

EnviroSOUTH

August 2019

Who's who?

Meet your Regional Forum members

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Leading the way

The first site-led programme for Southland

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environment
SOUTHLAND
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Te Taiao Tonga

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EnviroSOUTH

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Cover

Ten year old Jamie Reinke and Matt Grant discover a buried tyre during the Waihopai River clean up event hosted by Environment Southland and Sunrise Rotary in June (story page 4).



I'm encouraging all potential candidates and Southland voters to take an interest in Environment Southland at the upcoming Local Government elections.

As a regional council we take a region-wide, long-term perspective and have an important leadership role, which includes providing direction for local government regional and district plans through our regional policy statement. We're also responsible for leading the sustainable management of Southland's natural resources – water, land, air, coast.

Like all councils, we exist to serve the people of Southland and always have people and future generations front of mind.

We have 12 councillors elected from six constituencies. Six councillors represent Invercargill-Rakiura; there are two for Eastern-Dome and one each for Southern, Hokonui, Western and Fiordland. Unlike city and district councils, we have a chairman who is elected by the new council, rather than a mayor.

The Council's vision is for a thriving Southland now and for our future. Our first priority is maintaining and improving

freshwater quality and quantity, which is critical to our agricultural economy and the way we live.

Adapting to climate change is another huge challenge. Recently, the Council accorded urgency to developing a climate change action plan, rather than declaring a climate emergency, as some councils have done.

We have a strong relationship with iwi and wherever possible we partner with others to provide real value to ratepayers. Engagement with our communities is at the heart of our successful plans and programmes.

So if you're interested in leadership and the big issues that make a difference for Southland's economy, lifestyle, and future generations please consider standing for the regional council.

Most importantly, we need you to vote. Your vote is important because it contributes to the lives of Southlanders and the future of our region.

Rob Phillips, Chief Executive, Environment Southland

Environment Southland

A thriving Southland – te taurikura o Murihiku



▲ Seven-year-old John Thomas from New River Primary School checks out a tree before it gets planted during their planting event in May.

Pupils protecting 'our place'

Hundreds of plants were added to the planting along the banks of the Kingswell Creek by New River Primary School students in May.

Environment Southland has supported students from other schools, kindergartens and Girl Guides who have also been planting along the creek since 2010, but for the students at New River, this site is extra special.

With the school named after the nearby New River Estuary, the New River students identified the extended area [along the Kingswell Creek] as part of 'their place', giving the planting more meaning, 'caring for the environment around our place, our school'.

New River Primary acting principal Gina Larson-White said the students were excited to take part in the regular planting as part of their learning how plants helped to protect waterways and streams.

Environment Southland environmental education officer Hannah Sim says the aim of planting out the area was to create a better habitat and environment for species within and around the creek and to do it in a site the children recognised as important to them.

All students from the school (Year 0 – 6) planted alongside the creek and added to their already established sites. They also wrote their names on the plant protectors, so they could take ownership of their work.

"They love it... they are absolutely thrilled to be out here," Gina says.

No action is too small, it will take us all



▲ Tim and James Fogarty collect bale wrap during the Waihopai River clean-up.

A surge of projects and actions are taking place across Southland by individuals, groups, schools and farmers alike to improve our waterways.

In June Environment Southland teamed up with Sunrise Rotary Invercargill and the community to hold a river clean-up along the stop banks of the Waihopai River. Around 100 people of all ages braved the cold and wet conditions, picking up more than 660 kg of rubbish in less than two hours.

Rubbish included 18 car tyres, countless plastic drinking straws, and a smashed up computer console.

“The event was an amazing demonstration of how inspired our community is to take action and be involved in practical ways like helping to clean up our waterways,” says Ken Swinney, Environment Southland acting science and information director. “We were really pleased with the community support even in the blustery,

cold conditions that the day brought. It was beneficial to partner with Sunrise Rotary – we were able to achieve a lot more together.”

The river clean-up was a great opportunity to mark the beginning of National Volunteer Week, and to launch our new Water Story website – an evolving online space where you can learn more about your favourite places and activities. It includes science information, highlights of work underway and, most importantly, how you can get involved.

Rotarian and co-organiser, Alan Watson, says it was good to see so many young people turn up to help out at the event.

“Invercargill’s environment will be in good hands,” says Alan.



▲ Sam McLachlan



▲ Nicola Boutcher with Tia and Quade

How can you get involved?

If you didn't get a chance to help out at the Waihōpai clean-up, there are lots of other ways you can help improve Southland's environment.

1 Join your local catchment or landcare group. Lora Gorge became the 19th Southland Catchment Group, contributing yet another vital link in efforts to improve water quality across the Ōreti catchment. Each catchment group has their own vision and aspirations for their area, where farmers work together with their communities to make these happen. Talks of further catchment groups in the Otapiri Gorge, Middle Ōreti (Winton) and the Lower Ōreti (Invercargill) are also bubbling away, with great opportunities for farmers, businesses, and the community to come together and join forces.

The next steps for the New River Estuary Forum organising group are focused on developing an action plan for the health and wellbeing of New River Estuary over the next year.

2 Join in with local plantings. Local planting days happen all over the region so keep an eye out in your local paper and on Facebook for events you can take part in. The Otatara Landcare Group will be having a triple celebration on Saturday 14 September. Marking 20 years since its formation, the group has put in 15,000 hours of restoration efforts at Bushy Point, planting 30,000 native plants. The event will also mark Conservation Week with their Annual Planting Day. Everyone is invited so pop along, get involved, and join in on the festivities.

3 Learn more about Southland's water. Between September and November, you can gain a unique experience in the Ōreti and Aparima catchments through the University of Otago's New Zealand Marine Studies Centre's Aquavan. Supported by Environment Southland, the Aquavan project aims to create awareness and understanding of the connectivity between river health and the coastal environment, in a dynamic and hands-on way. The Aquavan will be in various locations across the two catchments, and will have live fish and aquatic creatures you can see and touch.



▲ David and Lucy Hart

You can learn more about Southland's monitored estuaries and their ecosystem health in a new guide on our website. The guide looks at the different types of estuaries found in Southland, the important role they play, and why some are more sensitive than others. It also explains how we undertake our monitoring programme.

More info

For more information on any of these activities and so much more, head over to waterstory.es.govt.nz today.



Getting everybody around the table

▲ RMS Solutions Ltd consultant Jake Bootsma with applicant Bevan Collie and Environment Southland consents team leader Aurora Grant.

Environment Southland's new accelerated consent process has so impressed Bevan Collie that he has suggested it to other farmers.

Bevan and his wife Fiona have recently completed an accelerated consent for their family-based operation, which milks 685 cows on the banks of the Waiau River, near Tuatapere.

Environment Southland consents manager Michael Durand says the new consent process means that instead of a flow of back-and-forth emails and phone calls between him, his team, consultants, experts and the consent applicant, now – when it is appropriate – his staff simply arrange to have everyone meet together face-to-face, ideally on-site, in order to make a decision on the application in a single day.

“The idea with this accelerated process is to get all these people together in the

same place at the same time on the site, so it's like a ‘round the kitchen table’ type idea,” he says.

The process meant it felt as if everyone was on the same team and were meeting as equals, Bevan says.

“It was a nice open forum.”

“It brought the process into the mind-set of: this is our environmental team, we are all sitting here, what do we need to do, how do we make this work and how do we future-proof it to make sure it continues to work.

“You can do that very fast, very accurately and with a great level of confidence that you're heading in the right direction,” Bevan says.

Michael believes the accelerated consent process has the potential to build better relationships with consultants that work in the sector, as well as making the applicants feel more involved in the consent process.

“Applicants see their consent being put together and understand it, and buy into it more than they would otherwise. This way they feel involved, and they understand what they've got to do. They'll also avoid a lot of the frustrations

they experience when delays are out of their control.”

So far the team has completed four real consent decisions in the field and are now fine-tuning the process. While the accelerated consents are not suitable in every case, applicants should contact the consents team to see if the new process is right for them.

Bevan says he has come away from the new process feeling hugely positive.

“I've already spoken to another farmer, who runs a reasonable operation. I said, ‘If you can, try for that process because the communication goes two ways and it's a lot easier.’”



▲ RMS Solutions Ltd consultant Jake Bootsma discusses the consent process with applicant Bevan Collie.

Winners are gridders

James Hargest College pupil Georgia Hawke said she wasn't sure what she was going to spend her winnings on when she popped into Environment Southland to collect her \$200 voucher.



▲ ShareYourWai youth section photo winner Georgia Hawke receives her prize from senior communications coordinator Adrienne Henderson.

Georgia won the youth section in the ShareYourWai photo competition, which was run alongside the survey about water earlier this year. Her photo was taken from standing in the water of the Waihōpai River near the dam. She says she has been coming to walk her dog along the Waihōpai Walkway since she was little, and it's a place she likes to go to get some time out and admire the scenery. "There's sometimes cool animals there too like seals, birds and eels."

A Real Journeys' package was up for grabs for those that completed the ShareYourWai

survey. From over 1000 responses, Art Santure's name came out of the random draw. Art, from Mandeville, is a former teacher and says he has never been to Doubtful Sound, so is really looking forward to taking the trip with his wife when the weather warms up a bit later this year.

The #ShareYourWai campaign was launched in December as part of the People, Water and Land programme – Te Mana o te Tangata, te Wai, te Whenua.

Since the survey closed, small groups of

community members have been pulled together to continue the conversation and delve a bit deeper into the survey results. The next steps require some more technical science before the information gathered will be presented to the Regional Forum members at their workshops in September and November. A report on the ShareYourWai campaign will be available in September.

Other photo competition winners:

Jack Crean – Children section
Tony Shepherd – Open section



▲ Photography competition open winner Tony Shepherd's photo of fly fishing on the Mataura River.



▲ Te Ao Mārama Kaupapa Taiao manager Dean Whaanga talks to Regional Forum members during a workshop in Te Anau in June.

The journey has begun

Fifteen members of the Regional Forum have started to unpack, get comfortable, and get into their work. They're tasked with recommending ways to achieve community aspirations for freshwater in the region.

“It's no small thing,” says Regional Forum lead Rhiannon Suter. “The first of three phases of their work is complete. This focused on developing the team and sharing knowledge.”

The first phase consisted of four workshops, where members learned more about Mātauranga Māori the policy environment and the water issues facing the region. Each workshop has been held in a different location and has included a public session where forum and community members heard from agencies

and other groups working in different areas.

“Working with the runanga, we will continue this theme of moving around the region and including a range of experts, volunteer groups, businesses, and agencies to participate and share their knowledge and experiences. It's also important to continue to get feedback from across the community on the topics the forum is discussing, so there are plans coming together to help with that,” Rhiannon says.

What is the Regional Forum?

▶ The Regional Forum is a community-based group that will advise Environment Southland's council and Te Ao Marama board members on how we can achieve community aspirations for freshwater. Members of the forum will consider the specific policies and rules as well as the on-ground initiatives required to make change and improve Southland's water and land for generations to come.

Over the next few years, the forum will meet regularly to work through the aspirations, values and objectives the Southland community hold for our water and land.

Follow their journey and find out when they'll be meeting in your area by subscribing to the People, Water and Land e-newsletter - www.es.govt.nz/subscribe.

Meet some of your Regional Forum members



Jade Maguire

For Jade, the land and the water are our tīpuna, they are for us to care for, and protect. By looking after them – we are looking after our future generations.

He decided to put his name forward for the forum because he was concerned about the state of the environment, particularly the water quality. “I wanted to be part of the conversation and do something about it.”

Of the forum, he says, “We’re a whole lot of community members focused on the same issue. We all want the same thing, we have the same vision. We’re coming together to

figure out what we’ve got to do – together.”

So far the forum has met in Bluff, Gore, Te Anau and Invercargill, with field trips to see different activities and hear from different people at each location. Jade says it’s been really good to see so many in our community concerned about the environment and wanting to find ways to make things better.

He says he’s looking forward to learning more about new ways of doing things. “I want to learn more about some innovative ways to deal with wastewater and storm water; what mitigations are available to deal with things like heavy metals going into the estuary, for example.”



▲ Members of the forum came together for the first time in April at Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff. The first four workshops have focused on developing the team and sharing knowledge.



▲ Regional Forum members gather together for their first workshop in April.



Kelsi Hayes

As a fifth generation Southlander, Kelsi takes her role as a caretaker of the land seriously and hopes to see native bush protected, and for the water quality in Southland’s rivers and estuaries to be the envy of the rest of New Zealand.

While she grew up on a sheep farm in the Progress Valley, she has a particular connection with the Fortrose Estuary and Waikawa River and harbour where she fishes regularly.

She was motivated to put her name forward to be a member of the Regional Forum as it seemed like a good thing to do – to be part of the discussion.

“I have quite a bit to do with waterways,” she says. “I’m a farmer and a keen recreationalist. Waterways are quite important to me.”

Having never been involved in anything like this before, she didn’t know what to expect. “I was surprised by how many people put their names forward for the roles.”

She says it’s all really interesting stuff – and there’s a lot to learn about. Kelsi is looking forward to getting into the detail, seeing everything and what can be done.

Looking ahead she says challenging discussions should be easier to work through because they’re a cohesive group. “One of the things about the group is that everyone wants to include each other.”



Paul Marshall

Paul says his family has farmed the same ‘bit of dirt’ in western Southland for 53 years. The land, and their stewardship of it, is the thing that binds the generations together. He believes though, that it is the water that sustains their family on the land and enables the wider community to thrive.

He says he put his name forward as he thought that it’d be a good way to make a contribution to improving water quality for the province.

And he’s pleased with how it’s going so far but it has been sobering at the same time. “My assessment is that the Regional Forum is comprised of good people, with different backgrounds and different perspectives.

“I’ve realised that none of us are disconnected from the other. All behaviours are linked. By removing something from one place, it may have an impact on another.”

The task is huge but there’s a bigger task out there, he says. “We will be able to frame advice to the council, but the biggest task is taking the community with us on this journey.

“Water quality will only improve if the changes are driven by our community.

“I’m particularly looking forward to meetings in my catchment. Specific issues in the Upper Waiau area are different to those in the Lower Waiau. At some point the forum is going to be grappling with meaty issues.”



▲ Workshops with Regional Forum members are being held around the region and each includes a field trip to see different activities, waterways and actions being taken to improve water quality.



▲ Predator Free Rakiura project manager Bridget Carter with her young daughter Quinn who is the driving force behind her passion to make the island predator free.

Leading the way

Imagine a future where our beloved kakapo once again roam free on Stewart Island, where those giant parrots who were actually born on the island and remain alive and protected today, could return to their home.

It seems like a fantasy but could become a reality if the current commitment to making the island predator free, is realised.

Predator Free Rakiura project manager Bridget Carter said the project is ambitious but realistic given New Zealand's track record in removing predators from islands, although it won't be achieved in a short timeframe.

She's excited about the inclusion of Rakiura and its surrounding islands in the first site-led programme for the region as part of the new Southland Regional Pest Management Plan, a move she sees as another step towards a united vision for the area.

Bridget says the concept of removing predators from the island has been around since at least the eighties, in one form or another, and the formation of Predator Free Rakiura is more about formalising the

project and establishing some agreements to move it forward.

"Predator Free Rakiura is about a collective of agencies, organisations, trusts and individuals and everybody is in it for different reasons, which is a good thing.

"The removal of predators can create an enormous variety of opportunities. For some they see it as an ecotourism opportunity, for others it's about the improvement in the forest and the benefits that will bring."

Bridget says the site-led programme is not just a really helpful tool in the fight against predators, but it's also a strong symbol that we are all working towards the same outcome.

She sees that the site-led programme for Stewart Island has helpful rules for rats, feral cats, possums, hedgehogs, mice and mustelids, the species identified for removal within Predator Free Rakiura.



▲ Stewart Island Rakiura Community and Environment Trust (SIRCET) trustee Letitia McRitchie with the area the trust is focusing their work on in the background.

“It is great that it covers pest plants, pest animals and marine and land-based biosecurity because we know that there is a link between these.”

She also sees potential for future biosecurity regulation to benefit the area, including a strong Stewart Island biosecurity pathway management plan.

“Even if you could wave a magic wand and make the island predator free, that wouldn’t be the job done. Maintaining a Predator Free Rakiura long term is just as difficult and we need to prepare for that.

“Biosecurity matters for Rakiura, it matters from both ecological and from livelihood points of view, our taonga matters, there’s an exciting opportunity for things to happen here and we can make that happen.”

Meanwhile Stewart Island Rakiura Community and Environment Trust (SIRCET) trustee Letitia McRitchie says she sees the site-led programme as further support of the work already carried out by the trust.

The group established itself in 2002 and has spent 17 years undertaking weed control and predator removal from select areas on the island.

She’s witnessed evidence of the damage caused by the large feral cat population on the island and hopes support and enforcement of the rules around desexing and microchipping of the domestic cats on the island will support the trust to build on the work they are already doing.

Letitia’s also keen to see the site-led programme provide an opportunity for more education around pest plants, many of which have started as garden plants on the island and eventually spread into the bush areas and become established pests.

“Lots of people like the look of their weeds, some of them do look very nice, but they are weeds and having the regulatory back-up within the pest plan is really helpful for our work.”

What does the site-led programme mean for Stewart Island?

A site-led programme allows for specific rules to be put in place to protect an area, rather than a specific species. These rules can relate to animal, plant or marine pests.

Site-led programmes are usually in an area where there are specific biodiversity values, habitat or species that require protection, or where significant work has been carried out to remove pests.

For Stewart Island, there are rules relating to a number of pest plants including Gunnera, Spanish heath, African club moss and Willow.

There are also rules relating to a number of pest animals including feral cats, feral goats, hedgehogs, possums and rats.

A rule for domestic cats requires them to be microchipped and neutered and not be released into the wild. Environment Southland has allocated some funding to assist pet cat owners meet the requirements of the plan.

More info

Find out more about the new Southland Regional Pest Management Plan at www.es.govt.nz

Weaving the golden thread

Environment Southland looks after the region's natural resources for future generations. But how does it ensure the voice of the resident iwi – the 'people of the land' – is heard?

As tangata whenua, Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku have a particular interest in the work of Environment Southland. And mutually, the council has responsibilities towards Māori and Māori cultural and spiritual values.

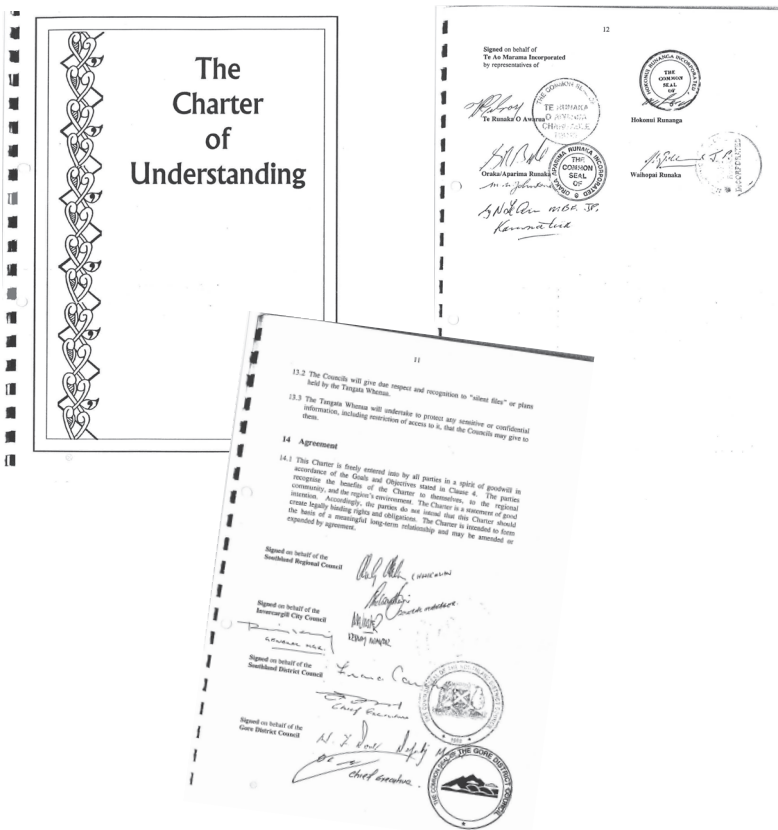
The approach we have in Southland today is unique in the South Island. Its aim is to ensure Māori values are reflected in the council's decision-making, so that Southland's mauri is protected for now and generations to come.

Don Mowat, the current chairperson for Te Ao Mārama Incorporated (the environmental arm of Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku) was one of the key facilitators when the relationship between the council and iwi began in the early 90s.

"In 1992, I was elected to the Invercargill City Council. Back then, Māori just didn't feature in local government. As the councillor with iwi affiliations, they sent me, Michael Skerrett and Stewart Bull to a hui at Te Rapa titled Māori in local government, to see how iwi were



▲ Te Ao Mārama chairperson Don Mowat and Environment Southland acting director of science and information Ken Swinney can look back on a lot of achievements in the 25-year relationship between the council and iwi. Don holds a copy of the iwi management plan Te Tangi a Tauria.



The Charter of Understanding

He huarahi mō ngā uri whakatupu

A pathway for the generations coming through

Signed in 1993 and provides the base for the iwi-council relationship. The charter has since been signed onto by all seven councils in the Murihiku rohe, which includes the four Southland councils, the Queenstown Lakes and Clutha District Councils, as well as Otago Regional Council.

“You can’t make trust happen instantly. You’ve got to build it, and that took a long time.”

Ken Swinney, acting director of science and information.

represented in other parts of the country.”

However, they didn’t see anything there that impressed them. “We came back from Te Rapa, more convinced than ever that we would have to find our own path forward. Michael Skerrett took the lead in setting up what would later become Te Ao Mārama.”

Te Ao Mārama was delegated the responsibility of dealing with councils on environmental matters, on behalf of the four papatipu rūnanga who hold mana whenua over all ancestral lands in Murihiku – Awarua, Hokonui, Ōraka Aparima and Waihōpai.

Over the next 25 years the relationship with Environment Southland continued to grow, with various protocols being developed to ensure smooth and efficient processes for plan development and consents management, a jointly funded iwi policy advisor position, an iwi management plan Te Tangi a Tauria, and a partnership to improve Southland’s water and land through the People Water and Land programme – Te Mana o te Tangata, te Wai, te Whenua.

The most recent milestone in the council’s relationship with iwi is the inclusion of mana whenua positions on two of Environment Southland’s committees. The successful candidates for these positions will start their work after the elections in October.

Environment Southland acting director of science and information Ken Swinney says one part of the secret for the successful relationship is commitment. “At

Environment Southland, we refer to our iwi relationship as te kōura tuia – the ‘golden thread’ that we weave through all our work. It’s just part of how we operate.”

He says another important part is trust. “You can put all the regulations, charters and agreements in place that you like, but you can’t make trust happen instantly. You’ve got to build it, and that took a long time.”

Don agrees, adding that a mutual interest and ongoing education is vital in keeping the relationship going.

“We take a responsibility to improve local government understanding of all things Māori. Because we have a three-yearly election cycle and they keep bringing in new people, it takes a lot of work. But to me, that really is one of the pleasures.”



Making a stand

▲ Former Southland Regional Council chair and Environment Southland councillor Marion Miller.

When asked what skills and attributes are needed to serve on council, former Environment Southland councillor and chair, Marion Miller says that listening to people, asking lots of questions, and keeping an open mind are key.

“You need to keep an open mind, and you want to hear all of the facts. You learn from the dissenters, and you listen to different perspectives. You never make a decision until you’ve got all of the information. And there are no silly questions – you need to ask a lot of questions,” says Marion.

“You always need to make sure that you are listening to, and hearing, what is being said.”

Serving for a total of 18 years over two timeframes, Marion was elected onto the inaugural Southland Regional Council in 1989 following widespread local government reforms. She was inspired to stand after hearing that a new organisation was being set-up that was focussed on the region’s environment.

Of the role, Marion says the learning opportunities are exponential.

“It (council) is an exciting place to be because there’s so much learning involved.

All the science is peer reviewed; it’s robust and credible. It’s a really dynamic place to be.”

One highlight was the launch of the first Regional Policy Statement – Southland’s most significant planning tool and the guiding document for all resource management decisions for the region. “We had to go through it sentence by sentence,” she says.

Being part of the Environment Awards was also a highpoint. “We visited so many exciting places where people were doing such interesting things. We met so many wonderful people. It restored faith – people were beavering away and doing the best that they could do.”

Looking ahead, Marion hopes to see more women put themselves forward for the regional council.

“Women often think about things in a 360 degree way and in many cases they are a carer (of someone). They bring with them a completely different perspective. They want the environment to be better for their children and grandchildren,” she says.

Marion’s message to women considering standing for council? “You can do it. And you’ve got a responsibility to do it. You’ve got the perspective that is missing from around the table. I do hope a lot stand”.

Candidates

Nominations are open from Friday 19 July 2019 to 16 August 2019. You will need to have two electors enrolled on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll in the area you are standing for to nominate you. It is strongly recommended that candidates do not leave lodging their nomination until the last day.

Voting

The voting period starts on Friday 20 September, with voting documents to be delivered by NZ Post between 20 and 25 September. The official local authority elections day is Saturday 16 October, with voting closing at midday.

If you post your document back, you will need to make sure you have it in the mail by Tuesday 8 October 2019. You can also hand deliver your voting document to a ballot box during the voting period (Friday 20 September to 12 noon Saturday, 12 October). Ballot box locations will be noted on your voting papers.

You must be enrolled to vote. You can enrol, check and register your details online at www.elections.org.nz or by calling the Electoral Commission on 0800 36 75 56.

2019 changes

There have been some small boundary changes for some of Environment Southland’s constituencies to align them more closely with the Southland District Council constituencies.

More info

Elections 2019 information and our Pre-election Report are on our website www.es.govt.nz



▲ Recently retired medical officer of health Marion Poore says the health effects of air pollution can't be ignored but it will take a community effort to improve it.

Air quality concern continues despite retirement

She might be taking a step back, but there's little doubt recently retired medical officer of health Marion Poore will continue to watch and hope for an improved community effort to address poor air quality.

Marion was one of several people involved in the development of a South Invercargill air quality pilot project, bringing together a number of organisations and local sectors. The aim is for the groups to work together on projects to improve air quality and thereby the health and wellbeing of the community. Those already involved include local councils, public health,

youth representatives, Venture Southland, Awarua Synergy, Te Ao Mārama and the Pacific Island Advisory and Cultural Trust.

Although the project is still in its early stages, a greater understanding of the problem and the roles different organisations could play is being developed.

Marion has been a strong advocate for this approach because she says smoky air is proven to be harmful to health and linked to cold, damp housing.

"This is such a complex problem that no one organisation can fix it on their own. As air pollution levels increase during cold calm periods in Invercargill, we know there is an increase in children being seen at Southland Hospital with asthma and other respiratory conditions, as well as some adults with chronic respiratory diseases.

"We know that over 90% of air pollution in Invercargill comes from burning coal and wood in domestic fires. Therefore if we can swap out old, inefficient burners, help improve the quality of homes with insulation and encourage everyone

to burn only dry wood, we will make a difference."

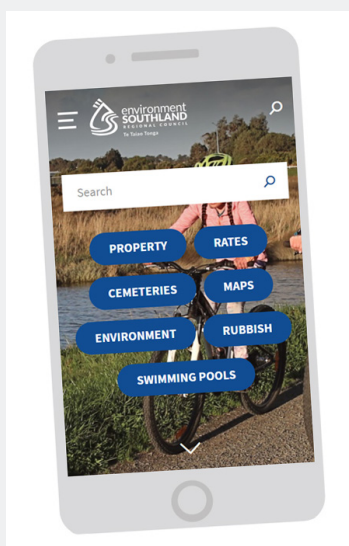
Marion says it is also not a problem that can just be fixed by organisations, it will take behaviour change by individuals and the sharing of a vision for improved health for all.

"People need to remember that we live in neighbourhoods, we live in communities and what you do to your neighbours is important, so there's a point where everybody has to take responsibility for being part of the solution."

More info

To find out more about what you can do to improve our air quality, the help available to change to a cleaner heating source and for a list of approved Good Wood suppliers, go to www.BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz

Updates



New look website

The council's website is getting a makeover to improve the user experience. Soon, it will be easier for our online visitors to find content and apply for a range of services online.

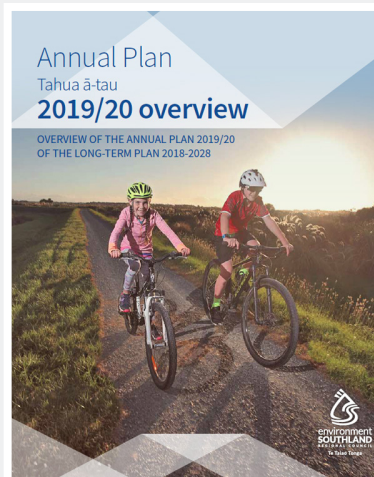
During our previous website upgrade, many people indicated they wanted to do more online, find things more easily and access information from their phones and tablets.

All this has been carried over into a modern design, which is powered by a customised template for local government organisations. It's the same solution behind a large number of other council websites across New Zealand, and a tried and tested solution that has a number of benefits.

The new website will go live over the coming weeks at www.es.govt.nz

Annual Plan 2019/20

In June, the council adopted the Annual Plan which focuses on significant issues of water quality and quantity, community resilience, and investing in Southland.



We are continuing to build on the solid research gathered from our four-year Southland science and economic projects. This data and information gives us a strong platform for our community conversations about water, and for the decisions we need to make as a community.

The overall rates increase is lower than what was forecast in our Long-term Plan. However, individual rate amounts may vary significantly this year, which is in large part due to recent QV revaluations within the Southland District Council area.

Both the Annual Plan 2019/20 and an overview document are available online at www.es.govt.nz/annual-plan.

Climate change

Councillors recently agreed that climate change needs urgent action, but decided against declaring a climate emergency.

The successful motion: Environment Southland acknowledges that climate change is an important issue which we have to engage with. The council commits to applying best practice and best science to its responsibilities and accords urgency to developing an action plan.

Those who voted in favour were: Councillors Roy, Horrell, McCallum, Cockburn, Hubber, Cook, Stevens, McPhail, Ludlow and Rodway. Councillors Guyton and Currie abstained.



An earlier motion: That the Council declares a climate emergency, was defeated 8-4. Councillors Guyton, Ludlow, Currie and Rodway voted in favour; the other councillors voted against.

Time to think about...

📅 AUGUST 2019

▶ Nodding thistle/ragwort

By now you should have completed an early winter spray for these weeds. If you missed this opportunity, an early spring application is recommended. During mid-late winter, cold temperatures and frosts restrict plant growth, meaning weed control may be less effective.

▶ Outdoor burning

A reminder that outdoor burning remains prohibited in the Invercargill and Gore airsheds until 31 August. Go to www.BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz for airshed boundaries.

▶ Farm waste

Make sure you have a plan to dispose of your farm waste, especially baleage wrap and used chemical containers. Baleage wrap cannot be burnt, but there are several options for disposal. Check out our website for more information.

▶ Rabbits

Winter is the most effective time for rabbit control before they start breeding again in spring. Check out our website for more information.

📅 SEPTEMBER 2019

▶ Gorse and broom

As we head into spring and plants are flowering, it's the ideal time for landowners to control gorse and broom on their properties. This is especially the case close to boundaries to avoid spread to neighbours.

▶ Mustelids, rats and feral cats

With the start of bird breeding season, it's essential to get good control of mustelids, feral cats and rats before they start preying on nests and vulnerable young. There are a variety of traps out there so give our biosecurity team a call for advice.

📅 OCTOBER 2019

▶ Darwin's barberry/cotoneaster

If you're heading up to your holiday home in the Manapouri/Te Anau area, it's worth keeping your eyes peeled for any signs of these nasty weeds. If you find any give us a call for advice on how to remove it.

▶ Environment Southland Community Awards

Our gala awards night will be held on 8 October 2019. This is an opportunity to recognise and reward the achievements of community groups, schools, families, individuals, businesses and farmers working to enhance our environment.

▶ Environmental Enhancement Fund

Get your application in now. This fund can assist with projects to protect and enhance indigenous biodiversity on private and community-owned land in Southland. Visit www.es.govt.nz for more information on how to apply, set and check traps for mustelids and rats.

📅 NOVEMBER 2019

▶ Firewood

Now's the perfect time to be sorting your firewood supplies for next winter. Visit www.BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz for a list of Good Wood approved suppliers.

For further advice
and information:

www.es.govt.nz

Down on the farm



By **NATHAN CRUICKSHANK** senior land sustainability officer

Most farmers will now be well into their winter grazing so it's a good time to reflect on the good management practices (GMPs) you have been implementing, and consider if there are more or improvements that could be made.

An AgResearch study carried out at Telford showed that through implementing strategic grazing up to 90% less sediment can be lost to the environment.

Strategic grazing is all about implementing the following GMPs:

- ▶ Grazing towards a waterway or critical source area and leaving as large a buffer as possible (minimum five metres). This includes grazing from the top to the bottom of slopes.
- ▶ Back fencing stock on fodder crops to ensure stock are not walking backwards and forwards over the same area of bare soil, therefore reducing compaction and potential for overland flow.
- ▶ Using transportable water troughs to reduce stock walking back and forward for the same reasons.
- ▶ Supplementary feed, such as baleage, is placed out in the fodder crop paddock before the winter grazing period starts. This avoids the use of heavy machinery in the paddock over the winter and also reduces compaction and potential for overland flow.

Implementation of GMPs around winter grazing will not only keep sediment, nutrients and fertility on your farm, but also greatly help the health of our waterways across the province.

Out in the field

Our people are no strangers to extraordinary situations as they go about looking after the region's natural resources.



▲ Science manager Elaine Moriarty gets a close-up look at a sediment trap during a field trip for the Regional Forum.



▲ Biosecurity team leader Dave Burgess assists the Hollyford Charitable Trust with their rat monitoring work in February, as part of the ongoing pest control programme.



▲ Environmental technical officer Mitchell Harvey and Yorke Excavating Ltd owner Bradley Yorke removing hydrology equipment from the Waikaka Stream at Willowbank. This site has been decommissioned and replaced by a site downstream which can provide improved water flow and water quality data.



▲ Citizen science coordinator Sam McLachlan helps a student with a clarity tube during the Enviroschools Hui held at Donovan Park earlier this year.