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Hello Members,

I apologise for the lack of newsletters. A couple of years ago we promised at our AGM to keep you, the members, a bit more informed and we have slipped up a bit. But here we are halfway through our membership year and we thought there is no better time for a catch up. Our membership at the time of writing is approximately 1,850 members. A huge increase from around 1,250 for the previous year. This can be attributed solely to changing our annual membership fee from \$100 to \$50 per year (\$45 on our early bird special). Although we have had an increase in our membership, the ramp launchings have remained similar to previous years.

Prior to the AGM, the committee felt that through Covid and lockdowns, things in life had become a little tougher for our members so it was time for a bit of a payback. Another reason was to reduce the amount of cash transacted at the ramp and improve the safety aspect for wardens. With our healthy bank balance we can still cover the unexpected.

As you are well aware, the unexpected turned up in November in the form a bit of flooding and in December a bit more flooding. We managed to do a quick dredge in January, but then New Zealand in general was thrown a couple of cyclones and this has resulted in significant silting up of the channel at Waikawau. Our issues are insignificant compared to the toll it has had on the people in Northland, Auckland, Gisborne and the Hawkes Bay. Our thoughts are with them as they work through the massive clean up and rebuilding of their communities and lives. However, the long and short of our situation is that the channel currently is half full of silt and stumps. *Continued over page*

Waikawau Boat Ramp currently at low tide...



DREDGING UPDATE

Dredging is scheduled for the week commencing 20th March. This coincides with large tides so should enable a good dredge. If you want to fish that week, go out in the morning because there will be no water in the afternoon...

President message continued...

I have put a couple of videos out through various social media pages and these have been viewed and shared throughout the fishing community (even the dog has had job offers). We are unable to reach everyone and a few visitors have been caught short at the low tide mark which has led to some less than favourable comments. But all in all, the message has got out that at present it is **3 hours either side of high tide only** and please still be careful as sand bars will shift with the slightest increase in flows.

Dredging has not been our focus, as machinery has been needed to clear local roads and get access to our remote communities. Our contractor of choice (Kerepehi Transport) has been busy and continues to be so, clearing trees and obstructions in our inland waterways so further rain and flooding will have less impact on farming and the communities in these areas. We have had an overwhelming response from machinery suppliers and outside contractors to assist with our dredging – thank you for these offers. As noted on page 1, dredging is scheduled for the week commencing 20th March.

Regards

Eric Carter, President, Waikawau Boat Ramp Inc. Society

A shout out to our ramp wardens

A big thank you to our ramp wardens as they make the ramp tick even in the hard times. These guys and gals are there to help you have a better day. Please be kind to them as they are volunteers with a passion for fishing. So on behalf of our members a massive thank you to the ramp wardens. Actually, ever thought of being a ramp warden...well you can, it's so simple... Just talk to anyone of our existing ramp wardens or committee people and they will enlighten you on the joys of getting up at 4 30am, getting your very own high vis jacket and sun hat and meeting a couple of hundred like minded people one or two days a month. The pay is lousy, hours are terrible but outside of that it's very rewarding. A perk of the job is that some people give you the odd fish.

Membership sticker location

A few people have been asking about where to place your membership sticker. It should be stuck on your winch post so the ramp warden can see it when you are queued up for launching (refer below).



Waikawau Boat Ramp Committee

President: Eric Carter

Vice President: John Sanford

Secretary: Eileen Ward

Treasurer: Matt Juby

Members Secretary: Bev Walker

Committee Members: Bruce Bogun, Rowan Christini, Bill Malcolm, Greg Ward & Russell Waterhouse.

If you have any issues or questions, please feel free to drop us an email (wbrs2000@gmail.com) and hopefully we can answer your queries. We hope to see you out there on the water soon, take care and happy fishing.

**Please Observe the
30 metre Rule when
fishing near the
Mussel Barges**