

Makarewa Headwaters Catchment Group

SEPTEMBER 2021

Newsletter



Ministerial visit with Damien O'Conner and delegates from MPI and Thriving Southland, Frew Farm, August 2021

Welcome to Spring 2021!

Well, we survived another (very wet) Winter, and somehow, we are into another Spring with the 2021/22 season upon us.

The catchment group continues to go from strength to strength. Over the past couple of months, we have had made some fantastic connections and grown our community following. Our facebook page has had over 60 new followers through August, and continues to grow with some recent events forming significant interest in our group.

Ministerial visit with Damien O'Conner

Thanks to Thriving Southland, members from our catchment group were given the opportunity to meet with the Minister for Agriculture last month. Alongside members of the Thriving Southland team, we met with the minister and his team at the Frew's property. The visit was very positive and politics aside, all who attended thoroughly enjoyed the insights from the Minister. Topics covered included his outlook of the industry; overseas markets, consumer trends and fresh water regulation. He was particularly interested in how our group was formed at provided some thoughts regarding future direction. Dan and Brett were fantastic hosts, highlighting some exciting new winter grazing techniques they are trialing on their property.

We prepared a document for the visitors, available here:

[MHCGinfoforMinisterialVisit13.8.21.pdf \(thrivingsouthland.co.nz\)](#)

The Great Gorge Clean Up

A bit of lockdown fun for the community via our facebook community.

The challenge gained significant momentum, shared far and wide. Thanks to a share to the NZ farming page, one of the facebook posts had over 40,000 interactions!

A huge thanks to Vet South who kindly donated some goodies for prizes! Well done to everyone who took part in the challenge.

Congratulations to our Winners!



Most Rubbish collected: Ryan, Harpur & Callum McKenzie, and Lilly Watkinson



Repurposed items: The Thorne family



Unique finds: Sarah Thorne & Thorburn family

MAKAREWA HEADWATERS CATCHMENT GROUP

The Great Gorge Clean Up

LOOKING FOR A FAMILY LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE? GATHER THE TROOPS AND HEAD OUT TO CLEAN UP YOUR ROADSIDES.

#solutionnotpollution
Post your entries using the hashtag to be in to win!

WITH SPOT PRIZES THANKS TO
VetSouth

1. Most rubbish collected by a family
2. Most unique find
3. Best repurposed rubbish item

ENTRIES CLOSE 12TH SEPTEMBER 2021



Awesome rubbish collectors: George Poole; Lexie, Charlie & Harriet Frew; Lydia & Florence Prankerd

LUCI-Ag project update from Anna Frampton

(LUCI-Ag project coordinator & Catchment Group member)

Things are well underway with the Catchment's LUCI-Ag project now that funding has been secured from Thriving Southland and initial information has been collected.

The modelling study is being carried out by Ravensdown Environmental and will model and help to identify N, P and sediment loss pathways and hotspots within the Makarewa Headwaters catchment. It will also explore mitigation options and scenarios to guide mitigation prioritisation and decision making.

Last month the catchment leaders successfully recruited six farms of different farming types from across the catchment to be involved. Ravensdown Environmental then met with the participating farmers during farm visits and collected data to inform the study. This information will be used in conjunction with hydrogeological and environmental data and individual farm modelling is currently underway.

Once the individual farms have been modelled, next steps include the modelling of the nutrient hotspots and pathways for the catchment and catchment wide mitigation strategies.

There will be a public field day in November when the study has concluded to share the findings and for everyone to learn more about our catchment. This project will provide valuable insights for individual farms as well as the catchment as a whole.

Thriving Southland promotional video

Dan Frew and Alexis Wadworth, along with some other Southland farmers, had the opportunity to speak to what our catchment group and Thriving Southland means to us. Check it out here; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxvpDB-S54M&feature=youtu.be>

Update from Margie Ruddenklau

(Southland District Councilor & Catchment Group member)

On the 15th I'm presenting to council on Rubbish in our open spaces.

- On waste in our open spaces, roadsides, rivers, etc
- I have spoken to many people and taken Ryan McKenzie on the ride as he is doing a Science Fair Project on it
- Paul & I along with alot of other Southlanders have been picking up rubbish, dumped by others for many years and it has escalated over recent years
- A comment from a friend who biked from Cape Reigna to Bluff this year was "Southlands roadside rubbish is the worst in New Zealand"
- Paul's comment was to look above our waterways in order to look after them
- Why are our children picking up adults rubbish?
- Have had lots of comments and photos from other Southlanders who cannot believe how bad it is and have also learnt a lot along the way
- It is solution based and am looking about how we can educate and find a solution to stop this happening in our beautiful province
- Utilising photos and Catchment Group competition for presentation

We are planning for Margie give us an update on her project at the next meeting.

Any questions, please get in touch with Margie

Follow her facebook page; <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=councillor%20margie%20ruddenklau>

Intensive Winter Grazing update from Dan

Hi all, I just wanted to give everyone a heads up and potentially a summarization as to what has happened regarding the Intensive Winter Grazing regulations. This Winter was a bloody tough one, with what seemed like 10mm's of rain every day, it was frustrating to work in, and a test for the systems we run.

The fact it was wet Winter, but we (Southland farmers in general) were monitored many times with fly overs from Environment Southland and received great reports, was a real pat on the back for all of us that we are improving. I really do think that there has been a shift in mindset, and most farmers are gaining an understanding as to how to best sow/grow/graze/resow our forage crops producing the best outcome for animal health and well being, and environmental stewardship. There is a lot to do yet, but we are generally traveling in the right direction. I have seen improved practices within our catchment and I am proud of you all for getting on board.

Our soil types are generally very easily eroded and become mobile easily. Even with the best practice undertaken, there will still be mobile sediment due to many reasons (many are outside IWG), but we can at least learn to improve the practices and do our best to improve our freshwater health controlling the things that we can control. I bring Sediment up primarily because I think it is our largest concern locally. When sediment settles in our creeks, rivers and estuaries it creates a muddy bottom choking our natural systems and putting a lot of our native ecosystems at risk.

In regards to the revised IWG regulations that were returned for further consultation, (and for those that don't know, I was on the Advisory Group that put together the recommendations), generally they (govt) have responded very favorably to our suggestions, with a few tweaks. It is back out for consultation, and they do listen to your feedback, so if you feel strongly for or against. **Please make a submission before October 7th**

- The reduction of our maximum slope from 15 to 10 degrees. Potentially this is more restrictive than it needs to be, with good management practice 15 degrees can be done effectively.
- We proposed the formation of a IWG module, which becomes a part or chapter of the Freshwater Farm plan (FFP), but it seems that its been put directly into the FFP. There is little detail on what the overall certifiable FFP will look like as yet, and how it will be certified.
- Definition of what is actually a Critical Source Area (CSA) also need work, as there are zones which could technically be a CSA but do not connect directly to a waterbody, and a lot of it is currently up to the individual's determination. The main thing to remember is that these are the main pathways for sediment to get into waterways, so they are the most crucial to protect.
- Pathways. Its proposed there is three options. 1 Permitted activity, 2 is permitted under a certified FFP, which will be inclusive of your mitigation measures to show how you're managing your effects to be no worse than Pathway 1, and pathway 3 is for consent where the land manager can't work his system within the guidelines, then he will be required to obtain consent and be able to show his management around this and how the effects will be mitigated. The actual definitions around where the exact lines are is yet to be determined and will become clearer when the actual FFP document is released.

Freshwater Farm Plans are inevitable in the very near future, hopefully they can be seen more so as an opportunity to show the good you're doing, rather than a frustrating and pointless document.

My personal belief is that these should have different standards attached to them to showcase exceptional environmental protection, animal welfare & production performance to become the document that farmers can use to assist with the sale of their produce to different markets that require higher standards (And higher produce prices!!) But it appears that's too hard for the Government to include at this stage

The government also has their consultations out for the FFP's and the low slope mapping so if you feel strongly about either of these then you have until **26 September to make a submission**. Beef & Lamb has a good outline of the details you might need, <https://beeflambnz.com/low-slope-map-changes-and-freshwater-farm-plans#msdyntrid=RSgTP4okENPhcd7OZ62vv6gVk7YLRWFa38bHdk5gFNU>

This stuff is critical for our catchments health so lets all work together to make the improvements needed. I am happy to chat to anyone about this please don't hesitate to make contact

Cheers, Dan

eDNA update from Mark Thomson

Watercare and catchment groups throughout the country were given the opportunity to obtain an environmental DNA kit courtesy of the Environmental Protection Authority, our group was no exception, in late May a water sample was taken from the lower Silverstream with the aim of capturing evidence of deer and pigs to add weight to our concerns in this area. The water is pushed through a filter which captures the DNA of any mammal, invertebrate, plant or aquatic life that has been in contact with the stream. For anyone wishing to explore the results visit

www.wilderlab.co.nz/explore our job number is 601756 and passcode is W08CC7D

Will obtain more detailed analysis of the results as the abundance of micro invertebrates in our sample will be indicative of the health of our watercourse.

Next project ideas

As the LUCI-Ag project progresses, now is the time to think about what is next for our catchment group. We have had a few ideas suggested over the past few months which need revisited given thought to how we can progress some.

Ideas include;

- Kowhai Reach restoration project in partnership with Jesse Bythell QEII Trust
- Communal/ shared space near waterway to help connect the community
- Water quality testing through real-time monitoring or similar
- Carbon status of catchment
- Rubbish cleanup of waterways
- Communal farm rubbish recycling depot or similar for our catchment
- Understanding the flora and fauna that is unique to our catchment
- Study of broader ecological conditions - plant, insect & aquatic life in our catchment
- Research into impact of Deer & Pigs on catchment - native bush regeneration, soil impact etc. and control options
- Gaining understanding of what makes our river system unique

We have the opportunity to apply for funding from Thriving Southland as we did for the LUCI - Ag project. Or can be free such as the rubbish clean up or our recent field days.

If you have any ideas to add, or feel particularly interested in anything listed above, please in touch.

Stay up to date

[Makarewa Headwaters Catchment Group | Facebook](#)

[Makarewa Headwaters | Thriving Southland](#)

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