weed Strategy: 2023-2033, which encompasses the catchment as a whole. Section 4.2.7 of the Upper Rakaia Weed Control Strategy covers the Coleridge-Acheron Operational Area, which is the area in which CHET operates. It covers the ecological values, extent of the current weed infestation, and describes both the 'Quick Wins' and 'Worthy Challenges' for the Coleridge area.

Ecological values of Coleridge-Acheron Operational Area vulnerable to weeds:

- Remnant lakeside vegetation with rātā, kōwhai and tutu at Lake Coleridge, and extensive grey shrublands and tī kōuka treelands regenerating on hillsides.
- Important sequence of wetlands and lakes with Australasian crested grebe in Scamander Stream, Simois Stream and at Moss Burn and below Mt Ida, in an outstanding landscape.
- Lake Lyndon and numerous nationally rare wetland turf species on the lake edge and in ephemeral wetland areas.
- Acheron Gorge with unusual vegetation assemblages and rare species, Black Hole gorge/wetland and shrublands in the Dry Acheron Stream, moss fields and short tussocklands in uncultivated terraces east of Mt Barker.



Ryton River Weed Control Area

Acheron River

BRFP Coleridge Financial Information

Between 2025 and 2026, CHET has contributed $40,000 to the LINZ BRFP Project, which was matched with $447,813 of external funding, resulting in a total BRFP project output of $487,813..

Date	Description	Amount
2025	Weed control Acheron River to weir, Lake Selfe shoreline, Ryton River and Lake Lyndon southern shoreline.	$40,000

Ecan Rakaia Gorge Biodiversity Protection Weed Project

The project site is on Rakaia River berms and adjoining land areas owned by private landowners, LINZ, and local Councils. It spans up to 5 km from the Rakaia Gorge Bridge on both sides of the Rakaia River.

Previous ecological reports at this site, the Rakaia gorge Weed Strategy (RGWS) outlines key indigenous biodiversity values relating to:

- the continuity of diverse mixed hardwood forest in the Gorge, connected by scrub and shrublands, and the extension in places up to the higher terraces, and the associated habitat for indigenous fauna,
- the adjacent silver tussock grasslands,
- the significant wetland complexes,
- the presence of many Threatened and At-Risk plant species (and species at distributional limits),
- the association with the braided river ecosystems up and down stream,
- the proximity of such diverse communities to the biodiversity-poor Canterbury Plains.

These significant indigenous flora values on this river berms are threatened by several well-established, and establishing, weed species. The key widespread weed species are sycamore, cherry, cotoneaster, and wilding conifers. The RGWS concluded that control of these, either through removal from the gorge or containment in defined areas and the removal of outliers, is a very high priority - for protection of the inherent ecological values, and to stop the weed species from outcompeting and eliminating native flora.

Stage 1 of the project saw a total of 7,033 labour hours covering approximately 42 hectares. This work focused on primarily controlling the main weed species - sycamore, wild cherry, cotoneaster, and wilding conifers. Key weed infestations at four gorge properties were controlled and significant progress was made to protect the significant biodiversity that is present.

Stage 2 of the project required additional funding is to cover the remaining 36 hectares of the project area which have not yet had any weed control work - this will help to prevent the further spread of weeds into ecologically sensitive areas. CHET agreed to $50k of funding over 2 years towards stage 2 of the project.

Rakaia Gorge Funding

Between 2025 and 2026, CHET has contributed $25,000 to the Rakaia Gorge Biodiversity Protection Weed Project.

Date	Description	Amount
2025	Ecan Rakaia Gorge Biodiversity Protection Weed Project	$25,000

Predator Control

CHET Trapping

The CHET Coordinator and five volunteers monitor a system of 51 traps in areas where predators are a particular risk to ground nesting birds (either river birds or grebes). The traps are ones purchased by CHET, BRaid and Manawa Energy. The CHET Coordinator maintains an inventory of all traps and all trapping results are recorded on the Trap.NZ app.

Over 500 predators have been trapped including 65 feral cats and 185 combined stoats/ferrets/weasels since trapping began.

Much of this work is volunteer with CHET funding new traps/maintenance as required.

An addition, CHET is funding a new trap line down the Acheron River; this is being undertaken by the Craigieburn Trapping Alliance and will be a line of 30 traps. CHET funding is for 2 years and covers the traps and initial set up/checks.

Trapping results reported during the year were:

- **Harper Village area.** *26 traps (DOC200, AT220 & Timms) currently monitored by the CHET Co-Ordinator.* During the 2025/26 year, there were a total of **41** catches recorded, total since 2016 is **224**.

- **Lakes Selfe, Evelyn, Georgina.** *19 traps (DOC200 & DOC250) monitored by Rosalie Snoyink and David Anderson* During the 2025/26 year, there were a total of **16** catches recorded, total since 2016 is **196**.

- **Boat Harbour Lake Coleridge.** *5 traps (DOC200 traps and AT220) monitored by David Murchison* During the 2025/26 year, there were a total of **11** catches recorded total since 2016 is **201**.

- **Homestead Road Lagoon** - *4 traps (DOC250 & AT220) monitored by Rebecca Rose* During the 2025 year, there were a total of **2** catches recorded, total since 2016 is **932** (includes commercial pest eradication).

- **Landowners** continue each year to do significant trapping operations on their land, in particular to control numbers of possums, pigs and deer.

LINZ - Predator Control Programme

The Upper Rakaia Predator Control Programme is a multi-year, interagency programme operating above the Rakaia Gorge on the Rakaia River in Canterbury. Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (**LINZ**) took over management of the programme in 2020, with the Department of Conservation (**DOC**) leading the programme prior.

The Upper Rakaia Predator Control Programme is focused primarily on the recovery of two key threatened braided river bird species: the ngutuparore | wrybill (*Anarhynchus frontalis* – Nationally Increasing), and tarapirohe | black-fronted tern (*Chlidonias albostriatus* – Nationally Endangered). Braided rivers are valuable habitat for indigenous, and often threatened, species and are one of the last remaining strongholds for biodiversity in the Canterbury Plains (Braided Rivers New Zealand, 2023). Mammalian and avian predators move across the landscape and into this ecosystem, preying on the eggs and chicks of braided river bird species. This programme aims to prevent predators from reaching the nests of these birds and ultimately predating on eggs, chicks and adults.

A full network of 514 traps are operated across the catchment, with four trap checks completed during the season. CHET encourages the efforts undertaken for the Rakaia River Trapping programme.

The trapping period for the previous 12 months resulted in 514 target mammalian pests were trapped, these includes stoats, ferrets, weasels, feral cats, possums, rats, and hedgehogs.

Lake Coleridge Aerial Pest Control

In 2025, Province Wide Helicopters Ltd and Mt Algidus Station (on behalf of nine other high-country stations) submitted a request for funding to the Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust (CHET).

The request for funding was to undertake a coordinated programme to control wild animal pest species, principally pigs, on ten high country stations located in the area bordering, or in close proximity to, Lake Coleridge. The ten participating properties were Mt Algidus, Peak Hill, Mt Oakden, Lake Coleridge, Glenthorne, Ryton, Acheron, Acheron Bank, Coleridge Downs and Big Ben.

CHET approved a grant of $20,000 excl GST for this programme and over a 6-day period of shooting, 473 pigs were shot along with 78 fallow deet. DOC shot Peak Hill Reserve accounting for an additional 57 pigs. In total 608 pest animals were shot.

Many of the pigs were at high altitudes up to 4,000 feet (1200-odd metres), presumably living there out of reach of all but the keenest ground pig hunter. The fallow deer by contrast were almost exclusively on the matagouri flats near the main rivers, Rakaia, Wilberforce and Mathias.

CHET has also been part of the University of Canterbury trial for trap long life lures.

CHET Predator Control Funding

Between 2025 and 2026, CHET has contributed $27,137 towards predator control.

Date	Description	Amount
2025	Province Wide Lake Coleridge pest control project	$23,000
2025	Craigieburn Trapping Alliance	$4,137

Relationships

The CHET Coordinator liaises with key stakeholders for the following projects:

- Landowners/Managers (particularly of Lake Coleridge Station, Glenthorne Station, Algidus Station, and the Murchison family) – especially in relation to trapping activities, signage, and willow control.
- A Weed Management Strategy was developed for Mt Algidus Station using funding provided by Mt Algidus.
- Land Information NZ (LINZ) and Department of Conservation (DOC) staff – particularly in relation to predator trapping, weed control and 4WD damage to the Torlesse Conservation Area.
- Environment Canterbury (ECan) – _particularly in relation to the weed control programme in the Scamander Swamp, CHETs willow control project at Lake Selfe and the Rakaia Gorge Weed Control Project.
- Selwyn District Council (SDC) biodiversity officers – particularly in relation to willow control and weed control works.
- Contact Energy – trapping and weed control.

A field trip was held in May 2026 and visited the Scamander Wetland, Lyndon Road and Contact Energy water diversion on the Acheron Stream.

Australasian Crested Grebe nesting platform

The CHET nesting platform is located in the sheltered harbour outside the Murchison baches at the south-east end of Lake Coleridge. Signs informing people who see it what it is for will be erected nearby. It is easily seen from Te Araroa's Lake Hill Track.

No Grebes have yet to nest on the platform, but the 2025 national Grebe survey indicated a healthy population within the Lake Coleridge catchment.

Eel protection

Contact Energy have been running a Tuna Heke pilot with NIWA during the migration season (netting and releasing migrating eels).

Because the hydroelectric station infrastructure lacks a clear safe pathway out of the lake, this initiative helps adult tuna safely reach the Rakaia River to complete their ocean migration.

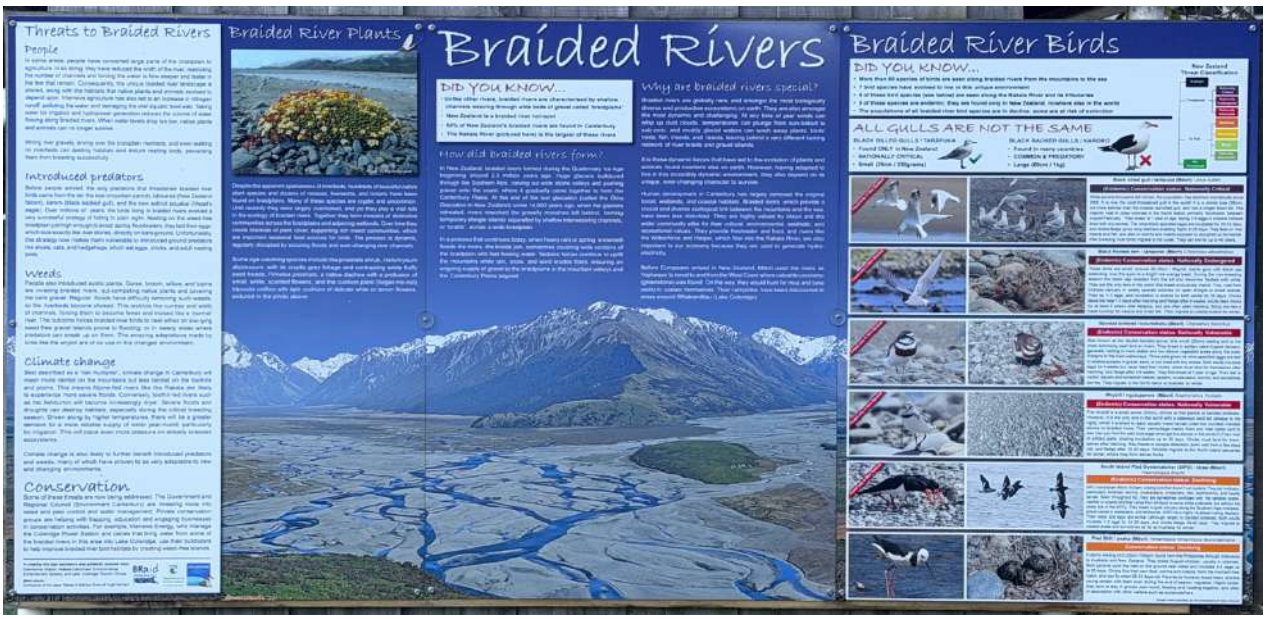
Signage/Interpretation

Wayne McCallum's 2009 Report (*Lake Coleridge: Opportunities and Strategies for Habitat Enhancement*) identified specific species/areas that would benefit from enhancement activities and his report suggested the following enhancement activities for signage the Trust could undertake:

- Signage to protect habitat for the Wrybill.
- Signage to reduce activities that cause habitat damage by vehicles, stock, and walking for the Black Fronted Tern.
- Signage to prevent human damage in fish spawning areas.

CHET has an inventory of signage to provide both information and interpretation for the habitat and species within the Lake Coleridge catchment. This also includes signage warning the public about predator kill traps and endangered species.

Signage upgrades are undertaken by the coordinator including installation - the *Braided Rivers* sign at the Lake Coleridge Visitor Kiosk was replaced in 2026.



Thank you to Farm Managers and Volunteers

Along with generous ongoing support from landowners and farm managers, several individuals voluntarily help with trapping and have done so for many years. Special thanks for this ongoing voluntary work to Rosalie Snoyink, David Anderson, and David Murchison.

Thank you to the farm managers and owners, local authority representatives and environmental professionals that the Trust has worked and engaged with. Your views, advice and consideration are much appreciated.

For more information:

Coleridge Habitat Enhancement Trust webpage:
www.lakecoleridge.co.nz/habitat-enhancement.html

Coordinator: Andrew Welsh
Email: coleridgehabitattrust@gmail.com

The contents of this report (including any attachments) may be subject to copyright, legally privileged and confidential. Any unauthorised use, distribution or copying of the contents is expressly prohibited.