

# Submissions for Waihemo / Shag River [alteration from Shag River (Waihemo)]

Considered by the Board on 20 April 2021



## Summary

At its 14 October 2020 hui the Board accepted a proposal to alter the existing official dual name Shag River (Waihemo) to the modern dual name format **Waihemo / Shag River**.

During the notification period from 11 November 2020 to 16 December 2020 the Board received **20 submissions supporting** and **eight submissions objecting** to the proposal.

The supporting submissions mostly reaffirm the Board's reasons for accepting the original proposal. They include submissions from Waitaki District Council and Members of Parliament Rino Tirikatena and Ingrid Leary.

A new theme in the supporting submissions is that the proposed alteration would honour the legacy of the late Jim Hinkley from Palmerston. Jim Hinkley, who died mid-2019, had long sought to change the name (to just 'Waihemo River').

The reasons in the objecting submissions are:

- To retain the name Shag River
- That Shag River should be the first part of the name
- Concerns over costs of altering the name
- That there are more important issues to deal with
- That Waihemo is not the original name
- Concerns for the associated feature names, or slippery slope arguments, what about Shag Valley and Shag Valley Station?

These reasons are responded to by the Secretariat below and are not considered to outweigh the original reasons why the Board accepted the proposal.

## Secretariat recommendations

At its hui on 20 April 2021 the Board resolved this recommendation

**Consider** all submissions on the proposal to alter the existing official name Shag River (Waihemo) to the modern dual name format **Waihemo / Shag River**, and their reasons,

**and**

**Reject** the eight objecting submissions based on the reasons given not outweighing those reasons for originally accepting the proposal, noting the proposed format would meet the *Standard for New Zealand Place Names*, 'Shag River' would remain part of the proposed altered name, and no evidence was provided that Waihemo is not an original name for the feature,

**and**

**Confirm** the Board's earlier decision to accept the proposal to alter the existing official name Shag River (Waihemo) to the modern dual name format **Waihemo / Shag River**,

**and**

**Report** the Board's decision to the Minister for Land Information **and request** the Minister for Land Information to make the final determination on the proposal.

## Background

**Board minutes 14 October 2020**  
[abridged]

### Resolution

*That the Board **Accept** the proposal to **alter** the official dual name Shag River (Waihemo) to **Waihemo / Shag River**, based on:*

- *reordering the name to better recognise the Māori history of occupation and use of the river, and the proposed format meeting the Board's standard on dual names including recognition of first discovery,*
- *both names continuing to be officially used together having been in long term use as a dual, and alternative names,*
- *equal significance of both place names,*
- *no concerns about issues for emergency services as both parts of the name are retained, and in the Board's standard modern format for a dual name, and*
- *the Board meeting Treaty of Waitangi partnership, protection and participation principles through its post-settlement relationship with TRONT,*

## Notification

Advice to mana whenua of public notification

The proposers Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki and Te Rūnanga o Moeraki are Ngāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnanga and are mana whenua. On 11 November 2020 the Secretariat advised its contacts at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu that the proposal would be notified from 11 November 2020 to 16 December 2020.

Advice to MPs

On 11 November 2020, the Secretariat advised the Members of Parliament for Waitaki, Te Tai Tonga, and all adjacent electorates that the proposal for Waihemo / Shag River would be notified from 11 November 2020 to 16 December 2020.

Public notification including social media

The Board advertised the proposal:

- in the [New Zealand Gazette](#),
- in the *Sunday Star Times*, *The News Lakes District & Central Otago*, *Otago Daily Times*, and *Dunedin Star*.

- on the LINZ<sup>1</sup> [Consultation, Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)<sup>TM</sup> pages,
- the New Zealand Government's [Consultation](#) page.

An advertisement was submitted to Te Puni Kōkiri's [events calendar Rauika](#), on 11 November 2020, but was not published.

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## Media

The Board released a media advisory on 11 November 2020 in te reo Māori and English which was also [posted on the LINZ website](#). It was syndicated by [Scoop.co.nz](#) and [Voxy.co.nz](#) on the same day.

On 12 November 2020 Māori Television interviewed Board member Paulette Tamati-Elliffe. On the same day Waatea News<sup>2</sup> posted a brief article on the proposal.

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## Submissions

### Overview

During the notification period from 11 November 2020 to 16 December 2020 the Board received **20 supporting submissions** and **eight submissions objecting** to the proposal.

Most submitters (19/28) advised they are local or relatively local to the feature (Palmerston, Dunback, Dunedin, Oamaru). Information on the location of the submitters is collected to inform on the level of local community engagement. It does not indicate that they have a greater influence on the outcome of the proposal.

### Issues

For online submissions, a check box required submitters to confirm '*I understand the proposed dual name Waihemo / Shag River means both names will continue to be used together as one name*' was included.

However, some submissions, both supporting and objecting, were clearly unaware the current official name is already a dual name, Shag River (Waihemo), and/or that the proposed name is also a dual name. These submissions do not adequately address the proposed change to reorder the name. It may be questionable if some supporting submissions are actually supporting the dual name.

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## Summary of the supporting submissions

The supporting submissions generally reaffirmed the reasons the Board accepted for proceeding with the proposal, specifically:

- changing the order of the dual name to place the original name first, giving better recognition of Māori history relating to the name and feature,
- supporting the local rūnanga, and
- continuing to recognise both names as equally significant, telling both stories.

A new theme in the supporting submissions is to honour the legacy of the late Jim Hinkley who died 23 July 2019. The submitters advise he had long campaigned for a change to the name of the feature to just 'Waihemo River'. A copy of a recent letter received by Waihemo Community Board 19 November 2019 is available from Waitaki District Council.<sup>3</sup>

Waitaki District Council supported the proposal. A joint supporting submission was received from MPs Rino Tirikatene [Te Tai Tonga] and Ingrid Leary [Taieri].

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<sup>1</sup> LINZ - Land Information New Zealand

<sup>2</sup> [Name switch recognises mana](#), *Waatea News*, 12 November 2020

<sup>3</sup> [Agenda for Waihemo Community Board Meeting](#) 9 December 2019 – last accessed 25 February 2021.

Some supporting submissions indicate a preference to alter the name to Waihemo River or to downplay 'Shag' on signage, particularly due to ridicule and offensive comments around colloquial meanings of the word 'Shag'.

Based on an assessment of the submissions they are still considered to be in support of the proposal, rather than objections to the proposed dual name. However, should the name be officially altered to Waihemo / Shag River, the legal requirement for both parts of the name to be used on official documents will remain.

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## Summary of the objecting submissions and the Secretariat's comments

**Current name/history should be respected. The feature is widely known as Shag River and should stay that way.**

**The change is confusing, if another name is added it should come after Shag River English is the most common language, putting Waihemo first is a gimmick.**

The current official name is already a dual name in the old format **Shag River (Waihemo)**. Shag River remains respected and recognised as part of the proposed dual name.

Changing the order of the names standardises it in and recognises the right of first discovery for the original Māori name, meeting Section 1.7 of the *Standard for New Zealand Place Names*.

### **Concern over the cost of change**

Most official documents using official names are maintained electronically so the cost to update is minimal.

The Board expects updates to names on physical products such as road signs, are made in a timely manner and in the course of regular maintenance updates and replacement cycles, thus minimising/absorbing costs.

### **More important issues to deal with**

Considering proposals for place names is one of the Board's purposes. The proposal is of significance to the joint proposers as mana whenua.

### **Waihemo is not the original name**

One submission is that Waihemo was not the original name for the full extent of the feature. Instead, considering the name applies to a tributary flowing from Blue Mountains to Shag River (Waihemo) which physically matches a meaning of Waihemo, 'disappearing water'. The submitter is concerned use of Waihemo may be a more recent development, or incorrectly transferred further up the river by the name of the former hotel, and the settlement of [Waihemo](#).

The local rūnanga/rūnaka have maintained knowledge of their name, and Waihemo is published in the Ngāi Tahu cultural atlas Kā Huru Manu for the full length of the feature. The Secretariat proposal report to the Board for its October 2020 hui lists documentary use of the Māori name for the feature from at least 1848, and both names for the same feature from at least 1858 (ie 'Waihemo or Shag River').

No evidence has been provided that the name applies to a tributary from Blue Mountains.

### **Shag Point at the mouth is associated with the river**

#### **What about Shag valley and the Shag Valley Station?**

One submitter may be concerned about the associated name Shag Point should the name of the river be altered, though it is not clear. There is no proposal to alter this name, which is also already a dual name Shag Point/Matakaea.

Waihemo would not be added to the name as the original Māori name for the feature is Matakaea.

Another submission is concerned about the names of Shag Valley and Shag Valley Station being affected. However, these are not names in the Gazetteer, and the names of stations are outside the naming jurisdiction of the Board.

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## **Supporting information**

1. Proposal report from the Secretariat to the Board – 2020-10-14
2. Online submissions spreadsheet (15 supporting, 5 objecting)
3. Copies of objecting submissions not received through online platform (3)
4. Copies of supporting submissions not received through online platform (5)