

Saving Our Alpine Lakes – What can we do?

The recent local body elections highlighted the widespread concern about the current and possible future states of our mountain lakes (Wakatipu, Wanaka, Hawea) and their catchments. This concern translates to a desire to try and avoid the water quality and ecosystem problems that have arisen in many lakes elsewhere in New Zealand.

Given the public concern, and an apparent dearth of baseline research on the present quality of the lakes and ecosystem function, the **Wanaka Branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand** is holding a public meeting to outline what the scientific research does tell us, and to enable the community to address their concerns.

The meeting is on **Friday 24 February at 7.30 pm in the Lake Wanaka Centre.**

The meeting will seek to provide an overview of all the research, actions and activities that are or need to be directed at guarding the health of the lakes and catchments. It will bring together those organisations which are vital to developing appropriate research questions supported by proper monitoring, and effective preventive or remedial actions if and where required. It is in the public interest to support any such actions, including fund raising and providing feedback to groups with statutory water management roles.

The meeting will include presentations by Professor David Hamilton, Waikato University and Dr Marc Schallenberg, University of Otago. They will describe the present state of knowledge about the lakes and the likely problems we could face.

They will be followed by a panel discussion. Invitations have been sent to Queenstown Lakes District Council, Otago Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Primary Industry, Land Information New Zealand, Fish and Game, and the Guardians of the Lakes. Russell McGeorge, Chairman of the recently formed Lake Wanaka Trust, will describe the objectives of the trust and its role as owner of the Alpine Lakes Research and Education Centre.

We look forward to your participation in this important meeting. For further information, please feel free to contact one of the below.

Yours sincerely

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Wanaka Branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand