

Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
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Full name of submitter Lindsay Joseph Paddon
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Applicant details

Name of applicant Te Rūnanga o Awarua, Department of Conservation, and Environment Southland (APP-20242456)
Activity location Waituna Lagoon
Application number APP-20242456

Submission details

My submission relates to the whole application Yes
Details of my submission I am opposed to their application.
I am adversely affected as my hut will be flooded and damaged at the applicants suggested 2.5m.
Background:

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The first work started in 1948 when the Southland Acclimatisation Society blocked off the main Waituna channel. At that time it had a good white gravel bottom but it quickly became a dumping ground for dead livestock. But it was not just farmers who did damage. Lands and Survey developed large areas of peat and killed fish by the thousands. The result was a silted up lagoon and all the natural channels were infilled.

Sediment and silt smothered the Ruppia beds of Moffat Creek. I have seen water quality in the area stink to high heaven, so bad that it could take two days to wash the smell off your hands. Over the years this silt and sediment has raised the level of the lake bed by about 30cm, right to the end of Moffat Road. The 2.5m high lagoon level suggested will increase erosion in the lagoon, it will increase the sediment and silt and it will be flushed less often if the 2.5m level is granted. There will be increased algae and plants, such as Oi Oi and a large area of vegetation to the west will decompose also to the detriment of the lagoon's health.

In 1976, the Ramsar convention was applied for by the Southland Acclimatisation Society for the protection of the wading birds – these wading birds and the macrophytes are not suited to a full lake.

The lagoon isn't the wetland. It is a lagoon which happens to be surrounded by a wetland. The Ramsar status was established for wading birds and also the alpine flora growing at sea level. The Southland Acclimatisation Society, and then Southland Fish and Game, used to support the opening of the lagoon because the license holders were users of the lagoon and they wanted the lagoon open, particularly at the start of the fishing season. But a change of manager, who has a conflict of interest, opposed the opening. It is not a good look and he is in contrast to the desires of the majority of license holders, particularly fishermen.

In days gone by when the lagoon was regularly opened to the sea it was recognised as a world class fishery but that is very doubtful today.

Dairy farming came into the area and with it some very poor operators particularly in regard to effluent disposal. A lot of effluent was dumped into the lagoon.

The Catchment Board was very reluctant to take a prosecution but was forced to do so by Fish and Game. More recently most farmers are doing a better job, but still there are some who are not abiding by the rules. One of them in particular, seems to be able to avoid prosecution by Environment Southland – he gives all farmers a bad name.

Over the years I have spent a lot of time hunting and fishing and watching birds. With a high lake level I cannot do that. I

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have a hut on Crack's farm, near the mouth of Moffat Creek. At the applicants suggested lagoon level of 2.5m my hut is badly compromised. It will sustain flooding damage. The lagoon should be opened regularly to flush sediment and nutrients out, annually when it reaches a level of 2.2m is best for the health of the lagoon and its inhabitants.

My hut was initially in the DOC reserve, but was shifted onto Crack's farm in the 1970s when DOC wanted everyone to shift their huts. I am astounded that DOC, Iwi and ES have no regards for my historic attachment to the area. The fact they think it is okay to try to flood me out, at my age is nothing short of criminal.

After decades of little interest, now DOC, Iwi and ES are wanting to control the catchment, the lagoon level and at little cost to themselves but at great cost to the inhabitants of the catchment, the hut owners and especially the farmers in the southern areas of the lagoon.

Birds have to have somewhere to wade and to perch. Now they are heading to the paddocks and making a mess. I have heard that DOC says they can go to Awarua Bay instead of Waituna. I would suggest the birds would all prefer to stick with their historical wading areas. The same thing that happens at the Invercargill Estuary will happen at Awarua, the tide comes in and again the birds have nowhere to go.

As for Iwi claiming the lagoon is very spiritual for them. I have only seen 2 Iwi people collecting kai in my 75 years – one was fishing and the other was just observing.

The lake was linked into the Treaty settlement by nefarious means that most people know nothing about.

I would also point out that Forest and Bird have no credibility in this process – they too only developed interest in the lagoon in more recent times.

They build flood banks for everybody else but in Waituna they just want to flood the farms and huts in the lower reaches. It's not on.

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 oppose the application.

Why I wish Environment Southland to make this decision

Decision I want ES to make:

I want them to grant the joint applicants a resource consent to

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open the lagoon. But at the level of 2.2m or lower.
I believe their consent should be worded so that they **MUST**
open the lagoon at 2.2m, not may.
The consent should only be for 20 years if it is at a level of 2.2m
or less.
If the consent is granted for 2.5m then the consent should only
be for 5 years.

Hearing details

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	Yes

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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