

Shallow Lakes Restoration Workshop

Dec 1, 2008

Venue: Waikato University (morning presentations and part 1 of discussion) and Lake Serpentine (on site restoration works and part 2 of discussion)

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Introduction

The morning presentations are currently available as PDFs on the NIWA website, <http://niwascience.co.nz/ncwr/tools>

The Shallow Lakes Restoration Workshop was the third in recent years to take place in the Waikato. The Dec 1 workshop was largely in response to the interest generated at the first two lakes events held at Te Kauwhata and Huntly. This year, an opportunity was presented by the Freshwater Sciences Society conference (New Plymouth, Nov 24-27) for scientists to get together and share thoughts on shallow lake restoration. This information was presented at the Dec 1 workshop and formed the basis for a general Q&A session as well as a lively discussion on values, barriers and ways forward. The results from the latter session are documented overleaf.

The organising committee for the Dec 1 workshop represents a diverse range of interests and includes government agencies, NGO's , consultants and scientists. Although it is a challenge to ensure that the momentum around shallow lake restoration is maintained, there is still plenty scope to continue assisting the wider community to learn more about shallow lake restoration and applying restoration techniques.

Who attended?

The workshop was well attended with a total of 81 people attending in the morning and ~50 attending in the afternoon. A diverse range of individuals and organisations were represented, including agencies (EW, Waikato, Waipa and Otorohanga DC's and DoC); industry (Solid Energy and Genesis - both major sponsors); community volunteers (Lake Ngaroto Care Group, Friends of Lake Hakanoa, Lake Kaituna and Komakorau Care Group, Lake Cameron Care Group, Whaingaroa Harbour Care, Lake Koromatua Care Group and the Waterways Ecology Team). Others included consultants, Landcare Trust, Fish & Game, ACRE, Waikato Tainui, Ngati Hana, nurserymen, landscapers, an engineer, Biodiversity Advice Waikato and the Lake Ngaroto Sailing Club).



Afternoon workshop at Lake Serpentine

Visions / Barriers to achieving visions

Over the course of the morning, attendees were asked to note their visions and barriers for lake restoration. Feedback is summarised below. Numbers in brackets refer to the number of mentions.

What's your vision for a restored local lake – what would you like to see or be able to do there? (n=68)

Response theme	#	Example of feedback
Improved accessibility	7	<i>Accessible entry (i.e. – boat ramps, walkways and tracks) to allow enjoyment of biodiversity amongst a well planted buffer zone on these lakes</i>
Recreational opportunities	21	<i>Fishing (2), walking (1), picnicking (1), swimming (4), kayaking (3), rowing (2), boating (1), gathering food (1)</i>
Tourism	2	<i>Encourage tourists – clean green NZ!</i>
Community engagement /development	5	<i>On-going educational opportunities, resources to increase awareness, change attitudes and values so that the people of Waikato treasure these areas</i>
Enhanced biodiversity/ecology	20	<i>Restore NZ Native trees and vegetation in surrounding buffer zone i.e. remove introduced species and noxious weeds, replace with natural vegetation</i>
Improved water quality	13	<i>Reduction of algal bloom impacts – make more enjoyable passive recreation activities – i.e. reduction of unpleasant smells, visual aspect improved</i>

What are the main barriers to achieving this vision? (n=64)

Response theme	#	Example of feedback
Statutory Legislation	11	<i>Understanding / compliance with regional plan rules. Eg. drainage, vegetation clearance, effluent management; Lack of clear legislation/guidelines on landuse in the catchments; Current legislation too permissive; Difficulty in getting market driven mechanism to change land owner practices</i>
Lack of effective partnerships/ landowner buy in	10	<i>Lack of understanding / empathy between stakeholders – very combative interaction between stakeholders leads to negative and unconstructive relationships. Ideally all stakeholders probably want the same thing but have different motivators; Apathy by local people/ landowners – status quo attitude. Nothing done! May need legislation, certainly need education – not too technical.</i>
Invasive species	4	<i>Invasive fish(2) and invasive aquatic plants/plants (2)</i>
Funding	11	<i>Do we need more than just a 30% grant and the rural user wanting to participate?</i>
Agriculture	5	<i>Increasing and on-going nutrient loading</i>
Other	2	<i>There is no clear pathway – what issues should be addressed first</i>

Ways forward

During the final discussion session at Lake Serpentine, potential ways forward were discussed. Results are summarised below.

Creating a stronger community

- Better communication between community restoration groups – has begun but has lost traction – Option to use Waikato Biodiversity forum calendar (www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz)
- Encourage community events

Managing the whole catchment

- Establishing different time scales for achieving different values / restoration goals
- Integrated catchment management to address the multiple stressors and diffuse inputs
- 'Planning for land use' There is currently no regulation for where dairy conversions can take place – Take too long to react.

Managing farming

- Restore balance between “polluters” and water / lake users i.e. farmers have been able to avoid the responsibility for offsite pollution
- Providing incentives e.g.
 - For fencing
 - For not using sensitive land as in the EU
 - For creating wider buffers (e.g. 10m) by allowing periodic light grazing
- Providing disincentives for negative behaviour
- Providing education e.g. for fencing off seeps etc.
- There is still a place for the 2m buffer zones as long as they are correctly planted – they are better than no buffer strip.
- Silt traps on all drains which relate to the size of the property and amount of fertiliser applied.

Managing Coarse Fish

- Enabling the public to catch fish for the good of the lakes
- Create a demand (however may cause illegal release issues)
- Establish a one day conservation event e.g. Koi Carp Classic (though limited to bow hunters)
 - Waiver to avoid health and safety issues
 - Boats and net screening to avoid transfer of noxious weeds (e.g. alligator weed) and simultaneous public awareness raising of risks
 - Piloted at less sensitive lake
 - Utilise hunting groups – gain their support