

# Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive  
Environment Southland  
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**Date** 01/09/2024 10:38  
**Online reference number** RC240870414

**Full name of submitter** Paul Duffy QSM  
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**Contact phone number**  
**Email**

## Applicant details

**Name of applicant** Te Runaka o Awarua/ Department of Conservation/  
Environment Southland  
**Activity location** 837 Waituna Lagoon Road, RD 5, Invercargill 9875  
**Application number** APP20242456

## Submission details

**My submission relates to the whole application** No, my submission only relates to parts of the application.  
**Parts of the application my submission relates to** The proposed conditions  
**Details of my submission** My name is Paul Duffy. I am serving my seventh term as a Southland District Councillor and am one of the two representatives of the Waihopai Toetoe Ward at SDC which includes the Waituna Lagoon and community.  
My grandparents farmed in that locality for over forty years and

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I regularly visited the lagoon throughout my childhood. I support the application to have a consented opening regime for Waituna Lagoon to maintain and restore ecological and cultural values of the ecosystem. However I have the following concerns.

I visited the lagoon on Thursday, August 29th.

The water level was at 2.3 metres and there was flooding of surrounding areas. The Waghorn Road bridge and approaches were flooded as they have been since at least the beginning of June.

The road closure has blocked access to the public viewing area and walking track, the Te Wai Parera Trust mahinga kai pa and for recreational users of the lagoon.

There is also the issue of damage to the road and bridge infrastructure caused by prolonged inundation.

While I understand that the priorities need to be the health of lagoon and ecosystem, the effects on land drainage for the surrounding farming community at the proposed 2.5mASL level should I believe not be discounted. Especially if the level was to remain at 2.3 to 2.4mASL for a prolonged period prior to reaching the arbitrary 2.5mASL.

Under the NPS for Freshwater Management, Te Mana o te Wai 10.3.1(c) "the abilities of people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well being, now and in the future " are prioritised along with the health and well being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems and the health needs of people.

I understand that under the modelling the affected areas at 2.5mASL are predicted to be just 27 or 28 hectares. I believe that should be investigated further now that there has been an extended period of 2.3 reaching 2.4mASL.

I also believe that whatever levels are set, there needs to be provision for opening if the level is such that a heavy rain forecast indicates a rapid rise above the set limits.

We have predictions of increased future rain events in Southland and have seen the example in Wairoa of delayed action. I realise the scenarios are different but similarities apply. There is very good scientific data available and more will be learnt over the twenty year term of this consent. I would hope there will be enough flexibility in the conditions to allow for openings at lower levels down to 2.3mASL depending on the lagoon ecological health at the time and for periods that do not result in a repeat of what has happened over the past three months.

In the Science Advisory Report, Appendix B. 7 Impacts of proposed consent conditions on other values.

7.1. Lane drainage and road/track infrastructure. The sixth paragraph states that "the hydrological modelling indicates that

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at 2.4mASL the road will be affected for approximately 5 days per year and at 2.2 metres for approximately 21 days per year “ This has this year been proven inaccurate as the road and bridge have been closed for at least 90 consecutive days up to now and ongoing as the lagoon level remains at around 2.3mASL.

This inundation is causing a negative effect on the integrity and condition of the road and bridge which will be extended further at a 2.5 metre level maximum.

The Scientific Advisory Report. Appendix B 5.3. Issues for consideration. Includes recreational values, risk to surrounding wetlands and the potential impacts on land drainage among the five key ecological issues considered most important to be addressed in developing conditions for the long term management of Waituna Lagoon.

I am asking for the effects on the road and bridge infrastructure and both the farming and recreational community be taken into account when the maximum levels and timings of the opening regime are being set in the consent conditions.

Finally, I strongly support the inclusion of proposed condition 13 regarding communication with the community. I would like there to be community participation in the forming of an effective two way Communication Management Plan. In my experience putting something on a website does not effectively reach people.

No

No

**Submission uploaded**

**I am a trade competitor of the applicant (for the purposes of section 308B of the Resource Management Act 1991)**

## Outcome sought

**I wish Environment Southland to make the following decision**

To support the application.

**Why I wish Environment Southland to make this decision**

So there is a practical lagoon management strategy put in place that is ecologically beneficial for the ecosystem but also has conditions that take the community and the roading infrastructure into account. Also that there is provision for ongoing learnings to be used to inform future management with possibly an ability to review the set limits at shorter intervals to accommodate as yet unknown effects due to climate change and other variables.

## Hearing details

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- I wish to be heard in support of my submission** Yes
- I would consider presenting a joint case if others make a similar submission** Yes
- I wish to be involved in any pre-hearing meeting that may be held for this application** No

## Confirmation

I will serve a copy of my submission on the applicant and I confirm all of the above information is correct

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