



Media Release  
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## **Volunteers work to create park recognised with award**

Local volunteers have won an award for their outstanding contribution to conservation by developing Prebbleton Nature Park.

The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board Award for a transformational restoration project was awarded to volunteers who helped plant and develop the park. Today the 2.6 hectare park has over 7,000 native plants, and is home to some rare local native plant species as well as a range of birds and insects.

Michele Frey, who lives next door to the park, came up with the idea to rehabilitate the former gravel quarry site. She wanted to restore the area to its natural habitat and provide a tranquil area people could visit to enjoy nature.

Michele approached Selwyn District Council in 2003 seeking support for the idea. Landscape Architect Jo Sutherland designed the park, the Council provided funding for planting and local volunteers have contributed thousands of hours over the past decade to plant and maintain the park.

"The objective was to regenerate the site with vegetation that once existed naturally on the Canterbury plains," says Michele Frey.

"This really is a dream come true. A beautiful park transformed from what was essentially nothing. And it is due to the massive commitment from the team of volunteers lead by Jim Hutton and supported by Selwyn District Council and other key agencies."

Regular community planting days and working bees take place to add new plants and maintain the park. Schools have also visited the park to learn about New Zealand's native habitat.

"The park is a credit to the volunteers who have worked to develop it into beautiful place that is highly valued by the local community and is a popular spot for walking and picnicking," says Selwyn District Council's Manager Open Space and Property Mark Rykers.

The park is located at 666 Springs Road just south of Prebbleton townships and is open to the public year round. The volunteers who maintain the park would welcome new members. Anyone interested in finding out more about becoming a volunteer can contact Jim Hutton on 03 349 3812.

Photos attached:

*Prebbleton Nature Park volunteers (from left) Professor Ian Spellerberg, Michele Frey, Jim Hutton, Rona Ryan, Marian Frey and David Jarvis, with the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board Award*

*Image of Prebbleton Nature Park.*

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