

Volunteer Salmon Hatchery

News Letter No 52

July 26.

Welcome to our latest news letter. The year is half gone and my does time fly. Winter is upon us.

We must acknowledge our members and interested parties who have made donations to our organisation. Since the last news letter the following have made donations. They are Chris Main and Brian Weller, and also Phoenix Tackle whom donated two go pro cameras for installation at Welcome Stream and Bells Pond. Our sincerest thanks to you .

We must also acknowledge our corporate sponsors who actively support our organisation. They are in no particular order Meridian Power up community fund, Ikawai Morven Glenavy Irrigation company (MGI) and Oceania Dairy Ltd.

As you are all probably aware the Waitaki River Wild Salmon run on the Waitaki River was the worst in the history of the salmon returns. This information was supplied by CSI Fish and Game.

Luckily the returns to the Rangitata river were slightly better than last years returns and as a result of the numbers of spawning salmon observed in the Rangitata spawning streams the ability to catch a salmon in the 26/27 fishing season remains although with a one fish per season per licenced person.

The only report of a fin clipped fish which may have been ours was caught in the Clutha river. No fin clipped fish were reported caught in the Waitaki River.

We have received numerous requests for fire wood this winter, but the wood we had disappeared in April. Why people leave it past the last minute to order firewood is unfathomable.

We are still looking for a source of Firewood logs for processing into firewood. If you know anyone that could assist us in firewood for fundraising please make contact with a committee member.

We are still collecting used batteries as a fund raiser. This is an easy a simple fundraising method for us. Please ask around and try and obtain used batteries for our organisation. These can be delivered to a committee member or dropped off at our collection point in Glenavy. If you cannot deliver can you please ring 03 689 3883 and arrange a pick up.

A thank you for the few volunteers who made themselves available for the fin clipping of our salmon smolt at Welcome Stream prior to the smolt being transported to Bells Pond for on rearing.

About 1300 smolt were fin clipped. These are now happily growing in the raceway. Of these about 400 will be retained for Brood stock purposes and the remainder will be released into the wild.

The Salmon Hatchery has just completed the very busy period where brood stock fish have been sorted and tested for harvesting purposes. Again a big thank you to those that made themselves available to Harvest the females over a period of 7 weeks. The numbers assisting or present ranged from 14 to 5. As usual the first harvest resulted in the greatest attendance. Volunteer numbers generally were sufficient to complete the tasks.

The egg harvest started at once a week on Wednesday mornings but after three weeks it was deemed that the eggs were best checked for ripeness on Wednesday – Sunday- and again Wednesday.

In total 50 females were harvested. The eggs harvested, were for some reason less in quantity than the previous year, and ranged from excellent quality eggs to very poor quality eggs or no eggs at all.

Each incubation tray contained the eggs of one hen fish after fertilisation.

The effort by the Welcome stream team in installing a hydrogen peroxide administering system and the installation of silt extraction system has improved the egg survivability. A job well done.

Without counting our eggs before they hatch, we are on track to be better than the last two years of production. At the time of writing we have some eggs in the “eyed up” stage.

We have 71 brood stock remaining in Bells Pond ranging in age group from rising three year old to four year old. These will provide the brood stock for the 2027 egg Harvest. The projected egg harvest for 2027 is less than half of this years total.

We have no rising two year old fish at all, and as earlier mentioned we have 400 rising 1 year old stock.

Fish and Game Central South Island has recognised that the salmon population survival is reaching the critical to possible slide into extinction stage. As earlier mentioned (Last News Letter) CSIF&G has engaged in a cryogenic programme to freeze and save salmon milt for the future in case there are no surviving male wild salmon returning to the river.

This year the Canadian technicians assisted by fish and game and our volunteers harvested 8 wild salmon males which were raised in our Bells Pond facility for their milt which was frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored in a secure facility for later use if required. This process will be repeated again next year.

Our AGM was held on Tuesday the 31st March. A good turn out of 22 interested persons attended. A new chairman was elected after the Incumbent (Trevor Hill) indicated that he wished to step aside. Ross Skinner was elected as chair, His deputy is Bayden King and the committee is Stu McNamara, Colin Ballantyne, Linn Koevoet (Sec/Treasurer) and Mike Hutchings with Nikki Dellaway as the CSIF&G liaison member.

Upcoming fundraising working bee. Please assist with this fundraising event. We are again assisting the Oamaru Poultry club with the setting up the bird cages at the drill hall in Itchen street. **Tuesday the 14th July** starting at 9am finish approx 2.30pm. Morning tea and lunch provided. **Sunday the 19th July** starting at 9am -finish at approx 11.30am. Morning tea provided. Please advise the secretary if you can help.

We have a web site and this is regularly updated with information, minutes, photographs and up coming events, and news letters. The site can be found at www.waitakiriparian.co

We are looking for two volunteers to help out at Bells Pond for 2-3hrs assisting with the routine duties that are required to maintain the bells pond operation. This is best attended to, on one of the last 2 days of each month. Anyone who can help with their time please contact Linn on 027 625 0397.

This news Letter is sponsored by **Oamaru Sports and Outdoors.** Please when purchasing your sporting Requirements visit Richard and his team.

