

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT FOR

Waikato Lakes Catchments

NOVEMBER 2008

This project is about you, your catchment
and the lakes on your backdoor step.

THE NZ LANDCARE TRUST IS LAUNCHING A NEW 3 YEAR PROJECT FOCUSING ON SHALLOW LAKES IN THE WAIKATO REGION. THE PROJECT WILL WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING BOTH SHALLOW LAKE AND CATCHMENT HEALTH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A WIDE RANGE OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS. THESE INCLUDE FARMERS, COMMUNITY LAKE CARE GROUPS, IWI, GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS AND RURAL INDUSTRY. A CLUSTER OF SHALLOW LAKES SELECTED BY THE PROJECT STEERING GROUP WILL FORM THE CORE OF THE PROJECT. A MAJOR PROJECT COMPONENT WILL BE PROMOTING CURRENT ON-FARM BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ("BMPS"), IN OTHER WORDS, APPROACHES WHICH CAN ACHIEVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES BOTH FOR FARMERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

Photo: Lake Maratoto is a high priority peat lake in the Waipa district. Large parts of lake's margins have been covenanted to protect the remnant wetland vegetation and further planting with natives is currently taking place.

Project funders:



Why Waikato lakes?

More than 40 shallow lakes are scattered throughout the Waikato Region. Nowhere else in NZ is so richly endowed with so many diverse lakes in a single geographic area. The Waikato shallow lakes can be divided into dune, peat, and riverine lake types. Each lake type has a different evolutionary history and its own community of plants, birds, insects and fish. Like the rest of the country, the Waikato Region has changed dramatically over the last 150 years. Today, the lakes add diversity and interest to a highly productive landscape. However, the challenge is, and always will be, to find a sustainable balance between production land and the protected places within it.



Shallow lake types (from Environment Waikato www.ew.govt.nz)

How the project will work

The "Community Sustainable Land Management for Waikato Lakes Catchments" project is coordinated by Monica Peters of the NZ Landcare Trust (see back page for details). The first part of the project is about getting to know what's happening on the ground around the lakes. This means talking to a range of people – particularly farmers as major land users in lakes catchments but also other land managers and interest groups. This will include a brief informal (and confidential of course!) survey to determine what people's information needs are, what their vision for their local lake might be and how that might be achieved.

Newsletters (like this one) will be one of the primary means of communicating what the project is doing. Project stakeholders (i.e. farmers and representatives from the groups listed on the page opposite) will receive a new edition 2-3 times a year. The newsletters will provide for example, updates on project progress, BMP case studies, results of interesting research, as well as roundups of local events and recent publications. Media releases and project web pages will be other methods used to ensure the right information reaches the right people – at the right time.

Key activities carried out over the 3 years of the project will include:

- Workshops (see enclosed brochure) and Field days
- Resource development e.g. toolkits and fact sheets highlighting current best management practices (BMPs)
- On ground works e.g. riparian planting

Farmers as leaders

An important part of the project is to share the knowledge already within the rural community. There are Waikato farmers who have already developed sound approaches to managing their farms well and looking after the landscape at the same time. Over the course of the project, these farmers will be given the opportunity to inspire others through for example, informal workshops and field days.



Silt trap constructed near the margin of Lake Kainui



Lake Serpentine East margin with wetland plants



Lake Harihari (Waitomo District) one of several lakes in the Taharoa complex, is an example of a west coast dune lake that retains very high water quality (photo courtesy EW)

Waikato shallow lake use and management – who’s involved?

This page provides an overview of who is responsible for what, and typical activities carried out. Note that not all activities described here are carried out at all of the lakes.

Environment Waikato (EW)

- Monitors water quality/quantity and establishment of water quality guidelines
- Establishes and enforces lake levels
- Prioritises lakes for restoration and advises on lake management plans
- Allocates and conserves water
- Provides education, advocacy and information on ecologically sound lake uses
- Controls drainage activities on surrounding land
- Administers the Waipa Peat Lakes Accord Group

District Councils

- Develop and implement lake management plans for lakes and reserve margins administered by Council
- Control land use practices in lake catchments
- Replant lake riparian zones or esplanade reserves
- Fence riparian zones on land administered by Council

Department of Conservation (DoC)

- Develops and implements lake management plans for lakes and reserve margins administered by DoC
- Preserves viable samples of flora and fauna, both resident and migratory species
- Oversees ecologically responsible use of the lakes
- Identifies and protects key indigenous aspects (ecosystems and habitats)
- Promotes native fish conservation and protects native fish life cycle and habitat requirements

Fish and Game

- Manages recreational game bird hunting and sport fishing
- Maintains game bird populations for hunters
- Enhances habitats for game birds around lake margins –including vegetation planting
- Advises on recommended ecological state for game birds – e.g. water levels

Tangata whenua representative groups

- (e.g. Waikato Tainui and Nga Iwi Toopu o Waipa)
- Provide cultural advice to lake managers

NZ Landcare Trust

- Develops and implements practical sustainable land management projects
- Facilitates information exchange between project stakeholders
- Assists landowners and community groups with on ground works

Community Lakecare Groups

- (e.g. Lake Cameron Care Group, Lake Kaituna and Lake Komakorau Care Group)
- Restore riparian zones around local lakes
 - Enhance public access and infrastructure

Science providers

- (e.g. Landcare Research, National Institute of Water and Atmosphere and Waikato University)
- Research water quality, native and introduced plants and animals, lake and riparian zone restoration
 - Provide technical expertise on e.g. management plans

Recreational users

- Hunt gamebirds, fish, sail and kayak etc

The project coordinator

Hi, I'm Monica Peters and I am the coordinator for this project. I've been working with Landcare NZ for 3 years focussing on wetland restoration and catchment management. To date, I've spent a lot of time out in the field talking to people, gathering their views as well as actively working with volunteers on restoration projects. I've also worked on a diverse range of farming, ecological restoration and social research publications for the community. My main tasks in this project are to:

- Research land use in shallow lake catchments and identify leading farmers
- Get people talking to one another, sharing their expertise and stories
- Promote activities in lakes catchments which will benefit both farmers and the lakes
- Provide information to the people that need it in a form which can be easily understood



Monica talking with Wintec students at Lake Serpentine East

Publications

Guidelines for Landowners in Peat Lake Catchments

This FREE publication has been developed for Waikato farmers by NZ Landcare Trust for EW, Waikato and Waipa DC, with the assistance of farmers, ecologists and DoC. The Guidelines include information about the lakes (history, ecological value, ownership and legal status) as well as current best management practices designed to minimise the loss of farm nutrients and slow peat shrinkage. Copies will be sent to all farmers in peat lake catchments with properties >20ha. in November/December 2008. For further information, contact Monica.

The project steering group

To assist with evolving the project and making sure it reaches its goals, a diverse group people with a wide range of expertise has been brought together:

Keri Neilson (Environment Waikato), Peter Van Dongen (Landowner, Lake Mangahia), Tony Roxburgh (Waipa DC), Amy McDonald (DoC), Mike Scarsbrook (DairyNZ), Wally Lee (Federated Farmers), Cherie van Schravendijk (Tainui). Other District Councils and interested parties will also be represented.

What is NZ Landcare Trust?

The NZ Landcare Trust (NZLCT) is a non-government organisation working primarily in the rural sector on sustainable land management projects. The NZLCT works in partnership with rural communities, local and regional government, iwi and rural industry to implement projects with a practical **action on the ground** focus. A small but dedicated team covers most regions in both the North and South islands. Our CEO is Dr. Nick Edgar, a Waikato born and bred freshwater scientist.



Contact details:

Monica Peters

07 859 3725

021 049 2036

PO Box 4305 Hamilton

monica.peters@landcare.org.nz



If you prefer an email version, or don't wish to receive this newsletter, please contact Monica.