



Tēnā koutou kātoa,

Thank you all, we warmly thank you for making the time to be here.

Tāne Mahuta, the God of the forest, separated Earth Papatuanuku and Sky Ranginui to let light into the world.

Trees are the life force. Without trees, nothingness.

Here we discuss this important project that concerns the survival of trees, so enhances the life of man.

Nō reira, Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou kātoa.

Thank you, thank you, thank you all.

VISION AND KEY MESSAGE

- Every tree in Wanaka is protected to live their long life
- Tree protection is the cornerstone of a regenerative resilient community

Meeting content

- History of trees in Wanaka
- Campaign goals
- Available tools for tree protection
- Have your say
- Starting a collective action

Every tree in Wanaka is protected to live their long life because trees are sentient living beings

TREES IN WANAKA TODAY



Since 2013, Tee Kakano has started propagating and planting native trees along the waterways. So we have 13 year old native trees growing.

Over the years, many people have planted their property extensively, hedges, trees, all special and making our place beautiful.

Loss

With densification, trees planted in the sections are removed to make room for another dwelling. Expected. The extension of the urban zone means that rural places with mature trees and shelterbelt are removed by the developers, and this reaches amazonic levels.

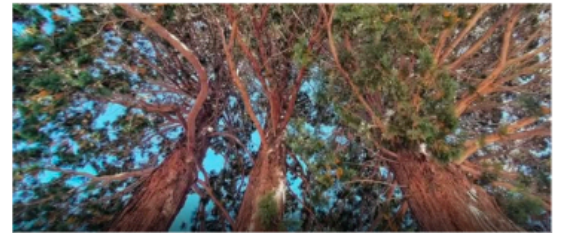
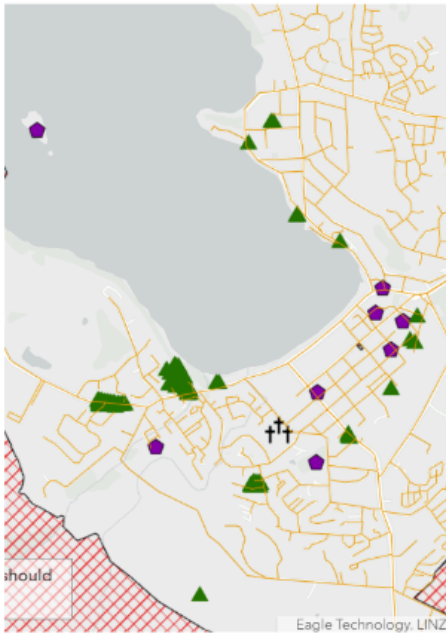
There was an old orchard providing an abundance of apples we used to collect for the Autumn Apple Drive. And it was felled, to the last tree. They could have kept a few and put a bench under their shade but no, cut them all to the last.

It's sad, unnecessary and I argue it needs to stop.

Now, nearly all windbreaks from Orchard road to Mt Iron are gone.

Yet there are still many trees to save. Let's try it.

PROTECTED TREES IN WANAKA TODAY



On the GIS map navigator, it is very difficult to find the right layer, the green triangles are protected trees.
https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/80c97d34e5764669bb9aab99e40d5b8d/page/Map-Navigator?views=District-Plan#data_s=id%3AdataSource_1-Land_Parcel_and_Properties_Data_6342%3A1463410&widget_2345=text:wanaka

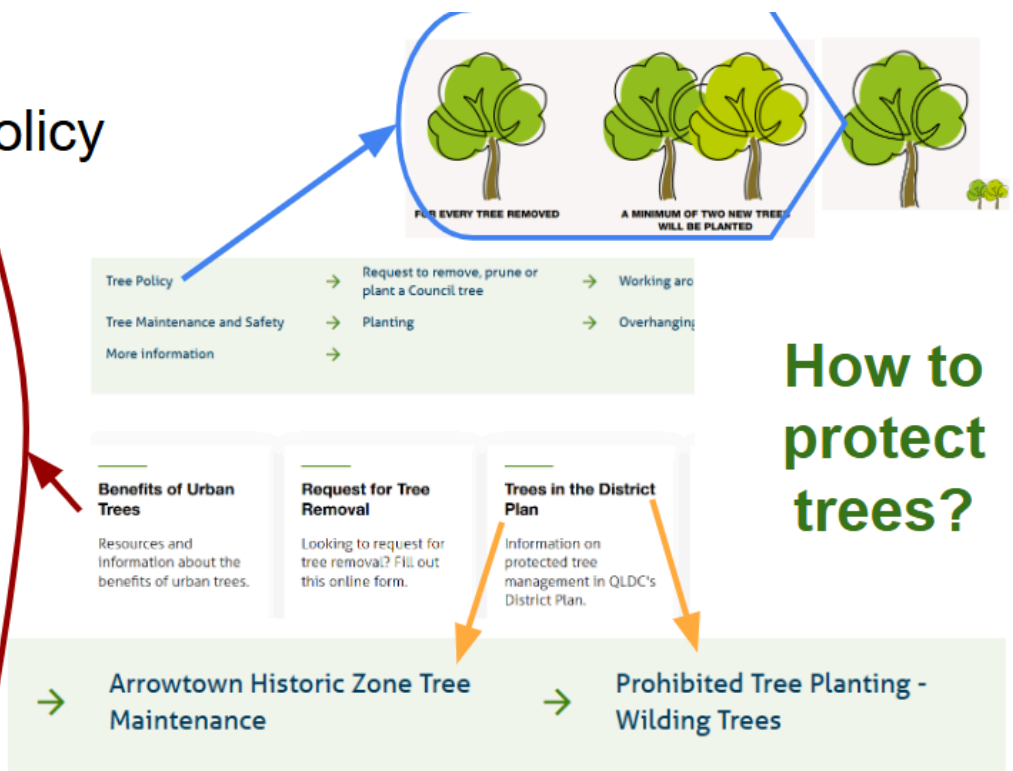
About 20 protected trees in Wanaka Station Park, sequoia, cedars, larch, lime trees

At least a dozen plane trees on Mt Aspiring road

14 other trees in Wanaka, mostly sequoias like the mighty spectacular beloved Mc Dougall sequoias

QLDC Tree Policy

- **Cleaner Air** - Trees naturally clean our communities.
- **Reduced Flooding** - Trees capture rainwater in lakes and rivers.
- **Cooler Streets** - Shade from street trees: outdoor spaces.
- **Economic Boost** - Mature trees enhance welcoming shopping areas.
- **Better Health and Happiness** - Trees support activity, and improving overall community.
- **Safer Roads** - Trees planted alongside roads and cyclists.
- **Quieter Communities** - Trees reduce noise.
- **Wildlife Habitat** - Trees offer essential habitat.
- **Healthy Soil** - Tree roots improve soil health.
- **Outdoor Adventure & Active Lifestyles** - Trees promote adventure, and promoting our region as a destination.
- **Cultural Heritage and Connection** - Trees connect communities to the land, and nurturing our heritage.



That's the QLDC Tree Page. <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/services/environment-and-sustainability/trees>

QLDC has a tree policy that protects native trees on public land. It has criteria for culling trees, rotten is usually claimed as the reason, but views should not be. This has a "replant 2 for one down" rule, that's their drawing,

but it really should look like that. QLDC Tree Policy here

https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/4ksis1uf/qldc_tree-policy_a4-booklet_may24-web.pdf

The Council lists many benefits although the important windbreak effect of shelterbelts is omitted.

Here we can request tree removal, which allows people to ask the Council to remove a tree on public land.

The “Information on protected trees” leads to Arrowtown's great effort to preserve their historic beautiful mature trees look AND a link to the wilding group webpage.

I have searched how to protect trees, asked the Council who sent me back to the page, not an option.



The Golf Course. It's on public land. In 2023, when the club applied to remove 70 trees to build water tanks, even the Upper Clutha Community Board deferred the decision. But this year, 650 trees from a 750-metre windbreak were removed without public consultation. And there was reported bribery. So I said that to the Council on the 27th August and asked them that it never happens again.

Eely Point:

Many Douglas firs were planted by Mr. H Kidson, no more than a 100 years ago. Now, douglas firs live up to 2000 years! And they are one of the trees capturing the most carbon. Eely point forest is unique, beloved and useful.

In 2020, an extensive community consultation from the marina to Beacon Point concluded that Eely Point “*area be retained and managed*”. But in 2025, in total contradiction to this, consultants were given a **brief** for “*the systematic removal and replacement of conifers*”. What happened in the Council for such a change? There was short community consultation. This is ongoing. I am hoping we can change this fate.

Campaign goals and specifications

Protect ALL trees in Wānaka by 2030

We do this by:

- Immediate pause on tree felling
- Help the Council create rules that effectively protect ALL trees
- Create a #LoveWanakaTrees culture

Big Hairy Audacious Goal

Because it's in our best interest, for now and the future, specially in a climate and biodiversity crises. Easy to list practical benefits of trees.

Because if we don't, urban trees in Wanaka will disappear due to very fast urban growth and densification.

So I started the campaign with research, posts and talking to the Council,

I have asked the Council in February for a moratorium on felling trees. Since then at least 7 major windbreaks have been felled. I talked again on the 27th August asking this time for a PAUSE, offering help to create an effective tree protection policy and inviting the Councillors and media to this meeting.

I am aware that it's against the trend, with the RMA replacement bill removing the ability of councils to protect urban trees altogether.

I believe legal action goes hand in hand with a culture change. This is why the [#LoveWanakaTrees](#) campaign is an essential and fun component of this campaign.

Existing tools for tree protection

QLDC Tree policy to reinforce, QLDC Green Blue network and many other Council dpts

In NZ, allies include NZ Tree Council and Notable Trees

In the World:

Arbor Day Foundation,

Tree Cities of the World (in London)

The Bristol experience

Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Tree

OUR TOOLS

#LoveWanakaTrees Facebook page

Regenerativelifestyle.blog

Our Love for trees

The QLDC Tree policy already mentioned needs to be reinforced to protect all trees, not only native on public land.

This policy is aligned to QLDC Climate Action Plan, QLDC Vision Beyond 2050, the Parks and Open Space Strategy, the Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan, so all potential tools.

I was told that we can apply for single tree or group of trees protection at the time of the district plan, so that's to follow up.

Did you know that in 2020, QLDC was named one of the Tree Cities of the World by the Arbor Day Foundation?

<https://www.qldc.govt.nz/2020/march/20-03-13-queenstown-lakes-district-receives-sustainability-award>

In New Zealand: NZ Tree Council and Notable Trees. The former advocates for urban trees in Auckland; the latter holds the NZ Tree Register but doesn't protect them.

Bristol experience: Bristol is piggy-backing on the UK Tree preservation orders laws and declared itself a "Conservation area" so that all trees ARE protected by default. More info here

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-regulations/tree-works-and-preservation/tree-preservation-orders>

Sam, a local arborist, is happy to help us with that.

Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Tree recognises trees "as living entities deserving of protection, including the rights to life, natural growth, integrity, and regeneration."

In June 2026, Terrasse-Vaudreuil signed on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Tree.

<https://www.terrasse-vaudreuil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/communiqu-09062026-terrasse-vaudreuil-reconnait-les-droits-de-larbre.pdf>

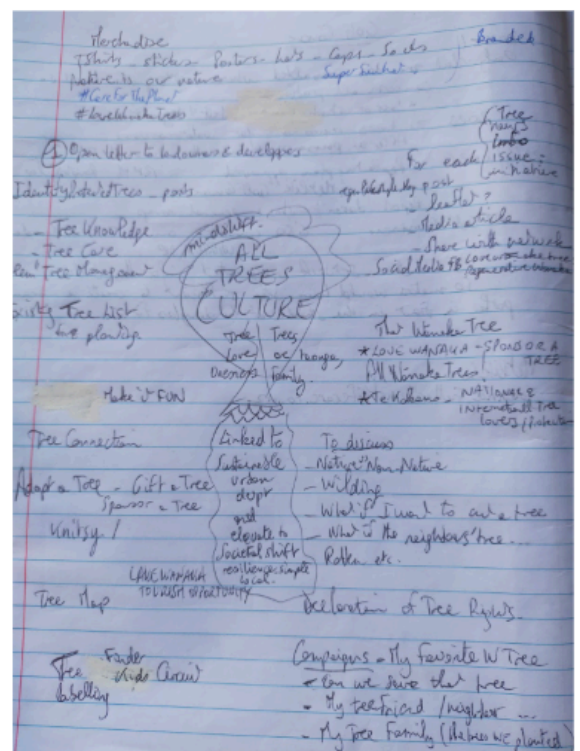
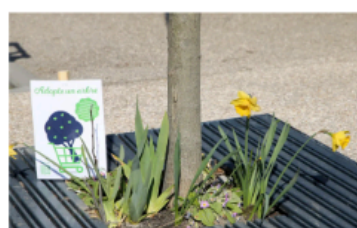
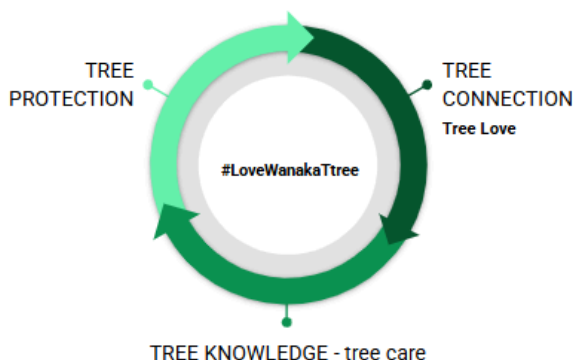
And this

<https://ecojurisprudence.org/initiatives/terrasse-vaudreuil-canada-municipal-resolution-rights-of-trees/>

The campaign began by distributing trees to everyone! All the citizens of this municipality now have a being to cherish and admire growing and changing every day.

Well, with the latest government move allowing no protection for trees in NZ, and the local government dismantling, that's probably not the priority... so let's focus on...

Culture Change ideas



We may not be able to change the law -right now- but many landowners have the right of life and death on their trees so we can leverage this.

I believe that tree connection fosters tree (and nature) love which fosters tree care and tree protection. The “Love Trees Culture” part of the campaign is fun.

We could start by identifying existing protected trees and celebrate them.
I think an open letter to landowners and developers is a top priority.

There are lots of ideas for tree campaigns, like Tree Parties, “Adopt a tree” etc.
<https://www.treesforcities.org/about-us/our-history>

Wanaka is famous for “That Wanaka Tree”, for its festival of autumn colours, let’s make Wanaka famous for all its trees.

The big issues

Native vs Non-native

Wilding trees

What if I want to cut a tree?

Other elephant in the room?



Principles

Starting from the tree viewpoint
No clear cutting, burnoff, chemicals use
Open mind - change
70/30 consensus

I love natives but I believe no tree should ever be cut to plant natives or we re-create the initial ecocode. This is very controversial, even my old tree lover friends at Te Kakano have written a blistering submission for removing the Eely point trees.

But in Wanaka, apart from a few kowhais and totaras, all our mature trees are non-native so we can’t just devalue them.

Wilding trees is an even more contentious issue, with powerful and well funded groups spending their weekends killing trees and spraying chemicals. To me, growing, making babies, that’s life, that’s what nature does and we should be grateful for it.

What if I want to cut a tree

Many criteria lists already exist, we need to discuss this and agree collectively.

What are other “Elephant in the room”? Or rather “Tree in the room”!

I have my ideas, I protect trees at my place, but I am not telling people what to do.

The purpose of this campaign is to agree on a Charter for the trees that’s we’ll share with the community and submit to the Council. I have started with a few principles, not mine, that’s what global research for nature and trees says. So these are the principles I offer as a starting point.

Campaign strategy

Creating a team

Piggyback on existing tools, groups ex. Action Station, Loomio

Seeking and collecting feedback from all and finding consensus

Drafting a tree protection charter from there.



ACTION STATION TOOLS



I have brought the campaign to this point, and I think the magnitude of the subject now requires collective action. So the first step, now, is to:

Creating a team:

Whether you take photos of trees, have drawing skills, are a media whiz, can draft legal documents or know someone, all will be useful.

I have started using the Action Station campaign strategy tool, and the team will continue that together (or any better campaign strategy tool). It focuses on “who has the power and what would make them do it”.

Loomio is a discussion and decision making tool.

I will send an email with this presentation in the coming days. If you want to volunteer for this campaign, there will be a meeting in a fortnight, time and venue to be confirmed.

But now is the time to have your say.

Have your say

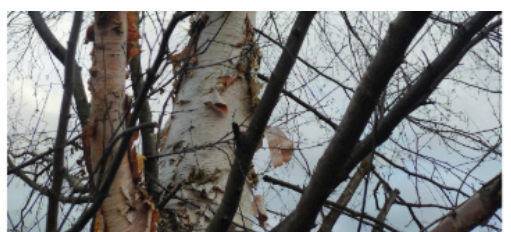
Have your say

THOUGHTS?

QUESTIONS?

SUGGESTIONS for improving this project?

**Thank you so much
for your time tonight**



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LoveWanakaTrees Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/541737274663194>

Regenerativelifestyle.blog <https://regenerativelifestyle.blog/>