

Lake Benmore Lakeweed Spraying Public Notification Protocol

Lake Benmore Aquatic Weed Management
Prepared for Land Information New Zealand

31 January 2024



1.0 Document purpose

This document sets out the public notification standards for boat-based or aerial aquatic weed spraying in Lake Benmore as part of Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand's (LINZ) annual aquatic control work programme. The public notification standards are made up of five separate but interlinked standards for:

- warning signs
- print and online local newspapers
- email notifications to a stakeholder list
- email notifications to owners of consented water takes
- information on the LINZ's website.

The public notification standards ensure that the local community is notified via a variety of channels with different target audiences.

2.0 About lagarosiphon

Lagarosiphon major (also known as South African oxygen weed) is an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act 1993. There are severe penalties for people who knowingly sell or distribute this species. It is a highly challenging and expensive weed to control, and once established, the ability to eradicate it is extremely difficult (see [Freshwater Invasive Species of New Zealand 2020](#) for more information). Given the current extent of lagarosiphon in Lake Benmore, eradication is not considered possible, and the control objective is progressive containment under a site-led programme under the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan 2018-38.

The areas for control in Lake Benmore are agreed upon by the Waitaki Lakes Aquatic Weed Management Stakeholders and are included in the *10 Year Lagarosiphon Management Plan for the Waitaki Catchment 2016-2025* (NIWA, 2016) as High-Risk and High-Amenity Areas under active management.

3.0 Aquatic herbicides

Treatment of lagarosiphon at Lake Benmore uses diver-based control methods and herbicide treatment using diquat dibromide. Diquat is one of two herbicides in New Zealand that are registered for direct application into water for the purpose of controlling aquatic weeds (endothall being the other). Diquat is the active ingredient in Reglone®, a herbicide used in New Zealand for over 60 years for agricultural operations and lake weed control.

Diquat is a selective herbicide that controls unwanted aquatic weed species. Most native plant species are not affected by diquat at the rates at which they are applied, nor are fish species

affected. When diquat comes into contact with aquatic weeds, it is rapidly absorbed, producing peroxide that acts like a bleach, desiccating plant tissue and disrupting cell membranes. It is recommended that lake users do not swim, fish, consume or use water for irrigation until 24 hours after control.

The use of diquat in Canterbury waterways is a permitted activity under the Environment Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan, the section 'Pest Control and Agrichemicals', Rule 5.2.2 - Discharge of an agrichemical. Please see a link to the Plan below:

<https://www.ecan.govt.nz/your-region/plans-strategies-and-bylaws/canterbury-land-and-waterregional-plan/>

Sailors Cutting is within a Community Drinking Water Drinking Protection Zone as designated by Environment Canterbury. A resource consent has been obtained to treat lakeweed with the herbicide diquat (consent number CRC213071).

This consent stipulates:

The consent holder shall notify the Canterbury Regional Council, Attention: Pollution Hotline and Regional Leader-Compliance Monitoring, at least 24 hours prior to the discharge (diquat, gel, and tracer dyes).

The consent holder shall notify the Waitaki District Council at least 48 hours prior to spraying commencing and shall ensure the following details are included: a. The dates at which spraying will commence; b. The duration of the spray period. c. The anticipated period in which the 48-hour stand-down from using the drinking water supply shall apply.

If required by Waitaki District Council, alternative drinking water supply shall be provided for Sailors Cutting Campground to use during the stand-down period.

The consent holder shall provide a 24-hour freephone for members of the public to contact for advice or information relating to spray operations. The freephone number shall be included in the signage outlined in Condition (16).

During the application of herbicide, the consent holder shall erect and maintain signs at the Sailors Cutting Campground and places where people normally obtain access to the spray area. The signs shall: a. Be capable of being read from a distance of five meters; b. Be maintained for the duration of the spraying; and c. Advise: i. that spraying is in progress; ii. that tracer dyes may be used during spraying; iii. the proposed dates of the spraying; iv. the spray methods used; v. the herbicides being used; vi. the tracer dye used, if applicable; vii. the agency conducting the operation; and viii. contact details for the agency, including the 24-hour freephone number described in Condition (15)

. This consent expires on 11 May 2026.

For more information on diquat, please see the factsheet provided by NIWA [Diquat FAQs_A4.indd \(niwa.co.nz\)](#).

4.0 Public notifications

Before undertaking boat-based or aerial aquatic weed spraying, a range of public notifications channels are used to inform lake and river users, including owners of consented water takes, neighbouring landowners, district and regional councils, iwi, advocacy groups, and the local community, of the timing and use of herbicide treatment at Lake Benmore.

4.1 Warning signage

Warning signs will be erected at key access points to key access and amenity sites of the planned treatment sites. Figure 1 below shows the signage locations around Lake Benmore.

Figure 1. Warning signage locations

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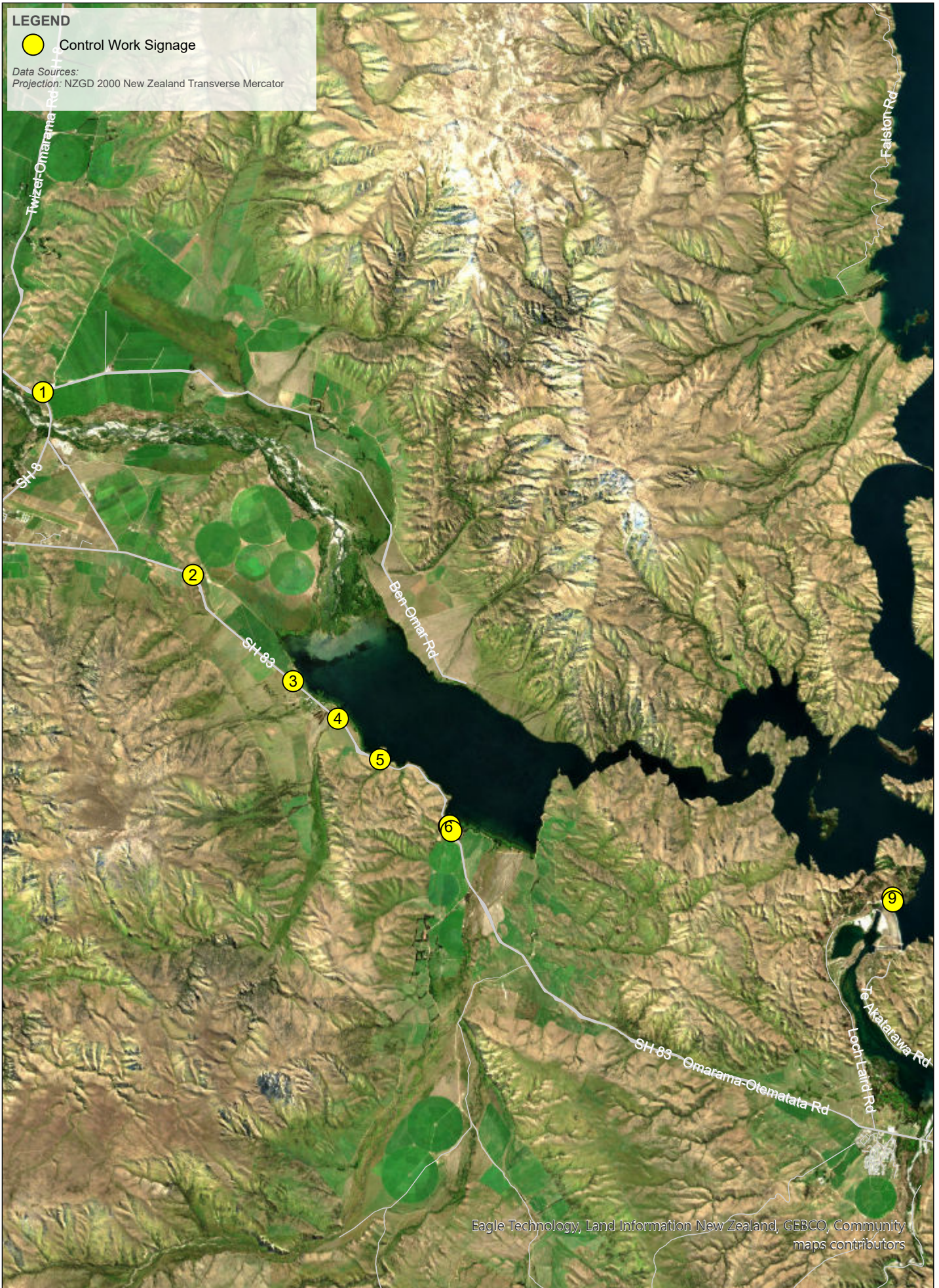


Table 1: Signage Locations Lake Benmore:

Pin name	Location	Sign location
Sign 1	Ben Omar Rd, Ahuriri Bridge river access track	Start of access road
Sign 2	Omarama-Otematata Rd	Road shoulder/ pull over area
Sign 3	Omarama-Otematata Rd, Lake access	Start of access road
Sign 4	Lake Benmore holiday park, Lake access	Start of private access road
Sign 5	Lake Benmore outlook parking area	On fence in parking area
Sign 6	Sailors Cutting	On fence next to cycleway
Sign 7	Sailors Cutting boat ramp	Next to boat ramp
Sign 8	Entrance to Sailors Cutting / Waitaki Lakes reserve	On fence
Sign 9	Benmore Peninsula Trail head	On fence
Sign 10	Loch Laird boat ramp	At boat ramp

Signage will be erected 24 hours before the scheduled date of control and will remain in place for at least 24 hours. Signs will be removed once the 24-hour stand-down period for swimming, fishing, and taking water has lapsed following control operations.

Figure 1 shows the signage that will be erected. This sign includes information on:

- the proposed treatment dates
- the diquat label recommendations for stand-down times
- target weed species, application method and hazard classification of diquat
- a scannable QR code that links to the LINZ webpage, giving up-to-date information on specific sites and timing for when sites were controlled and when they are safe to use again
- an 0800 number that can be called during business hours if a member of the public has questions about the control operations

A signage register is kept up to date to record information on the location of signs, and when they are erected and removed.



Figure 2. An example of a warning sign that will be erected at key lake access points proximate to the application areas.

4.2 Newspaper advertisements

Newspaper notifications will be placed in local newspapers seven days prior to the schedule date of control, as well as on the first day of the period in which spraying is planned to be carried out.

The information included in the newspaper notifications includes:

- the proposed treatment dates and location
- the diquat label recommendations for standdown times
- target weed species, application method and hazard classification of diquat
- an 0800 number that can be called during business hours if a member of the public has questions about the control operations.

Notifications will be placed in the following newspapers:

- Christchurch Press (print and online)
- Timaru Herald (print and online)

4.3 Stakeholder emails

Emails are sent to a comprehensive list of stakeholders, which include district and regional councils, DOC offices, community groups, relevant businesses, schools, and affected

individuals. Emails are sent in advance of proposed spray dates, as well as 24 hours before application, on the day(s) of application and after application.

The information included in the email notifications includes:

- the proposed treatment dates and locations
- maps showing the proposed spraying locations
- a PDF version of the NIWA diquat fact sheet
- the diquat label recommendations for standdown times
- target weed species, application method and hazard classification of diquat
- an 0800 number that can be called during business hours if the member of the public has questions about the control operations

Please email biosecurity@boffamiskell.co.nz if you would like to be added to the distribution list.

4.4 Notifications to owners of consented water takes

Identification of consented water takes is undertaken 10 days before application using the Canterbury Regional Council's surface water take information database. The owners of consented water takes that are within one kilometre of application areas will be notified via email at least seven days before the planned application.

The information included in the email notifications includes:

- the proposed treatment dates and location
- the diquat label recommendations for standdown times
- target weed species, application method and hazard classification of diquat
- an invitation to discuss how spraying could occur without contaminating water supplies. Mitigations may include temporarily disabling the water take or electing not to treat the proposed control site

4.5 LINZ website

Notification of spraying is published on the [LINZ website](#), giving up-to-date information on current and upcoming control at lakes and specific sites. This information includes the scheduled date of control, the actual date of treatment, and if the site is safe to swim at, gather food from, and/or take water for irrigation or domestic purposes.

This LINZ website can be accessed using a scannable QR code on warning signage.



Figure 2. An example of a scannable QR code included on warning signage that will be erected at key lake access points proximate to the application areas.

4.6 Public queries

Should a member of the public have any queries, concerns, or feedback, they are encouraged to contact Boffa Miskell on 0800 638 943 or email biosecurity@boffamiskell.co.nz. All enquiries are responded to during business hours as soon as possible and logged for future reference.

About Boffa Miskell

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