

**In the Matter of the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)**

**And**

**In the Matter of application by the Central Plains Water Trust (CWPT) and Central Plains Water Ltd (CWPL) and the Ashburton Community Water Trust (ACWT)**

Statement of evidence of Kathryn McIlraith.

Introduction.

My name is Kathryn McIlraith and I make this submission on my own behalf as a resident in the Little River area of Banks Peninsula, Canterbury, New Zealand.

Effects on Lake Ellesmere and the surrounding communities:

It could be said that little consideration appears to have been given to Lowland Drainage and water tables.

In the area extending from Little River all the way round both Lake Forsythe and Lake Ellesmere to Taumutu are a myriad of fresh-water springs feeding into pockets of wetlands and waterways.

If the applicants' proposal were to be entertained, in more than isolated instances the waterways would be subjected to increased flows with all the associated increase in nutrients, sediment suspension and faecal coliforms draining into Lake Ellesmere. The springs themselves could also be affected by less subterranean water being available to well up and maintain the current flow rates.

As has already been covered by other submitters, Lake Ellesmere is continuing to fight for its very life, Lake Forsyth having partially succumbed to that fight for existence and serving as a reminder of what can happen when 'things go wrong'.

The fringes of Lake Ellesmere are home to a repository of specialized flora and fauna with strong input from the Waihora Ellesmere Trust volunteers and others. This has enhanced the opportunities for wider community participation in environmental, educational and recreational activities.

Lake Ellesmere and tributaries are used a customary food gathering areas, e.g. fishing for flounder, in much the same way that customary eeling is

practiced at the neck of shingle beach where lake Forsyth runs closest to the sea at Birdlings Flat Beach.

#### Tourism:

We need to be vigilant about any further impact on these two lakes and the environs.

Thousands upon thousands of local and overseas visitors fish, boat, cycle, run, walk, and drive in on and around these lakes on the roadways or the Little River Rail Trail. Visitors come to these areas to enjoy the natural environment, enjoy the scenery and appreciate the history. This has flow on benefits for the local communities.

#### Concerns:

This proposal process has illustrated that we need to find ways to empower and resource the Authorities who are charged with caring for our environment here in our Canterbury province; to enable them to provide adequate and timely protections for these ecosystems. These protections need to be well understood, mandatory and enforceable.

It would seem to fly in the face of natural justice that there is provision for land to be taken from an individual by another individual for the financial betterment of that second individual. It is considered by many to be a yardstick of the well being of a society, how we deal with the situation of “just because we can, doesn’t mean we do”.

#### Conclusion:

I believe that the Authorities have struggled to provide adequate information and that there are insufficient checks and balances.

For all of the reasons above, I oppose the application. I request that all of the applications for resource consents be declined along with all other associated matters.

L Kathryn McIlraith  
6 August 2008

