



Working on water

Water is the lifeblood of our region—for recreation, the economy and culture—and ORC's number one priority. The challenges we face in this area are knotty, complex and contentious. We're kicking off this issue of Waterlines with a recap of all the work happening around water at ORC right now.

Water Plan

All regional councils in the country are required by the Ministry for the Environment to set physical areas for managing waterways. These are called Freshwater Management Units, or FMUs. ORC set five of these units for Otago in April this year, one of which (the Clutha/Mata-au) was further divided into five sub-areas, called rohe.

Alongside the national requirements, we've begun the process of a full Water Plan review. ORC has agreed to do this in stages, based on the development of FMUs and community values, objectives and limit setting. Each FMU or rohe will essentially form a chapter of the new Water Plan. Our

Progressive Implementation Programme has committed to giving effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) by 2025.

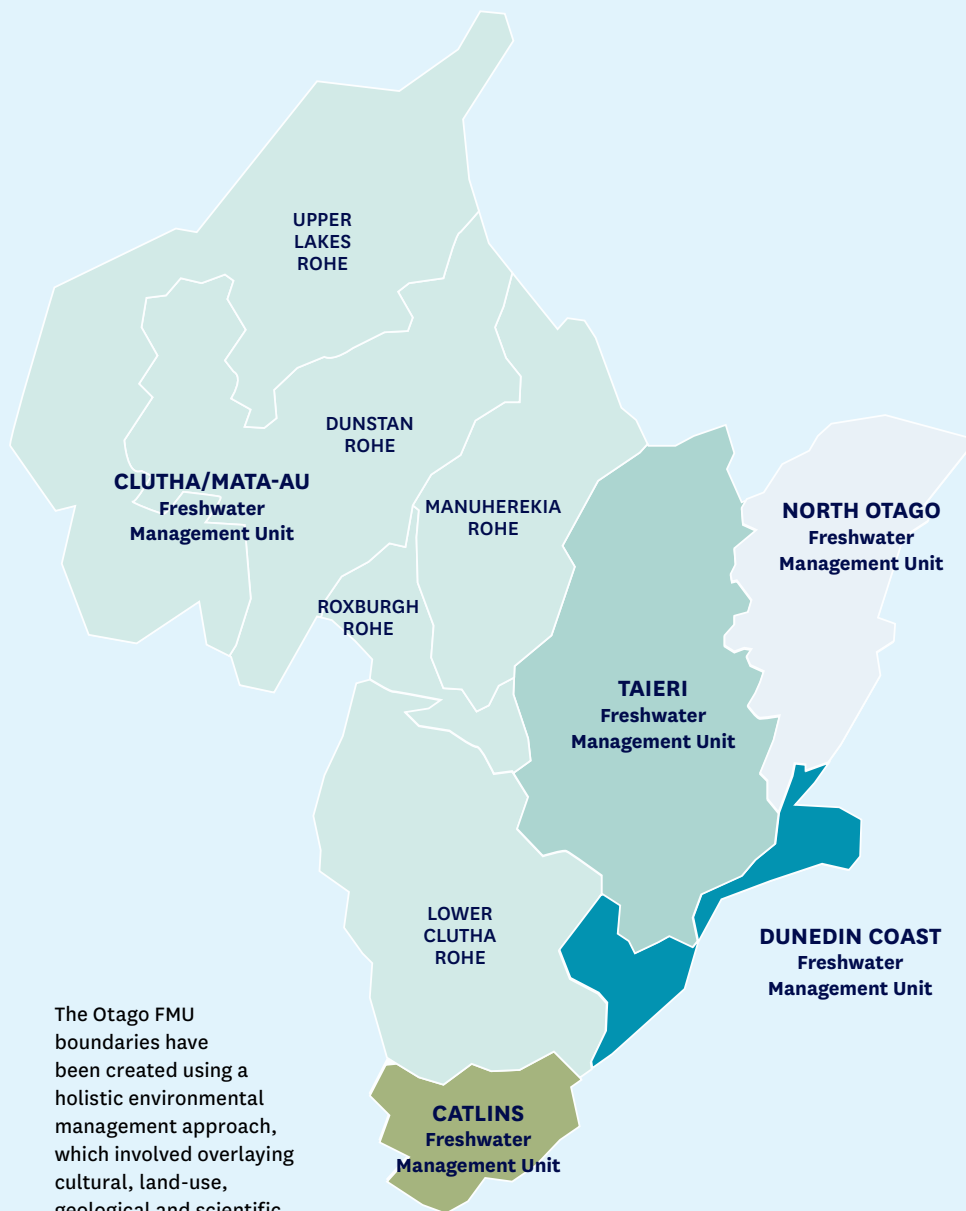
We are taking a staged approach to understanding values across the FMU and rohe, which has already started in the Cardona and Arrow River catchments (part of the Dunstan Rohe), and will continue with the Manuherekia later this year. These areas have been prioritised because of the work their communities have already done with us in relation to managing their rivers.

We're currently working with key stakeholders, community groups (including a Technical Advisory Group in the Manuherekia) and members of the wider public in these three areas

to confirm whether the values they identified in the past are still current, and then we will work through a range of options for future management of these catchments. These discussions will form the basis of proposed new parts of the Water Plan for these rivers. We're aiming to be able to publicly notify the plan changes for Arrow and Cardona in March 2020, and the Manuherekia in August 2020.

Deemed Permits

These processes might seem complex enough, but at the same time ORC is also working with people who hold soon-to-expire 'deemed permits' (historical rights to use water for gold mining), and who need to apply for a new



The Otago FMU boundaries have been created using a holistic environmental management approach, which involved overlaying cultural, land-use, geological and scientific maps and other relevant information to identify areas with commonalities.

GLOSSARY

NPSFM

The Ministry for the Environment's 'National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (amended 2017)' provides direction on how local authorities should carry out their responsibilities under the Resource Management Act 1991 for managing freshwater.

All regional councils must give effect to these policies by 31 December 2025.

FMU

Freshwater Management Units set out physical boundaries for how we manage freshwater in the region.

Otago's FMUs have been created using a holistic environmental management approach, which involved overlaying cultural, land-use, geological and scientific maps and other relevant information to identify areas with commonalities.

Rohe

One of Otago's FMUs—the Clutha/Mata-au—is broken up into five smaller units within it, which are called rohe, for a more tailored water management approach in the area.

Regional Plan: Water

This is our plan for managing water in Otago's rivers, lakes, groundwater and wetlands. The purpose of the plan is to promote the sustainable management of Otago's water resources.

To achieve this, the plan has policies and methods (which include rules) to address issues of use, development and protection of Otago's freshwater resources.

Deemed Permit

Deemed permits to use water were granted in Otago's gold-mining heyday, but these expire in 2021, meaning anyone who wishes to continue to use water granted under a deemed permit will need to apply for a resource consent water permit.

Continued from cover

resource consent water permit by October 2021. These land-users must complete resource consent applications on time if they want to keep using water on their land in the future. They must also be aware that there's no guarantee a new water permit will be granted, or that if one is granted, it will be for the same amount of water or for a long period of time.

Many of the active deemed permits are in place in the Manuharekia, Arrow and Cardrona catchments, so we're working to ensure the notified plan changes for these areas are in place before applications for resource consents come in from these areas, to provide surety for land-users in these communities.

There's a lot of work to do, but we're focused on having the right conversations with affected stakeholders and the community to progress to a water plan which gives effect to the NPSFM as efficiently as we can.

If you're in the Manuharekia, Arrow or Cardrona catchments, keep an eye out for consultation opportunities on Water Plan options in the coming months.

Introducing Manager Good Water Programme

Andrea Howard

Andrea Howard is one of ORC's newest hires, in the position of Manager Good Water Programme. She tells us a bit about herself and her role managing the implementation of the Water Plan.

Tell us a bit about yourself

I was born in Milton, South Otago, but grew up in Dunedin. I attended the University of Otago, ultimately graduating with a Master's degree in Social Geography, which involved the study of people and their communities, cultures, economies and interactions with the natural and built environment. While at University I completed a dissertation on farm-based tourism as a diversification strategy in South Otago and a thesis on deprivation in rural areas.

What brings you to the Otago Regional Council?

I have worked in a range of research, policy, planning and operational roles at the Dunedin City Council and the University of Otago before coming to ORC. My prior roles were focused primarily on economic development, tourism, education and health. While much of the day-to-day subject matter of my position ORC is new to me, the skills and experience gained working in other public sector roles will be directly relevant.

What about the role appealed to you?

I am interested in complex problem solving, identifying what actions need to occur to achieve goals and assembling the different parts of the puzzle to make everything work together effectively. In short, I like to get things done. The Manager Good Water Programme role ticks all these boxes and will hopefully provide a chance to positively contribute to the strategic goals of ORC and the environmental and wellbeing outcomes of the region's communities.



Manager Good Water Programme, Andrea Howard.

Tell us about the role—What are your responsibilities? Who will you be working with?

The Manager Good Water Programme role fits within the Operations group but will work across all areas of ORC. The role is responsible for the development of a programme of projects and initiatives to help implement ORC's Water Plan, with the overall aim of driving improvement in Otago's rural water quality.



I will be working across all areas of ORC, with various teams and stakeholders to manage, mitigate and escalate risks, issues and interdependencies that impact on the rural water quality compliance goals that have been established.

What are your top priorities in this role for the first few months?

I am very much looking forward to developing a comprehensive programme plan to support the implementation of the rural water quality rules in the Water Plan. This will involve identifying clear actions and accountabilities and helping to ensure that tangible progress is made, in a constructive way, to achieve both regulatory requirements and ORC's strategic objectives.



Photo: ODT.

Rabbit management tips

Rabbits are the #1 pest in Otago. Ten rabbits can eat as much grass as one sheep, affecting pasture production.

They are a serious threat to our biodiversity and environment, they ruin beautiful landscapes with rabbit holes, they destroy gardens and—as the saying suggests—they breed prolifically.

We're all responsible for pest management in Otago: as a property owner, you're responsible for rabbit management on your land. These rules apply equally to farmers, lifestyle block owners, the Crown, councils or anyone who owns land in the region.

When it comes to rabbit management, working with others is the best form of control. Rabbits don't understand property boundaries, so have a chat with your neighbours about what will work best for you all, and work together to get the best results.

To encourage cooperative efforts, our proposed Regional Pest Management Plan sets out new Good Neighbour

Rules for rabbits, which require all land occupiers to undertake pest control if a neighbouring property is doing so.

There is no silver bullet for reducing the number of rabbits in Otago. To keep numbers down, rabbit management needs to be ongoing and long-term. Biological controls like the K5 virus, released here in March 2018, do not replace traditional rabbit management methods.

Secondary control is important to keep numbers down and make the most out of these controls. There are a number of methods you can choose from or combine to control rabbits on your property, such as rabbit-proof fencing, poisoning, shooting, trapping and fumigation.

For more information on rabbit management, visit our website at www.orc.govt.nz/rabbits



Newest addition to the Rural Liaison team

Jason Evered is the newest member of ORC's Rural Liaison team, covering North Otago. He tells us how his first few months are going, and about the rural water quality challenges on the horizon for landowners.

Hello, Waterlines readers!

I'm really pleased to be a part of the rural liaison team—if you're based in North Otago, you may have already met me in this job or my last one, at the Waitaki District Council.

After spending the majority of my working life as a Police Officer with the Metropolitan Police Service in London, I found my way to New Zealand and fell in love with the landscapes and the people. I've been here with my wife and two kids ever since.

"Improving the quality and managing the quantity of water in our region is something I won't be taking lightly, and something that will require collaboration with the North Otago community."

What an exciting time to start my Otago Regional Council career, lots of things are going on and I am impressed with what I have seen so far. One or two things that I have planned are, firstly, around ORC's ECO Fund—I will be working hard to find suitable projects and bring some funding into the area. I've read about some great projects that have had successful applications to the fund, and look forward to supporting North Otago groups with their applications.



Rural Liaison and Support Officer for North Otago, Jason Evered.

Also high on my priorities is support the catchment group work in North Otago as I can see the positives of land owners and farmers working together. For me, getting a group together to talk about issues allows for greater discussion—and, on occasion, debate. It's not just someone from ORC turning up and telling people what to do—good catchment groups are willing to learn from each other, and the industry is also providing them with great professional support.

Improving the quality and managing the quantity of water in our region is something I won't be taking lightly, and something that will require collaboration with the North Otago community.

Well, that's all from me. For rural readers in North Otago, I hope to see you when I'm out and about!

If you need advice on good water management practices, feel free to get in touch by sending me an email jason.evered@orc.govt.nz or by calling me on 027 298 3460.

Improving stock truck effluent disposal in Otago

ORC's newest stock truck effluent disposal site is open for business on State Highway 85 near Brassknocker Road, north of Alexandra.

The site became operational on 17 May, and has been receiving glowing reviews from trucking companies ever since. Along with the Raes Junction facility, it is well-located to collect effluent from stock trucks in Central Otago. Drivers have commended its easy access and solar-powered lighting.

In March, Councillors voted in favour of moving the planned location of the next stock truck effluent disposal facility (STED) from Ripponvale Straight in Cromwell to State Highway 8 approaching Tarras.

Effluent spillage onto roads is a serious issue for safety, health and environmental reasons, and it is very difficult to stop trucks from spilling effluent or prosecute those who do.

A public STED network that all trucks can use greatly reduces the amount of effluent being spilled onto roads. The law does not require the facilities to be used, so we have to minimise the barriers to safe and responsible effluent disposal.

The publicly-owned and managed STEDs that ORC plan and maintain with district and city councils and the NZ Transport Agency are a public good approach to keep people safer and protect the environment.



Otago's newest stock truck effluent disposal site on SH85 in use. Photo: Bruce Robertson.



Stock truck effluent disposal sites around Otago.



Tautuku Bay in the Catlins.

Otago South River Care: Farmers helping farmers

The Otago South River Care group is a Clutha Community Trust initiative building on previous work to improve the understanding of water quality in the area, and to promote good management practices that will enhance water quality.

The group covers Tokomairiro, Waiwera, Catlins/Owaka, and Tuapeka/Waitahuna.

Otago South River Care is an umbrella group facilitating a series of catchment groups, setting visions and objectives, and assisting with initiatives that are relevant to each catchment.

The group received \$27,000 in funding in the September round of ORC's community grants scheme, the ECO Fund. The Waiwera catchment group, which was born out of the Otago South River Care group, has received just over \$5,000 in funding for projects in their area, like a sediment fencing trial and a community planting day.

"The idea of the group is to get farmers talking to farmers about their local catchment," said Project Leader Lloyd McCall, "to share ideas and to work together to improve farm management practices, which will lead to improved water quality."



Attendees at the initial stakeholder group meeting of Otago South River Care.

The catchment groups have each held a field day or information session for their area this year, and have partnered with a local school for a stream health and riparian planning initiative.

Otago South River Care is assisting farmers to access water tests on their own properties, so they can better understand what impact their farming practices might be having on water

quality. They are also undertaking water tests in waterways around the region to help assess the quality in areas where there is no existing water quality information.

For more information, visit Otago South River Care's Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/OtagoSouthRiverCare



Water samplers at weirs in the control tussock catchment and the treatment forest catchment collected water samples during high flow events.
Photos: Christina Bright, University of Otago.

Glendhu forestry study

A multi-year study conducted by ORC with the University of Otago has examined how pine harvesting operations affect sediment levels in water at Central Otago's Glendhu Forestry.

Best practice measures at Glendhu meant forest clearance effects were compliant with ORC's Water Plan rules.

The study compared two adjacent Glendhu catchments, one of which retained indigenous snow tussock, while the other was converted into a pine forestry in 1982.

Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research (on behalf of Rayonier Matariki Forests) maintained two weirs, located at the bottom of the 'control' tussock catchment and the 'treatment' forest catchment, which recorded water levels during a forest clearance period in 2017.

Upstream turbidimeters monitored sediment, and water samplers on the weirs collected samples during high flow events.

The environmental best practices demonstrated at the Glendhu forestry are key to reducing the discharge of contaminants at higher flows.

The turbidimeters showed that, compared to the tussock catchment, the pine plantation catchment had increased turbidity, higher suspended sediment and reduced water clarity as a result of forest clearance, meaning forest clearance in Glendhu has a small but measurable effect on the discharge of sediment. However, the turbidity during the harvest phase of the pine plantation catchment did not exceed Regional Plan limits.

The environmental best practices demonstrated at the Glendhu forestry

are key to reducing the discharge of contaminants at higher flows. These practices included maintaining extensive riparian buffer networks, keeping roads and landings to the periphery of the catchment and carrying harvesting out in a staggered timeframe over a longer period.

The research is a part of a long-term research collaboration with the University of Otago, Rayonier Matariki Forests and Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research.



Staff from ORC, Southern Monitoring Services, the University of Otago and the University of Waikato towing the monitoring buoy into place at its new home on Lake Hayes.

Otago's first monitoring buoy installed in Lake Hayes

It's a buoy! ORC is pleased to welcome its much-anticipated Lake Hayes monitoring buoy into the world, transmitting up-to-date weather and water quality data to ORC every 15 minutes.

The Lake Hayes buoy is the first to be installed in the region, supplementing the recently extended State of the Environment monitoring programme in the Upper Clutha Lakes. Two more buoys are planned for Lakes Wanaka and Wakatipu.

ORC commissioned the University of Waikato to build and install the high-frequency monitoring buoy. Its top-mounted weather station measures

data related to climate and weather, including wind speed and direction, air temperature, solar radiation, relative humidity, barometric pressure and rainfall.

Below the surface, winch-operated sensors move up and down the water column collating data related to water quality, including water temperature, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll fluorescence, phycocyanin fluorescence, turbidity, pH and conductivity.

The advantage of this system is that water can be measured at multiple depths up to every 0.1m, offering new insight into important water column variables such as the vertical distribution of algae.

The buoy is part of a wider work programme in Lake Hayes, including a turbidity study at Mill Creek, a catchment study, and upcoming consultation on options for remediating water quality in the lake. The data it generates will greatly improve ORC's understanding of how Lake Hayes is responding to the environment in both the short- and long-term, so we can make informed decisions about remediation.

On the subject of Lakes Hayes, consultation on remediation options began on 6 August through our consultation platform at yoursay.govt.nz and will run through until 3 September. We are also hosting drop-in sessions on 13 August, and 3 September, from 12-1:30pm and 5:30-7:00pm at the Lake Hayes Pavilion.

A day in the life of...



Moa footprints discovered in the Kyeburn in May. ORC worked with the Otago Museum on a consent for their removal. Photo: ODT.

In every issue of *Waterlines*, we profile a team within ORC, highlighting some of the hard work that goes on behind the scenes. Today, we're spending some time to learn more about the Consents team.

ORC's 14-strong Consents team has a lot on their plate. Otago is the second-largest region in the country by area and the team works hard to advise and process applications in a timely manner.

"It's really important to people in Otago that they work under the surety of a resource consent, so we know how essential it is that our consenting officers are up to the task."

That's Joanna Gilroy, ORC's Consents Manager. She moved to Dunedin to start with ORC in February, after six years working for Environment Southland.

Jo is in charge of a dedicated team with a wide range of experience, based between Dunedin and Alexandra. Many of the Consents Officers are lifelong locals—they live and breathe Otago; they grew up around its lakes and rivers. Their day-to-day work centres mostly on water permits, but there's more to the job than sitting in front of a computer.



The Dunedin-based contingent of ORC's Consents Team.

"Part of being a Consents Officer is site visits and meetings with applicants. That can mean getting out and visiting properties to advise people and assess the need for consents," says Jo. "We offer a free half-hour of advice to anyone considering a consent application, and our team are more than happy to provide it."

In fact, there's a surprising variety of work for the Consents team. A recent example from left field involved approving a consent for the Otago Museum to "disturb and temporarily

divert the Kyeburn for the purpose of fossil footprint extraction."

When a local man made the chance discovery of moa footprints in the river—the only such find ever in the South Island—museum staff had to act quickly to remove and preserve them. That required an urgent effort by ORC's Consents team.

"We worked closely with the Otago Museum to be able to turn that consent around really quickly, so that the fossils could be removed and preserved before they were lost," Jo tells us. "It was great



to have a part to play in such a cool discovery.”

ORC’s Consents Officers have arrived here from a variety of backgrounds, including dairy farming and other councils, but they all share a strong understanding of Otago’s water quantity issues. It’s fair to say these represent the most pressing challenge for ORC’s consenting function.

“The situation with deemed permits is unique to Otago,” says Jo. “There are just over 300, often very complex, permits with a deadline approaching. We’ve made a big push to ensure we are resourced to process these.”

Preparations for deemed permit renewal have included developing a Guidance Note, having additional people on standby to process extra applications, upgrading the consents database to easily identify allocation risks, and recruiting, training, and clarifying deemed permit processes.

A key element of this preparation has been making consent services more user-friendly, especially online where applicants are increasingly keen to get their applications sorted. There are significant consenting challenges on the horizon, but Jo is resolutely confident in her team. “We’re really proud of how the team is holding up; they’re a great, passionate group and they’re thriving in a really busy period.”

New staff and improved processes in compliance

ORC’s Compliance team is getting a boost with fresh faces in both Dunedin and Alexandra



ORC staff looking out over farmland from above during one of this year’s flyovers to monitor winter grazing practices. The flights are undertaken to spot sediment disturbance and discharges to water. ORC teams follow up on issues seen from the air, with responses ranging from education and advice, through to enforcement notices and prosecution.

Four new compliance staff have recently started work in the Dunedin and Alexandra teams, and a permanent appointment has been made to the role of Team Leader Investigations and Enforcement. Meanwhile, recruitment is underway to find four additional staff, including an Alexandra-based Team Leader of Compliance.

Staff have also improved processes and procedures for undertaking investigations and collecting evidence, and for commissioning legal advice and managing cases.

The staff in the Regulatory Group are focusing on implementing a risk-based approach to compliance and enforcement. This will aim compliance efforts squarely at the activities and geographic areas where they will have the most positive impact.

This approach will also align the tools at our disposal (from awareness and education, to infringement, abatement and prosecution) with the range of activities and risks that we need to manage in Otago.

Contact our pollution hotline



ORC staff engaged in an oil spill exercise at Steamer's Basin, Dunedin, in February this year.

ORC is responsible for looking after our region's natural resources. To help us do this, we have rules that are designed to prevent pollution harming the environment.

How quickly we know about an environmental incident can make a huge difference to how well we can investigate it.

If you see pollution, please call our pollution hotline which is staffed 24/7 on **0800 800 033** straight away.

You can also report pollution by filling in our reporting form online, at **www.orc.govt.nz/pollution** or by emailing **pollution@orc.govt.nz**



Annual Plan 2019-20 now in effect

ORC's Annual Plan for 2019-20 has been in effect since 1 July, building on the Long-term Plan 2018-2028. The Annual Plan reaffirms a focus for ORC in the four priority areas of water, climate change, urban development and biodiversity.

Water is our top priority. We've begun reviewing our regional Water Plan, which will acknowledge the principles of Te Mana o te Wai—the health of our waterbodies, ecosystems and people. We have a lot of work to do in this area, working with communities to understand their values, so that we're better placed to set objectives and limits for waterways.

Climate change is here. It's impacting our weather, our assets and our lifestyle, which is why we're fast-tracking our work programme this year to get a better understanding of the impacts across all of Otago. Our requirement to minimise the impacts of urban development on water quality is increasing, as is ensuring natural hazards and climate change are accounted for. We're reviewing our Regional Policy Statement this year, to give more direction and guidance on future development.

With so many native species and unique landscapes here in Otago, we all need to do our bit to look after biodiversity. The revised Pest Plan comes into effect soon, which will help us protect biodiversity by managing pest plants and animals that can negatively impact our ecosystems.

Proposed Pest Plan progresses towards implementation

ORC's Pest Plan is getting an update, following research, stakeholder engagement, and a consultation process that began in November 2018.



Clockwise from left: Ragwort, rabbits, Russell Lupins, wilding conifers, gorse and Old Man's Beard.

Some of the biggest changes in the proposed plan are new 'Good Neighbour Rules' for gorse, broom, Russell lupin, ragwort, nodding thistle, rabbits and wilding conifers. These rules require land occupiers, including the Crown, to undertake pest control if a neighbouring property is doing so.

The proposed plan also follows a national template allowing for the establishment of site-led programmes. These programmes are new to Otago, and were added to manage a range of

additional pests in areas with special biodiversity values, such as the Otago Peninsula.

We received 344 submissions on the plan over a six-week consultation period, and we have wrapped up hearings in Dunedin and Queenstown, where 36 submitters took the chance to present in person.

The hearing panel, made up of three Councillors and an external commissioner, is currently deliberating on submissions, after which the final document will be brought to Council for

sign-off. Once the plan is adopted by Council it will be implemented over the next ten years.

If you would like to receive updates on the plan, you can email us at **pests@orc.govt.nz**.

You can find all the information about the proposed plan, consultation and submissions on our website, at **yoursay.orc.govt.nz/pestplan**.

Looking back on a year of the ECO Fund

The ECO Fund (Environment, Community, Otago) has completed three funding rounds, bringing its first full year to a close.



A Kererū in Project Kererū's rehabilitation aviary, in Green Island. The project was awarded funding during the ECO Fund's first year.



A Good Nature possum trap installed by Project Kererū.

The Fund has now distributed \$250,000 to environmental community groups around the region. 30 projects received funding, out of 78 applications seeking over \$1,000,000.

The interest shown in the ECO Fund's first year has demonstrated an appetite from Otago community groups to take ownership and take action in their backyards.

The final round ended on 20 May, with 11 projects supported. Projects funded include:

- Native riparian planting by school kids with the Waiwera Kaihiku Farmer-Led Watercare Group.
- Further research in the Makarora Catchment Threatened Species Project by the Aspiring Biodiversity Trust.
- Control of weed species in and around Lakes Waiholā and Waipori Wetlands by the Lake Waiholā Waipori Wetlands Society.

ecofund

*Environment. Community. Otago.
Te Ao Turoa. Hapori. Ōtākou.*

For more information on the ECO Fund and the projects we have funded, visit **www.orc.govt.nz/ecofund**, or if you have a project in mind and want to ask us about the fund, you can email **ecofund@orc.govt.nz** or call **0800 474 082**.

BioBlitz hits Otago coasts

A team made up of representatives from ORC, the University of Otago's Marine Science department and the Department of Conservation spent the day in a 'BioBlitz' with Waikouaiti locals at Pleasant River Estuary recently.

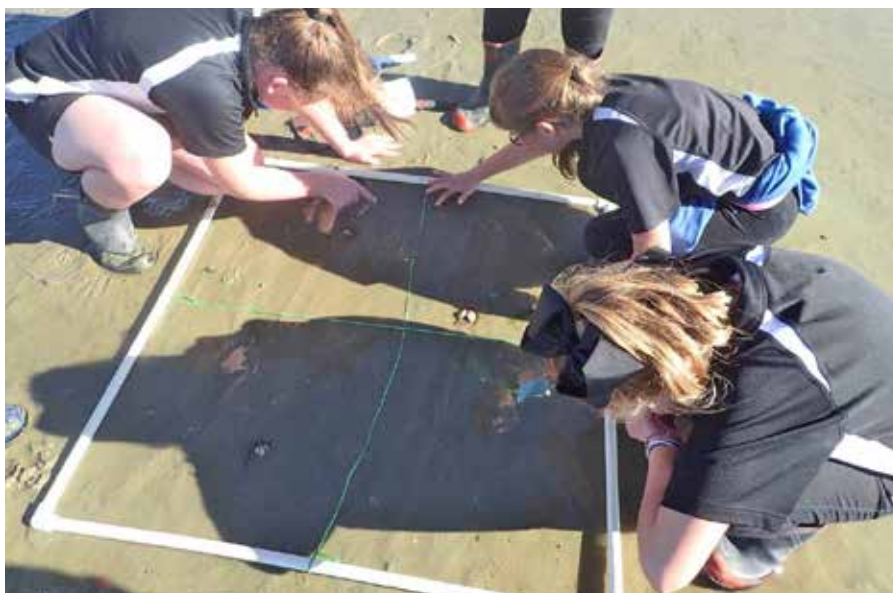


Participants at Pleasant River Estuary taking part in the Marine Studies Centre's pilot BioBlitz. One-square-metre quadrats (the square frames) were used to set out the area for each group to make biological observations during low-tide. There was one leader (in high-vis) per group of three to four schoolchildren from around East Otago. Photo: Jean McKinnon.

A BioBlitz involves a group of people—usually scientists, naturalists and volunteers—attempting to record as many of the living species within a designated area as possible. The programme encourages communities to work together to collect valuable baseline data about the biodiversity, distribution and abundance of marine species along the Otago coastline.

The BioBlitz was run by the University of Otago's Marine Studies Centre and was used as a pilot for a larger event to be held in Karitane in September.

The BioBlitz events are part of the Monitoring Coastal Change in Otago project by the Marine Studies Centre, funded in part by ORC's ECO Fund. The ORC has contributed over \$24,000 across two funding rounds to support the project, which will travel the coast of Otago engaging local communities in monitoring their coastal environment.



Keep an eye out on our Facebook page closer to the September school holidays for more information on how to get involved, and in the meantime, keep Sunday 29 September for the community BioBlitz at Karitane. The BioBlitz team hopes to involve schools on Friday 27 September. For further information, contact **marine-studies@otago.ac.nz**

What's up at ORC?

Report wallaby sightings

Wallabies have the potential to significantly impact the Otago economy and local biodiversity values by damaging crops and competing with livestock for pasture.

ORC undertakes monitoring and contracts poisoning operations to try and eradicate wallabies from the region. They are currently not well established, but it's essential we keep the population down so it stays that way.

The Otago Pest Plan requires land occupiers in Otago to destroy wallabies on their land. If you spot a wallaby in Otago—dead or alive—report it by calling

0800 474 082 or through our wallaby sighting form at:

www.orc.govt.nz/wallabies

Direct debit rate payments

Invoices for 2019-20 rates will be in your letterbox this month. These must be paid by 31 October to avoid a penalty.

Did you know you can set up a direct debit to pay your ORC rates in instalments? With direct debit, you can either:

- Pay the full amount owing by direct debit on the due date 31 October, or
- Pay in three equal instalments on 31 October and the last business day in the months of February and June. Rate penalties will not apply to current year rates using this option.

You can set up a direct debit to make paying your rates easy and stress-free at:

www.orc.govt.nz/rates/ways-to-pay



Enviroschools update

Enviroschools across Otago are finding out what lives in their neighbourhoods. Fenwick Primary students spent last term learning about the local ecology and made tracking tunnels to identify the animals they share their community with.

They found out about the impact introduced mammals are having on birds, invertebrates and lizards.

The students have built trap boxes and are working with their local community to reduce the numbers of rats and mice. They will carry on monitoring the tracking tunnels to see if the traps are making a difference.



Register to vote or stand in local body elections

2019 is an election year for local authorities, and that includes ORC. Candidate nominations close at 12 noon on 16 August, so if you're interested in running you will need to put your name forward before then.

Voting documents will be delivered between 20 and 25 September, ahead of election day on 12 October; the polls close at 12 noon. Preliminary results will be announced later on election day, before being confirmed between 17 and 23 October.

You can visit **www.vote.nz** to enrol to vote or update your details.

Check out the Candidate Handbook for more information about standing for election in the ORC at:

www.orc.govt.nz/2019election

Have you signed up for On-Stream yet?

We have a monthly e-newsletter that keeps you up to date with what's happening around Otago. Email us to sign up: water@orc.govt.nz



You can like Otago Regional Council on Facebook for regular updates.