

Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
Private Bag 90116
DX20175
Invercargill

Date 02/09/2024 19:20
Online reference number RC240903729

Full name of submitter Tim Warnock
Postal address Section 53
Contact phone number
Email

Applicant details

Name of applicant Tim Warnock
Activity location Waituna Road
Application number APP-20242456

Submission details

My submission relates to the whole application Yes
Submission uploaded Waituna Lagoon Submission. T Warnock .pdf (30 kb)
I am a trade competitor of the applicant (for the purposes of section 308B of the Resource Management Act 1991) No

Outcome sought

For now
& our future



I wish Environment Southland to make the following decision To oppose the application.
Why I wish Environment Southland to make this decision Please see attached submission

Hearing details

I wish to be heard in support of my submission No
I wish to be involved in any pre-hearing meeting that may be held for this application No

Confirmation

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

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



Waituna Lagoon Submission

I am writing in opposition to the application APP-20242456 for the periodic opening of the Waituna Lagoon.

I am a local farmer running a 800 cow dairy farm within the Waituna Catchment area. Having lived in the area my whole life and now being able to explore our back yard and surrounding areas with my young children, it has become an important part of our family to adventure along our local walking tracks and educating my kids on the important history of the Waituna lagoon and surrounding wetland areas.

Which brings me to my first point.

1. DOC maintained walking track and viewing platform.

This was a walking track which was a local icon, I frequently visited with my family, a track which provided so much history within our whanau. As the DOC website now informs people, the Waituna Lagoon Loop track is CLOSED. This is due to the water levels being so high in the lagoon due to the lack of frequent openings. The track is now inaccessible, and members of the public are unable to even get over the Waghorn Road bridge to get to it. This track was a fantastic opportunity for our offspring to learn about the ecology, bird life and of course the fishing. Not being able to walk this track and not being able to make use of the viewing platform proves to be a waste. Frequent openings would provide the lagoon with a much more efficient water level which would make the boardwalk and viewing platform usable again, creating many more learning opportunities for our whanau. With the lagoon being a Ramsar Wetlands site, I think it is an important area for us to be able to continue educating and using the wetlands and Ramsar site as outdoor learning experience for many years to come.

2. Wildlife (Birdlife and Fish Species)

Failure to open the lagoon has proved to have an evident effect of the wildlife species within the lagoon and surrounding wetlands. The fishing experiences have almost diminished due to the lack of fish species being able to enter and exit the lagoon throughout openings. Again another educational experience that our whanau and whakapapa are missing out on, not to mention that our children don't

get to experience and learn all about where our Kai comes from and how it survives/grows within its local habitat. The birdlife which was once a true icon within the wetlands area has depleted enormously and providing adverse effects to the nearby farmland. For example, the geese population on nearby farmland has more than doubled creating damage to crops, spreading deadly diseases to our livestock (such as salmonella) and potentially decreasing the lagoons famous Ramsar site identification. The wetlands and lagoon are famously recognised world-wide as part of the global Ramsar Convention. As the Wetland Trust website states, Ramsar sites around the world acknowledge the flyways of migratory birds. Migrating birds visiting New Zealand's wetlands are a constant reminder of our global connections, with some birds travelling distances of 12 thousand kilometres nonstop from the Arctic. The failure to allow regular openings of the lagoon is damaging the wading birdlife habitat, which means that eventually it will destroy the lagoons birdlife population and famous Ramsar Status. This Ramsar status is not only important for the wider Waituna catchment area but also the wider southland community due to the lack of tourist/visitors to the area.

3. 20 Year consent/opening plan

A 20-year consent/opening plan is absurd. The last 5 years the lagoon has seen substantial changes which means that a 20-year plan could potentially create enormous ongoing damage to the lagoon and surrounding wetlands and farmland. A 5-year maximum, opening plan needs to be addressed and reviewed yearly to prevent further damaged to the lagoon, local wetlands, wildlife, lagoon ecology and surrounding farmland and buildings.