

3. Summary of Research Findings

- Freshwater in the Waimea region is highly valued for irrigating productive land; supplying businesses with water for processing; for drinking water supplies; for other recreational activities, thus contributing to the overall well-being of people living in the Tasman area.
- The Lee, Wairoa and Waimea rivers are highly valued by Tasman (and Nelson) residents – as part of where they live, by those with environmental or ecological interests; by those who express an aesthetic or scenic interest; by iwi with guardianship or kaitiakianga responsibilities; and by recreational users of all ages.
- Sustainability was a value to which many participants subscribed. Access to, or the presence of, good quality and quantities of freshwater – whether for productive land use, enjoyment or for maintaining environmental/ecological integrity were activities that need to be sustained for future generations.
- People are generally supportive of storage options in the Upper Lee or Wairoa catchment areas, but for some there are ‘conditions’ attached to this support, such as financial contributions to a decided option being distributed equitably with those who benefit directly (irrigators) paying more than those who receive little or no benefit; and that TDC continue to investigate alternative means of encouraging or enforcing water conservation.
- Learning about water resources in the region, along with better water management and conservation initiatives are seen as a responsibility of everyone in the region, from TDC to individual households.
- Charging for water was seen as a mechanism for achieving more efficient use of water, but there was variability in how charges could be set: for example, by volume or by a formula that would determine the contribution of water to generating profits.
- Participants prefer win-win outcomes (for everyone) of decision-making, but also implicitly recognise that trade-offs may be an inevitable process in decision-making. Where trade-offs are unavoidable, the criteria employed for trade-offs should be transparent.
- A number of the management options identified in the workshops and in the other data represent areas in which the Tasman District Council could engage in social learning initiatives to address people’s lack of knowledge and/or understanding about freshwater management and decision-making.