# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22



# **Combined message** from the Chair/Project Lead

# WELCOME

Welcome to the 2021-22 Thriving Southland Annual Report. This Report provides an overview of the projects, events, activities and much more that Thriving Southland has enabled, supported or led.

There has been significant progress in the second year of Thriving Southland, with Catchment Groups building momentum, creating projects, accessing funding support, connecting with each other and in-catchment, and accessing compelling data and science that deliver outcomes for better decision-making.

Thank you to the Southland Catchment Groups, the Thriving Southland Board and the Thriving Southland team, who have helped create the momentum that is generating unprecedented change on the ground. We also want to thank Ministry of Primary Industries for their support and flexibility around funding that has helped the momentum gained to date.

This year has, as with year one, been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, limiting meetings, Group events and opportunities. The catchment communities have been remarkably resilient through this time and managed to maintain their connections and focus on the projects they have been driving.

In year one the number of Catchment Groups **increased from 18 to 27**, and in year two from **27 to 32 groups**, covering **90%** of Southland's productive land.

Projects that started in year one, significantly progressed, with the focus turning to extension and sharing the outcomes with their communities.

The ground-up approach has meant Groups have taken ownership of their projects, ensuring they deliver meaningful results. There has also been greater engagement across Groups as they share their learnings and see others develop projects that they can relate to.

Just two examples of the significant work by Catchment Groups include the Wendonside Understanding Land and Water to Effect Change and the Hedgehope Makarewa Winter Crop Cultivation trial projects.

#### Wendonside Understanding Land and Water to Effect Change

#### The Wendonside Catchment Group engaged Land & Water Science to understand the physiography of their catchment landscape.

The project covers the entire 27,000-hectare catchment of Wendonside and provides findings at a paddock scale that will help farmers to make future environmental decisions on their property based on prioritised risks, with good science they understand and have confidence in.

The physiographic science will use radiometric and satellite layers to better conceptualise the variability in nutrient losses from the catchment, the surface and groundwater quality and the timing of the aquifer recharge. This will enable farmers and rural professionals to design a strategic response plan for mitigating losses.

With the help of Macroinvertebrate Community Index (MCI) testing they will be able to put in place long-term mitigation strategies for the catchment and at farm level.



#### Hedgehope Makarewa Winter Crop Cultivation trial projects

The Hedgehope Makarewa Catchment Group embarked on a project that became something seriously impressive – looking at cropping trials across eleven farms and using an army of volunteers.

They worked with a range of stakeholders, including the Southern Dairy Hub to help highlight the diversity of practices on farms across the region and demonstrate that there are many factors that affect winter grazing outcomes.

You can read more on the Thriving Southland website, but in summary, after collating thousands of data points, the most significant learning was that the daily management of grazing stock had the greatest impact on soil damage, rather than soil type and crop establishment methods.

It highlighted that having a winter grazing plan, with planned crop husbandry and stock management, supported the best wintering successes. Farmers who carefully assessed their own situation, adapted what they did as conditions changed, and had good systems in place, had the best outcomes. However, the study also found that there was no silver bullet, and there was no clear 'best alternative' to conventional cultivation.

Thank you and enjoy reading.

Jeff Grant (Board Chair) and Richard Kyte (Project Lead)





Thriving Southland and other stakeholders are working with Catchment Groups to Support farmers in navigating the upcoming regulations and future challenges. Farmers are trying to get ahead of the issues, participating in events and projects to develop localised responses that reflect their expertise and experience.

# A FEW OF OUR HIGHLIGHTS:

# EVENTS

Over the year, Catchment Groups have had opportunities to attend events and engage with speakers covering everything from understanding greenhouse gases, farm planning workshops, composting field day, stream walks, and pest control workshops. All events have been well attended.

- » A highlight event was Matt Chisholm speaking about his journey and overall wellbeing across two evenings in November 2021.
- The Catchment Group Leader's Forum was moved to an evening meeting in October 2021 with a refreshed format that proved to be popular.
- Two leadership workshops were held on strategy and leadership in December 2021 and effective meetings and engagement in February 2022.
- The Annual General Meeting on 10 November 2021 included guest speakers Anna Campbell and John Rodwell, sharing their thoughts on the world of consumerdriven change and how farming in Southland can respond to this.



# RESOURCES

With the help of Scarlatti, we have collected a range of data that helps substantiate the outcomes and measures for the overall project.

The Year 2 Thriving Southland Annual Survey, captured valuable insights from Catchment Groups, farmers and rural professionals around their experience and expectations of Thriving Southland.

Pragmatica were also engaged to deliver a case study with a focus on how the Change and Innovation Project has enabled change on the ground in year two.

Work continues on the Catchment Group individual water quality literature brochures, with delivery dependent on the availability of science staff to review material for accuracy.

The Information Hub, a key outcome in the first year for farmers, was updated to reflect useful online links to important information, tools and resources.



# SUPPORTING BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

As part of the Social Science work, we launched a behaviour change campaign "Give it a Go" to motivate, inspire, acknowledge and celebrate action on the ground by Catchment Groups and farmers.

Based on the philosophy of the Cane Changer Project in Australia, the "Give it a Go" campaign has the intention to help farmers see the value in what they are doing, encouraging them to do more and start new projects to make a difference.

#### CHECK OUT THE STATS -25 APRIL - 13 JUNE

Give it a Go achieved significant engagement across several channels.

Over **1000 impressions** on Facebook, with a Click-through rate (CTR) of **1.78%** (well above the industry standard of 0.89%).

And a further almost **100,000 impressions** and CTRs of **0.33%** (above national average of 0.07%) through Otago Daily Times, and a CTR of **0.26%** (above average of 0.09%) for Stuff / Newshub/Southland Times.



# ON THE GROUND SUPPORT

Providing on-the-ground support has been invaluable to enable Catchment Group meetings and events which bring people together with a common goal to inform and connect people.

Over the year there have been

# 156

catchment meetings and events with

> 2,657 attendees.

# FUNDING SUPPORT

Total funding approved for

# **41 PROJECTS**

for Year 2 came to

\$623,015

#### INFORMATION DELIVERY

Communications has again been a very strong component of Thriving Southland and Southland's Catchment Groups. Communications channels launched in the first year are now well embedded, including the newsletter, website, regular radio interviews and social media, as well as multiple campaigns driven through geotargeted social channels (Southland Times, ODT, Facebook, google).

The website shares information with Catchment Groups and farmers, and engagement in the site has grown significantly through the year. To maximise the usefulness of the site; the projects section of the website was created to better promote the large range of projects now in action, the Information Hub was reformatted to make finding useful tools and information easier and the homepage was redesigned for quick and effective engagement.



A Thriving Southland promotional video was produced, celebrating and showcasing Catchment Group progress and achievements. It was shared widely across Southland via social media, digital advertising and existing channels to promote the commitment Southland communities have to creating positive change. A Southland-wide flyer drop also promoted Thriving Southland, local Catchment Groups and events.

A range of targeted campaigns also took place, including promoting events, competitions, the updated Information Hub, videos and project results.



# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Minister of Agriculture Damien O'Connor visited Southland twice through this period, once in August 2021 and again in January 2022. He was able to meet the Thriving Southland Board and engage with farmers involved in projects and talk to a mixed group of farmers and rural professionals to discuss their sector concerns.

We have happily shared information with numerous organisations throughout New Zealand.

Our focus on stakeholder engagement and building strong relationships remains a priority. We established six weekly catch-up meetings with Te Ao Mārama Inc and Environment Southland, to create opportunities for collaboration and keep communication lines open.



Farmers see Thriving Southland as a **trusted entity**. Local Government agencies recognise they have compliance and information roles and can be viewed more as regulators. Therefore, farmers are more likely to consider information from Thriving Southland as more independent and trustworthy. They get the same information from Thriving, but because they're seen as independent and **farmers supporting farmers**, it's a big plus and that information tends to be trusted. (*Stakeholder interviewee*)

# **Internal Setup**







Jeff Grant

Independent Chair

Kate Scott

Vice Chair

Richard Kyte

**Project Lead** 

#### **Board of Directors**

Bernadine Balle-Guilleux (Independent) Neil Gardyne Paul Marshall Ewen Mathieson Jonathan Pemberton Lynden Prebble John White

#### **Operational Structure**

(with linkage to Governance and Funder)



# **Thriving Southland's purpose is to**

# INSPIRE COMMUNITY ACTION

Thriving Southland is underpinned by its values.

At Thriving Southland we do...



**Brilliant** 

Brilliant is facing our challenges head on, being prepared to work hard for success, and always celebrating our achievements.



Collaborative

Our best collaboration comes from being honest, acting with integrity, and being prepared to learn from others. Through collaboration we will deliver results.



#### Community

Community is at the centre of everything we do. Our success comes from connecting others, and empowering communities to thrive for the future of our children.



#### Inspiration

We will inspire greatness through our passion. Our passion for Southland and its communities is at the heart of who we are.



#### Solutions

We encourage innovation, foster opportunity and seek outcomes through on the ground action.

Catchment Group members maintained that Thriving Southland "adds a **much more professional side** to catchment groups without taking them over."

# **Catchment Projects**

Total number of projects approved for Year 2:

41

Total funding approved for projects for Year 2:

\$623,015

#### Breakdown of categories of projects approved

MAJOR	Small category 1	Small category 2
6	(<\$5k): 1	(\$5-10k): 34

Major projects have ranged from using science to understand the landscape to help make decisions around farm systems and land use, to implementing wetlands, to on grass wintering trials.

The smaller projects included a wintering tour, biodiversity speaker and a recycling workshop. The wellbeing and operational grants have also helped enable the Groups throughout the year. Another small project (category 1) included understanding international farming communities and if English as a second language impacts on good management practices.

# UNDERSTANDING THE LAND TO DRIVE CHANGE

Working alongside Land & Water Science, the Hedgehope Makarewa Catchment Group is using science and local knowledge to understand how variation in landscape characteristics drives water quality outcomes. They are using radio metrics to create high-resolution hydrological layers to help landowners understand their catchment and develop practical solutions by identifying and understanding the flow path of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbes from the landscape to waterways. They are getting the information to farmers, growers and landowners through an online tool in order to make future environmental decisions with good science they can understand and have confidence in.

#### UNDERSTANDING AND IMPROVING THE CATCHMENT WITH WETLAND DEVELOPMENT

This project focused on understanding the Between the Domes catchment through a Catchment Landholder Survey to establish key contacts and property info, land use, waterbodies, wetlands, riparian vegetation, flora and fauna, and nutrient management in the catchment.

They are working with NIWA and local farmers to locate and design wetlands and create sediment/nutrient capture structures for the most cost-effective environmental effect. This will be summarised into a booklet detailing the catchment.

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# THE WELLNESS GRANT

The Grant, that provided \$500 to each Catchment Group to spend on an initiative to support wellness, proved to be extremely successful. How the grant was used was up to each Catchment Group and it supported events to bring people together, e.g. BBQ. Several Groups brought in speakers, such as the Yolo Farmer and Matt Chisholm. It also led to a collaborative Catchment Group and Thriving Southland Christmas Competition that featured on the TV programme Seven Sharp in December 2021.

#### PROJECTS NOT FUNDED BY THE CHANGE AND INNOVATION PROJECT

- In collaboration with Land and Water Science we won the Agmardt Food and Fibres Aotearoa NZ Challenge
- 2. We were also invited by the Southland business community to take part in the Just Transition programme looking at opportunities in the region for when/if the Tiwai Aluminium Smelter closes. With funding from Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment we are leading a research project within the Land Use workstream.



Thriving has a much better knowledge of what's happening overall in the region, [and] we've [previously] perhaps not been able to get that information out into the wider community in a way that they pick up on it. I've seen that Thriving's been really successful in that space. They were also very instrumental in **getting farmers to take the lead** so catchment groups are doing their own science. They're so empowered by that you know? They're getting out there, they're seeing what's happening in their catchment and then they're making changes as a result of that. And that's not funding that we would ever be able to make available for something like that. *(Stakeholder interviewee)* 

# Science

Central to Thriving Southland's purpose is understanding the science and information that Southland's Catchment Groups and farmers seek to help them make informed decisions. As a result, during year two Thriving Southland commissioned the following:

#### **ANNUAL SURVEY**

A survey was conducted in February 2022. The results showed what is happening on Southland farms, what Catchment Groups want and how Thriving Southland can work with farmers, their communities and stakeholders to help support the on-going health of Southland's people and environment.

#### SOCIAL SCIENCE: BEHAVIOUR CHANGE CAMPAIGN

Give it a Go campaign recognises the great work of Catchment Groups (thanks for giving it a go), motivates and encourages others to start (give it a go) and promotes how Thriving Southland can support projects (we helped you give it a go).

#### MEASURES

Scarlatti, working with the Thriving Southland team, created a monitoring and evaluation toolkit - a suite of data collection tools to assist in consistent and effective data collection. This was passed onto Catchment Groups at the Leaders Forum.

#### SOCIAL SCIENCE TOPICS TO COORDINATORS AND LEADERS

Work with Catchment Coordinators and Groups to develop a shared understanding of social science. Delivered "how to make online meetings great" for catchment group leaders during the time when there were many Covid interruptions.

#### WATER QUALITY LIT REVIEW BROCHURES

A breakdown from the Science Report (Literature Review) to provide each catchment with their own targeted report.

# **Independent** evaluation

Thriving Southland commissioned Pragmatica Limited to capture learnings from their activities with Catchment Groups funded through the Change and Innovation Project. The case study focused on the Catchment Groups projects and events they organised to support the farming community to respond to the regulatory, environmental and economic pressures they face.



It found that Thriving Southland plays a critical role in providing 'backbone support' to the Catchment Groups, and that Catchment Groups were providing increased support for farmers.

#### The key learnings identified that many **farmers** want to make a positive difference to the environment and in their farming production.

It found that Thriving Southland and Catchment Groups are working together to enable farmers to "identify the at-risk areas and how [they] can mitigate some of these issues." With the help of Thriving Southland, Catchment Groups can respond to localised environmental issues and make informed decisions that reflect their mutual needs and goals.

#### In summary:

- » Catchment Groups are accessing funds to carry out valuable projects and the capacity of Catchment Groups is building
- » Access to science is a catalyst to informing good farming practice and management
- » Farmers are gaining knowledge and skills to drive positive change, improving their farming management practices and taking proactive steps toward farming for the future
- » Catchment Groups are building farmer resilience, supporting positive wellbeing and helping build a greater sense of community and shared purpose
- » Catchment Groups are building wider relationships: working with Māori helps socialise iwi values; working with scientists, local government, and other farmers helps embed sustainable change.

# Catchment Management -Tools & Support

Thriving Southland is all about enabling and supporting, listening and creating action. A key way to supporting these outcomes is through connecting and empowering our Catchment Groups. This often takes the form of events, information sharing and training.

Over the year, Catchment Groups have had opportunities to attend events and engage with speakers covering everything from understanding greenhouse gases, farm planning workshops, composting field day, stream walks, and pest control workshops. All events have been well attended.

A highlight event was Matt Chisholm speaking about his journey and overall wellbeing across two evenings in November 2021. The Annual General Meeting on 10 November 2021 included guest speakers Anna Campbell and John Rodwell, sharing their thoughts on the world of consumer-driven change and how farming in Southland can respond to this. The Catchment Group Leader's Forum was moved to an evening meeting in October 2021 with a refreshed format that proved to be popular.

We supported training with two leadership workshops on strategy and leadership in December 2021 and effective meetings and engagement in February 2022.

These trainings and support are enhanced by on-the-ground field days and targeted learning activities, such as workshops on propagation, planting and maintenance of native plants through to Catchment Group winter grazing farm visits.

We have also promoted events, activities and where to find key information through a flyer delivered to all of rural Southland.

Finally, in year 2, a focus was put on using the website as a key portal for useful project and Catchment Group information, as well as providing more access to resources, and a wider range of information through The Information Hub.



Having the **Support with the science** and the evidence, the data to make sure we go in the right direction and spend the money in the right place (is critical) (*Catchment Group member*)

# ENGAGING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Building strong, resilient and lasting relationships with people passionate about Southland, farming and the environment was a key focus for the Thriving Southland team in year 2.

This included, Minister O'Connor visiting Southland and engaging with Thriving Southland in August 2021 and January 2022.

Thriving Southland secured funding through the AGMARDT Aotearoa New Zealand Food & Fibres Challenge for breaking new ground in the drive towards a zero-carbon economy. The award of \$498,000 funds this joint initiative between the rural community, Thriving Southland and local environmental consultancy Land and Water Science, with the additional support of local regional authorities, industry bodies and rural professionals. The project will develop and trial a new model that provides scientific landscape data aimed to inform carbon and water quality solutions that meet government sanctioned environmental targets. It involves farmers working directly with scientists to deliver a valuable tool that will benefit rural communities across New Zealand.



# JUST TRANSITION PROJECT

Thriving Southland is leading the Land Use Workstream for the Just Transition programme to provide opportunities for the sector. There are three research projects:

- 1. Identify food and fibre growth opportunities to grow higher value crops and products to improve regional resilience
- 2. Totara Pilot: build a model for native species by establishing a Southland Totara forestry plantation
- 3. Create a model for a regional green waste economy; model and pilot facilities to fully utilise Southland's green waste.

# Thriving Southland Communications Activities

Thriving Southland's communications channels have gone from strength to strength.

It is a well-established brand, recognised across Southland and further afield (based on enquiries and engagement from farmers, Catchment Groups and stakeholders outside Southland).

A redesigned website, videos, a popular monthly newsletter, targeted radio advertisements, regular radio interviews, strong organic and paid social media presence, cost-effective geo-targeted digital advertising campaigns, and an array of positive coverage in the media has helped position Thriving Southland and Catchment Groups as key players.

#### KEY COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES I JULY 2021- 31 JUNE 2022

#### NEWSLETTER:

By June 2022, **1225** people received the newsletter every month, achieving well over industry norm open and click rates (**5.4% click rate** compared to 2.94% industry norm).

A special Christmas edition newsletter celebrating the Christmas competition was sent to **1115** recipients with a **49% open rate** (industry average is 23%).

#### FACEBOOK

Facebook campaigns have been particularly successful, resulting in more than **2436 link clicks** and **462,109 impressions**, regularly achieving click through rates (CTR) of more than **1.5%**; industry norm is 0.89%. Average CTR for Thriving Southland campaigns stands at **1.79%**.



#### MARKETING:

A range of targeted digital marketing campaigns took place throughout the year (Southland Times/ Stuff, Newshub, Otago Daily Times, NZ Herald) to raise awareness of Thriving Southland and to promote the Beyond Regulation video, our Give it a Go campaign, the Information Hub, our events, leadership workshops, the 2021 Thriving Southland video, the Wintering trial project and Southern Women.

#### **WEBSITE**:

With targeted digital campaigns to drive people the website and to specific project, information or campaign pages, it is great to see high engagement in the site. Website visits averaged at over **1379 visits a month** or **15,253 visits** over the course of the year.

The most visited pages in 2021-22 were the Go Ahead campaign, AgMardt Beyond Regulation project and the Catchment Groups pages.



#### PODCASTS:

Two podcasts were recorded and aired on interest. co.nz and through Thriving Southland channels.



#### RADIO:

Regular interviews on The Muster - also shared on social media and the Thriving Southland website. The Muster is a destination show and the only local farming show on radio in Southland with an actively engaged audience for that hour.

#### **MEDIA**:

Stuff =

Over the year there have been a great range of stories across multiple publications and media channels; from TV, to radio, print and online. There has been a minimum of four stories a month, including Seven Sharp coverage of the Christmas competition.

#### DIRECT MAIL:

12,300 copies of a Thriving Southland flyer was delivered end March 2022





# **Statement of Service Performance**

Thriving Southland supports and enables the community to create and lead innovations that build community wellbeing, environmental improvements and education and research across rural – and in many cases urban - communities. It all helps build the movement towards change in agriculture and farming.

We do this by supporting Catchment Groups with funding for their projects, their meetings and events that bring people together.

Thriving Southland also invests in useful and targeted data-led science, modelling and case studies for increased learning and knowledge across Southland's agricultural sector.

We use a range of different communication channels, including a strong focus on collaboration, to ensure information, tools, advice and learnings are shared between rural and urban communities.

	2021-2022	2020-2021
<b>Projects</b> Projects have ranged from small projects, where the objectives were to support engagement and operational enablement, through to events with high-calibre speakers and larger projects looking at implementing wetlands, on grass wintering trials and looking at the science of catchment land use capability.	<ul> <li>¥1 projects approved</li> </ul>	» 39 projects approved_
<b>Community Wellbeing</b> Enabling and supporting catchment group meetings and events which bring people together with a common goal and to inform and connect people.	<ul> <li>» 156 catchment meetings and events</li> <li>» Total attendance of 2,657</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>» 121 catchment meetings and events</li> <li>» Total attendance of 1,644</li> </ul>
Education and Learning Providing science reports, information, tools and workshops to Catchment Groups that enables informed decisions.	<ul> <li>Workshops x 16</li> <li>Catchment Group Leader Forums x 2</li> <li>Water Quality literature brochures for each catchment</li> <li>Wintering plan tool updated</li> <li>Stream Health Monitoring Plan for Catchment Groups</li> <li>Information Hub updated to provide focused farmer advice</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>» Information hub providing farmer advice</li> <li>» Southland water quality science report</li> <li>» Science report that covers each catchment</li> <li>» Wintering plan tool</li> <li>» Catchment Group Leader Forums x 2</li> <li>» Workshops x 8</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b> Different channels set up to effectively communicate with catchment members, communities and stakeholders.	<ul> <li>» Facebook engagement 7% (NZ Avg 0.18%)</li> <li>» Monthly newsletter 1,217 subscribe with open rate of 41% (industry avg 23%)</li> <li>» Monthly (unique) Webpage visits 2,529</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>» Facebook engagement 6% (NZ avg 4.16%)</li> <li>» Monthly newsletter 900 subscribe with open rate of 35% (industry avg 25%)</li> <li>» Monthly (unique) Webpage visits 2,230</li> </ul>

# **Financials**

#### **Full Financial Statements**

The full audited Performance Report for the year ending 30 June 2022 for Thriving Southland have been summarised for this Annual Report.

The Performance Report has been prepared in accordance with Tier 3 PBE Accounting Standards: PBE SFR-A (NFP) Public Benefit Entity Simple Reporting - Accrual (Not-for-Profit) on the basis that it does not have public accountability and has total expenses of equal to or less than \$2,000,000 in the previous financial year.

The full Performance Report has been audited and were authorised for issue on 24 October 2022.

This summarised financial report has not been audited and may not contain sufficient information for a full understanding of the financial position of Thriving Southland, but copies of the full Performance Report and the auditors report can be obtained from the Thriving Southland Office or from the Charities Services website following the AGM.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE	2022	2021
Income		
Ministry for Primary Industries Grant	1,833,771	2,305,747
Agmardt Contract Income	150,629	
MBIE Contract Income (Just Transitions)	39,251	
Interest	664	140
Total Income	2,024,315	2,305,887
Expenses		
Catchment Projects - MPI Funding	872,302	827,093
Agmardt Project	151,748	-
Just Transitions Project	39,251	-
Catchment Management	381,760	374,508
Applied Science	63,000	186,487
Communications	93,072	159,416
Stakeholder Engagement	16,586	31,321
Governance	107,580	124,981
Staff and Management	295,873	284,716
Planning and Project Management	45,494	123,538
Administration	179,564	194,987
Total Expenses	2,246,230	2,307,047
Net Deficit	-221,916	-1,161
FINANCIAL POSITION		
Current Assets	1,006,345	970,221
Current Liabilities	1,229,421	971,382
Net Assets	-223,076	-1,161

#### 2022 Expenses



