

**QLDC
BOATING
GUIDE**

NOVEMBER 2025

LAKES WĀNAKA & HĀWEA



www.saferboating.org.nz



QUEENSTOWN
LAKES DISTRICT
COUNCIL

www.qldc.govt.nz

RULES OF THE WATER

QLDC has a responsibility to:

- » Ensure that the QLDC Navigation Safety Bylaw is followed by all water users. All water users must also comply with the Maritime Transport Act 1994.
- » Educate and undertake enforcement where required. This could include issuing infringements or prosecution.



SPEED OF ALL CRAFT

All boats must travel at a safe speed that accounts for boat traffic in the area, weather conditions and when glare affects visibility.

- » Specifically, **YOU MUST NOT EXCEED A SPEED OF 5 KNOTS** (a fast walking speed) if you are:
 - **Within 200 metres of the shore.**
 - Within 200 metres of a boat displaying a **diver's flag**: 
 - Within 50 metres of any other boat.
 - Within 50 metres of a person swimming.
 - On a power boat if any person has any part of their body outside the rails on the edge of the deck.



15+ MINIMUM AGE

- » You must be 15 years and over to operate any power boat which is capable of speed exceeding 10 knots. This includes dinghies and personal water craft.



LIFEJACKETS

- » Lifejackets must be carried to fit all persons on board, and be worn at all times by children 10 years and under.
- » **Life jackets must be worn** on all recreational vessels, six metres and under (including kayaks) while underway.
- » Life jackets must be worn on board any boat in rough or adverse conditions.
- » Users of paddleboards and similar unpowered craft, must wear a life jacket or full wetsuit at all times.



VESSEL NAME

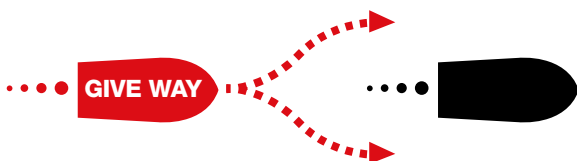
» All vessels must display an ID as per navigation safety bylaw.



COLLISION PREVENTION

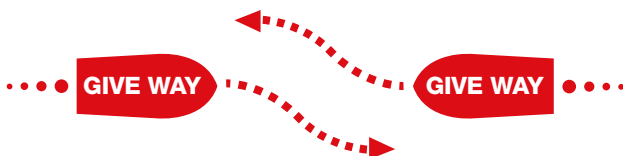
Vessels overtaking:

EVERY overtaking boat gives way (this includes sailing boats).



Power vessels head on:

Both alter to starboard.



Power vessels crossing:

Power boats give way to others on their starboard (right) side.



» Give way boats should cross behind.

» Always make a bold alteration as soon as possible.

» Powered crafts give way to sailing vessels.

» Proper navigation lights to be displayed throughout the hours of darkness.

Please refer to the '**Safe Boating: an essential guide**' from Maritime New Zealand for more information at

 www.maritimenz.govt.nz



FISHING

- » Fishing licence is required.
- » Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea are open for fishing all year. For further information please contact Fish and Game at  www.fishandgame.org.nz



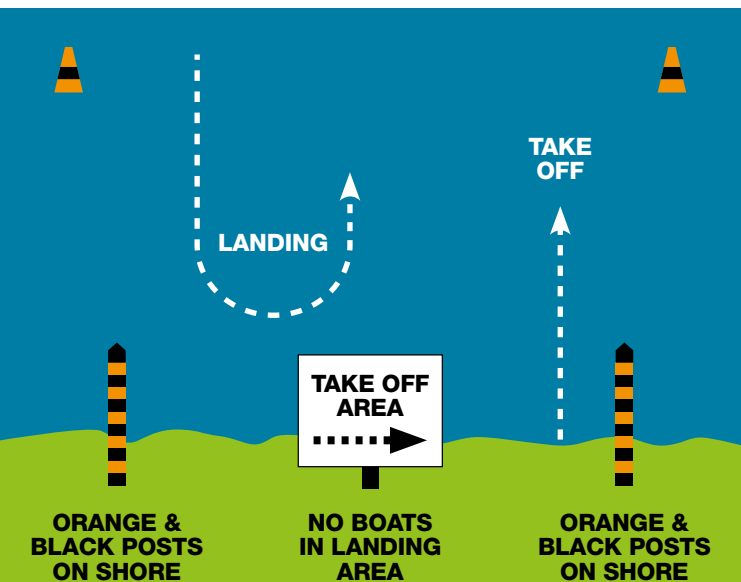
SKI ACCESS LANE MARKINGS

Ski access lanes enable powered craft (including jet skis) while engaged in waterskiing to legally leave or approach the shore at speeds in excess of 5 knots.

YOU MUST KEEP RIGHT IN THE LANES

You must:

- » Not proceed in any manner dangerous to other persons or vessels in the lane.
- » Have an observer (over 10 years) to report any mishap to the driver.
- » Not beach your boat in the lane.
- » Not use the lane for any other purposes.
- » Only drive in an anti-clockwise direction when using the lane (see illustration below).
- » Please note: Eely Point Ski lane is a take off 'launch' only lane due to the multi user conflict of this location.



SPOT A SPILL? CALL THE OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL POLLUTION HOTLINE ON 0800 800 033



WATERWAY PESTS

Managing aquatic pests is a vital part of protecting our freshwater and marine environments.

LAGAROSIPHON

An aquatic weed found in some Central Otago lakes and rivers, in particular lakes Wānaka and Dunstan, and Clutha and Kawarau Rivers.

DIDYMO

A microscopic algae currently present in the Von, Hāwea and Clutha rivers, as well as Lake Dunstan.

FRESHWATER GOLD CLAM

An invasive freshwater mollusc found in parts of New Zealand. For more information visit

 www.biosecurity.govt.nz/clam

For more information on waterways pests, or to report a finding, contact MPI on 0800 80 99 66 or DOC on 0800 DOC HOT (0800 36 24 68).



CHECK

Check for weed fragments or debris on equipment and trailers.



CLEAN

All items should be washed and soaked in dishwashing detergent for at least one minute.



DRY

Ensure all items are dry to the touch before entering another waterway.

HARBOURMATER ENQUIRIES

For Harbourmater enquiries, please contact QLDC 24/7 on 03 441 0499 or visit  www.qldc.govt.nz/lakes-and-boating for more information.

SKI LANES



Dublin Day
Eely Point
Glendhu Bay
Lake Hāwea
Roys Bay
Waterfall Creek

BOAT RAMPS



Eely Point
Glendhu Bay
Kidds Bush
Lake Hāwea
Roys Bay
The Neck
Waterfall Creek
Wharf Creek

ROCKS



TREES IN WATER



STEEL POLES



SHALLOWS



TOILETS



CAUTION IN HARBOUR AREA



CAUTION SWIMMING AREA



5 KNOTS AT ALL TIMES



5 KNOTS TIME RESTRICTED (see below times)



SPEED UPLIFTING NO RESTRICTIONS



Welcome to the Headwaters of the Mata-Au – Lake Wānaka & Lake Hāwea

Nestled in the Southern Alps, these lakes are taonga – treasured places to be respected and cared for.

Lake Wānaka spans 180km², stretching 45.5km and reaching depths of up to 300 metres. Its waters stay cool year-round, averaging between 8.5°C and 18°C.

Lake Hāwea sits just next door, covering 149km² and extending 35km, with a maximum depth of 389 metres.

Our stunning lakes and rivers are shared spaces with deep cultural, ecological, and recreational value. Please help protect them by using the waterways safely and responsibly.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Lake Hāwea requires extra care being a hydro storage lake with an 8m operating range (346.0 - 338.0 masl). Objects/dangerous obstacles can be exposed, or lay just underwater, at any given lake level.
2. The lakes can become very rough, very quickly.
3. The lakes are subject to rapidly changing wind conditions.
4. Lake water is very cold and not as buoyant as seawater, making swimming much more difficult. Be prepared!

MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.qldc.govt.nz/lakes-and-boating for more bylaw and boating safety information for waters under control of the Queenstown Lakes District Council.



EMERGENCY MARINE COMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION

DIAL 111 FOR POLICE

VHF RADIO CHANNELS 66, 4, & 16

Monitored by commercial operators during their operating hours only.

Channel 16 may be heard by boat users who are within range and line of sight of the calling vessel, but calls will rarely be picked up by land-based VHF receivers.

Roys Peak Radio Users provides VHF radio services on **Channel 66 (Wānaka)** and **Channel 4 (Hāwea)**.

This is a member funded and owned radio service. For inquiries regarding membership and the use of Channel 66/4, visit: royspeakradiousers.co.nz

For non-emergency boat-to-boat chit chat, use channel 6 or 8 (simplex – line of sight).

Note: Cell and VHF Radio coverage can be limited in our mountainous environment, for remote locations it is also recommended that you also carry a waterproof PLB and/or emergency flares.



DO YOU KNOW THE RIVER RULES?

Upstream Craft:
Give Way to Downstream Craft.
Keep Right:
Up & Down Stream.

SPEED RESTRICTED AND UPLIFT AREAS

Cardrona River: A permanent 5 knot speed restriction applies to the Cardrona River.

Clutha River: No powered vessels between 1 December and 30 April from the Lake Wānaka Outlet to Albert Town Bridge. 5 knot speed limit applies between 1 May and 30 November, except when there is a speed uplifting between 10.00am–6.00pm from the Lake Wānaka Outlet to Albert Town Bridge. Five knot limit at swim lane.

Hāwea River: 5 knot speed limit applies from the Hāwea Dam to the Clutha River.

Hunter River: 5 knot speed limit applies except when there is a speed uplifting between 1 November and 12 December and between 19 March and 30 April.

Lake Hāwea: Keep clear of the dam intake, this is marked by buoys.

Please refer to the Navigation Safety Bylaw for further information on areas with speed restrictions or upliftings.

IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 111

For non-emergency assistance call Coastguard on *500



BOATING SAFETY TIPS



Everyone wears a lifejacket, even the skipper



Always take two waterproof ways to call for help



Check the marine forecast



Leave the beers at home



Be a responsible skipper

Kia Mataara

Know the ways of the water
before you let go of the land



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