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If you provide an email address you will receive e-News and e-Alerts. You can unsubscribe from these emails at any time.

Request more information

- Please send me a FREE magazine and information about joining Forest & Bird.
- Please send me a FREE magazine and information about joining Kiwi Conservation Club, Forest & Bird's club for children.

Make a donation to Forest & Bird's Save the Mokihinui campaign

I would like to make a donation of \$ _____

By cheque – Please make cheques payable to "Forest & Bird"

By credit card – Card type: Visa / MasterCard / Amex / Diners
(please circle one)

Card Expiry Date: ____ / ____ Credit card number:

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Donations over \$5 are tax deductible. A receipt will be sent.

Please post your completed form to FreePost 669
Forest & Bird, PO Box 631, Wellington 6140, NZ.

Charities Commission Registration No. CC26943

Forest & Bird is New Zealand's leading independent conservation organisation. We are a charity and we are active nationally and in branches around New Zealand.



Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society
of New Zealand
PO Box 631, Wellington 6140
office@forestandbird.org.nz
Tel: 0800 200 064 or 04 385 7374
www.forestandbird.org.nz

Cover photo: Mokihinui Valley

- Organise or attend a fundraising screening of the Mokihinui episode of Craig Potton's Rivers television series or Whitewater NZ's *A Tale of Two Rivers* – contact office@forestandbird.org.nz for more information.
- Contribute to Forest & Bird's fund to engage expert witnesses for the Environment Court hearing – see www.forestandbird.org.nz
- Become a Mokihinui campaigner – join Forest & Bird's activist list to help fight the dam – see www.forestandbird.org.nz
- Write to the Department of Conservation, Government ministers and Meridian to tell them the river must be saved.
- Support strong protection for the Mokihinui River and its surrounding forests.
- Visit the Mokihinui to appreciate a truly wild river

How you can help

Save the Mokihinui

Too precious to dam

www.forestandbird.org.nz



Forest & Bird
GIVING NATURE A VOICE

Why save the Mokihinui?

The Mokihinui is one of our last unspoilt wild rivers. Set in a rugged landscape of dense bush, the third largest river on the West Coast is by turns turbulent and placid. The Mokihinui is fed by a vast area of uplands and mountains, gathering force as it snakes through bush-clad granite and limestone gorges and flatlands. The river makes a final lunge through a narrow gorge before entering the Tasman Sea about 40 kilometres north of Westport.

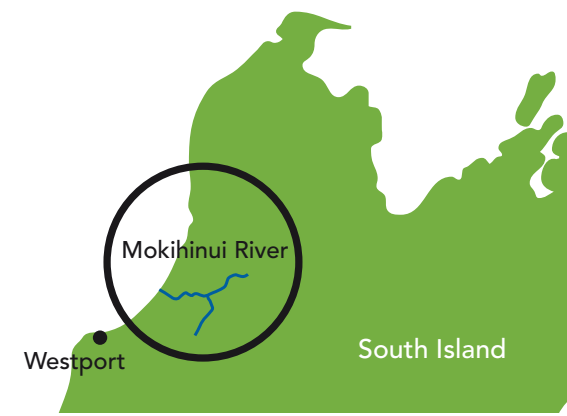
Dense beech forest covers the surrounding hills, and the lower terraces are home to rimu, kahikatea, matai and miro, while rata and ferns are found closer to the river.

The banks and forests in the river gorge support 11 endangered bird species – including the blue duck (whio) which only inhabits fast flowing rivers – two unique species of giant land snails, and the South Island long-tailed bat.

The river is home to more fast disappearing natives, including the longfin eel, and the giant and short-jawed kokopu.

Rafters and kayakers treasure the river, challenging their skills in the turbulent rapids, and trampers and fishers love its rough-hewn beauty.

An historic pack route dating back to the region's gold rush days clings to the valley sides before turning up the Rough and Tumble tributary on its way to Karamaea.



The threat

This stunning landscape and the rare wildlife it supports are being threatened by publicly-owned electricity generator Meridian, which in April 2010 received resource consents to build an 85-metre-high dam on the Mokihinui.

Forest & Bird and other organisations, including the Department of Conservation, are appealing the consents in the Environment Court.

A 14-kilometre-long lake created by the dam along the river gorge will drown 330 hectares of pristine forest in the biggest ever inundation of New Zealand conservation land.

The dam will destroy the wild river and its surrounding forest forever. Eels above the dam will be blocked from travelling to the sea for their final journey to breed and young eels will be blocked from migrating to the upper reaches to mature. The breeding cycle of other native fish will also be disrupted and their natural habitat destroyed by the creation of a lake where the river now flows free.

The loss of the forest on the lower terraces and slopes around the river will also have a disastrous effect on the wildlife that depends on it. The blue duck lives only on forested upper catchments of rapidly flowing rivers.



Tall rata forest.

Male blue duck. Photo: A Reith

What are the alternatives?

Meridian argues the Mokihinui must be dammed to ensure power for the West Coast. But Hydro Developments Ltd's alternative scheme would take polluted water from the Stockton mine area – keeping it out of the nearby Ngakawau River – and feed it into a power turbine. Consent has also already been granted for another project further south on the Arnold River, which has already been modified by an existing hydro scheme.

The pressure to build dams on wild rivers can also be eased through energy conservation and efficiency measures. The Electricity Commission has estimated that greater efficiency could save 6400 gigawatt hours a year – almost eight times the amount Dunedin uses annually.

We also have other energy sources – including solar, wind, marine, and geothermal – which have a much lower impact on our environment.

Save our wild rivers

Our few remaining wild rivers are a national treasure and must be left in their natural state. Some of our rarest wildlife and plants rely on them.

Around two-thirds of our native freshwater fish are on the threatened species list and their numbers are continuing to decline rapidly. Longfin eels, short-jawed kokopu and giant kokopu are among the species that could disappear in the space of a single generation if current rates of decline continue.

The blue duck's range has been drastically reduced by river pollution and modification. There remain only 2000 to 3000 of these unique birds, which have no close relatives anywhere in the world. The banks of the wild rivers are also home to many other species, including native bats, weka, kereru, kiwi and giant land snails.

We love the wild rivers too, for kayaking, rafting, fishing, tramping and swimming. They are a magnet for foreign tourists and a crucial component of our 100% Pure international branding.