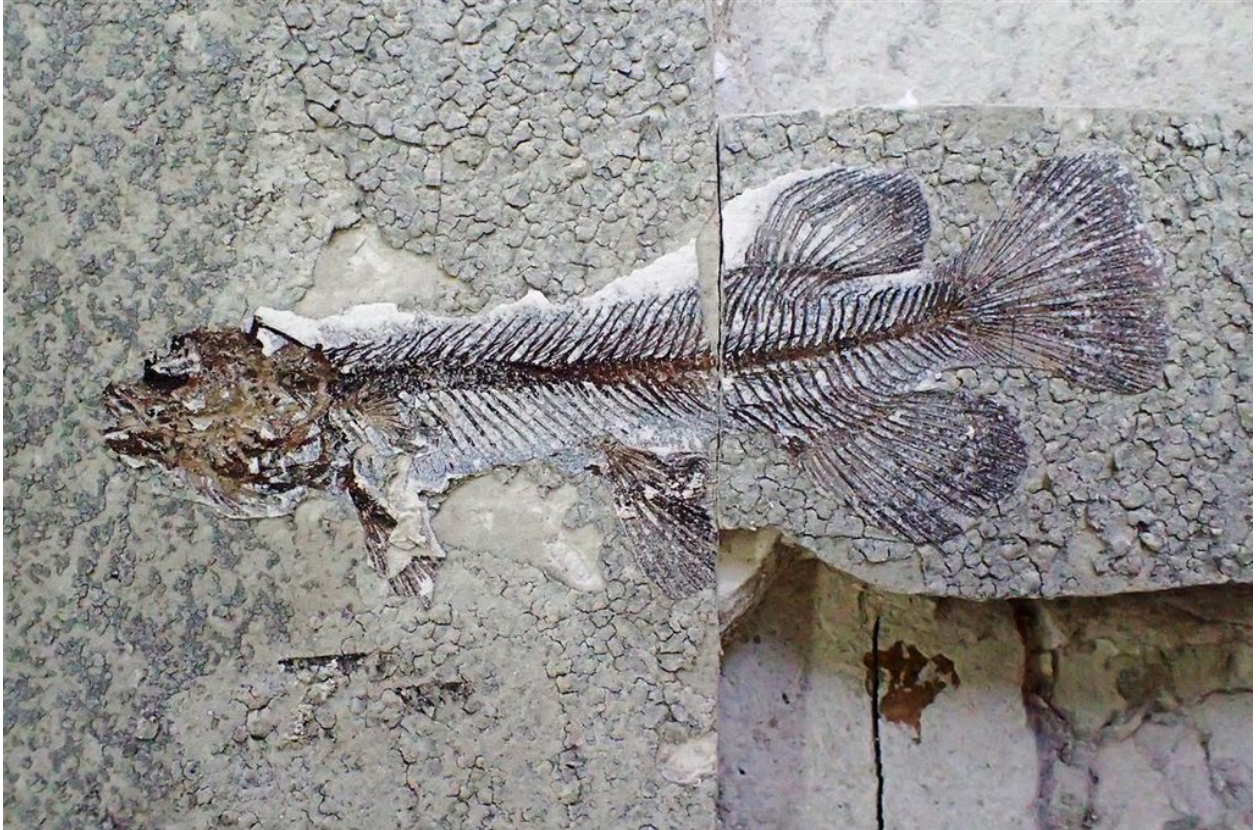


A vision for Foulden Maar: modelling sustainability and environmentally conscious stewardship.

Save Foulden Maar Incorporated



Galaxias effusus by Stella Cameron (CC-BY)

The purpose of this document is to create a vision for Foulden Maar and its role as a publicly owned asset within our community. It is based on conversations with geologist Associate Professor Daphne Lee, international expert on the site and also on discussions with *Save Foulden Maar*.

As a result of a concerted fightback by people of Otago and wider New Zealand along with international and local scientists, the Foulden Maar site is now undergoing a process whereby it will be placed in public ownership in perpetuity through the Dunedin City Council and the Department of Conservation. We feel it important that while this lengthy process is taking place, that we begin to develop a vision for its care and long-term management.

Now is the time to consider the role of Foulden Maar becoming a model of sustainability and environmentally conscious stewardship. Our only legitimate mandate is in returning this unique site to the children and youth of today and to future generations, so it can help them develop ways of adapting to and understanding climate change.

First and foremost, in an era of escalating climate change, Foulden Maar must be maintained as a workable scientific site for continued climate change and geological research for the common good of all.

Save Foulden Maar's emphatic position is that Foulden Maar is not to be capitalised on. This includes tourism, of which the environmental impact is becoming increasingly apparent. The Otago Regional Council in its *Regional Policy Statement 2020 Survey* says, "Economic and domestic activities use natural resources, but do not always properly account for the environmental stresses and future effects they cause... tourism which also relies on the environment, can also add to degradation."

The exciting potential exists for Foulden Maar to be part of a broad corridor of publicly owned and restored land from mountains to the sea, creating habitat for native flora and fauna, with clean streams, ponds, tarns, lakes, and restored tussock land. It is about creating an environmentally rich and diverse legacy for future generations and contributing what we can now to the body of climate change knowledge.

Two scenarios

The two scenarios below outline how Foulden Maar could be managed under public ownership in order to allow climate and geological research to continue, while at the same time, giving the public the opportunity to learn about the treasures the site holds.

Option one: how access to the site has been managed historically.

Over several decades, Otago University scientists have built good relationships with a succession of mining corporations. Because Foulden Maar was only ever mined sporadically (due to both financial failure and low quality product), scientists had the opportunity to carry out research work on the site. This included the drilling of a 180m core from the centre of the maar, funded by a Marsden Grant. Over decades, thousands of people including geology students and many other groups like tangata whenua, Forest and Bird, rock, mineral

and geology clubs have visited Foulden Maar in a tightly controlled framework lead by Daphne Lee and fellow scientists.

The University has three strands to its charter: academic, administration, and service. Service is to the institution and to the community at large, (which accounts for approximately 30% of its focus).

When Foulden Maar becomes a publicly owned site, the fundamental logistics that have worked successfully for decades, could easily continue. It would not entail financial transactions and would be in the spirit of the University providing service to community.

Option two: broadening access to Foulden Maar.

As Professor Daphne Lee has said, she would like the public to have access to the site, "... to see what the fuss has been about and to learn about fossils in a safe environment."

Under public ownership, it is more than likely that scientific research at Foulden Maar will escalate. While no longer a commercial site, it will nevertheless remain a work site with a pit, excavation tailings, dust and on occasion, heavy machinery and equipment.

This is why broadening access to Foulden Maar must be carefully managed. As Daphne said, "We can't just have people swanning in for a little look and dig." The purpose of broadening access would be to increase awareness of our geology and climate change challenges, with the focus of inspiring young people to become involved in these areas.

Daphne has long been considering how this could be achieved.

Tours to Foulden Maar

Logistics

- Tour groups of a maximum 20 people, accompanied by two tour/educational guides
- Bookings through the Middlemarch Museum with guidance from Otago Museum
- Site open for visits on 2 days a week (or fortnight) from September to May
- Printed matter with lively and richly illustrated scientific and climate change information
- Include Foulden Maar as part of the wider Dunedin volcano tour

Tour/educational guides

- Senior geology students from Otago University
- Local people from the Strath Taieri whom Daphne is willing to train
- All tour guides to be paid a minimum of the living wage from ticket sales

The site itself

- Extensive planting between Foulden Maar and the neighbouring farm to ensure privacy

- Plant entire area with indigenous plants and create and enhance habitat for skinks, geckos and other invertebrates listed in the Ecological Report
- Middlemarch school and community groups involved in planting to give a sense of ownership of the site
- Several modest shelters for groups to have lunch in
- Composting toilets but not on the Maar itself
- A basic building for the use and accommodation for scientists and researchers

Access

- Minimise the number of people and vehicles on or near the site
- Minibus leaving from the Middlemarch Museum for each tour
- Small minibus and car park on Moonlight Road for 6 vehicles max.
- Indigenous plants along landscaped path for visitors from Moonlight Road to the Maar
- Parking on site for scientists with access along the public road (which leads to farm)

A legacy to children, students and young people

Daphne would like to see young people as priority guests at Foulden Maar. The site and issues have been widely discussed in NZ classrooms. Students from Taieri High School have done analyses on mining versus scientific and environmental values. An eight-page article was published in the *School Journal*. The Correspondence School has also shown interest in material for their science curriculum.

Education outside the classroom

We would like classroom learning to be augmented with Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) which brings the national curriculum alive by taking advantage of the community and environment beyond the school gates.

- Children, students and New Zealand youth are priority guests at Foulden Maar
- Visits for NZ children and youth should be free (as are art galleries in France)
- School class trips could have a maximum of 30 children on site
- Educational material to accompany children's tours (includes a history of the fight to save Foulden Maar)
- Promote intermediate and high school trips which could take in Foulden Maar, Sutton Salt Lake, Rock and Pillar Conservation Area and the region's renown dark skies
- Use Sutton Camp (Otago Youth Adventure Trust) for accommodation

A new wing to the Middlemarch Museum

Although numbers of visitors on the site would always be low, nevertheless we would like to create a focus on Foulden Maar, in locations beyond the Maar itself.

- A new wing for the Middlemarch Museum dedicated to the geology of Foulden Maar

- Waikaia Museum in Southland and Vanished World could serve as models for a new wing, as could the Volcano Museum and Maar Museum in the volcanic Eifel region in Germany
- A dedicated geological wing brings further reasons to visit and stay in Middlemarch

Representation from Save Foulden Maar

Save Foulden Maar led the fight to save Foulden Maar and brought the intentions of the mining transnational to the attention of the public and government. We therefore request two seats on any Dunedin City Council group involved in making decisions on the site along with Professor Daphne Lee.