

Place Name Summary Report

Lake Opuha

(new name)

Fairlie Basin – Mackenzie District

General Background

The submitter is LINZ's Customer Services, who are producing the new Topo50 maps scheduled for publication in September 2009. The proposal seeks to assign a new place name for a man made lake based on the confluence of the North and South Opuha Rivers, to the east of Fairlie. The lake was formed behind a dam constructed in 1992 as an irrigation reservoir and small hydro electric plant. The resultant lake formed is now predominately used for recreational water activities such as fishing, boating and water skiing.

The submitter has consulted verbally with the New Zealand Police, and provided documentary evidence from the New Zealand Fire Service that Lake Opuha appears as a common place name in their databases.

The submitter advises that it is important for safety reasons that the lake is officially named on maps, and has provided documentary evidence that Environment Canterbury is using Lake Opuha in their publicity information, for example, Navigation Safety Bylaws.

Documentary evidence supporting the proposal has been supplied by the Mackenzie District Council, who state that the name is well recognised both locally and in the wider region. They advise that as the lake is man made, there are no earlier traditional names for the feature. This is not necessarily the case, and the Ngāi Tahu Board member may provide further comment at the meeting.

The index of Māori names by Henry James Fletcher at the Waikato University website describes 'Opuha' as a place in South Canterbury. *Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index* has no translation for *opuha*.

The feature is not located within a Conservation Area.

There are no records of the Board (Canterbury, Canterbury National, NZGB card indices) relating to Lake Opuha. As the lake was only recently formed, there is no historical evidence of previous names.

There are other geographical features and a locality with the name 'Opuha', which have not been gazetted as official through the NZGB Act but appear in the New Zealand Place Names Database (Archived), ie. they are 'recorded'. These features are nearby and should not cause confusion as Lake Opuha will be preceded by the geographic feature type. Lake Opuha is given as an associative name with these other Opuha named features.

Duplication:

North Opuha River	Natural water course, Canterbury
South Opuha River	Natural water course, Canterbury
Opuha River	Canterbury
Opuha	Location, Canterbury

A small number of streets and roads located in the area are named 'Opuha':

Opuha Dam Road	Mackenzie District
Opuha Gorge Road	Mackenzie District
Opuha Street	Timaru District
Opuha Street East	Timaru District

The Board should consider whether macrons apply to this Māori name.

Map:

