



Newsletter July 2014

From the Chair.....

It gives me tremendous pleasure to welcome Ray Maw back to the Trust. Ray provided invaluable service to the Trust for many years and it is great to see him enthused by what the Trust has been achieving. The return of the Statutory Agencies Group in the form of Te Waihora Partners Group is also most welcome. We have pressed hard for this interagency liaison group to keep going as it has been invaluable in keeping a coordinated approach and focus on the Lake and its catchment. This newsletter also highlights significant projects through Whakaora Te Waihora and I wish Amanda Ward, who leaves her position as WTW Project Manager, all the best in her future career.



I was in the Springston pub recently and overheard someone comment that they would never eat a fish from that 'dirty' Lake. It was sad to hear that this remains a perception of the fish from a lake that is still a major recreational and commercial fishery. As well as working hard to improve the appearance and quality of the Lake we need to address such perceptions and work hard to have the Lake valued as we value it. In this respect, we continue to pursue funding for a Lake visitor and research centre, working with Ngai Tahu and Lincoln University's Prof Jenny Webster-Brown from the Waterways Centre.

Last week I taught a module in an AgriOne/ASB short course *Taking the lead – Environmentally Sustainable Agricultural Production*. The seriousness with which these farm leaders and bank representatives regard the need to address water issues gives me hope. In an email from my brother today, he recalled drinking water fresh from the Selwyn where it flowed fast over shingle. With the ongoing help of the farming sector I look forward to the day when everyone is able to say this.

In this newsletter we've also included some information about lake opening. ECan send out weekly updates on lake levels and you can find the latest information on the WET website www.wet.org.nz

Take care all

Hamish Rennie, WET Chair

Hamish was featured in the Selwyn Times feature "5 Minutes With" on July 1.

<http://thestarepaper.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

June Trust Meeting

At our Trust meeting in June the Trustees approved an update for 2014/15 to our Action Plan. This gives an overview of what we are hoping to achieve over the next year and can be read on our website.

With changes coming up to Health & Safety at Work legislation, we thought it timely to formalise WET's policy and procedures and a Health & Safety Policy was also adopted at the June meeting. This will be reviewed annually.

Welcome to a 'new' Trustee

At our June meeting Ray Maw was welcomed back as a co-opted member of the WET Trust Board. Ray was an ex-officio member of the Trust Board from 2006 to late 2009.

Ray grew up on a farm near Southbridge and has worked with many of the land owners within the catchment of Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere. He was closely involved with the formation of the Trust, acted in a liaison role between the Trust and Environment Canterbury until 2009, and served as its second Treasurer. Now being self-employed enables Ray to reconnect with furthering community driven initiatives aimed at improving the health and biodiversity values of the lake.

Opening Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere to the sea

Ever wondered how the decision is made to open the lake to the sea? Leigh Griffiths, ECan Environment Management Leader (Engineering), has provided some information about how the decision are made and who is involved.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and Environment Canterbury jointly hold the resource consents to open and/or close Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere to the sea. Before the final joint decision is made by James Caygill (Ngai Tahu General Manager Tribal Interests) and Wayne Holton-Jeffreys (ECan Director Operations) eight stakeholder groups are consulted: Te Taumutu Runanga, Department of Conservation, the Rating District Liaison Committee, Fish and Game, Commercial Fishermen Association, Selwyn District Council, Christchurch City Council and the Waihora Ellesmere Trust. Experts are engaged as required to provide technical advice and forward weather and sea conditions are also considered. When and at what level the lake is opened to the sea requires the consideration of a number of matters which include: wildlife, wetland vegetation and fish habitat, mahinga kai, customary fisheries, water quality, summer levels, land inundation, waterway networks and infrastructure, fish migration for a variety of species in Autumn and Spring. The joint consent holders are working together to ensure informed and timely decisions are made wherever possible.



Eel migration, April 2014 (Photo courtesy of Mike Hyatt, ECan)

Several reports have recently been prepared as part of conditions attached to the Resource Consent for lake opening which was renewed earlier this year. These reports will be on the ECan website in time but you are welcome to email Leigh if you would like a copy – email: Leigh.Griffiths@ecan.govt.nz.

- 1: Results of coastal erosion monitoring for previous 12 months
- 2: Results of in-lake monitoring for previous 12 months
- 3: Results of the off-shore monitoring for previous 12 months
- 4: A programme for monitoring the effects of coastal plume
- 5: Proposal: investigation on summer Lake Levels
- 6: information on openings for last 12 months. Note: a mechanical closure has never been attempted so is not part of the dataset.

Whakaora Te Waihora (WTW)

As this restoration programme continues, it is clear that the vision and objectives are consistent with WET's vision for the lake and the objects of the Trust and we are pleased to support the programme. We have also been fortunate enough to receive some funding over the past year to assist WTW with a range of tasks and we have recently received confirmation that funding will continue for 2014/15. A new Programme Implementation Manager will be joining WTW in August and so the exact details of how WET will be working with WTW have yet to be determined but we are excited by the opportunity to really make a difference.

One project that is in the early stages of planning and which WET will assist with is a forum to present the results of a suite of science investigations undertaken through WTW. This will be happening in early October.

Te Waihora Partners Group

After a break, the statutory agencies have re-established their regular meetings to focus on Te Waihora with the addition to the group of the Waterways Centre for Freshwater Management and Fonterra who are working with DOC on the Community Investment in Water project in the catchment. The group is now known as the Te Waihora Partners Group and WET provides independent facilitation.

In addition to information sharing, this group will provide direction for a number of projects to benefit the lake. A recent example was a research topics forum hosted by the Waterways Centre to identify and prioritise future topics for research. In addition to staff from LU and UC, there were attendees from DOC, Ngai Tahu, ECan, CCC and MPI and much lively discussion.



Sustainable Drain Management Project – a new phase

We have some funding available to continue to promote the messages from the Sustainable Drain Management Project and also to offer a riparian/wetland planning service. We anticipate these plans will provide specific advice to farmers about how to implement recommendations identified through Farm Environment Plans (FEP). We'll be working with a range of partners to ensure that the plans fit well with the FEP formats and meet all the requirements of new planning rules due to come into force over the next few years. Please get in touch if you have already identified some problem areas on your farm and would like some advice on implementation.



Green Footprint

Planning is well underway for a very special Green Footprint planting on September 12 at Coes Ford. This will be the 10th planting undertaken as part of this project – a partnership between YHA, SDC and WET, with assistance from EnviroSchools and a number of other organisations over the years. All the plantings have either been at Coes Ford or Chamberlains Ford and to mark the 10th we will be returning to Coes Ford where the first 'Green Footprint' trees were planted in 2005.

The invitation to come along and plant some native trees is open to all – further details will be on our website soon.



Kate Ufton (YHA), planting at Chamberlains Ford, 2013

Kids Discovery Plantout

WET is a partner in an exciting new initiative for schools in the Selwyn District. The aim is to provide schools with an opportunity to learn about native biodiversity through hands-on experience in adopting a long term relationship with a restoration site.

The Kids Discovery Plantout is a collaborative project between Te Ara Kākāriki (TAK), EnviroSchools, Waihora Ellesmere Trust (WET) and Lincoln University in Selwyn District. WET has worked with a number of schools in this way in the past and by partnering with other organisations we aim to streamline existing projects and make

it easier for schools to incorporate conservation and biodiversity learning into their curriculum. TAK have secured funding to cover the costs of preparing and maintaining sites and we'll support schools to adopt a site, plant it up and to monitor progress over time.

Te Ara Kākāriki annual social event

Head along to hear about how TAK's greendot sites are progressing. Guest speaker Alice Shanks from QE11 National Trust will be talking about what is special about remnants in Selwyn.

RSVP: to register@kakariki.org.nz

Where: Room 6 in the Landscape Building, Lincoln University

When: Wednesday 23 July 2014

Time: 7.00 pm start drinks & nibbles provided



Membership

Yes, it's that time of year again! WET members are vitally important to us in many ways. Having healthy membership numbers demonstrates to our partners and funders that interest in the lake is strong, and helps our voice be heard. We welcome members suggesting and getting actively involved in projects and it really can make a difference. Becoming a member of WET costs no more than a few cups of coffee so renew your membership or join us as a new member today.

The WET membership year runs from July to June. By becoming a member of the Trust you will be part of a team, helping to make a positive contribution to Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere and its catchment. You will:

- Receive newsletters (also available on the website)
- Have speaking and voting rights at our AGM or special meetings
- Have opportunities to be on WET committees and get involved in projects
- Be eligible for election to the Trust Board - we'd love to hear from you if you would like to become a Trustee
- Have opportunities to access information and resources
- Have opportunities to take part in events, workshops and seminars, some of which may be limited to members

Annual Subscriptions

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|--------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| • Individual Adult | \$25 | • Junior (under 16yrs) | \$5 |
| • Family | \$30 | • Organisation | \$50 |

To join, just send us your contact details and payment - we can accept payments by cheque or cash, or you are welcome to pay using internet banking. Contact the office for details.

What's coming up?

Green Footprint – September 12

Canterbury Plantout 2014 – coming up in September, contact Te Ara Kākāriki office@kakariki.org.nz for details.

WET AGM – 22 September

Ellesmere A&P - 18 October

Kind regards,

Adrienne Lomax

General Manager

ph 03 365 3828 (ECan reception – ask to be put through)

or 021 052 9720, email manager@wet.org.nz



