

# EnviroSOUTH

December 2017



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## Award winners

Celebrating our environmental champions

From page 3

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## Young scientists

Students test Otatara's water quality

Page 13

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environment  
**SOUTHLAND**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Te Taiao Tonga



# In this issue...

Southland Community Environment Awards	3
Waituna	12
Young scientists explore water quality	13
Any Number Is Too Many	16
Treasuring our greatest gifts	18
Southland Water and Land Plan	18
Watching over our recreational waters	19
Boating – prep, check and know	20
Updates	22
Time to think about...	23
Out in the field	24

## EnviroSOUTH

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### Cover

◀ Graeme and Jan Appleby, winners of the Councillors' Special Award at the Southland Community Environment Awards 2017. A full list of winners and nominees at this year's awards can be found on pages 3–10.



### Improving water quality requires innovation and effort – individually and collectively.

It means insisting on well-maintained wastewater systems from the home to the plant and keeping waste products out of the gutters and drains. It also means good practice by commercial enterprises, good land management practice by all farmers, and the backing of their industry groups.

We are currently developing the People, Water and Land work programme. Its focus is on communities and partnerships, and its aim is to support people to make change happen on the ground. It will include setting limits (for discharges into and abstractions from waterways), but it will be much wider than that.

The Government's recent grant of \$5 million dollars for Waituna shows how successful Southland can be when we put our minds to something and pull together.

**Rob Phillips**, Chief Executive, Environment Southland



### Congratulations to all our winners and nominees in the Southland Community Environment Awards.

The difference you make is inspiring. I know there will be many others, too, who are working hard to improve Southland's environment and I commend you.

If we are to successfully meet the challenges ahead, particularly in terms of improving water quality, we will all have to step up and do our bit.

Southland is unique in terms of our dependence on agriculture and the inextricable links between town and country. That's why finger pointing will get us nowhere; we're all in this together.

Early next year we will be talking with people about their values for water quality so we can have some certainty about community expectations. I hope as many people as possible will get involved.

I'll be at the Southern Field Days in February, along with fellow councillors and staff, so if you are too, pop in and see us at site 111.

**Nicol Horrell**, Chairman, Environment Southland

## Environment Southland



*A vibrant organisation actively enhancing the experience of living and working in a sustainable Southland.*

# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

The Southland Community Environment Awards were hosted on Wednesday 1 November by Environment Southland at the Ascot Park Hotel in Invercargill. The awards showcased valuable work being done by Southlanders to help improve our environment. Congratulations to all the amazing nominees and our very special winners.

## *Councillors' special award*



▲ Councillors' special award winners, Graeme and Jan Appleby.

## Winners – Graeme and Jan Appleby

Graeme and Jan Appleby run a 260 hectare dairy farm with 580 mostly Friesian cows near Drummond. They purchased an additional block of land with a 4.4 hectare peat bog, which at the time was covered in 4 metre high gorse and other weeds.

After some consultation with local iwi, Department of Conservation and Environment Southland, they began restoring the peat bog, which now has a QEII covenant. It is home to many special birds and plants including the Australian bittern and rare orchids.

Graeme continues to keep on top of the battle with gorse, spraying the small seedlings that pop up annually. In addition, they winter all their cows on baleage, swedes and fodder beet produced on-farm and have fenced their 16 kilometres of streams, with buffers and riparian tree plantings to ensure run-off is kept to a minimum.

Award sponsored by



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Kaitiaki Tohu Pai (Guardian Award)*



## Winner – Janet Gregory

Janet Gregory is passionate about both farming and the environment.

After moving to Southland, she began coordinating the Southland Biodiversity Forum. She has provided invaluable support for community groups, worked with farmers and landowners on catchment scale projects, and pushed for sustainability in the deer industry.

She is also part of the Southern Rural Support Trust, helping both humans and animals after severe weather events. Her contribution to water quality improvement, enhanced biodiversity and to behaviour change is significant.

This new award, given at the judges' discretion, recognises Janet's outstanding commitment to the promotion and protection of biodiversity across the Murihiku community.

Award sponsored by



▲ Janet Gregory.



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Environmental action in the community*



▲ Representatives of the Bluff Hill/Motupōhue Environment Trust: from left, Estelle Leask, Peter Leask, Debbie Fife, Nikki Ladd, Annichje Raimersma and Eric Black (Tracker).

## Winner – Bluff Hill/Motupōhue Environment Trust

The Bluff Hill/Motupōhue Environment Trust was formed in early 2008 by Bluff residents wanting to bring back the birdsong to Bluff Hill.

They have a dedicated band of volunteers who work tirelessly to carry out an intensive pest control programme that now extends off the hill and across the harbour to Joey's Island in Awarua Bay, and along the Greenpoint Walkway and Flat Hill Wind Farm. They've installed a

staggering 1,318 pest control devices and the results are now being seen, with an increase in birdlife and the recent translocation of 41 South Island robin from Waikaia to Bluff Hill.

The Trust also works alongside school groups and the Southern Institute of Technology students, with many taking part in regular planting events to help restore native vegetation.

**Commended – Heddon Bush School and Winton Community Gardens**

Award sponsored by



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Environmental action in education* **Winner – Kindergartens South**



▲ Kindergartens South representatives Pam Wilson and Wendy McLachlan.

**O**n a 10 acre block of land on Myross Road, some of our youngest environmental warriors are investigating the world of nature.

And they're even inspiring their parents to discover the natural world around them.

Kindergartens South's Nature Discovery programme offers children from 11 kindergartens the opportunity to understand the health and viability of our environment and to grow their ecological identities.

Their current focus is on pest eradication and empowering children to be leaders of environmental learning. There is high attendance of parent helpers and amazing parent/child evenings that allow the children to share their knowledge.

### **Commended – Glenham School**

*Award sponsored by*



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Environmental leadership in farming and land management*



▲ Matt and Sarah McKenzie.

## Winner – Matt McKenzie

A trained engineer, Matt McKenzie has taken over his parents' farm in Woodlands and converted it to dairying.

In just a few years he's well and truly shown his commitment to doing things well, taking the environmental impact into consideration with all his farming decisions.

Moving to once a day milking this season, Matt has a well thought out plan to get the best from his land, with wide buffers along his fenced waterways to accommodate existing flax and vegetation. He's worked hard with his father to carry out substantial native riparian planting and minimised the impact on critical source areas by leaving these areas ungrazed or fenced for stock exclusion.

He's also allowing areas to revert back to wetlands and has some impressive planting around the new dairy shed and effluent pond.

Award sponsored by

**WYNNWILLIAMS**  
LAWYERS



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Environmental leadership in business*



▲ Southland disAbility Enterprises: from left, Todd Molloy, Hamish McMurdo, Brett Sutherland, Paddy McGrath and Debra Soper.

## Winner – Southland disAbility Enterprises

With over 100 employees, Southern disAbility Enterprises provides a service to the community that goes far beyond its mission to enrich the lives of people with disabilities.

With the contract for managing the region's recyclable items keeping a large team busy sorting and processing, others are focused on the more specialised areas where the business is making big inroads – the

recycling of baleage wrap and agricultural plastics. Currently processing around 500 tonnes of baleage wrap a year, they are keen to build this to 1000 tonnes next year.

The expected increase in processing will enable more employment opportunities for both people with disabilities and mainstream employees, as well as reduce the environmental harm caused by poor disposal of baleage wrap.

Award sponsored by





# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Environmental achievement*



▲ ICC Parks and Reserves team members: from left, Shona Tomlins, Keith Dudfield, Graeme Davies, Kate Gough, Robin Pagan, Anne-Marie Colbran, Sheryll Aston, Cassie Scobie and Chris McAulay.

## Winner – ICC Parks and Reserves team

The ICC Parks and Reserves team has achieved so much to enhance and benefit Invercargill's environment. Under the leadership of Robin Pagan, the team has used both innovation and creativity when it comes to restoration projects.

They are passionate about helping biodiversity thrive and have a strong focus on creating space for native plants and biodiversity. This includes opening up drainage areas in Queens Park so the waterways can support birds and insects in the area.

Behind the scenes, their commitment to recycling saw them successfully move from using coal in the nursery boiler to woodchips from tree-trimming. They have also removed exotic forestry from Bluff Hill and cleverly used these trees as mulch for native seedlings, which have been planted in their place.

### **Commended – Invercargill Prison**

Award sponsored by



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

*Individual environmental leadership or action*



▲ Phil Newbury and Jill Gwynne (Aon).

## Winner – Phil Newbury

Phil Newbury has been working as a stained glass artist since the 1960's, creating an array of spectacular works that are exhibited throughout New Zealand and abroad.

He was nominated for his commitment as a business owner to recycling sheet glass as well as other types of glass waste. Since the 1990's he has been pioneering

the use of slumped and recycled glass as a sculpture medium.

His studio is testament to the many extraordinary things that can be done with waste in a creative space, drawing on the Southland environment to inspire his work. Through his art he has contributed to reducing the volume of waste glass sent to Southland's landfills.

Award sponsored by **AON**  
Empower Results®



# SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2017

## *Environmental innovation*



▲ Paddy O'Brien (ILT) with Karl Lawrence and James Quaid

## Winner – RDM Services

When RDM Services was formed in 2011, they had a goal to address the issue of damp, cold homes in Southland.

Directors Karl Lawrence and James Quaid set a clear mission for the company – healthy homes that are warm and dry, using energy efficient products that are affordable to run.

The company offers a full ducted heat pump, ventilation, solar hybrid system

which works as one throughout every room of the home. The most recent advancements mean the system can provide a completely wireless and independently controlled temperature zone for each room.

By using free energy from the sun and converting that energy to heat, homes are heated without impacting on the region's air quality.

The testing process included trials in some of the coldest, dampest places in Southland and products are designed, built and tested in Invercargill, so they specifically suit the local environment.

## Commended – Bio Active Soils and Koha Kai Charitable Trust

Award sponsored by



# Whakamana te Waituna

When it comes to enhancing the dynamic ecosystems of Waituna catchment and lagoon and surrounding Awarua Wetland, collaboration between the tight-knit community and invested agencies is key.

Recently, exciting progress has been made in the management of the Waituna catchment and lagoon. The Waituna Partners Group has been successful in gaining \$5million from the Government's Freshwater Improvement Fund to further the work already underway in Waituna.

Up until now, the Waituna Partners Group included Environment Southland, Southland District Council, Department of Conservation, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and Te Rūnanga o Awarua, but the Government's backing opens opportunities for more work and others to get onboard.

Fonterra has now joined the Partners Group to further enhance its cohesive management approach.

Its work in Waituna through Living Water, a partnership alongside the Department of Conservation, will be included into Whakamana te Waituna – a new work programme that will support ongoing ecosystem enhancement activities, Iwi reconnection to the wetland, and nutrient management strategies for Waituna properties.

Living Water is nationwide and backs projects and communities to demonstrate

how sustainable farming can function alongside healthy freshwater ecosystems. In Waituna this will mean working with the Waituna locals to tailor farm environment plans, researching practical tools for nutrient management and increasing the connectivity of native wetland environments.

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**"The Waituna Partners Group already has real momentum, and bringing Fonterra and Living Water knowledge into Whakamana te Waituna means we can galvanize around one programme."**

TRISH KIRKLAND-SMITH

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Living Water national manager Trish Kirkland-Smith says by bringing Fonterra to the Partners table, there's a real opportunity to co-ordinate knowledge under one umbrella and find solutions that

work for the Waituna community as well as the catchment and lagoon.

"The Waituna Partners Group already has real momentum, and bringing Fonterra and Living Water knowledge into Whakamana te Waituna means we can galvanize around one programme."

"It's not just doing a bit of riparian planting; it's about adapting what we know to find local solutions. One example, we're trialing is nitrogen and phosphorus filters to see how they work in Waituna soils."

Vulnerable catchments like Waituna require solutions to be brave and innovative says Trish, and a joint approach provides a supportive and stable environment to do just that.

Environment Southland land sustainability officer Katrina Robertson has been working alongside the Waituna community since 2009, and says a cohesive approach would support the unique environment, a tight knit community and recreational activities enjoyed by many Southlanders.

"The Partners Group provides direction for work by agencies involved in Waituna. Whakamana te Waituna is about fitting all the pieces of the jigsaw together."



## New website

Check out the new Whakamana te Waituna website. It has information about ongoing projects in the catchment by community groups and agencies alike, and highlights the bigger picture around the challenges for the catchment, its values and its stories. [www.waituna.org.nz](http://www.waituna.org.nz)

◀ Waituna Lagoon





▲ Otatara School young scientist Poppy O'Keefe looks down a clarity tube, held by Sean Cross in the centre and Michael Buchanan.

# Young scientists explore water quality

Inspired by a need to find out more about the environment around them, the students at Otatara School have set aside their usual way of learning to become budding young scientists, with a passion for water quality.

**W**orking under the teaching programme, Mantle of the Experts, the entire school has been involved in learning science through drama and students have set up their own version of a regional council – appropriately named, Environment Otatara.

Assisted by Environment Southland's environmental education officers Mark Oster and Pat Hoffmann, the students

have completely led their own learning – each year group deciding on their own directorates, roles and responsibilities.

The year six students have taken on the role of hydrologists, but teacher Tracey MacLennan says rather than learning about what hydrologists do, they are actually acting as scientists, complete with titles and planned projects.

The students quickly realised that water quality is a big topic of discussion in the community. They wondered how it affected their immediate surrounds and set out to discover the ins and outs of water quality in Otatara.

Armed with test kits, it was then up to the teachers to organise some professional development for the young scientists.

“It was all very well to talk about E.coli levels but they needed to understand what that meant, they needed to know about bacteria, what is a virus, what is a fungi?” Tracey says.

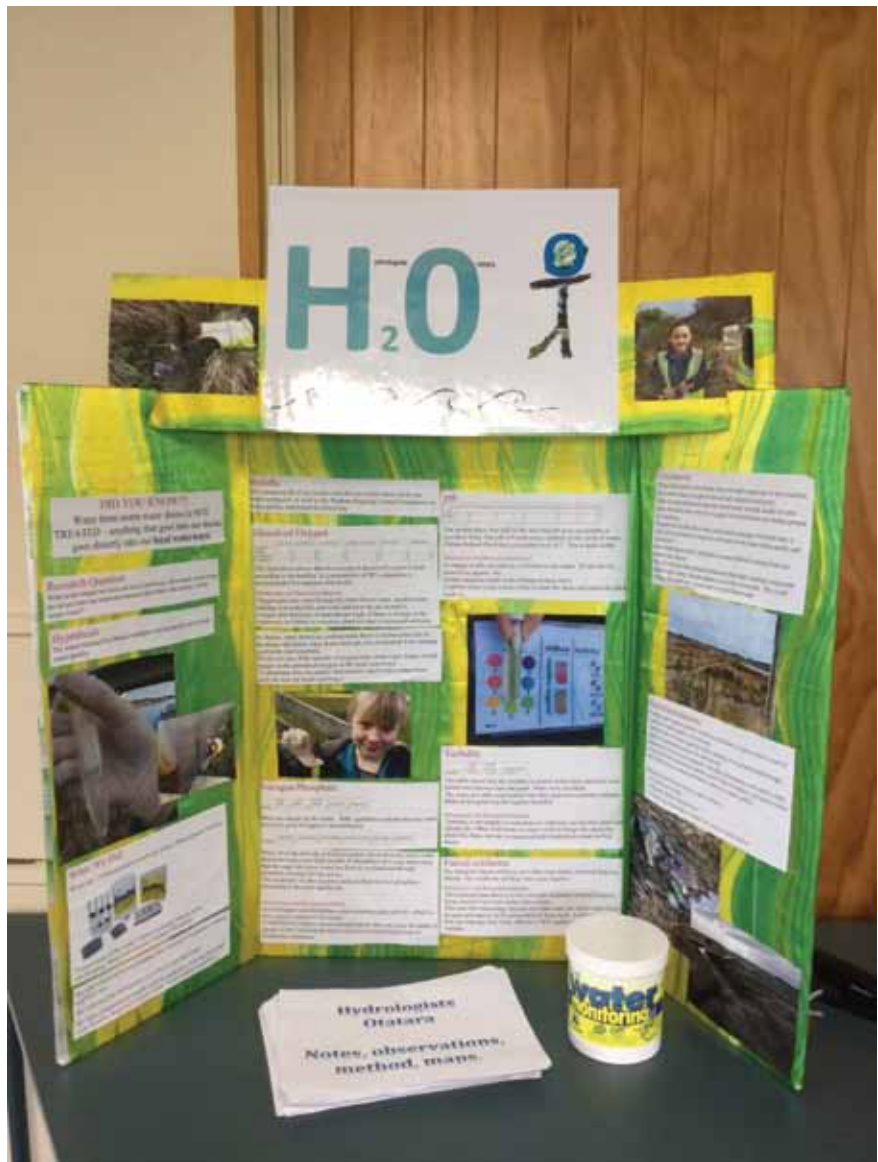
For the teachers, it was important the students weren’t only doing science, but doing it well; and they needed to own it.

The students refined their water quality testing skills on the Otatara Scenic Reserve stream that runs behind the school and then decided to take their skills further afield, carrying out a wide range of tests including testing for nitrates, phosphates, dissolved oxygen and faecal coliforms.

Their goal was to find out what the quality of the water was like in the local stormwater drains that lead to local rivers and the estuary. After tests, they discovered the results were variable, with low oxygen levels in some places and high nitrate readings also recorded in some areas. They also noted that in many cases, it was easy to make small changes to improve water quality, like reducing rubbish in the drains and increasing riparian planting to help filter the water.

Inspired by their findings, the students presented their work at the NZAS Southland Science and Technology Fair. They have also taken their knowledge home to their families and are influencing the impact their own homes have on water systems.

“I’ve had parents come and say they’ve



▲ Students presented their water quality findings at the NZAS Southland Science and Technology Fair.



just driven past somebody washing their car on the street and their child has been absolutely horrified and explained why you shouldn’t do that.”

The children also understand that their single day of water quality testing only provides a snapshot and is, therefore, not a good source of reliable data.

“The kids want to do more, but testing kits cost money so they are looking at writing some persuasive letters to a few people to see if we can get some assistance to continue.”

The students are looking further ahead too

– now that they have an understanding of water quality and what affects it, they are keen to discover how water quality affects the life within a stream.

“While doing the testing they discovered some small fish, so that has inspired another area of interest and they want to find out more.”

Tracey says the learning for the children has been impressive from this alternative way of working and it has proved a really effective way to immerse children in science and the environment.

◀ Students tested pH levels of water in local stormwater drains.



# Why is water quality important to you?

**MOLLY FLYNN, AGE 10**

If the water was all dirty it wouldn't be drinkable - humans and animals need water to live.



**SARAH MASON, AGE 10**

We care about waterways, it's not good that animal life and plants are dying.



**TANE WILSON, AGE 10**

Water quality is important for living - it can affect the whole world and we drink it.



**MICHAEL BUCHANAN, AGE 10**

For the next generation it needs to be good for quality of life.



**AADVIK KUMAR, AGE 10**

We want Otatara to be a clean water environment.



**LARA LEITCH, AGE 10**

It will affect all the world and we have to keep it nice for future generations - we only have one source of water.





▲ St John's Southland/Otago district operations manager Pauline Buchanan says even one death on the roads is too many.

# ANY NUMBER IS TOO MANY

27, 54, 105 – Is there an acceptable number for the road death toll? When we start talking about lives lost, it's pretty obvious that there is no number we are really comfortable with and that is the focus of a new programme being undertaken in Otago and Southland.

The *Any Number Is Too Many* programme aims to put the focus back on the lives lost and the impact that a death or serious injury has on our communities. Designed to initiate conversations, the programme will feature locals sharing their experiences

and encourage the community to look for solutions to the road death toll.

The programme is a response to Otago and Southland communities' need to find a new way to make a difference in the region.

It is led by local emergency responders and the Southern Road Safety Influencing Group, of which Environment Southland transport planner Russell Hawkes is a key member.



# ANY NUMBER IS TOO MANY

Be part of the conversation, share your ideas. Join the *Any Number Is Too Many* facebook page or go to the website.

[www.AnyNumberIsTooMany.org.nz](http://www.AnyNumberIsTooMany.org.nz)

"At the end of September 2017, 27 people have been killed on Otago and Southland roads. This is more than the same total for 2016. Since the beginning of 2013, 136 people have died on Southern roads. We believe all could have been prevented," Russell says.

"We've put our full support behind *Any Number Is Too Many* and our emergency responders.

"We've seen how Otago and Southland communities are responding to the call to address the increasing number of people being killed on our roads. People across both regions are joining the Facebook page, putting up posters in their businesses and shops, using the stickers and asking to be involved," Russell says.

For St John's Southland/Otago district operations manager Pauline Buchanan, it's a lot more personal than a number – every person killed in a road crash is somebody's family member, part of a community and in several cases, it's been somebody she knows.

"As emergency responders, we know the impact the loss has on people and it's not just on the families. With road deaths, there's often the blame factor and it can divide families and divide towns. The impact is huge."

Pauline has seen the devastation first-hand too many times and she's also observed the effect on her staff – the frustration of wanting things to change, the need for the whole community to take up the challenge to agree that there is never an acceptable number.

Pauline says the *Any Number Is Too Many* programme is important to St John's staff as it gives them the opportunity to put their voice out there.

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**"At the end of September 2017, 27 people have been killed on Otago and Southland roads. This is more than the same total for 2016."**

RUSSELL HAWKES

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"We get to see things others don't. It sticks in your brain forever, it stays with our people for the rest of their lives and we know it has a massive impact across the community as well. This programme is our

chance to do something, to help reduce the road toll, to make a difference."

Russell says the road toll is not something we should simply accept and he feels strongly that we need a solution that is for southern communities, by southern communities.

"We recognise communities know their roads better than anyone else and often know what needs to be done to improve their safety. They know the intersections and stretches of road where crashes happen too often. They have experienced the blind-spots and seen the near-misses. They see the problems, they know the risks."

Pauline wants to see the community talking about how our roads can be safer, about what makes our drivers take risks and what we can all do to prevent more road deaths.

"It doesn't matter whether you are talking from a city or a rural perspective, something needs to change because even one death is too many."



# Treasuring our greatest gifts

Papatūānuku (mother earth) provides for all her children and maintains all her landscapes and ecosystems to support life, says Te Ao Marama board chairman Gail Thompson. “One of her greatest gifts is the taonga or treasure of water.”

**A**cknowledging our impact on the environment and our waterways is crucial for moving forward, according to Gail.

These values provide the foundation for the new People, Water and Land programme.

Environment Southland chairman Nicol Horrell says Southland’s natural resources are so important to the way we live. “We all use them and we all have a responsibility to ensure that use is sustainable. We all want a thriving Southland; it’s up to us, as a community to take a long-term view and make it happen.”

“We know we need to move on meeting the Government’s requirements, and we know we can’t do this alone,” Nicol says. “Rules and regulatory limits can only be one part of the equation. I’m looking forward to continuing our work with our iwi partners and others because it’s going to take a ‘whole-of-Southland’ effort to be successful, and people need to be at the centre of this.”

Gail says right now there is an imbalance. “We must acknowledge our impacts on the environment and waterways. But there are good things happening now

too, and we want to acknowledge and build on these things that are making a difference to get our water right. Ngai Tahu ki Murihiku is a part of Southland and want to also be a part of finding the solutions, of being innovative, of supporting the good work that continues so that we, and all our descendants, can enjoy this land Southland we call home.”

Go to [waterandland.es.govt.nz](http://waterandland.es.govt.nz) for more information on the People, Water and Land programme.

## Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan update

**T**he *Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan* hearing has now been completed.

Environment Southland Chairman Nicol Horrell says this has been a huge undertaking for all those involved because of the large number of submissions. “I really appreciate the time and energy

people have put into telling us their thoughts and suggestions on the plan. With such a high level of participation from so many Southlanders, I am hopeful that the final result will be a plan that reflects the community’s views and is owned by all those who took time to contribute.”

Last year 900 submissions and 50 further

submissions were received when the proposed plan was notified. Around 270 submitters have taken the time to present their submission to the panel of commissioners.

The hearing panel began their deliberations in November and a final plan is expected to come to Council in the first half of next year.



# Watching over our recreational waters

Summer is in full swing, so how can you choose the best place to enjoy the water? Making a decision is now even easier with the updated 'Can I swim here?' section on the Land, Air, Water Aotearoa website.

It's here that you can see the results of Environment Southland's summer water quality monitoring programme, which tests for *E.coli* levels. High levels can indicate an increased risk of gastrointestinal illness.

Keeping tabs on the water quality at our popular leisure spots over summer is an important part of Environment Southland's seasonal work. Understanding the results is easy as LAWA uses a traffic light system to indicate the results of the most recent water sample.

Public Health South's health protection officer Kate Marshall says, "While it is part of the kiwi lifestyle to get out and enjoy our rivers, estuaries and beaches, we need to be aware of the health risks which can be posed by bacteria and viruses in our waterways."

As well as checking the latest sampling results, you also need to take into account recent weather – if there's been heavy rainfall in the last few days, avoid swimming or gathering shellfish.

"Enjoy the water, but remember to stick to the smart swimming tips to prevent you or your family getting ill," Kate says.

Looking ahead, the Government has set a national target of making 90% of New Zealand's large rivers and lakes swimmable by 2040, with an interim target of 80% swimmable by 2030. Environment Southland and regional councils around the country will be working with communities to achieve this.



LAWA is designed to connect New Zealanders with their environment by making relevant information accessible.

It allows the public to stay informed on the quality of our rivers, lakes and beaches, water quantity data including water use, live river flows, and rainfall and groundwater levels, and also air quality.

The data is provided by New Zealand's regional councils, unitary authorities and NIWA, as well as presenting information provided by the Ministry for the Environment.

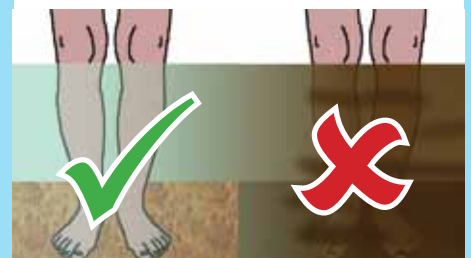
[www.lawa.org.nz](http://www.lawa.org.nz)

## Smart swimming tips

- ▶ Check [lawa.org.nz](http://lawa.org.nz) for the most up-to-date water sample results.
- ▶ Keep away from stormwater outlets.
- ▶ Keep away from streams and areas with possible runoff from intensive agriculture.
- ▶ Don't swim or gather shellfish during and for 2-5 days after heavy rainfall.

### SMART SWIMMING TIP

Stand in knee-deep water. Can you see your toes?



It should be safe for swimming.

You could be at risk of getting sick.

# Going boating? Make sure you prep, check and know

Boating safety is taken seriously at the Southland branch of Jet Boating New Zealand and they are keen to encourage other boaties to know the basics.

Rivers officer Eddie McKenzie says the organisation has always been a staunch advocate for safe boating, right from when he joined back in 1984.

“[They] always drummed into you that you don’t launch a boat without doing a check-over first, you don’t boat without putting a lifejacket on, and you don’t put anyone else in a boat without a lifejacket on.

“It’s all about good boating behaviour and looking out for the other person.”

At 52, the Southland branch is the oldest in the country and is still going strong. Currently, Eddie is working towards getting a recognised jet boat driver training programme up and running in Southland.

“There’s a hell of a lot of jet boat owners out there that aren’t members, and I’d encourage them to join just for that reason, to see how to use and handle a jet boat, and benefit from driver training.”

Environment Southland’s maritime team, Lyndon Cleaver and Ian Coard, work year-round with boating clubs, supporting them to encourage a safe boating culture amongst their members.

This summer they will be out on the water at popular boating spots across Southland, to help keep boaties safe.

They’re keen to make sure everybody on the water is sticking to Maritime New

Zealand’s safe boating advice – prep your boat, check your gear, know the rules.

“One of the most important things we’re reminding people to check is that they always have two means of communication, whatever they are,” says Ian.

“They could be a VHF radio, a flare, a distress beacon, or even a foghorn. Hunters often have a rifle, so they just fire three quick shots in succession, which lets others know something’s happened.”

You can find a copy of the *Safer Boating Guide* at [www.es.govt.nz](http://www.es.govt.nz), along with local boating rules.



## Introducing Ian Coard

Ian Coard has worked in the marine environment most of his life as a commercial fisherman, and started his current role as maritime officer at Environment Southland in 2016.

He's been involved in the Riverton Coastguard for nearly 30 years, and earlier this year was awarded a New Zealand Search and Rescue Gold Award.

◀ Maritime officer Ian Coard chats with Te Anau boaties about boating safety during Labour Weekend.





# Mini BioBlitz

Environment Southland hosted our first Mini BioBlitz in October at Daffodil Bay. This scientific treasure hunt was a great opportunity for people of all ages to get out and explore the range of plants, insects, birds and other species they weren't even aware existed.



With the sun shining, a range of experts were on hand to take guided tours and help people identify their finds.





# Updates



## Join us at field days

Entering the Environment Southland site at the Southern Field Days in February you'll find something a little different. Not only are we at a new location (Site 111 – at Entrance 1 on Bowman Lane), but we're also keen to talk about you – less about us.

We'd like you to tell us a bit about you and your story. Tell us about the places you love in Southland, and what future you see for our region.

The 2018 Field Days at Waimumu near Gore are being held from 14-16 February. Join us there with our councillors, who will be available for a cuppa and a chat. We will have a range of staff to talk to you about the activities on your farm, there'll be great prizes and giveaways, neat displays and a comfy chair for you to rest your tired legs.

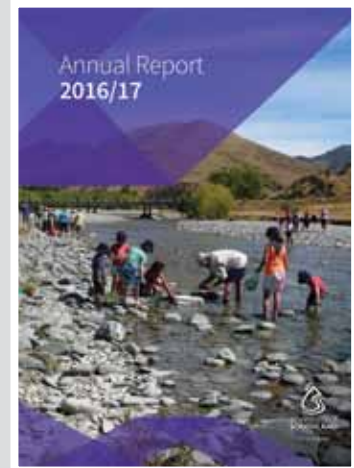


## Pest management

The next step to set the direction for pest management in Southland will take place in the first half of next year. The formation of a new Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP) began in March 2016, when the community was asked for its thoughts on pest management priorities.

This year, workshops have been held with the council and key stakeholders to shortlist Southland pest species, develop the draft plan and an overarching strategy. This work follows the requirements of the Biosecurity Act and the National Policy Direction for Pest Management. As part of the process, we've been working closely with Environment Canterbury and the Otago Regional Council to ensure our approaches complement each other.

The Regional Pest Management Plan is expected to be ready for formal public consultation by mid- 2018.



## Annual Report

Environment Southland's Annual Report 2016/2017 covering the progress towards our Long-term Plan goals was adopted by the council in October. Financially, it shows we are in good shape, with no significant deviations from our budgets, and that we were on track with the work we said we would do. Particular accomplishments include progressing the Southland Water and Plan, successfully coming to an agreement with Gore District Council over the Cleans Air Loans scheme, and the ongoing work towards a Biodiversity Plan.

For a copy of the Annual Report or the Annual Report Summary, visit [www.es.govt.nz](http://www.es.govt.nz) or call 0800 76 88 45.



# Time to think about...

## DECEMBER 2017

**POTATO WART** – If you're pulling up your spuds for Christmas lunch, keep an eye out for potato wart, a nasty looking fungus which turns potatoes to mush. It's important to contact us if you suspect you have potato wart in your crop, as it needs to be dealt with correctly to avoid jeopardising our lucrative commercial potato industry.

**CHECK, CLEAN, DRY** – Lots of us will be out enjoying Southland's rivers and lakes this summer, so remember to Check, Clean and Dry all your fishing and boating equipment to ensure you don't spread any unwanted freshwater pests.

**NODDING THISTLE** - This time of year nodding thistle is flowering and should be targeted for control. If you've got nodding thistle on your property, you should destroy all plants before they begin seeding.

**CULTIVATION** – At this time, people are thinking about getting a start on next year's crop. Keep in mind buffer zone requirements which vary according to slope; the steeper the slope the wider the buffer. Remember to cultivate on the contour and don't cultivate surface soil too finely. This helps prevent erosion under heavy rainfall conditions. Make sure to identify and avoid critical source areas.

## JANUARY 2018

**MUSTELIDS** (ferrets and stoats) – These pests have just been through their annual spring/summer breeding season. They're a menace to other animals, so now is a good time to set some traps around duck ponds, chicken coops, streams and bush areas.

**RAGWORT** – At this time of year ragwort plants which have made it through to flowering should be targeted for control. Remember, all ragwort within 50 metres of a boundary must be destroyed before seeding.

**SILAGE** - If you're starting to make silage up, make sure your cut grass is properly wilted beforehand. This will considerably reduce liquid leaching from the silage stack. Stacks need to be 50 metres from any waterways, wetlands or potable water. Silage should not be stored on land that can become wet from springs, seepage, high water tables, or stormwater run-off.

## FEBRUARY 2018

**FIREWOOD** - Summer is perfect for thinking about future firewood supplies. Get it in now and store it correctly to ensure it is less than 25% moisture content when it is time to burn it. Stack it in a criss-cross pattern to allow for airflow between the

wood to dry it effectively. Go to [www.BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz](http://www.BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz) for a list of Good Wood suppliers.

**FARM PLANS** – Get in touch with your land sustainability officer for advice around good management practices and farm management plans.

## Down on the farm



By **GARY MORGAN** *Environment Southland principal land sustainability officer*

Have you thought about planting a woodlot? Trees on agricultural landscapes offer a great example of two-tier farming; trees are managed for a variety of uses and pasture production is maximised.

Woodlots have a multitude of on-farm benefits. They help control soil erosion especially on steeper landscapes, and those with mixed species can improve indigenous biodiversity values, as well as mitigate on-farm nutrient loss. Using well sited and managed commercial species can also provide a significant monetary return.

So, think about any gorse-filled gullies, steeper unproductive grazing land or exposed ridges, they may all be candidates for a woodlot.

Funding for establishing new woodlots is available from the Ministry for Primary Industries through the Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS). If you are considering plantings of 5 hectares (this can include several pockets within the farm boundary too), you may be eligible for a grant of \$1300 per hectare.

If you are interested in creating a woodlot, contact an Environment Southland land sustainability officer.

They can visit your property, discuss suitable species and good locations, work out a planting plan and help you through AGS applications for funding.

*For detailed information on any of these topics visit our website.*

0800 76 88 45 | [service@es.govt.nz](mailto:service@es.govt.nz) | [www.es.govt.nz](http://www.es.govt.nz)

# Out in the field



▲ Environment Southland staff Courtney Guise and Tom Harding help the Omaui Landcare Group install Goodnature traps in the Omaui Scenic Reserve as part of a major pest trapping project in September.



▲ Compliance officer Michelle Te Maro and senior environmental technical officer Warren McNamara show off their nautical skills during a boat training and recertification session aboard the Environment Southland vessel Toroa on the Oreti River.



▲ Environmental education officer Pat Hoffman (right) identifies macroinvertebrates (aquatic organisms) with Rimu School students and parents taking part in a stream study on the Waihopai River.



▲ Business systems analyst Lianne Kooiman points out a sea level benchmark on a tower for the Otepuni Stream on a trip with the environmental data team. The tower is used to measure the water level of the stream. It contains pipes which pump water up inside to provide a more accurate environment to measure levels.