



- Protect plants and animals
- Remove rubbish
- Bury toilet waste
- Keep streams and lakes clean
- Take care with fires
- Camp carefully
- Keep to the track
- Consider others
- Respect our cultural heritage
- Enjoy your visit
- Toitu te whenua  
(Leave the land undisturbed)

# Four-wheel driving in Mackenzie/Waitaki



SOUTH CANTERBURY/OTAGO



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

## Care Code

- Avoid driving in sensitive areas. Alpine landscapes, swamps, waterways, sand dunes, river beds and beaches are easily damaged by vehicles.
- Abide by the laws and regulations covering all vehicles and drivers.
- Stay on roads. Avoid widening them.
- Keep the environment clean. Take all your rubbish with you.
- Respect wildlife, look but don't disturb. Keep your distance.
- Find out if a permit is required for access. If your trip crosses private land obtain permission.
- Leave gates as you find them.
- Always thoroughly clean your vehicle before and after trips to minimise spreading weeds and diseases.
- Respect the right of others for quiet enjoyment. Avoid noisy driving. Give way to walkers, cyclists, horse riders and others.
- Be prepared for the unexpected. Drive at a speed which will allow you to stop if a hazard arises.
- If winching is necessary, use another vehicle.
- Cross waterways with care. Use designated crossings where possible.
- Reduce fire risk by fitting a spark arrestor to vehicle exhausts.
- Learn more about minimal-impact practice by joining a 4WD club or going with a licensed tour operator

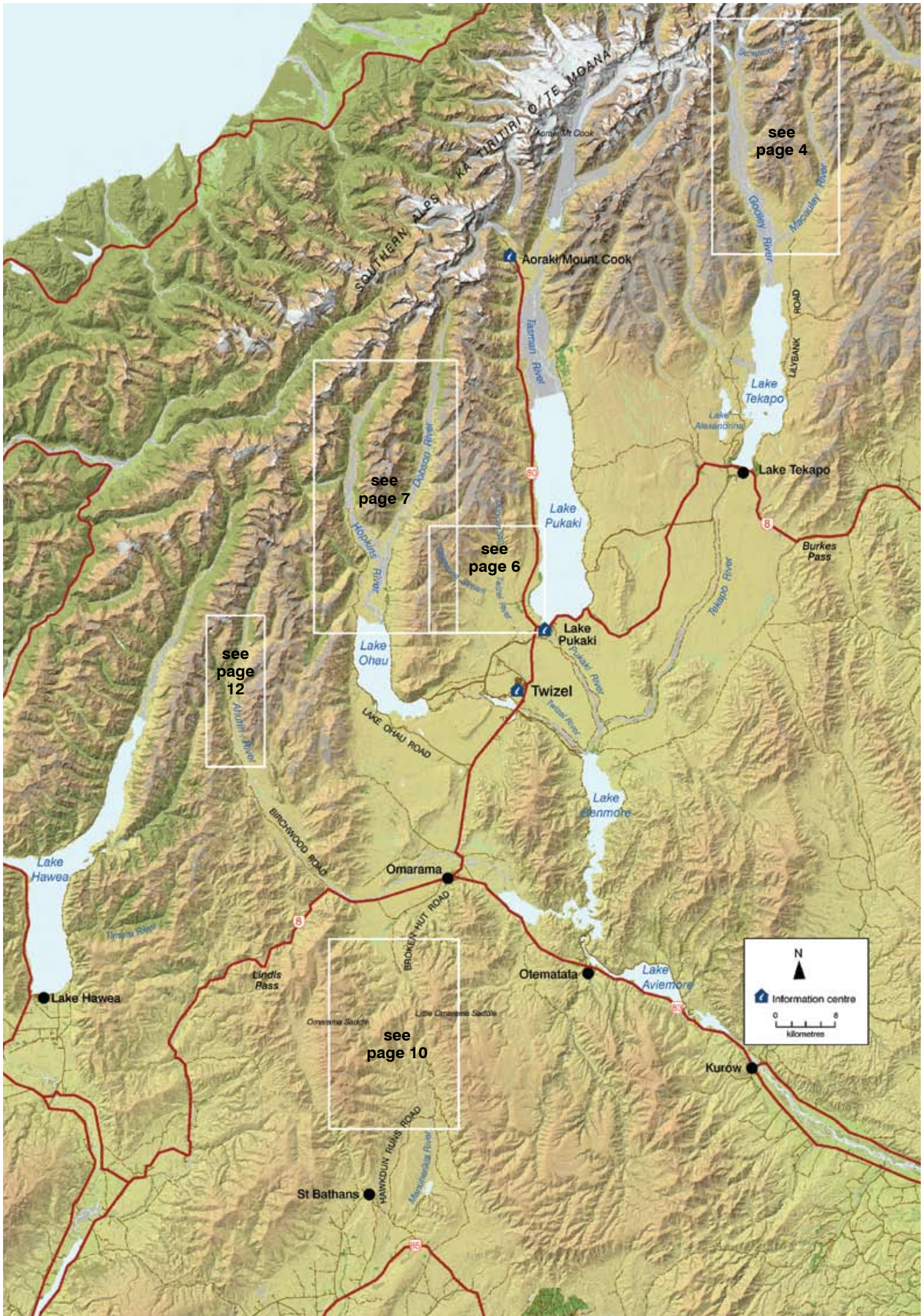


Cover: Macaulay River valley

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**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**  
Report any safety hazards or  
conservation emergencies  
For fire and search and rescue call 111



## Be aware of nesting birds . . .

### Follow the Braided River Care Code

Every spring, native river birds come to braided rivers to breed. From early September to late January, too much disturbance from people, vehicles and pets can result in the deaths of their eggs and chicks.

YOU can help protect threatened river birds by following a few simple tips

- River birds nest on the ground. Their eggs and chicks are extremely well camouflaged and are almost impossible to spot from a vehicle. To avoid crushing them, please refrain from driving in riverbeds from September to January. Instead, park on a bank and walk to your destination.
- Birds that are swooping, circling or calling loudly probably have nests nearby. Move away so they can return to them, or their eggs and chicks could die.
- A dog running loose can wreak havoc in a nesting colony. Leave your dog at home or keep it under strict control during the breeding season.
- If you use a jetboat, be aware that jetboats disturb birds and can wash away nests near the water's edge. The speed limit for boats is 5 knots within 200 metres of the bank.



### Check, Clean, Dry

Stop the spread of didymo and other freshwater pests.

Remember to Check, Clean, Dry all items before entering, and when moving between, waterways.



## General information

There are a number of great places you can take your four-wheel-drive vehicle to access public conservation land in the Twizel *Te Manahuna* area. In consultation with the Combined 4WD Club of Canterbury, the Department of Conservation is promoting these opportunities. Some of the tracks are not suitable for light four-wheel drives or sedans. Remember also, to check your vehicle's insurance policy before travelling backcountry roads, as you may not be covered.

Huts in the area are either basic huts with limited facilities (no charge) or standard huts with a heating source (open fire or log burner), mattresses, a toilet and water supply (1 hut ticket per person/night). A Backcountry Hut Ticket or a Backcountry Hut Pass is required for these huts. These huts are small so pack a tent in your vehicle as a back-up.

Most tracks involve river crossings so caution and skill are vital. In the route descriptions true left or true right denotes the side of a river when facing and looking downstream.

### Runholders

Dobson River valley—Glen Lyon Station 03 438 9644, or alternatively 03 438 9642

Vehicle access to Baikie Hut—Pukaki Downs Station 03 435 0131



DOC Mackenzie Summer Holiday Programme 4WD trip

## Lake Tekapo region



### Macaulay River valley – Macaulay Hut

Distance: 18 km

From the Lilybank road end, ford the Macaulay River and follow the DOC signs for Macaulay Hut (above right). Orange trail markers denote permanent sections of four-wheel track and the best places to cross the river.

Macaulay Hut is located on the lower Tindill fan and is run by the Mackenzie Alpine Trust (14 bunks). The hut is free to the public but donations are readily accepted.

Please end your trip here, as the upper valley beyond the hut has many fragile areas which are easily damaged by vehicles.



### Godley River valley (east side) – Separation Stream

Distance: 30 km

From the Lilybank road end, cross the Macaulay River to reach a marked public-access route through Lilybank Station. A four-wheel-drive track follows the east side of the Godley Valley for 25 km to Red Stag Hut (4 bunks). This hut is owned by the South Canterbury branch of the NZ Deer Stalkers' Association. Fees are \$3 a night per person. From here it is a further 5 km to Separation Stream (the track is rougher in condition). It is a one-hour walk from Separation Stream to Godley Hut, situated on the true right of Fitzgerald Stream, above the glacial-terminal lake.



## Ruataniwha Conservation Park

### Baikie Hut

Distance: 9 km

To drive the public-access easement to Baikie Hut vehicle owners must first gain permission from Pukaki Downs Station. Permission will be granted unless there is potential

for track damage at the time. You will need to pay a fee and key bond. The tracks will be closed to vehicle use if damage could be caused in wet conditions, or if the fire danger is high enough for vehicles to be a potential fire hazard in tussock grasslands. (Public access by foot, mountain bike and horse is available at all times on the public easements).

Baikie Hut sleeps four people and has a small log burner for heating/cooking. You will need to bring your own dry wood with you, as there is no fuel source readily available. Please do not take vehicles beyond Baikie Hut.



### Dobson River valley – Kennedy Memorial Hut

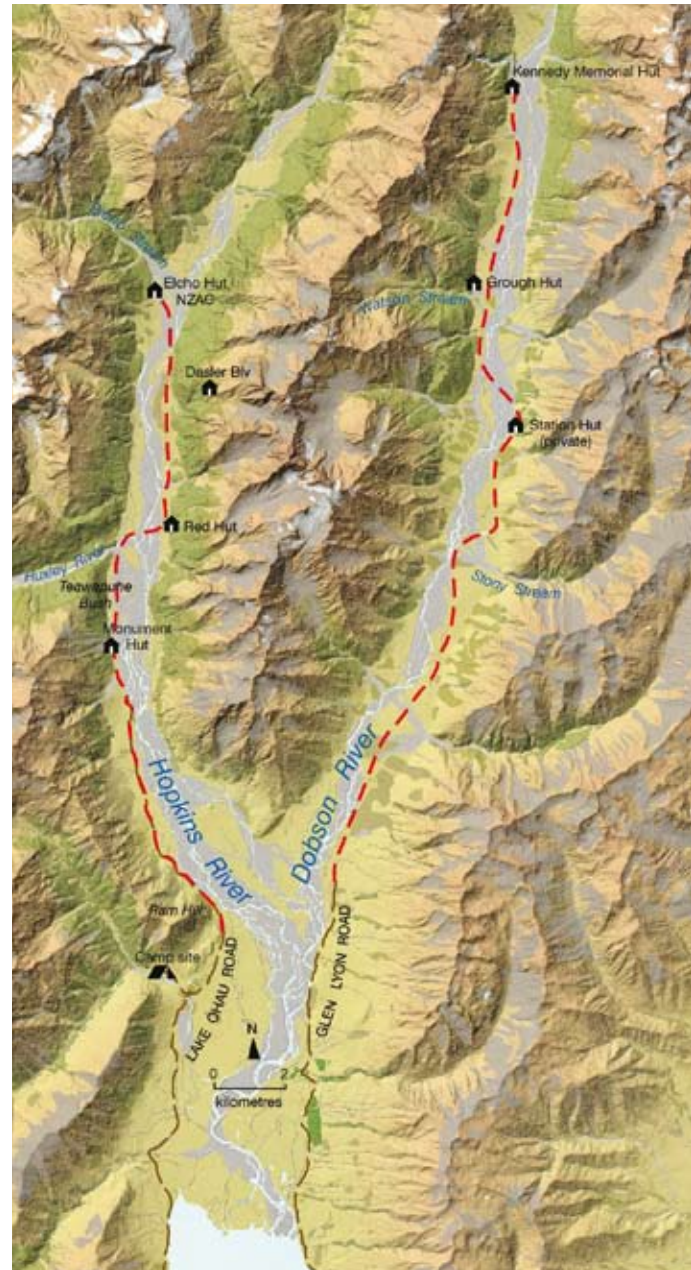
Distance: 35 km

First gain permission from Glen Lyon Station to access Dobson valley (below) via the four-wheel-drive track on the true left of the river. Permission will be granted unless there is potential for track damage at the time.

Travel is on a high-country working station so please leave your dog at home and do not disturb stock.



The track above Story Stream cuts out into the riverbed and includes a number of river-channel fords before ending at Station Hut (private). From Station Hut, vehicles have to negotiate the riverbed, as there is no established track. Routes vary, but generally the best option is to strike out for



the true right bank heading upstream to the lower Watson Fan. Grough Hut (basic, two bunks) is located north of this fan, on old lateral moraine above the riverbed.



A four-wheel-drive track leads to the hut but getting onto it can be problematic as the river has cut a channel through the track entrance.

Kennedy Memorial Hut (standard, six bunks) is a further 6 km up the valley, on the true right bank. Above Kennedy Memorial Hut, the river narrows down to one channel as it passes a series of stream fans on the true right. Taking vehicles beyond this point is not recommended. River crossings can be deep and unpredictable and beyond the fans, the riverbed becomes extremely rough, with frequent high terraces and large boulders inhibiting travel.

## Hopkins River valley – Elcho Hut

Distance: 12 km

The legal road from Ram Hill, above Lake Ohau to Monument Hut in the lower Hopkins valley, is managed by the Waitaki District Council. However, for a number of years the main channels of the river have been eroding the true right bank, damaging the road beyond economic repair. Be warned, the road is now a rough four-wheel-drive track.

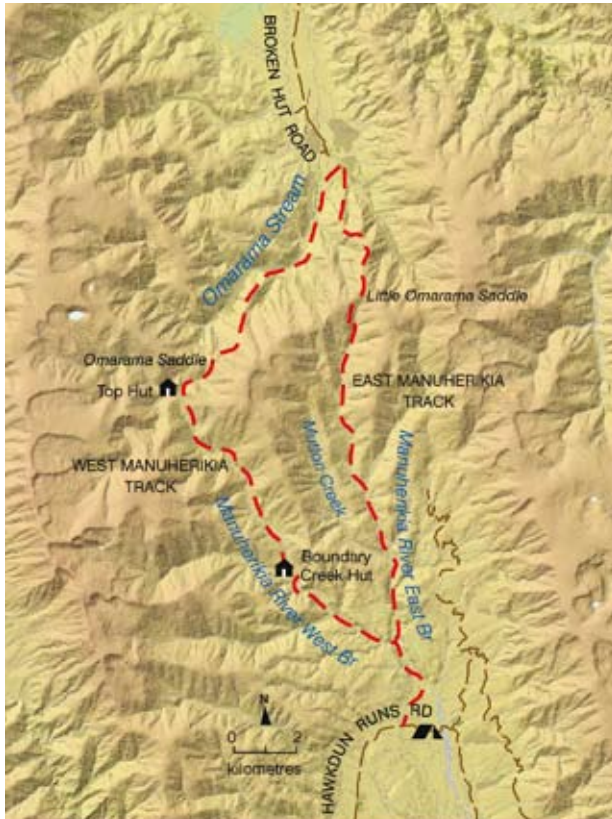
Monument Hut (standard, six bunks) is approximately 9 km from Ram Hill. From Monument Hut vehicles can continue up the valley and across Hopkins River to Red Hut (standard, 12 bunks) on the true left bank, a distance of 4 km. It is another 4.5 km driving along an established four-wheel-drive track to the base of Dasler Pinnacles tramping track which leads to Dasler Bivouac. Continuing on the four-wheel-drive track, vehicles stay on the true left of the river until opposite Elcho Stream. From here, vehicles can cross to the true right (if the fords are suitable) to Elcho Hut located near Elcho Stream fan. This standard hut sleeps 12 people and is owned by the North Otago branch of the New Zealand Alpine Club.

Please do not drive in the Huxley valley, the true right of the Hopkins valley between the Huxley confluence and Elcho Stream, or beyond Elcho Stream into the upper Hopkins valley. These areas do not have a history of vehicle use and are prime tramping environments; please respect other people's rights to have some areas free of vehicles.



## Oteake Conservation Area

The East and West Manuherikia tracks are within Oteake Conservation Area and start from a car park at the end of Broken Hut Road near Omarama. These tracks are seasonal four-wheel-drive access only and open from Labour Weekend to 30 April each year. However they may be closed if conditions are unsuitable and/or the tracks become prone to damage. There are numerous river crossings on these tracks, more particularly on the Otago side of the West Manuherikia Track.



### East Manuherikia Track

Distance: 19 km

This well-formed track climbs up to Little Omarama Saddle (1357 m) and then descends into the east branch of Manuherikia River. At the track end drivers have the option of continuing out to Hawkdun Runs Road and then on to St Bathans.

### West Manuherikia Track

Distance: 25 km

This well-formed track climbs steadily up to Omarama Saddle (1260 m), however, the upper section of track is narrow in places and prone to slips. From the saddle it is a steady descent into the west branch of Manuherikia River. From Omarama Saddle to Top Hut (standard, eight bunks) it is a distance of 2 km. Continuing on down the West Manuherikia Track there is another hut, Boundary Creek Hut (standard, eight bunks) which is 8 km from Top Hut. At the track end drivers have the option of continuing out to Hawkdun Runs Road and on to St Bathans.



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## Ahuriri Conservation Park

### Ahuriri valley – SH 8 to road end

Distance: 34 km

The upper Ahuriri valley is all public conservation land. In dry conditions, there is two-wheel-drive vehicle access available up to the Ahuriri Conservation Park boundary. However, a four-wheel-drive vehicle is necessary to drive from the boundary to a car park at the road end. DOC is maintaining the four-wheel-drive access and will close this road to vehicles only if prevailing conditions could create road-base damage. This could occur under very wet conditions or during freeze/thaw cycles in late winter and early spring. The four-wheel-drive road passes Ahuriri Base Hut (standard, six bunks).

Beyond the road end there is foot, mountain-bike and horse access. There are more camping opportunities in Canyon Creek and the upper valley as well as three more huts to visit.



## For your safety

### Pre-trip planning:

Check current track and weather conditions before heading out

### River crossings:

Rivers are subject to frequent floods, especially during spring and early summer, which can change the depth and width of fords. Snow melt will also raise river levels in spring.

### Communication:

Mobile phone coverage cannot be relied upon in some of the backcountry areas. The use of satellite phones, mountain radios or personal locator beacons all provide increased personal safety.

### Fire:

Fire restrictions apply to all conservation land. Check with local information centres or DOC for the current fire status.



## Further information

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Twizel

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Email: [TwizelAO@doc.govt.nz](mailto:TwizelAO@doc.govt.nz)

Combined 4WD Clubs Inc  
[www.4wd.org.nz](http://www.4wd.org.nz)

For further information about recreation activities and conservation visit: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

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