

State of the Onepoto Lagoon

February 3 2013

I was called by Ian Bergquist on Friday Feb 1st and he reported that the pond level was low and had been falling for the last couple of days.

On reaching the pond the level was about 200mm lower than normal and it was obvious that the weir gates were leaking. The gate chamber is covered by a stainless steel lid and this was padlocked. I had reported to council last year that the padlock was rusted and needed replacement. They had done so, but replaced it with a 'C' lock and I only had an 'A' key.

While we were wondering what to do I noticed a council car leaving the park so I waved it down and asked if he had a 'C' key. This was Park Ranger Norman Watson. After checking who I was he did have such and opened the lock so we could see what the problem might be.



The timber weir gate boards had rotted out and there was a large leak between the two boards.

These boards had been installed in 2007 after the previous set had become rotten.

The top trim strip had mostly disappeared and the timbers were soft to the touch. At this stage,



being late Friday afternoon, we needed to make a temporary repair by patching the boards.

Ian went for some plywood while I found a sack that could block the water in the meantime. With plywood both sides the leak was down to a dribble.

The next day, Saturday, I obtained some retaining wall timber cut to size. The ends needed notching to bring the thickness down to 48mm, and the faces were planed to be flat and straight.

The boards are best replaced when the tide is at the same level as the pond. see [Onepoto Lagoon Manual PDF](#) on the [web site](#) for details. This was calculated as being 3:20pm.



When we went to remove the old boards they disintegrated being infested with gribble worm as well as being rotten.

The sill is also rotten but this seems to be concreted in and can't be easily replaced.

The new boards fitted into place with the water levels almost equal each side and were wedged to hold them from floating. We then needed to return later when the tide had dropped to check for leaking.



Wedges were needed to plug leaks around the sides where the concrete is rough and eroded. The board edges sealed nicely, but the sill was soft and failing and some leaking was noticed.

Required Repairs:

The sill must be replaced. This may require a coffer dam both sides of the weir gates while the old sill is dug out and replaced, preferably with something that will last better.

Richard Plinston
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