

Volunteer Salmon Hatchery News Letter.

Edition 47, October 2024.

Welcome to our latest news letter.

Our latest call for assistants at the two Hatchery sites resulted in no new volunteers. This coupled with the sad passing of three of our long serving volunteers leave us short on a volunteer base. If you can assist please help out.

We must acknowledge the members who made donations since the last news letter (June 24) they are Chris Main, Andrew Smith, We thank you all for your assistance.

We must also acknowledge our corporate sponsors, without whom we couldnt provide the facilities and programme that we do. They are the Meridian Energy community trust; the Morven – Glenavy -Ikawai Irrigation Company (MGI) ,Oceania Dairy Ltd/yilli and the Waitaki Irrigators collective. Without the support of these organisations we would simply not be able to operate.

Does anyone out there know what has happened to the Waitaki Irrigators Collective? If you have any information please contact Linn Koevoet or Trevor Hill.

Working bee

Sunday the 17th November 2024

9am and finishing at 12.30pm- to split and ring as much dry pine firewood as possible in the time available. This will be occurring in the wood paddock in Glenavy on the Glenavy – Tawai Road . If you can assist with chainsawing or feeding the log splitter please come along . Your assistance will be appreciated. Many hands make light work.

We finally got a reply from the Otago Regional council after months of waiting and requests regarding the massive release of vegetation in Welcome stream which caused considerable time and effort to remove from our raceway and subsequent damage and loss of fish.

The Otago regional council advised that the farmer broke no consent conditions in what he did because, he only removed vegetation and did not interfere with the stream bed. The fact that over 50% of the dislodged macrophytes was oxygen weed and mud ,which is attached to the stream bed , did not mater, or the disturbance of silt. The ORC advised that they wrote a letter advising this farmer of being a **better neighbour and not dislodging vegetation and allowing it to go down stream**, to cause problems down the line. Well done Otago Regional Council.

The easement for the Bells Pond site has been completed and lodged. We thank Meridian Energy Community fund for suppling us with the Funding for this.(\$5,000) .

At the time of writing we are aware that “the Terrace” property of Alister Bell is about to be sold. Thank goodness for the easement being in place.

Following a request for logs for use for firewood fundraising in our March news letter, nothing was immediately forthcoming, which forced us to purchase a truck and trailer of old man pine logs from Laurie Forrestry. This was converted into firewood and disappeared as soon as it was split, even being green, but it provided a much needed cash flow.

Lyn McCulloch of Glenavy donated some large logs. Blue Gum and Black poplar. This was cut and split by a working party of 5 and about 35 m3 of wood was split and delivered to the paddock.

Alister Bell made contact with us and asked if we still wanted logs. He offered us a heap of dry pine logs on his property. Donated. This was accepted and we organised Philip Waring Transport to transport the logs to our Paddock. 3.5 truck and trailer Loads where delivered.

We are still collecting old /dead lead acid batteries. Please if you have any or know where some are located please assist with our fund raising. We liquidated the previously accumulated batteries and raised \$4226.20 towards the cost of fish food. Thank you ,to every one who helped in collecting and delivering the batteries to our collection Point.

As alluded in the last news letter, the wild salmon run in 2024 was the worst on record. The salmon were small and in general poor condition. This has been confirmed by Fish and Game surveys and observations of spawning sites throughout the region.

There was only one fin clip salmon caught and this was released as it appeared about 4lb in weight. Unfortunately there was no supporting evidence from the angler and hence was inelligible to claim a sports voucher.

What started out as a success, was the Harvesting of our Broodstock for eggs. 240,000 eggs where collected and placed in the incubation shed. Thank you to all those that assisted in the Harvesting operation.

Our dedicated volunteers did an amazing job tending to the eggs but it became apparent that something serious was amiss. The eggs started dying in large numbers, at all stages of development, throughout all the incubators at the same time.

The weather at the time of incubation was wet with weeks of drizzle and damp conditions leaving the ground saturated.

Questions were asked and enquiries with ORC regarding any notified chemical spill were conducted. This proved negative but information received from local farmers suggested a possible reason for our fish egg deaths. A farmer disposing of large quantities of pig effluent on a farm above the Hatchery in paddocks adjacent to the stream where we obtain our water. The suggestion was that it is possible that this effluent ran off from the paddock into the stream.

Enquiries with Hill Laboratories in Christchurh ,(independent water testing and analysis) advised that as the chemical is unknown the cost of testing the water to identify the contamination would cost our organisation \$15,000 with no gurantee that the chemicals would be identified as it may have already passed through the system and be undetectable. With this advice we were not prepared to spend \$15,000 with a possibility that nothing could be detected. We simply do not have that disposable cash.

The Otago Regional Council Polution section was informed of our findings and situation , and the resultant death of our eggs. They agreed with the assessment from Hill Laboratories but advised there are Regional Council Regulations covering “Off Farm” disposal of pig effluent which must be complied with. The ORC will conduct an investigation into the disposal of the Pig effluent.

This news letter is sponsored by Oamaru Sports and Outdoors, Please, when purchasing your sporting equipment visit Richard and his team.

