



Case Study

Lifestyle block owners focus on good management

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CATEGORY: NEWS | Zone Committee | Land Use | Environment | Water Quality | Farming | Water

ZONE(S): WAIMAKARIRI

Power family on their lifestyle block

Lifestyle block owners in Waimakariri have discovered the benefits of good management during a three-week pilot project run by the Waimakariri Water Zone Committee.

There are more than 4500 lifestyle blocks in Waimakariri, and while they are not significant contributors to water quality issues in the area, collectively they do have an impact on the environment.

Pilot project leader David Ashby says the three sessions covered topics such as animal welfare, riparian planting, waterways, pasture growth, feed requirements and fertiliser use.

“This whole project is designed to be interactive and we’ve had plenty of robust discussions around various topics relating to lifestyle blocks.

“It has been invaluable to share our knowledge and to see that we’re all on the same page in terms of wanting the best outcome for the environment while being able to enjoy the benefits of developing a sustainable small block.”

During the final session participants used Environment Canterbury’s farm portal to access an overview of information relating to their property and went through a lifestyle block management plan together with the aim of putting their own plan together.

“Everyone was able to see that this type of plan is extremely useful in terms of getting the best use out of your lifestyle block. Identifying small issues can help people achieve environmental outcomes.

“If you look after the environment your lifestyle block will be more productive, look better and be a pleasure to live and work in.”

We all have a part to play

Swannanoa couple Daniel and Michelle Power say the pilot project has given them a fresh insight into best management practices for their lifestyle block.

“It’s great to take the time to really look at what you’re doing and to have the opportunity to meet regularly with other lifestyle block owners. Even though we’re a small drop in the bucket, everything counts when it comes to the environment.”

Daniel and Michelle were pleased to discover that their regular soil testing programme is helping them to get the best use of their 20-acre block.

“Knowing that we’re on the right track is really helpful. It was also interesting to learn more about N-loss and irrigation.

“We were both surprised at how much we got out of it and we could easily keep going every week. Sharing knowledge is really the key to growing and developing new skills.”