

WAITAKI RIVER

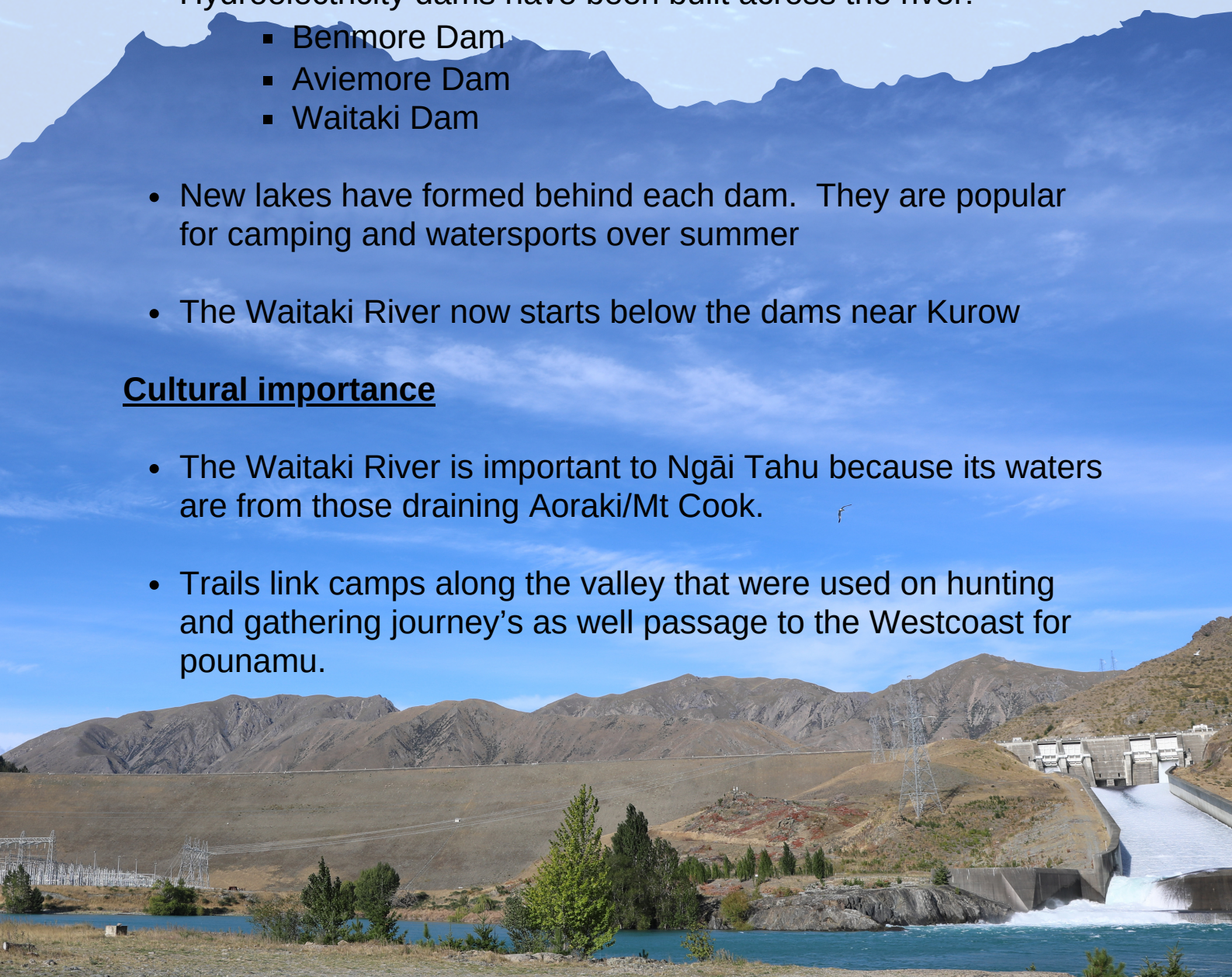
The Waitaki River is a very special river. Here's why:

THE WAITAKI RIVER GENERATES ELECTRICITY THAT WE USE!

- The Waitaki River used to be longer - starting where the Ohau and Tekapo Rivers joined.
- Hydroelectricity dams have been built across the river:
 - Benmore Dam
 - Aviemore Dam
 - Waitaki Dam
- New lakes have formed behind each dam. They are popular for camping and watersports over summer
- The Waitaki River now starts below the dams near Kurow

Cultural importance

- The Waitaki River is important to Ngāi Tahu because its waters are from those draining Aoraki/Mt Cook.
- Trails link camps along the valley that were used on hunting and gathering journey's as well passage to the Westcoast for pounamu.



THE WAITAKI BRAIDED RIVER

Braided rivers are rare worldwide

Features of a braided river

- Many channels - some can be dry and some **flowing**
- Dry gravel between channels are called bars
- Bars can be 'drowned' in times of flood
- Bars position in a river change with sediment movement (erosion and deposition)
- Form wide floodplains
- Require large supply of sediment from uplifting mountains
- Create important homes for a range of different plants and animals (biodiversity) - spot the three images of wildlife!
- Recreation values



Ref: National Geographic living world (Simon Bloomberg) 'Waitaki: Water of Tears, River of Power' accessed 30 March 2020
Ref: Wikipedia, 'Waitaki River' accessed 30 March 2020