

ORC Glenorchy flood response

Update 03 | 01 October 2020

Here's what we've been working on to improve flood resilience in Glenorchy since our last update in September. We are aiming to update you monthly, via the Glenorchy Community Association (GCA) meetings held on the first Thursday of every month.

1. Progress on a water level monitor in the lagoon

We expect to receive a decision this week from the Department of Conservation (DOC) on the application we lodged in May to install a water level monitor in the lagoon. If approved, we will install this monitor along the south-eastern shoreline (see map below) in the next few weeks. Once it's up and running, data will be available in real-time on our WaterInfo website (water.orc.govt.nz) for anyone to access.

The data from this monitor will help us better understand how the water level in the lagoon is changing over time and assist in responding to flood events.



Map showing the proposed location for a water level monitor in the Glenorchy Lagoon.

For our future

2. Investigation - protection of the Glenorchy floodbank

ORC commissioned a report to assess the impacts of Rees River erosion on riverbank and floodbank stability. This report identified a number of concerns regarding the stability of QLDC's floodbank structure and have highlighted the need for floodbank repair works to be undertaken. The report was circulated with QLDC and the GCA earlier in September. The next steps for management of this floodbank structure will be decided by QLDC.

3. Glenorchy flood event response

Dan Andrew and Craig Gibson, the Queenstown-based Emergency Management Otago (EMO) officers, are currently preparing the first draft of the Glenorchy flood event response plan. This plan aims to improve the community's response in a flood event in Glenorchy, and will include the development of a warning system with trigger levels and clarification of community and EMO responsibilities. This draft plan will be available for review in the next few weeks for feedback from the Glenorchy community, ORC, EMO and QLDC, before being finalised.

4. Head of Lake Wakatipu natural hazard adaptation strategy

ORC and QLDC are leading a project to develop a Natural Hazards Adaptation Strategy to improve the resilience of the area located at the Head of Lake Wakatipu, including Glenorchy and Kinloch. This is being developed because the area is exposed to a wide range of potential natural hazard events that have had regular impacts throughout history. As changes in climate and river characteristics are expected in the future, we need to plan to adapt to these changes.

We will appoint experts to assist with assessing these risks and develop an adaptation approach. We are aiming to begin community engagement of this project by Christmas.

If you have any queries or feedback, please contact Dr Jean-Luc Payan, Manager Natural Hazards Jean-Luc.Payan@orc.govt.nz

Summary of 2020 ORC activities

Clear vegetation in Lagoon Creek to assist draining Lagoon Creek into the Rees River	Completed August 2020	This work was intended as a short-term measure as it's inevitable the vegetation will return overtime. We'll keep an eye on how it is performing, particularly at times of moderate to high river flows.
Realign channel at the Rees River mouth toward the western side of the delta to assist with drainage into Lake Wakatipu during high river flows.	Completed September 2020.	As with vegetation clearance, it is a short-term measure and we will keep an eye on how the realigned channel performs.
Glenorchy riverbank erosion and floodbank stability investigations.	Completed September 2020	Management of the floodbank sits with QLDC.
Additional lake level recorder and river flow monitor	Funding for an additional lake level recorder and river flow monitor is being proposed in the draft Long-term Plan, which will be open for consultation in early 2021.	
Water level monitor in the Lagoon	DOC approval expected to be received early October. Monitor to be installed along south-western shoreline in October. Data to be available in real-time on ORC's WaterInfo website.	
Glenorchy flood emergency evacuation plan	The first draft of this plan will be expected to be circulated in November.	
Head of Lake Wakatipu natural hazard adaptation strategy	Community engagement phase of project expected to commence before Christmas 2020.	