



**T O G E T H E R  
T E T A U I H U**

**MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023**

## **TE TAUHU IWI, COUNCILS SIGN HISTORIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Iwi and councils in the top of the South Island have today affirmed their strong relationships, signing an historic partnership agreement that will see them work more closely together across the region.

The *Together Te Taihū* agreement was signed in Whakatū Nelson today by the chairs of the eight tangata whenua iwi of Te Taihū o te Waka-a-Māui (the top of the South Island) and the mayors of Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough.

The signing came following overwhelming support from the three councils. In both Tasman and Nelson, councillors voted unanimously to support the partnership agreement.

Olivia Hall, chairperson of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rārua and presiding chair of the long-running Te Waka-a-Māui Iwi Chairs Forum, said it was a proud day for the region.

“This is a significant milestone, for all of Te Taihū, for all of our communities and it is important to firstly acknowledge the work of many across the region over many years to establish more meaningful relationships, strengthen ties and achieve better outcomes.

“To me, this is a document of potential. It shows we’re all here to talk, we’re here to participate, we don’t always have to agree, but we are here for the long haul for the betterment of all. It reminds us of our obligations and our opportunities.”

Hall said the agreement recognised the important and unique roles that iwi and councils play in the cultural, social, environmental and economic wellbeing of Te Taihū and provided a framework to weave the aspirations of all parties more closely together so that Te Taihū is strengthened as a region.

On behalf of the three mayors, Tasman Mayor Tim King welcomed the agreement and said the entire top of the South community would benefit from the stronger relationships this partnership identified and supported.

He said the three councils had worked alongside the eight iwi for many years.

“This agreement now provides an agreed framework for our continuing work together. Fundamentally, the agreement is about ensuring we keep taking steps forward and building on the relationship and acknowledging that, yes, we are stronger together.”

*Together Te Taihū* sets out various partnership principles as well as review mechanisms. Iwi chairs and mayors are expected to meet in person in early 2024 to establish priority outcomes for the coming year.

**ENDS**

**For further information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact:**

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## NOTES

1. The eight iwi of Te Taihū are: Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō, Ngāti Kuaia, Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Tama ki Te Waipounamu, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Rangitāne o Wairau, and Te Ātiawa o te Waka-a-Māui.
2. Te Taihū o te Waka-a-Māui (Te Taihū) is the upper South Island region that stretches from west to east and includes Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough. Te Taihū is the front of the waka and Te Waka-a-Māui is a Māori name for the South Island.
3. All eight iwi are post-settlement (2014) and have been working alongside the three councils across Te Taihū for a number of years. All regional, unitary and territorial councils are required to engage with Māori under the Local Government Act (2002).