

# The Waitaki LINK Highlights



Waitaki DISTRICT COUNCIL

## A new champion for biodiversity



Hi, I'm Margy Gaynor, Waitaki District Council's first Biodiversity Coordinator – a new part-time job funded for three years by the Department of Conservation's Biodiversity Advice Fund.

I'm here to support on-the-ground protection of Waitaki's indigenous biodiversity (both flora and fauna), and to assist landholders to protect the remaining native vegetation on their land in the best ways possible.

This is a critical step in assuring the future of Waitaki's indigenous biodiversity, and in developing what is becoming common practice in New Zealand's districts and regions.

I recently moved to Otago from North Queensland. Although not a native kiwi, I come well prepared, having completed a basic science degree (zoology – James Cook University, Townsville, North Queensland), worked in field-based research (freshwater ecology) in Victoria's mountainous country, and later in landscape planning (land clearing administration, leasehold land) in North Queensland). In recent years I've been extensively involved in community conservation efforts on World Heritage Magnetic Island, Queensland (part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area), while also working towards post graduate planning qualifications, here in Otago.

Why do this? Why bother? New Zealand's native wildlife both reflects and preserves the country's extraordinary evolutionary heritage and environmental health, and also contributes significantly to the ecosystem services provided by nature.

New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity is particularly unique – it has even been described as eccentric! Unlike any other non-polar country, the flora and fauna largely evolved without humans, until about 1000 years ago. Ironically, this isolation made NZ's wildlife extremely sensitive to human settlement. Consequently, several native species have vanished altogether, and much remaining wildlife is on the way out, as per global trends, for typical reasons: human use of land, water and air quality changes, and the spread of exotic species.

In particular, environmental scientists have identified land clearing as a major driver of biodiversity losses, globally and also here in New Zealand, especially in widely developed landscapes having few reserves. Thus, the protection of remnant native vegetation is identified in the NZ Biodiversity Strategy (2000) as National Priority No. 1 ("to protect indigenous vegetation associated with land environments that have 20% or less remaining in indigenous cover"). To achieve this, various measures are available to landholders willing to preserve native vegetation on their land, including QEII funding for vegetation covenants.

**Please contact me at Waitaki District Council if you wish to discuss how I can assist with biodiversity protection on your land.**

Phone - 03 4330300 or 0800 108081; mobile - 027 5656578.

## Cracking down on water theft

Following random inspections of restrictors on properties connected to Waitaki's rural water supplies over the past couple of months, one case of tampering has been referred to the Police. Random inspections began late last year, following an announcement from Council that it would be cracking down on theft from rural water supplies.

Water Unit engineer, Caitlin Donovan, said in addition to the case referred to Police, eight cases have been investigated and resolved by Council's Enforcement Team.

"We are disappointed that we've found evidence of tampering. However, we also know that the majority of people on rural water supplies are not taking more water than they're entitled to, which is great to see."



Council is often called to investigate water shortages within the rural supplies. These are usually caused by burst or damaged pipework within the system, however, it can also be the result of missing or tampered supply restrictors.

All customers pay for a fixed amount of water units. Infrastructure surrounding the water supply is controlled to deliver the correct amount of water to all users. Once a restrictor is tampered with, other customers relying on the supply can suffer water shortages.

In an effort to reduce unnecessary investigation and additional cost to the rate payers in the District, we would like to remind all customers with restricted water supplies that any tampering with restrictors will be regarded as theft and followed up by Council's Enforcement Officer and potentially the Police.

**Left: Council Water Unit engineer, Caitlin Donovan, with one of the lockable units that are placed on restrictors that have been tampered with.**

## Dog alert



Council's Dog Control Officers are continuing to keep a eye out for uncontrolled dogs on Waitaki streets.

Unfortunately, we've received a number of calls in recent months concerning dogs being exercised or allowed to run loose without a leash.

Many dog attacks and rushing dog incidents which have occurred in the District and elsewhere could have been prevented if the owner had their dog controlled by a leash.

The District Bylaw 2004 states that an "owner of a dog may allow their dog on any public place (not being a prohibited public place or dog exercise area) if the dog is controlled on a leash".

**The bottom line - if you or someone else is taking your dog out in public, please make sure it's on a leash.**

It's the job of Council's Dog Control Officers to enforce the Bylaw to help keep our community safe. If dog owners don't comply with the rules, they may be liable for fines up to \$300.

That said, we know there are plenty of responsible dog owners out there who register their dogs and keep them under control. So when our Dog Control Officers are out on their patrols, they'll be offering a gift for the dog owners seen complying with the Bylaw as a thank you for doing the right thing!

**Oamaru Service Centre**  
 20 Thames Street, Oamaru 9400  
 Private Bag 50058, Oamaru 9444  
 Open to the Public  
 Monday to Friday 8:30am- 5pm  
 (Thursday 8:30am - 4pm)  
 Available by Phone 8am - 5pm  
  
 Phone: (03) 433 0300  
 Freephone: 0800 108 081  
 (within the district)  
 Fax: (03) 433 0301  
 Email: service@waitaki.govt.nz

**Waihemo Service Centre**  
 54 Tiverton Street, Palmerston 9430  
 Open to the Public  
 Monday to Friday 8:30am- 5pm  
 (Thursday 9:30am - 5pm)  
  
 Available by Phone 8:30am - 5pm  
 Phone: (03) 465 1106  
 Fax: (03) 465 1111  
 Find us online anytime at:  
[www.waitaki.govt.nz](http://www.waitaki.govt.nz)

**Upcoming February Meetings:**  
  
**LOWER WAITAKI SOUTH-COASTAL CANTERBURY ZONE COMMITTEE**  
 Wednesday 8 February, 4.15pm  
 ODT Inkbox, Oamaru Opera House  
  
**UPPER WAITAKI ZONE COMMITTEE**  
 Thursday 9 February 2012, 3.00pm (TBC)  
 Twizel

**HARBOUR SUB COMMITTEE**  
 Monday 13 February 2012, 9.00am  
 Council HQ, Council Chamber  
  
**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL**  
 Tuesday 14 February 2012, 9.00am  
 Council HQ, Council Chamber  
  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**  
 Tuesday 14 February 2012, Following  
 Extraordinary Council meeting  
 Council Chambers, Council HQ

**COUNCIL**  
 Tuesday 21 February 2012, 9.00am  
 Council HQ, Council Chamber

Do you want the Waitaki Link sent straight into your inbox or postbox every two weeks?  
 Then join our mailing list.  
 Email: [consult@waitaki.govt.nz](mailto:consult@waitaki.govt.nz)



Stay informed, start a conversation and follow us on [twitter.com/WaitakiDC](https://twitter.com/WaitakiDC) or [facebook.com/WaitakiDistrictCouncil](https://facebook.com/WaitakiDistrictCouncil).

