

Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
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Date 03/09/2024 15:17
Online reference number RC240906029

Full name of submitter Trevor Robert Tatham
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Applicant details

Name of applicant Te Rūnanga o Awarua, Department of Conservation, and Environment Southland
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 the application by Te Rūnanga o Awarua, Department of Conservation, and Environment Southland.

I will be adversely affected if the consent is granted at their proposed levels.

For now
& our future



Background:

I have lived in Waituna Catchment all my life, I have hunted and fished the lagoon since my earliest days, as has my father and grandfather, and now my children are doing the same.

If the lagoon level is lifted as the joint applicant proposes then I will be limited in my ability to gather food from the lagoon, and it will have a detrimental effect on my recreational activities.

In addition to this my wife Sarah and I own 93ha of grazing land in the lower catchment which is adversely affected when lagoon levels are over 2.2m. At 2.5m the main creek (the Maher) which runs through my farm is higher than normal and any tiles draining into that creek are under pressure – the result is wetter pasture and also is can make it difficult to work paddocks and sow ground.

I believe the community wants its catchment back. The joint applicants have failed to listen to the people of Waituna and I think if the resource consent is granted in its present form, then there will be repercussions, and not just for the health of the lagoon.

I am opposed to the consent in its present form for several reasons:

Proposed level

The proposed level of 2.5m is too high. It is too high for the landowners in the area and it is too high and will adversely affect the health of the lagoon.

At a level over 2.2m there is a cost to the ratepayers, the individual landowners and ultimately the lagoon. You only need to look back at the events of late 2023, early 2024 to see how well the lagoon coped with a high water level.

Loss of access

There are few attractions in Southland, especially of national and international significance. It is great to be able to take visitors to the walking track and to show them the lagoon and surrounds. At 2.3m the new bridge is under water and the road is closed. I would question how long the road and bridge would be shut if the new consent is granted at their preferred levels. It is hardly conducive to the promotion of our internationally acclaimed attraction.

Loss of habitat

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I fear for the lagoon, for the wildlife and I also fear that future generations of my family will be unable to enjoy the lagoon and surrounds.

This is just the first step in taking our access away.

At 2.5m, the Ruppia cannot cope, nor can the wading birds and other migratory species. The lagoon must be opened annually to allow fish passage and cater for these species if nothing else.

Increased sedimentation

As the lagoon level rises, so too, does the quantity of eroded material which ends up in the bed of the lagoon. With that is attached nutrients. Farmers don't want nutrients leaving their farms but in a flood event on a high lagoon it is impossible to prevent all run off.

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

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

I believe if the consent is granted at their proposed level then I think the joint applicants should be liable for the damage to neighbouring land, roads, bridges and any other infrastructure affected – not to mention to the lagoon itself.

And, not just the organisations but the people that make the decisions. They too should be accountable, now and in the future.

Too often they make poor decisions and then move onto

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another job. We in the catchment are left with the results. There should be ramifications and they should be accountable long into the future.

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 | Yes |

Confirmation

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

For **now**
& **our future**

