



Thursday, 22nd April 2010

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Dear Michael,

I am once again writing to thank Sargood Bequest for the funding allocated to the Taupo for Tomorrow learning programme in order to facilitate the LEARNZ Freshwater Ecology fieldtrip.

This year's fieldtrip focused on freshwater as a basic requirement for all living things and that careful management of this resource is extremely important. It is hugely gratifying to be able to deliver these key ideas to learners throughout New Zealand.

Given the high quality waterways we are able to visit in our area, the specialists available to assist in a technical sense and the number of community organisations both recreational and business that are passionate about fresh water, we are in an ideal situation to be able to deliver these extremely important ideas to learners.

This year's fieldtrip focused very much on three key areas;

- The Science of freshwater ecology. The Taupo food web and threats to freshwater quality from introduced plant and animal species.
- The Social Science of fresh water. A Maori perspective of freshwater both in the past and in the present and how industry such as hydro electricity works to avoid negatively impacting on the environment.
- Trout and fresh water. Describing and investigating the links between trout and quality fresh water habitat.

When presenting these three key learning areas we are able to deliver to students a real and engaging learning experience. Rather than seeing freshwater conservation as a series of separate ideas, our hope is that learners will take a holistic view and realise that everybody has a key role in ensuring the long term health of our rivers and lakes despite where they happen to live in New Zealand.

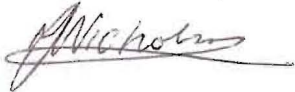
We are very pleased with the level of participation of this year's field trip. At the time of writing there are 90 enrolments (classes) – a substantial increase over the same time last year, in fact nearly double the number. We were once again thrilled with the key indicators to student engagement, the quality of audio conference questions and the well constructed questions posted on the 'ask an expert' web boards.

The support of Sargood Bequest is central to these learners participating in a fieldtrip when they otherwise may never get the opportunity to do so. Over the past few years we have made incremental changes to the fieldtrip with a view to both increasing the number of enrolments and providing a valuable learning experience for young people. The learners we engage with are passionate about sustainability and conservation and are avid advocates for our freshwater resources. These same young people will be the ones to drive future thinking and problem solving around the continued wellbeing of our natural freshwater environments.

The Taupo for Tomorrow programme does have a number of images of the fieldtrip if you would like to make use of these for any purpose. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you would like any further information regarding the 2010 freshwater ecology fieldtrip.

Once again, thank you very much for your continued support both on behalf of myself and the learners who directly benefit from the experience provided for them.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Nicholson
Educator
Taupo for Tomorrow Learning Programme