

2015-16 Chair Report - Interim Chairman; Ian Cole



While the makeup of trustees remain the same, due to major health issues, Dan Rae has understandably decided to step down from his role as Chair. Dan has successfully chaired the Trust for several years and I know I speak for all trustees in thanking him for his enormous contribution and sound leadership over that time. Thankfully, he remains as a trustee and his wise counsel will certainly be sought and appreciated.

Funds continue to be carefully managed. Returns on investments are proving to be challenging given the current world financial climate. This year the Trust undertook a full review of its Statement of Investment and Policy Objects (SIPO) and Risk Assessment as required to meet prudent financial management practices of the Trust investments. Our commitment to conservative fund management have still provided sufficient revenue to allow the Trust to operate and contribute a significant role in a number of key areas within the local community.

There has been no Capital expenditure during the financial year.

The Lindis River continues to be a significant focus of the Trust. While the ORC's recommendation of 900 litres/second falls short of the 1000 litres/second that both Otago Fish and Game and the Trust were advocating for, the Trust has seen fit to support ORC's recommendation. To that end, the Trusts flow monitoring together with temperature and wildlife surveys continue. The Trust is also undertaking similar research on the Cardrona River in support of Fish & Game and the minimum flow process.

Water quality monitoring in the Manuherikia catchment remains a high priority for the Trust, particularly given the degree of intensification that's been witnessed in recent years.

Improvement of nesting bird habitat on islands at the head of Lake Dunstan has been very successful, resulting in good numbers of breeding birds witnessed roosting on the islands. These include the Black billed gull, an endemic species listed as nationally critical. Information signage has been placed on the islands to raise awareness of the nesting activity.

The Trust continues to identify and improve access to the Clutha River. I'm pleased to say that we are in the final stages of formalising the access agreement on Kane road. All parties are agreed and we await final signatures. Work is hoped to be completed by the end of the summer. It has been a long process but one which will secure meaningful access to the Clutha and its margins for the recreational benefit of current and future generations. The River Ridge/ Black Bag access to the Clutha continues to be upgraded and improved together with identification and negotiations of other potential access points.

The Trust has continued support to Otago Fish and Games Helen Trotters research of bio manipulation on Lakes Hayes and Johnson, and continues to support native fish work by DoC in addition to assisting with the removal of noxious fish from the Albertown ponds. Anglers surveys on Lake Dunstan over the Christmas period are to be continued.

My sincere thanks and appreciation go to Aaron Horrell, our employee, for his commitment and hard work as well as Otago Fish and Game together with fellow trustees Dr John Jillet, Dr Gerry Closs and Murray Neilson. Again, a heartfelt appreciation to Dan Rae who may be "off the hook" but is still very much "in the net"!

Ian Cole - Interim Chairman
Clutha Fisheries Trust