

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED ON BEHALF OF THE
OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

UNDER the Resource Management
Act 1991 (the **Act** or **RMA**)

IN THE MATTER of an original submission
on the Proposed Regional
Policy Statement for Otago
2021 (**PRPS**)

BETWEEN **OTAGO WATER
RESOURCE USER
GROUP**

**Submitter OS00235 and
FS00235**

**FEDERATED FARMERS
NZ INC**

OS00239 and FS00239

DAIRY NZ

Submitter FS00601

AND **OTAGO REGIONAL
COUNCIL**

Local Authority

EVIDENCE IN CHIEF OF JOANNA HAY



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EVIDENCE IN CHIEF OF JOANNA HAY

1. My full name is Joanna Hay. I am a trustee of Springbank Trust. Myself, my husband, and our three primary school aged children farm sheep and beef over 670 hectares split between two properties. Our home farm is at Herbert nestled between SH1 and the coast. Our lease property is at Moeraki also in North Otago.
2. Ross and I took over our home farm 'Springbank' from Ross's parents in 2006. We run 174 hectares on the home farm, lease 90 hectares along the road, and lease another 410-hectare property at Moeraki.
3. Our lease property at Moeraki is known as 'Lighthouse Hills' due to the historic lighthouse built in 1878 at Katiki Point, the southern point of Moeraki Peninsula. It is home to yellow-eyed penguins and fur seals. The site is also the Te Raka a Hineatea Pā site.
4. We run 2800 ewes, 800 hoggets, 4000 lambs, 1200 Winter contract lambs, 200 bulls and 120 steers across our blocks. We are part of Silver Fern Farms, Reserve Beef and 100% Standard Lamb programmes, which certified farms can supply stock that is 100% grass fed, antibiotic free, has no added hormones, GMO-free and doesn't use feed lots. We are audited through the New Zealand Farm Assurance Program (NZ FAP) and New Zealand Merino (ZQ) and are about to be audited under the new New Zealand Farm Assurance Program Plus (NZ FAP+) guidelines. We are working towards certification for carbon zero programmes.
5. I am a fourth-generation farmer, having spent the greater part of my life in North Otago. I have a BEd from Dunedin Teachers College and spent 6 years in teaching and management roles in Oamaru prior to having children. I continued to teach part time until 2017. When we took on our lease property in 2018 I made the decision to leave teaching and focus on our business. This also gave me the opportunity to focus more on the community and industry roles that were previously on the backburner.

6. I am a Steering Committee member of North Otago Sustainable Land Management Group (NOSLAM) which is a farmer led Catchment Collective working together to help the sector move collaboratively and collectively toward improving water quality outcomes in our Region. Attached at **Appendix 1** is a snap shot of NOSLAM's work.
7. I am a shareholder, and elected director of North Otago Irrigation Company (NOIC) which is capable of servicing 26,000ha. NOIC seeks to deliver cost-effective, reliable water supported with environmental leadership, enabling positive social and economic outcomes.
8. In 2018 I co-founded Lip Gloss and Gumboots along with two farming colleagues. This is a regional hub for graduates of programmes from Agri Women's Development Trust. The purpose is to provide opportunities to build skills and confidence, which in turn will add value to their farming businesses and our community. This group has grown from a solid base of 10 to 30 women. We also hold open events annually for women across the region.
9. I graduated from Agri Women's Development Trust flagship programme Escalator in 2021. This was an intensive 15-month programme that concentrated on leadership and governance.
10. I founded the Herbert-Maheno Food Fairies, a group who make meals for families who have a new baby or in our community. See **Appendix 2** for examples of the food boxes we provide.
11. I have also founded the Herbert-Maheno Community Facebook group. This has fostered a means of communication around our community which new commers find particularly useful. We have collectively solved many problems, most commonly stock on the loose, but as far ranging as missing people. I am passionate about having a connected community where members can contribute and have a sense of belonging.
12. I have been elected as a Central South Island Farmer Councillor for Beef and Lamb. Our role as Farmer Councillors is to guide and advise the development and delivery of innovative tools and services to support

informed decision making, and continuous improvement in farming systems within our region.

13. I have been, and am involved in a number of community groups, including, but not limited to: a Playcentre committee member and volunteer, a Kindergarten parent committee member, a Maheno Home & School committee member and volunteer, a classroom volunteer at Maheno School, organiser of countless School events, a coach for touch, hockey and rugby teams, Secretary and Treasurer of Maheno Rugby and Organiser of Maheno Junior Rugby.
14. The time taken to fulfil my governance and community obligations can be up to 40 hours each week.

Scope of Evidence

15. The purpose of this evidence is to provide some 'on-farm' and community-based context to the regulatory changes faced by our sector. I will discuss some of the challenges that we face in implementing change on our own and the impact that this has on how quickly it can be achieved. I will also discuss the impact of regulations and change on our own local community.
16. I will also discuss the broader community effects of this. In my roles with NOIC, NOSLAM, Lip Gloss and Gumboots and Beef + Lamb, I am exposed to the challenges that individuals and groups face in adapting to change and would like to discuss how I think this needs to be handled in order to preserve the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of our communities.

Our property

17. Our farm is located in between the Kakanui and Waianakarua catchments. The Bowalley Creek is a spring fed creek that runs to sea. Both branches of the Creek run through our farm. Our farm is named Springbank, so clearly springs popping up in places on farm is not a new thing, with a new one forming in the middle of a paddock in early October 2022. Our topography is rolling and with predominantly Timaru clay soils. While we are in a drought prone region, our heavy soils mean we

typically hold on longer in the dry than some of our counterparts elsewhere in North Otago.

18. We are a sheep and beef operation. Originally, we had a Romney flock. With the dry conditions in North Otago and the move to irrigation we couldn't run sheep under irrigation profitability wise, so made the decision to sell them. While on paper this was an easy decision to make, to carry it to fruition was one of the hardest things we have had to do. We sold our entire ewe flock. Once you have made that decision it is hard to come back from.
19. Not long after that we had leased the Lighthouse block – which is much tougher country, coastal and hilly. We ended up buying a Perendale flock of ewes. They were a high-performance flock – but were not the same temperament as the Romneys we were used to. They broke through fences and were difficult to yard and manage, which isn't good when you are farming in a fishbowl. The lease block at Moeraki is on the tourist route and everything is noticed by others.
20. We knew what we wanted in a flock, something that tolerated the climate, was resilient, had good quality wool and could rear lambs well. After talking to a ram breeder, we now purchase a Romdale (a Romney Perendale cross). It has been a long slow process, four seasons in duration, however now we have a ewe flock that is performing well. Our key aim was for resilience – i.e. sheep that hold out to the conditions in North Otago.
21. We finish¹ all our own lambs, but also finish 1000 plus Halfbred lambs (fine wool) that we carry over the winter.
22. Before we put in irrigation we would rear beef calves, with the aim of growing them until they were prime and ready to slaughter at 18-24 months. Because of our dry conditions we could never realise this and often had to sell our stock store. Selling store, meaning selling an animal not yet ready to slaughter, usually because you do not have enough feed

¹ To finish lambs means that they are kept on farm until they are at the weight and grade to go to the processor. There is a premium for finishing lambs.

for them. Irrigation gave us opportunity to realise that system – i.e. irrigation has allowed us to finish our own beef cattle. They (the store calves) always used to be first to be sold or culled when pressure came on.

23. Most of our cattle are on the home block. These are predominantly Friesian bulls. They come to us as 100kg calves, and we finish them with the aim of doing so before their second winter. This is due to their impact on our soil structure. We really enjoy working with beef steers and over time would like to switch the balance to predominantly beef cattle. However we cannot change the system overnight, that level of change takes time and planning. Realising the potential of reliable irrigation means finishing cattle to a high standard.
24. The Lighthouse lease block has rougher pasture, consequently we have beef steers and heifers there to rotate behind the ewes, cleaning up pasture. We sell everything in prime condition, unless it is dry, and we must offload stock. We have a specific contract with our meat processor to supply a specific number of animals, on a date, at a target weight and grade. That's our policy.
25. We are loyal suppliers and shareholders of Silver Fern Farms. Both of our families were before us, giving us a long history with Silver Fern Farms, and previously PPCS.
26. Our home farm is our finishing block, all stock on it is finished and sold prime – it is the engine room of our farm system. Every blade of grass that can be utilised is. We have very small parcels of land planted in pine, but none of a size to qualify for rebates or offsetting, yet they serve an important purpose and add value to our system.
27. We are now at the point where we believe we have the balance right – between sheep and beef, between various stock classes (types and ages) and between the two properties. Our system is very much integrated and run as one, or at least complimentary to each other. To get to this point it has taken a lot of hard work, and importantly time. All change takes time, especially when you are working within an environment where you have no control on what will occur each day.

28. All our waterways are fenced off. This has taken years of planning. The writing has been on the wall for a long time. It has been over 10 years – but that's how much time was required to do it. Moving fence lines to follow contours of creeks, ensuring the setbacks are wide enough so that when in flood minimal damage is done. We have always had big buffers because of the topography and where we are. In a big rain event, we get everyone's water – and because it's sheep fencing (it acts like a sieve) we must be careful how we do it. Smaller operations like ours need time to do that – we cannot just make large changes to our farm systems overnight. **Appendix 3** is a photo of what is required to put up a fence on our farm.
29. We have started native plantings – but the adage is true; you can't go green if you are in the red. Planting native trees takes time and investment. For small operations other priorities come first. We have been part of a Biodiversity project with Silver Fern Farms known as the 'Farming with Native Biodiversity Pilot Project'. We had experts from University of Canterbury assisting us, under the tutelage of Professor David Norton.
30. We have also planted out and fenced the Critical Source Areas. Children from our local School came and helped with some of the planting. See **Appendix 4** for a photo of the school planting day. Unfortunately, hares have subsequently eaten all but a handful of plants, which is yet another demonstration of the uncontrollable environment that we operate in. It cost us a serious amount of money to plant at the outset, so we are cautious about planting again, but are doing so now. It has been a learning journey.
31. I have started setting up my own native plant nursery and have been working with the local rūnaka who are on a planting journey too. We have worked together to gather local seeds. Many of the Lip Gloss and Gumboots ladies are on this journey too. It's a slow game as the native plants take a long time to grow. **Appendix 5** shows photos of where we have collected some of our native seeds (Mount Watkins).

32. We have a NOSLAM planting project on Bowalley creek. All 9 farmers on the creek have formed a pod group with NOSLAM. The goal was to plant 20m on each side of the boundaries down the creek, instead of just one big planting. Some people are amazing and have been on the journey of fencing and planting for years, but others are just beginning their journey. Everyone is saying that we need to do this and as a result every farmer is taking part. The benefit of the project is taking everyone with us – it has been amazing to be part of the collective vision and enthusiasm. The morning after the very first meeting, I saw 3 post drivers out putting in fences on farms. Our vision is for a biodiversity corridor right up Bowalley Creek – and that one day there might be benefits in terms of greenhouse gas emissions.
33. This process has been about education and taking people (everyone) on a journey. What we have learned is that it is important to do things with people – not telling them to do something. We are leading alongside, not from the front. In the beginning, some people were concerned that they would lose lots of productive area from their paddocks – but once we explained to them and they understood the rules, they were with us.
34. We aren't a closed shop on our farm – anyone who asks will be given explanations for the why, how, and what. We share with others; with the knowledge we can learn from each other. Everyone wants to do the right thing, but sometimes they just don't know how and where to start.
35. We also want to educate a wider audience. We never say no to people visiting our farm, from School Children to International Supermarket buyers. We want to encourage understanding of the care taken in how we farm.
36. One thing I have noticed from all the community things I am involved with is that the people in the sector are swamped. They are carrying a heavy burden of stress caused by the onslaught of regulations. The regulatory burden is ever increasing, and even more so the strategic thinking required to keep our farm profitable under the said pressures.

37. A large proportion of our sector is in a reactive state. People need to be able to think and respond in a measured thoughtful way, not just have a kneejerk reaction. But this is where the sector is at. It is a level of current stress that we are all carrying. People can't come up with solutions – all they can do is react and it's not beneficial for individuals, families or the wider community. From what I see in my community I think it is impacting every facet of their lives. It's hard to give back when you are tapped out. See **Appendix 6** for an infographic of how people respond in a reactive state.
38. When I have conversations with people, I sometimes feel like I have the weight of the world on my shoulders. Young families who want to get into farming feel the pressure from all sides – and the added pressure of regulatory stress only compounds this.
39. The Rural Support Trust recently had a speaker giving a talk locally with strategies for resilience. The talk was open to everyone in the rural community. Every single ticket sold.
40. At the end of the day all of this is about people, not just the land and air and water, but the people that it sustains. We are all part of that environment, and that includes the wider community and family.
41. Otago understands that much of its economy comes from the rural sector. But looking at farming families you can see the community groups they are on and what they donate their time, money, and energy to. They are helping with sports teams, the fire brigade, first response units, meals on wheels and school boards to name a few. The social fabric of the rural community relies on this support. Too much pressure means people can't do this extra work – but the wider community relies on the volunteer support. What happens to the social fabric of our rural community if that isn't there?
42. Everything that makes me tick is about working collaboratively with people, for people, to grow strong communities and a flourishing Primary Sector. But there is only so much that people can give – we have limited capacity. I'm trying to keep my head above water with all that is going on – and when you talk to friends across the sector you realise that

everyone feels the same way. Even writing this evidence comes at such a busy time of year.

43. Many do not understand how difficult each decision is for farming families. Many farmers will be supporting the generation above them through the provision of income and/or capital if they require a home to retire in. Many farmers will also have significant costs that many urbanites do not have including mandatory boarding costs for their children to attend school. When there is a limited resource such as profit, and that resource becomes even more restricted by virtue of regulatory change, what should farmers compromise? Should they compromise the support of their parents, the education of their children, the multi-generational sustainability of their farming operation or should they make decisions to fence their waterways, change pastures and plant natives in an incremental and focussed manner.
44. All decisions that are made will have a direct and express impact on the sustainability of my farm and my neighbours' farms. That in turn will have a direct impact on their immediate and extended families and community relationships, all of which they have invested a significant amount (both financially and morally). Therefore, many farmers find it difficult to cope, particularly when many farmers have already reduced their drawings or wages to the absolute minimum to ensure the younger generation can inherit a sustainable farming operation.
45. These are not easy decisions to make. The frequency in which many farmers are being forced to make them would overwhelm anyone. I have found through my work with NOSLAM that community lead initiatives will often be more productive, as opposed to decisions that are imposed on us without any input as to when or how to implement effective change.
46. Our Lip Gloss and Gumboots group has demonstrated how much rural women do – especially in the smaller family farming operations. Women are trying to keep all the balls in the air and keep the family unit together. When the parents are stressed, it has ripple effects through the family and kids pick it up too.

47. I surveyed the database of Lipgloss and Gumboots and asked them to list all the ways that they, their farming partner and business, volunteer or give back to their community. The found the results overwhelming.

(a) Participant One:

- (i) Hakataramea Catchment group (founding member). This is both me and my husband
- (ii) Coach kids' rugby
- (iii) Squash club president
- (iv) Rural fire brigade
- (v) Run and teach at local unaffiliated pony club
- (vi) Community native nursery volunteer
- (vii) Volunteer at some school events (but would like to do more)

(b) Participant Two:

- (i) School Board of Trustees
- (ii) School Fundraising Committee
- (iii) Catchment Group
- (iv) Perendale Sheep Society R & D committee
- (v) Ballance Farm Environment Awards Judge
- (vi) Local Hall fundraising
- (vii) Community Centenary Committee
- (viii) Community Emergency Defibrillator coordinator
- (ix) Community spraying / gardening volunteer
- (x) Junior Rugby Coach
- (xi) Touch Rugby Coach

- (xii) School hockey coach
- (xiii) Secondary school sports fundraising
- (xiv) Hockey team manager
- (xv) Community playgroup life member/mentor
- (xvi) Secondary school gateway farm
- (xvii) Sponsor for 4 community dog trials (Southland, Canterbury, Otago x2)
- (xviii) Sponsor for Perendale annual conference
- (xix) Mentor for young person pursuing an agricultural career
- (c) Participant Three:
 - (i) Coach Netball
 - (ii) Coach Rugby
 - (iii) Coordinate Junior Netball
 - (iv) Board of Trustee member
 - (v) Home and School member
 - (vi) Food donations to new mums in the district
 - (vii) Donate to School Livestock Scheme
 - (viii) Donate to IHC calf Scheme (the leading provider of services for people with intellectual disabilities)
 - (ix) Donate to Gumboot Friday Calf Scheme
 - (x) Donate to local Rugby Club
 - (xi) Donate to local Netball Club
 - (xii) Donate manure to Lions for them to sell for their community fundraisers

- (xiii) Provide Transport for local school so school kids can go to local events
- (xiv) Drive staff members' children to sports so they can attend
- (xv) NOSLAM steering committee
- (xvi) South Island Diary Event, Governance Group and Event Committee
- (xvii) Mentor Farmer for Mayoral Task Force, employing and mentoring at risk youth
- (xviii) Speech and drama lessons in school
- (d) Participant Four:
 - (i) Run the local playgroup,
 - (ii) I provide meals to new mums/struggling families.
 - (iii) Donate to local dog trials.
- (e) Participant five:
 - (i) My husband is on the local rural community hall committee
 - (ii) I manage the rural community facebook page
 - (iii) I am property manager for the local rural school house.
- (f) Participant six:
 - (i) School Board of Trustees (averaging 400 hours pa over past 3 years)
 - (ii) lead many school projects such as creek and grounds restoration.
 - (iii) Land Search and Rescue – volunteer hours
 - (iv) Supporting kids' sports teams – with transport and managing etc – fundraisers.

- (g) Participant 7
 - (i) Home and School chair
 - (ii) Board of Trustees representative
 - (iii) Senior rugby referee
 - (iv) Coach of touch, netball, cricket
 - (v) Organiser of junior netball club
- (h) My husband and our business (in addition to the items I have included above)
 - (i) Federated Farmers Meet and Wool Chair
 - (ii) School Board of Trustees Chair
 - (iii) Senior Rugby referee
 - (iv) Junior Rugby coach
 - (v) Donate to School Livestock Scheme
 - (vi) Donate to Rugby Club
 - (vii) Contribute in kinds and time to the Collie Club Dog Trials
 - (viii) Donate to Meat the Need and St John's
 - (ix) Supply of mince and sausages in school freezer to provide for school families in need (as and when needed)
 - (x) Gateway students (High school students once a week)
 - (xi) Organise rugby club speed shear (fundraiser)

48. I then asked the participants whether the speed, impracticalities and consequences of regulatory change has impacted their current capacity to give back to the community. 88% of those surveyed said that they have a decreased capacity to give back to the community because of the impact of the regulatory change. The 12% represents a

young family who have had to decrease their involvement while they raise their young family.

49. I also asked participants whether they anticipate they will have additional or decreased capacity to give back in the future. 100% said that they anticipate that their future capacity will decrease because their time will be taken up with the tidal wave of regulatory change coming our way.
50. I have noticed a complete shift because of the pressure all farmers are under. Pressure used to come and go, but it feels as if we are all now living in a pressure cooker. There is inflationary pressure and regulatory pressure, among day-to-day pressure of running a business and having a family. The flow on effect is that everyone is hunkering down. This means that they have reduced their involvement in the community. The ultimate effect of this is unknown, but if a farmer needs to let go of a worker, they will bear more of the burden. This not only impacts the immediate farm, but also the community. For example, our stock manager's wife has trained to be the local Emergency medical technician. If we ever had to let him go, the community would also lose its Emergency medical technician.
51. Council needs to recognise the interconnectedness of environment and people. Rural communities aren't doing it for themselves or to line their own pockets. They're doing it for the greater good, because they know it's the right thing to do, because it's how communities work. At this moment in time, I am growing tiny natives from seed that I will never live to see fully grown.
52. Farming for us involves our whole family. It is not a 9 to 5 job where you can walk off site and forget about it till the next day. The farm is our home and our business. Both Ross and I work full time on the farm. If you counted Ross's hours, it would be far more than a 40-hour week. I split my time 50:50 between office work for the farm business and working on farm. Ross' dad (who is 81) comes out every day and works on the farm helping with jobs that make the farm run smoothly (e.g., running dogs and checking or fixing machinery). He would probably work the equivalent of 10 – 20 hours per week. When it is cultivation

time, he spends hours on the tractor. **Appendix 7** is a photo of Pop teaching our children about machinery maintenance.

53. We also have a full-time stock manager. He is married with 3 grown up children.
54. This intergenerational story isn't unusual for North Otago. For farming families, it is very common to have the grandparents and children involved in the day-to-day activities of the farm.
55. The social fabric is the cornerstone of rural community. Relationships knit this together. If you come to our house to do business and don't want a cup of tea and some baking, chances are we aren't going to be working together for long. The social network and support are what holds us together.
56. Time is crucial here. Good policy is well thought out and listened to. A collective voice that represents a united vision for our future environment. The people that live and work in an area know it is best. We need to give people the opportunity to build the outcomes together. Council needs to be brave and listen to the voices of the people and families who live here.
57. For this RPS, good policy requires clear and achievable outcomes, with clear and achievable time frames, that build on the experience and expertise that farmers have gained by managing the land for centuries. Without this, I fear that our sector will lose good people. People are the key.

Date: 23 November 2022

Joanna Hay

Otago Farmer

Appendix 1

About North Otago Sustainable Land Management Group.


















NOSLaM's VISION:

To have an environment we are proud of, a vibrant community and strong agriculture in North Otago.

NOSLaM's PURPOSE:

To educate, assist and encourage the North Otago Farming Community to farm in conjunction with sustainable land management objectives and practices.

300+ STAKEHOLDERS & SUPPORTERS	 350+ FARMER MEMBERS	9 FARMER-LED CATCHMENT POD GROUPS 	RIPARIAN PLANTING Have received \$370,000 in funding from private grants and Jobs For Nature resulting in: 31 RIPARIAN SITES 74,000 SQM 11.9KM OF WATERWAY 35,800 PLANTS IN THE GROUND 9.6KM FENCED PLANTING DAYS WITH 15 SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY & GROUPS JOBS FOR NATURE Providing employment for three people. 
480 VOLUNTARY COMMITTEE HOURS PER YEAR	19/23 SCHOOLS IN THE WAITAKI DISTRICT ENGAGED  70+ STAKEHOLDER GROUPS INVOLVED IN PLANTINGS		
 WATER TESTING PROGRAMS The Waiareka Pod water testing program and the Battersby Pod water testing program both provided important scientific information.		STUDENT FIELD TRIPS TO FARMS 	
ENVIRO AG SUPPORTING WAITAKI GIRLS HIGH WAITAKI BOYS HIGH AG CURRICULUM 110+ STUDENTS In-class visits from industry and farmer representatives. Increased student enrolments. Developing and extending student thinking beyond the classroom.		47 WORKSHOPS ON AND OFF FARM  Winter Grazing Practices, Irrigation Efficiency, Addressing Critical Source Areas, Nitrogen Cap Reduction, Rule Changes to Compliance	
 150 NOSLaM ENVIROFOLDERS DISTRIBUTED		15 SCHOOLS & KINDERGARTENS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN SOIL YOUR UNDIES Teaching over 365 students the biological indicators of soil health and the role of earthworms and dung beetles as ecosystem engineers. \$60,000 funding over two years. primary and secondary school involvement. Stakeholder collaboration. 	
WAIAREKA CATCHMENT PHOSPHOROUS STUDY		 SHARING IMPORTANT INFORMATION Valuable "Resource Hub" and information on the NOSLaM website. Presence and engagement on social media platforms.	
PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:     			

Appendix 2

Food boxes from the Food Fairies



Appendix 3



Myself, husband Ross, father-in-law Allan & 3 kids fencing the last part of the Bowalley Creek during lockdown 2020

Appendix 4



Maheno School children helping plant a CSA (Critical Source Area)

Appendix 5



Lunch break from seed collecting on Mount Watkins



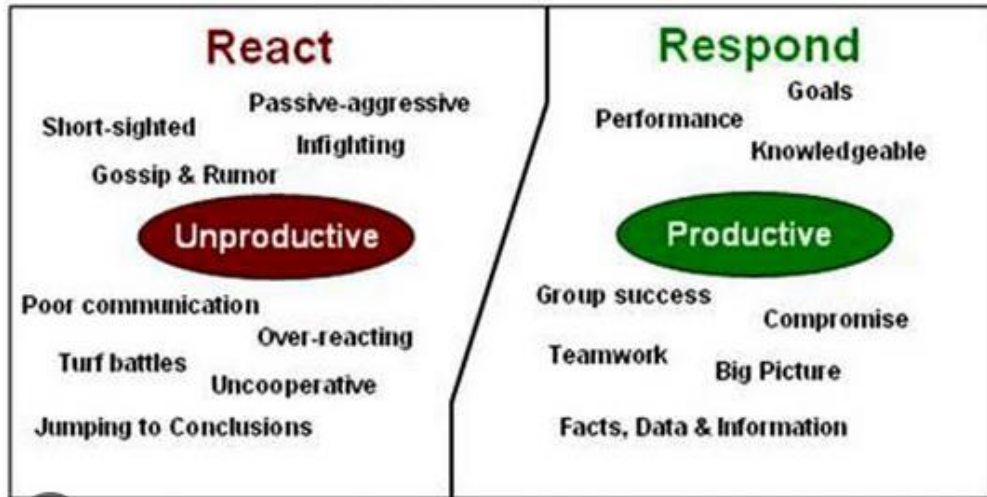
Mount Watkins native bush where we collect seeds.



Totara Seeds

Appendix 6

Infographic on how people respond when they are in a reactive state.



Appendix 7



Pop teaching our children about machinery maintenance