

Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
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Date 03/09/2024 11:40
Online reference number RC240904994

Full name of submitter
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Barry Warnock

Section 53

Applicant details

Name of applicant Barry Warnock
Activity location Waituna Lagoon
Application number APP-20242456

Submission details

My submission relates to the whole application Yes
Submission uploaded Waituna Lagoon Opening - B Warnock .pdf (28 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 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 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 Opening

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

I currently own and operate approx. 750ha of farmland, 600ha of which is located within the Waituna Catchment area. I have lived within the area my whole life and some areas of our farmland have been within the family for decades. For over 120 years there has been multiple generational farmers within the area, who have successfully managed the lagoon openings and been able to successfully control the water height within the lagoon.

The current conditions of the Waituna Lagoon and surrounding wetlands are providing adverse effects to local farmland and surrounding areas.

The Waituna lagoon is located along one of New Zealand's most iconic routes, The Southern Scenic Route. The lack of openings for the lagoon is providing damage to the wider economic future of Southland because of the adverse effects of the high-water levels. The Waituna Wetlands/lagoon area currently holds a special global rating, a Ramsar rating, which draws visitors and tourists to the area. With the local boardwalk, viewing platform and generic areas within Waituna area being non accessible, the tourist and visitor numbers are depleting. The adverse effects this has on small local business' is significant to our rural community.

The current consent application is implying that a lagoon opening will take place if the water level is at or exceeds 2.5m for 24hrs or more with winter openings occurring if water levels are at or above 2.3m for seven days. A water level of this nature is nothing but destroying, not only to the wetland and infrastructure itself but also to the local farmland. Water levels of this nature for long periods of time create significant erosion to tributary banks, leaving them saturated, soft and collapsing into local waterways and eventually ending up within the lagoon catchment. Significant amounts of sediment entering the lagoon for long periods of time, creates ongoing issues within the lagoon such as damaging historical nutrients and promoting algae blooms. This has been proven over past years monitoring that excessive amounts of sediment/nutrients that enter the lagoon are caused by high water levels coming down from creeks and streams, flowing from nearby farmland. It has been proven that nutrients and sediment can come from within the first metre of tributary banks upstream from the

lagoon. Dramatic algae blooms can then affect the ecology, birdlife and the wider wildlife (such as fish species) within the lagoon and surrounding wetlands. Eventually this will then cause depletion of such iconic species and impacting the future of our local paradise.

I am an active fisherman and have always enjoyed sharing fishing adventures with whanau and friends down at the lagoon. With the current water levels, it has the potential to damage the reproduction systems of the vital Ruppia. Ruppia plays a significant part in the life support system in the lagoon and surrounding the lagoon. Fish and other wildlife rely on this for food and shelter. Without Ruppia, the water quality will rapidly decline, causing animal numbers to decrease and the lagoon could become dominated by toxic algae. Recent months has proved this. Healthy Ruppia means a healthy lagoon and healthy fish. An outdoor activity which I thoroughly relish with my whakapapa. According to the DOC website, they are currently advising that the recent monitoring of the lagoon are showing that Ruppia beds within the lagoon were the lowest they have ever been since recording started in 2009. This alone is very alarming and needs to be taking as a serious factor when considering this opening consent. The lagoon needs opened frequently to allow fresh/salt water to enter, flushing the lagoon and creating healthy Ruppia which in turn creates a safe and healthy habitat for fish species and wider wildlife. Frequent opening is needed to flush nutrients and stop any algae blooms.