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Vision - To engage our communities to protect and enhance water quality now and for future generations

The last couple of months have been busy for Otago South River Care catchment groups. There have been a number of farmer field days, schools' involvement in planting days and instream health, as well as our Stakeholders Meeting. See below for more information.



Owaka Field Day

20 farmers from the Owaka area met at John Latta's property at the head of the Owaka and Waiwera Rivers. This peat bog has a QEII covenant protecting the native manuka stand. John has recently invested in a major water scheme for his sheep and beef property. The water is sourced from the spring that is at the beginning of the Owaka river.

A water test on the day showed NNN levels at over 10 times the ORC schedule 15 limit. High NNN levels coming out of native bush areas has been a concern for some time for Owaka farmers. It was decided to continue testing this "native" water so a benchmark can be developed over time. John said installing the water scheme has had a significant effect not only on stock growth rates but also drawing the stock away from the natural water courses.



Waiwera Field Day

Farmers attended the Waiwera field day on the 23rd of March. Rachel Ozane from ORC presented the results of a comprehensive study completed on the Waiwera in 2017. This showed declining water quality and habitat for micro invertebrates. This talk complemented a review of the most recent water testing results on the Waiwera. Daniel King from ORC also talked about willow control along the Waiwera river.

The farmers present and subsequently those who could not make the field day have been very proactive in their area. Sediment control over winter and spring has been highlighted as a significant concern for the area. A request to the Eco Fund to get and trial sediment fences was successful. These sediment fences have been distributed throughout the region and we all keenly await the farmers feed back as to their effectiveness.

Sandra Campbell has been very active arranging planting days with the school and a Women's Enviro Evening on 30th July at the Clinton Hall. This event has been very well received with a quality line up of speakers and a large crowd is expected.

TUESDAY 30TH JULY 2019

WOMEN'S ENVIRO EVENING

CONNECTING, INSPIRING AND EMPOWERING

Clinton Town Hall
6.30pm - 9.30pm

FREE Event | Supper | Raffles | Cash Bar

Sarah Perriam
Presenter

Penny Clark-Hall
Founder
Social Licence Consultancy

Sinead Leahy
International Capability & Training Coordinator
NZAGRC

Kate Scott
Executive Director
Landpro Limited

Janet Gregory
South Island Team Leader
NZ Landcare Trust

RSVP
by 26th July to libby@cluthanz.com



Tokomairiro / Lake Tuakitoto Field Day

A field day at Simon Davies' Toko Mouth property was attended by about 15 farmers. After a brief talk around water quality results Simon took us on a quick tour of the farm. A significant re fencing programme has allowed Simon to create riparian margins in conjunction with his forestry neighbours. The installation of sediment traps in ephemeral streams will also help water quality.

The options around possible riparian planting of low-lying drains were also discussed. This group would like to look further into the management of both private and ORC managed drains to assess options to ensure water quality is maintained or improved.

Lawrence Water Quality Evening

There was a small but engaged attendance at the Lawrence water quality night. The group is keen to have a follow up field day looking at good management practices and especially sediment control on sloping cropland.

Water Testing

In Stream Testing

22 sites have been identified to monitor water quality in the Otago South area. These sites will be monitored 3 times a year with ORC staff assisting in the collection of the samples.

So far there have been 2 rounds of sampling with water quality being much improved in the July round as compared to the March round of sampling. This is likely to be due to the cooler temperatures and increased water flows. Brian Hutton assistance in the collection of samples and delivering all samples to Citi Lab in Mosgiel is very much appreciated. Brian doing this has allowed us to test more sites more often within our budget.

Discharge Testing

Farmers have completed 300 plus discharge tests this year. The information received by farmers is invaluable. Knowing what the quality of the water is on their farm enables farmers to make management decisions to minimise their environmental impact. Encouraging farmers to continue to monitor their discharges will continue to be a focus of our project.



Community and Schools

School and community sites have been established at Tokomairiro High School, Waiwera, Waitahuna and Clutha Valley. Working with Craig Simpson of Landcare Trust, these school children have started learning about stream health in their area. Craig takes the pupils through a stream assessment sheet looking at the streams habitat, chemistry and macroinvertebrates to get an overall score. It is intended to monitor the stream health 2-3 times during the year.

The schools also planted native riparian plants as they start to restore their streams. It is awesome to see the children engaged in assessing their streams and then taking ownership with their planting. We will continue to look to identify other spots to work with schools and local communities throughout the region.



Stakeholders Meeting

A follow up stakeholders meeting was held in June 2019. This meeting was well attended with lead farmers and other non farming stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to update the projects progress to date and discuss our next steps. Each sub catchment area got together to plan their next event. This resulted in most areas having a field day and getting schools interacting with their waterways.

The development of a good management practices poster was also progressed during this meeting. A brain storming session came up with short phrases for inclusion in the Good Management Practices poster. Our new poster concentrates on the areas the greatest gains can be made with supporting visual pictures. Look out for the poster being delivered in the coming months.

Everybody agreed the project was progressing well and as we gain momentum Good Management Practices will become standard practice and our rivers water quality will improve.

Subscription Renewal

Annual Subscription is valid from 1 July to 30 June each year
Annual Fee: \$280 + GST (per farmer)

Invoices for the 2019-20 year will be sent to current members over the next month. If you are not already a member and would like to join, please get in touch



Get in touch

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Otago South River Care

