



Media Release
Tuesday 26 March 2013

Natural Environment Fund now open

Applications are now open for Selwyn District Council's Natural Environment Fund.

The fund was established to encourage and assist private landowners to carry out work that benefits the natural environment and supports native biodiversity.

Selwyn District Resource Management Planner Andrew Mactier says that less than one percent of the original native vegetation remains on the Canterbury Plains. "The Canterbury Plains is listed as an acutely threatened natural environment which makes the remaining native biodiversity in Selwyn District rare and important."

Around \$40,000 is available in the fund to help protect and restore areas of native vegetation on private land. Priority is given to supporting work on sites which have been identified and confirmed as having significant ecological values through a formal ecological assessment. A second priority is supporting sites which may have lower value remnant vegetation but which would benefit from works and management.

Over \$200,000 has been allocated to over 60 projects through the fund since 2006.

Funding has been used for a wide range of projects in previous years, including work to restore existing native vegetation by landowners, schools and community groups and establish new native plantings. The fund has also been used to help fund a field survey of threatened beetles in the Selwyn District and to conduct an environmental perceptions survey.

Southbridge School received funding through the Natural Environment Fund for a five year native regeneration project along Dobbins Road on the north bank of the lower Rakaia. The project is being carried out with Rakaia Island Dairies, and aims to increase native flora and fauna in the local area and develop an environmental awareness and education programme for the school students.

Funding has also been granted for a project at the Taege farm at Kowhai Bush to fence and re-plant several areas of significant existing kahikatea and podocarp forest remnants on the farm. 5,000 native plants have been planted as part of the project and pest and weed control work has been carried out.

The closing date for applications for funding for this year is Friday 31 May.

Ends

Photo attached: planting at the Taege Farm in Kowhai Bush.

For further information, please contact:

Andrew Mactier
Selwyn District Council
03 347 2799
andrew.mactier@selwyn.govt.nz