

Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
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Date	12/07/2022 12:29
Online reference number	RC220721339
Full name of submitter	Joanne and Darrin Crack - Southern Star Farms
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Applicant details

Name of applicant	ewen pirie on behalf of Lake Waituna Control Assn
Activity location	coastal bar between Waituna Lagoon and the sea
Application number	app-20211669

Submission details

My submission relates to the whole application	Yes
Submission uploaded	pdf redacted submission.pdf (553 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 support the application.

Why I wish Environment Southland to make this decision

ES should grant the consent in its entirety as per the application by Ewen Pirie on behalf of the Lake Waituna Control Assn.

Parts of our submission are redacted.

We expect to provide full details of our submission, including several videos, at any future hearings.

We have found certain ES staff to have a conflict of interest in regards to Waituna Lagoon issues and a poor attitude in regards to protecting the privacy of its ratepayers.

It is for this reason that parts of this submission are redacted.

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

No

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**



Submission from Joanne and Darrin Crack on behalf of Southern Star Farms Ltd, in support of the application by Ewen Pirie on behalf of the Lake Waituna Control Association (LWCA).

We are submitting in support of this application because if this consent is not granted we will then be adversely affected.

Waituna Lagoon has been opened to the sea for over 100 years, for a multitude of reasons, but mostly it has been opened to aid farm drainage in the catchment – essential to make land in this area productive.

Our farm is adjacent to the Waituna Wetlands. Our family has farmed here since 1966.

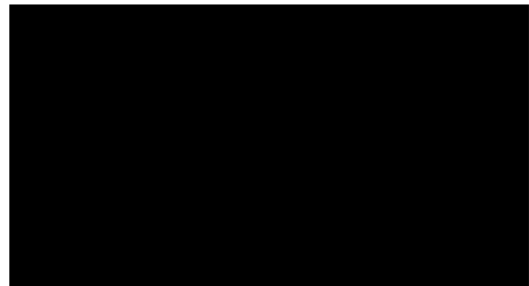
Opponents of the application by Ewen Pirie, [REDACTED] seem to forget the Waituna Catchment is significantly modified and as such, long held historic management strategies such as openings at 2.0m and 2.2m needs to be retained.

Failing to open the lagoon when it reaches these levels, or failing to open it at all as suggested by some would have a devastating effect on both our farm and, we believe, an equally devastating effect on the health of the lagoon itself.



Waituna Catchment is not pristine, it is chock full of dairy cows, beef cows, sheep, deer and forestry. In fact, there is little non-modified ground in private ownership in the catchment. As such the waters which flow into the lagoon carry sediment and nutrients – this needs flushed from the lagoon to ensure its health.

Much of the sediment which is flushed to the lagoon comes from creek bank erosion. We have seen first hand just how much erosion and damage can be done to creek banks when the lagoon is held at high levels (over 2.0m) for prolonged periods.



This above image says it all!



Above: This photo of the lower reaches of Moffat Creek was taken a few days after the lagoon was opened in September 2021. It shows some of the damage to the SRC lease ground and also some of the erosion that results.



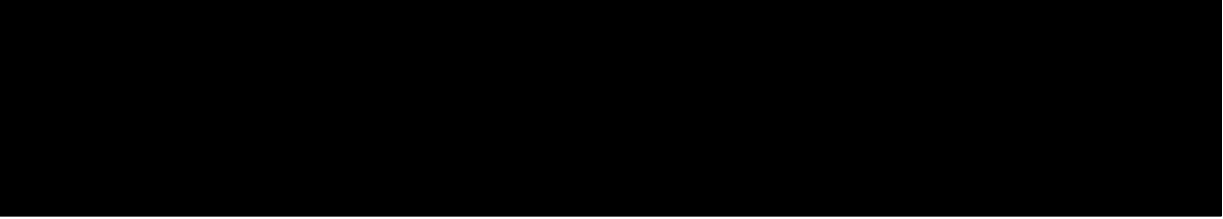
Left: This photo, same date as above, also of Moffat Creek, was taken to show ES how much erosion was occurring.

Ironically, by the time they came to view it, the flood of September 9-10 had swept most of this badly eroded bank down to the lagoon.



Above: Moffat Creek Sept 3, 2021. Below: Sept 26, 2021. Showing erosion after full lake & deluge.






The land we sold was our most flood affected, but not all land impeded at that level was sold.


We find the ES staff report “Recommendation and decision on notification of resource consent application under sections 95-95G of the Resource Management Act 1991 RMA” to be misleading at best, when it suggests on Page 9:

Note 12 (at the bottom): I understand that this is land that the Council purchased on the understanding that it was likely to be affected by higher lake levels in future.

This refers to what was our property. As stated above, this land was purchased on the basis of a 2.2-2.3m lagoon level, not higher than that as is implied.


At over 2.2m we would see increased damage to fences, our drainage network and creek banks.



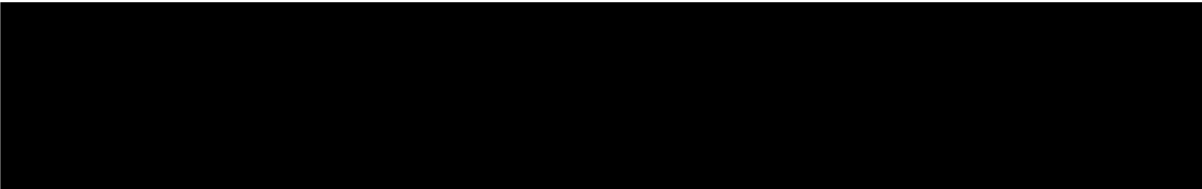
But, here’s the crunch - 

We know the results would be devastating to our farm and stock losses likely.

We don’t believe the increased erosion and sediment will be beneficial to the lake, either.

The adverse consequences of a lagoon level over 2.2m will be many, but from a farmer’s perspective the worst effects will be increased erosion and sediment into the lagoon, damage to our farm, stress on us as individuals, a strain on our mental health and certainly it would be detrimental to our well-being.  of interest and importance to the Whakamana Te Waituna Trust.

It would be very stressful to live upstream of a very full lake, listening for the rain, worrying about a deluge and how your animals will be impacted.



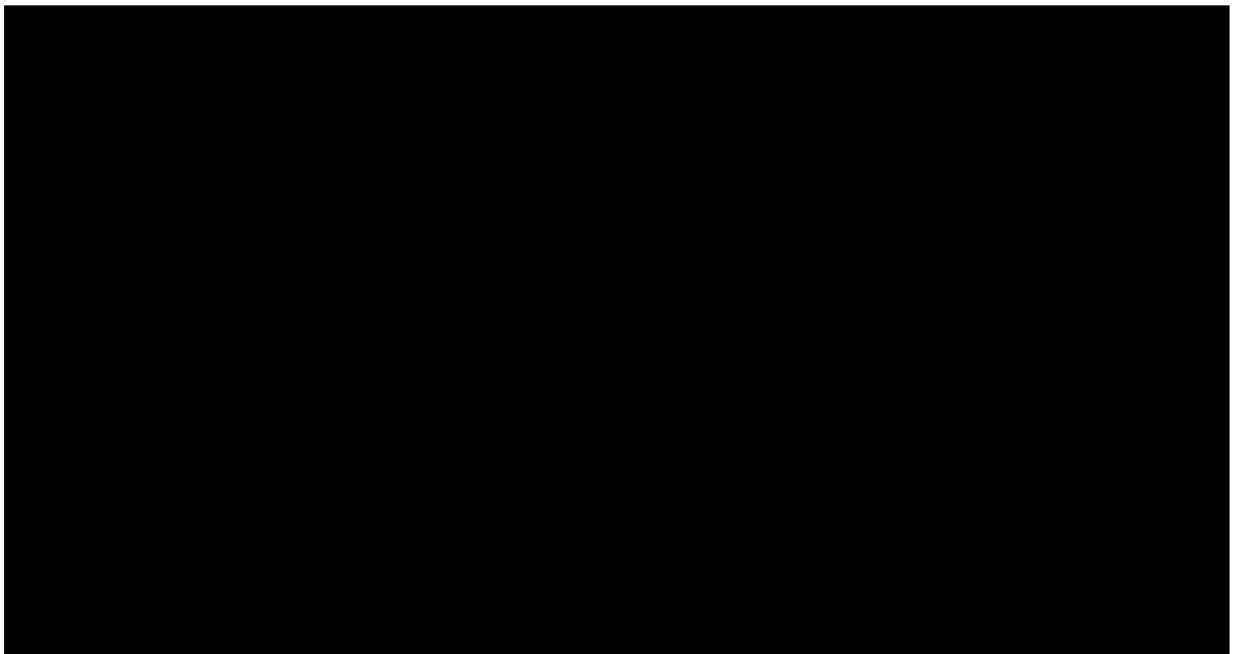
And, there will also be increased nutrient loads and detrimental effects on the health of the lagoon.



We are here for the long haul.



This is what drowned sheep look like, after a flood event in the Waituna Catchment.



A report dated 15 Sept 21, detailing this is presently being with-held by ES. Since a request under the LOGIMA and subsequent complaint to both the Privacy Commissioner and Ombudsman, ES has sent us a sanitised version dated 9 Feb 2022.

The LWCA (and Ewen Pirie) are on the ground, constantly monitoring the lagoon level and are able to respond in a timely manner – unlike the “adversely” affected DOC and Iwi.

They have a huge amount of knowledge of Waituna Lagoon. ES, DOC etc are quick to spout off about how many openings there have been and at what levels etc. Funnily enough all their

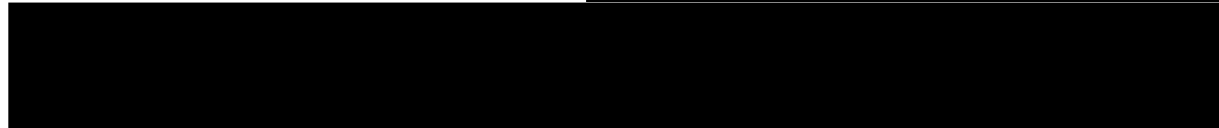


A lot of money has been invested into our property, and while we can see the lake needs protected, so too does our farm, our investment and the future opportunity we have eked out for our kids.



But now both our futures and that of our kids is being threatened.

It would be easy to think this consent application is all about a lagoon level, the health of the lagoon and a weed called Ruppia, but in fact



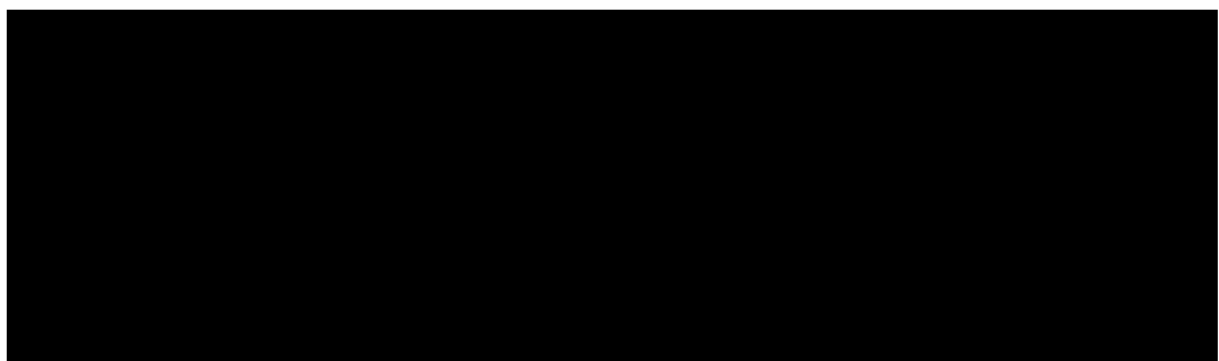
We would urge ES to grant this consent as per the application.

The repercussions, if this does not occur, will be long remembered in Waituna Catchment

Footnote:

There's been much in the media in the past about Waituna, polluting farmers, flipping lagoon but there's been very little about who encouraged farmers to borrow money and drain and develop the swamp that was Waituna.

It was the Government of the day that encouraged farmers to develop this area - all based on a lake level of 2m. Farmers in the catchment agreed we could work with 2.2m when the level was raised, but now 2.5m - that's not workable.



[REDACTED] buffer around Waituna they need to buy the land at fair market rate and allow it to revert to its original native condition, not try to flood farmers out.

The land might have been cheap to buy back in the 1950s-1970s but it was only cheap because it needed a lot of money spent on it to make it productive.

That money has been spent and farmers cannot afford to walk away, nor have their assets deliberately water logged and flooded by the opponents of this application, who are not “individually” or “financially” affected.”