

SOUTH WAIRARAPA BIODIVERSITY GROUP



Background for South Wairarapa District Council meeting

13 December 2017

The South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group (SWBG) was formed in October 2011 and became an incorporated society in November 2012. It is a rural community-led initiative and was the original brainchild of two Pirinoa Farmers.

The group's vision and goals are:

- To raise the level of awareness in the community of positive environmental management and its benefits.
- To improve farming practices through support and education.
- To act as a conduit between local/regional agencies and the community on environmental issues.
- To improve water quality and biodiversity through wetland restoration projects.
- To promote restorative projects around Lake Onoke.



Planting September 2017 Okorewa Lagoon, Lake Ferry

The first three objectives are being met through the annual 'Farming for the Future' seminar which is in its fifth year and brings people together to talk about our connection and management of natural resources. It attracts a cross section of agricultural practitioners including farmers, consultants, landowners, resource management specialists, iwi, local government and various community groups. <http://www.farmingforthefuture.org.nz/> or <https://www.facebook.com/farmingforfuture/>



Farming for the Future seminar April 2017

The last two objectives are met by SWBG's three projects at the bottom of Lake Onoke in the Lake Ferry area, South Wairarapa.

The group's planting as part of its restoration projects at Lake Ferry and Okorewa Lagoon (just past the Lake Ferry Hotel) have been an annual event since 2011. In that time the foreshore at Lake Ferry near the hotel has been planted and at Okorewa Lagoon there has been planting every winter on the bank behind the lagoon. Last winter the focus moved to the flat area in front of Okorewa lagoon, where planting started once a post and rope barrier had been put in to keep vehicles out of the riparian strip. Both the Onoke foreshore and Okorewa Lagoon restoration projects have been supported by Wairarapa Moana collaborators Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), Department of Conservation (DOC) and in the case of the Lake Ferry foreshore South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) as landowners.

SWBG's third project in the area is above the Lake Ferry Hotel at the village wastewater project. SWBG with support from SWDC have planted the gully below the run off from where the pipes discharge greywater underground.



Gully Grey water - Photo 2014



Gully Grey water - Photo 2017

To add value to this project and engage visitors to the area we proposed (with initial approval given 15.10.2015 but since rescinded) a walking track to meander through the planted area towards the spectacular view at the bank edge where DOC were keen to progress a viewing platform.

We wish to get this project back on track and request support from council as follows:

- Approval from SWDC to track the Grey water gully through the planting.
- Financial support from SWDC to develop the walking track (Costed at around \$4500 back in 2015)
- Resumption of two way communication and progression of this collaborative project
- Reassurance that public access was (or will be) renegotiated to facilitate these visitor amenities
- Briefing and consultation with SWBG and Lake Ferry Residents and Ratepayers Association (as interested parties) regarding the proposed removal of pine trees above the settlement

We thank you for your consideration of this proposal and look forward to progressing this initiative for the benefit of ratepayers, visitors to the region and our natural environment.

Heather Atkinson
President SWBG
swbg@hotmail.co.nz
06 3788479