Funding Criteria for
Wetland Development Projects

Sept 2026

Background

Environment Southland confirmed a community grant to Thriving Southland to support delivery of wetland projects across Southland.

This funding is designed to support initiatives that not only improve the state of freshwater in the region but also build knowledge and foster community involvement in environmental stewardship.

Applying for Wetland Development Project Funding through Thriving Southland

Thriving Southland invites applications for funding from Southland Catchment Groups and/or individuals for impactful projects of varying sizes and time periods, up to June 2028.

Projects will be supported at property and catchment scale that advance environmental initiatives such as constructed wetlands and/or restoration, riparian planting, sediment traps, biodiversity enhancement and related activities. These projects should empower community engagement, enhance understanding of environmental issues and align with the principle of "the right mitigation in the right place."

Note that Thriving Southland can provide resources through its Catchment Coordinators to assist with your project and application.

All applications submitted to Thriving Southland, will be reviewed for approval by an independent Project Panel managed by Thriving Southland.

Eligibility Criteria

Project Type:

- **Wetland and Riparian Development Projects ($10k or less)**:
    - Focus on riparian planting, wetland restoration and creation, sediment trap construction, biodiversity enhancement and related activities.
    - Must address an identified environmental issue, supported by science summaries and include a maintenance strategy.
    - Where appropriate projects in areas with high nitrate levels in groundwater will be encouraged but not an exclusive criterion. Projects outside these areas will still be supported where they are well aligned with eligibility criteria.

- **In addition, for Projects over $10k:**
    - The project must be part of a catchment-agreed initiative combining the types of initiatives above or one that includes wintering, buffers, and fertiliser application strategies.
    - Preference for integrated plans that target multiple areas (e.g., multiple wetlands or sediment traps, biodiversity enhancement).

Project Impact:

- Demonstrate a high-value catchment mitigation, particularly for projects proposed by individuals.
- Projects should showcase actions that improve freshwater quality and contribute to broader environmental understanding.

Collaboration and Co-funding:

- Applications that include co-funding, which may be in the form of in-kind contributions (e.g., digger time) are preferred.
- Projects should ideally be collaborative, working through the catchment group model to allow flexibility and community engagement.
- Sharing of data and learnings from project to promote broader community knowledge and understanding.

Funding Exclusions:

- Funding is restricted to projects within the Southland region.
- Retrospective funding (for costs incurred prior to the application and its acceptance).
- Resource consenting costs.
- Carrying out activities that are required by legislation or the Southland Land and Water Plan unless the Project Panel believes there is merit in assisting an activity.
- Any project cost, activity or deliverable already funded by Environment Southland.
- Projects by agricultural levy bodies, commercial contractors, local government, and council funded organisations unless they are participants with a catchment group in the project.
- Commercial trials or Intellectual Property development.

To ensure the greatest impact, projects should demonstrate alignment with these criteria and contribute to the overall goals of enhancing freshwater quality and environmental understanding in the Southland region.

Health and Safety

Why do we need to consider health and safety?
Everyone shares responsibility for health and safety. Getting people home safely at the end of each day is the most important reason for considering health and safety. "***Healthy people…from the mountains to the sea***" is a key component of Thriving Southland's vision and critical to the catchment groups and Southland community. This is not just about physical risks or dangers, it includes ensuring the wellness of those involved.

What do we need to know?
When you are applying for funding support from Thriving Southland it is important that you tell us how you will meet our vision of "**healthy people**" as part of your application. The amount of information we will require depends on the nature of your funding request.

If your event is lower risk, think about the activities you do, what can go wrong and what you will do to manage this. Identify the actions you need to take to manage health and safety and assign roles and responsibilities (for example, give someone the role of bringing a first aid kit, or making sure there is access to toilets).

If you are undertaking a bigger project, we will need to know that you have a health and safety management plan in place. Although you may not have a legal responsibility for health and safety under the Act, it still plays an important part in engaging, communicating and consulting with, and ensuring co-operation between the others who will influence health and safety outcomes and may have duties under the Act. It is therefore important that you manage health and safety as part of your activity.

If you need help with your health and safety management plan there are a lot of freely available resources (see below). It does not have to be complicated and Thriving Southland can also help by obtaining specialist assistance where required (cost would need to be included in project budget/funding request).

Helpful Resources
https://beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub/PDF/farm-safety-management-system.pdf
https://www.dairynz.co.nz/resources/people/
https://worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/agriculture/

Funding Application Form for Wetland Development Projects

Please complete the following form regardless of the application value, taking into account the above funding criteria for projects under $10,000 and projects over $10,000

Note that applicants will not be paid directly but Thriving Southland will handle the payment of approved project expenditure on behalf of the applicant. Please contact Thriving Southland if assistance is needed scoping your project or completing this form. We have Catchment Coordinators ready to assist you.

1. APPLICANT DETAILS

Organisation/Applicant Name		
Organisation/Applicant Purpose		
Organisation/Property Status (Company/Incorporated Society/No legal status)		
Address for Service		
	Contact Person	**Alternative Contact**
Role		
Postal Address		
Physical Address		
Phone (Landline)		
Phone (Mobile)		
E-mail		
Signature		

Other individuals/catchment members supporting the application	
Name	**Address and Phone**

Do you have a Farm Environmental Management Plan (FEMP) or Freshwater Farm Plan (FWFP)? ***(please circle one)***		
Have one	Actively developing	Not yet commenced

2. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name
Objectives of the Project
Project Description *(please provide map (google earth) of project area and/or photos and a planting plan if applicable)*
Expected Outcomes - Include extension of the project - *what environmental outcomes you are looking to achieve with this project.*
Please provide the estimated area (in hectares) that will be restored, created, or enhanced through this project.

Project Start Date		**Project Finish Date**	

Total Funds Sought GST exclusive *(please include a breakdown of costs ie fencing, planting, earthworks and attach quotes)*
Likely Amount & Timing of Funds Sought from Thriving Southland by Month
Are other funds currently being sought? *Please advise details of other funding applications/sources. (note: projects already funded or approved for funding through Environment Southland are excluded).*
Co-funding Yes/No?

If yes – Who and $$ amount? Confirmed, Tentative or Applied?
In-kind support Yes/No? **If yes – Who and estimated $$ amount? Confirmed, Tentative or Applied?**
Any contracted resources for the Project Yes/No? **If yes – please provide contract details**
What other Resources are required?
Will the Project be at a level of activity that requires a consent and/or a specific Health & Safety plan? *(project must comply with all legal criteria such as ES consents and H&S legislation – please advise if you have consulted with ES and/or if project requires a specific health and safety management plan and provide details)*

Project Specifics – as relates to the Eligibility Criteria (complete where applicable and to a level that is in proportion to the level of funding being sought)
1. Advance environmental initiatives - property (What is the identified environmental issue and describe how the project improves the environment at property scale?)
2. Advance environmental initiatives - catchment (Describe how the project improves the environment at catchment scale – *state the catchment area size)*
3. Enhancing freshwater quality (How does this project contribute to the overall goal of enhancing freshwater quality?)
4. Right mitigation in the right place (What science summaries/information supports that this project will result in mitigations in the right location to bring about improved environmental outcomes). Attach science information to application.
5. Maintenance (Outline the strategy for maintenance for the mitigation/structure once this project is completed).

6. Collaboration (How will this project be collaborative and connect in with the local catchment group and other stakeholders?)
7. Community Engagement (Describe how this project will encourage community engagement and the understanding of environmental issues and how this will be shared and promoted to the broader community).
8. Catchment agreed initiative (projects over $10k) (How is this project part of a catchment agreed initiative, does it target multiple areas eg. multiple wetlands or sediment traps or biodiversity enhancement?)
9. Ability to deliver (Provide confidence that the applicant/catchment group can deliver on this project).
10. Risk Identification and Mitigation (Identify any significant risks to the project failing to meet its objectives and what risk mitigations might be possible).
11. Success (Describe a successful project outcome. How can the success of the project be evaluated in both the short and longer term?)
12. Value for money (The cost of the project is in proportion to the significance of the changes being sought).
13. Reporting (How and when will you let Thriving Southland know about the progress and outcomes of the project).
14. Healthy People (Describe how health and safety risks will be identified and managed for the project).

Further Information you wish to provide in support of the Application

Disclosure of any potential of perceived conflicts of interest in the project with members of the catchment group *(e.g. – proposed consultant is a niece of a catchment group member)*

Declaration:

We/I declare that the information provided in this funding application is true and correct to the best of our/my knowledge.

We/I fully understand that any funding approved can only be used for the project as outlined in this application and agreed upon by Thriving Southland.

Thriving Southland will not be responsible for any additional expenditure that goes beyond the amount approved for funding for this project.

If at the completion of a project the total cost is under the total funding that was approved for the project, we/I recognise that the funds will be retained by Thriving Southland.

Applicants will not be paid directly for the funding allocated for a project. Thriving Southland will handle the payment of approved project expenditure on behalf of the applicant.

Receipts, invoices and other evidence of expenditure will be checked to ensure that the funding allocated has been spent on the approved project, before direct payment by Thriving Southland.

We understand it is appropriate to acknowledge that our group project has received funding from the Environment Southland and Thriving Southland Wetland Development Project Funding when profiling the project in public forums.

Signed:
Name: **Date:**
For:

Return Completed Application to Thriving Southland:

Richard Kyte	Project Lead	richard@thrivingsouthland.co.nz
Sandra King	Project Manager	sandra.king@thrivingsouthland.co.nz