



# OTAGO CATCHMENT COMMUNITY INC

## Annual Report 2025-2026

September 2026

CRAIG SIMPSON PREPARED FOR OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL AND  
MINISTRY FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

## Executive Summary

The 2025–2026 year was another period of significant achievement and progress for Otago Catchment Community Inc. (OCC), as we continued our work supporting catchment groups to address environmental challenges throughout the Otago region.

This Annual Report highlights some of OCC's achievements in delivering its 2025–2026 Annual Work Plan, which is closely aligned with the organisation's four objectives. Key achievements included:

- Nine workshops were delivered to help groups develop their visions and work plans.
- Twenty-one groups received funding for coordination and administration support.
- Nineteen catchment group projects were supported through the Kick-start Fund.
- OCC led or co-delivered 23 catchment group events.
- Twelve training opportunities were delivered to help groups and coordinators build their skills and capability.
- Two catchment forums were co-delivered with NZ Landcare Trust.
- OCC created 12 opportunities for groups to connect with stakeholders and mana whenua, and six opportunities for groups to connect with one another.

We maintained strong relationships with key stakeholders throughout the year. This included continued collaboration with MPI's On-Farm Support team, an active role in the Otago Extension Network, and a growing relationship with ORC's Catchments team. These relationships help OCC connect catchment groups with relevant stakeholders and promote catchment group events, workshops and stories throughout the region.

The report provides an overview of OCC's budget and expenditure for the 2025–2026 year, including separate reporting on the Wai Connection programme. Section 3 outlines the funding provided to catchment groups. This included \$258,626.63 granted to 21 groups for coordination and administration support, together with \$41,465 provided to support 19 projects through OCC's Kick-start Fund.

Section 4 assesses how the work of catchment groups contributes to addressing environmental issues and provides examples of the positive work taking place throughout the region.

Section 5 presents the Project Data Report, outlining the number, membership and geographic distribution of catchment groups across Otago. It also highlights the addition of two new OCC member groups during the year.

The final section considers OCC's future opportunities and direction. These include continuing to strengthen relationships with ORC's Catchments Team and MPI's On-Farm Support team; continuing the Kick-start Fund, which fills a gap in the funding currently available to catchment groups; and implementing a contract variation with the Ministry for Primary Industries that allows OCC to continue supporting Otago's catchment groups. The section also considers future opportunities identified through the OCC Annual Survey.

We would like to thank our generous funders, Otago Regional Council and the Ministry for Primary Industries, for their continued support. We look forward to working alongside both organisations in the year ahead to help Otago's catchment groups achieve their water-quality and wider environmental goals.

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# Introduction

The year 2025-2026 has been another successful year for the Otago Catchment Community Inc (OCC) as it continues its efforts to support catchment groups working to address environmental issues throughout the region. This annual report reflects on the work OCC has undertaken throughout the year, where we have worked closely with stakeholders, and industry leaders to build momentum and support Otago's Catchment Groups in helping them achieve their water quality and environmental goals.

This report summarises progress against the OCC Annual Work Plan and explains how the year's activities have contributed to our four objectives. It presents the targets and outputs for each objective, showing that OCC met—and, in most cases, exceeded—its annual targets. The section also provides an overview of the organisation's governance.

Section 2 provides financial reporting, highlighting the income and the expenditure of the organisation. In Section 3, we provide a discussion on funding and an overview of our operational activities and provide a breakdown of funding support given to the groups. In Section 4 we provide an assessment of CGs' work to address environmental issues, which provides some examples of positive work going on in the region. Section 5 provides the Project Data Report where we outline the number of groups, memberships, and their locations throughout the region.

In the final section, we address the future opportunities and direction of OCC. Highlights include the continuing connections with the ORC catchment and MPI's On-farm Support teams. The continuation of a 'Kick-start' fund which is viewed as gap in the funding currently on offer to catchment groups. A contract variation with the Ministry of Primary Industries, allowing us to continue to support Otago's groups. And finally, a review of opportunities as presented in our Annual Survey.

Otago Catchment Community would like to acknowledge the funding given by the Otago Regional Council (ORC) and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), without which we would not be able to achieve this effective mahi we are undertaking throughout the region.

# 1. 2025-2026 Work Plan Outputs

In this first section the outputs from OCC's work plan have been compiled into the tables below, which relate to our objectives.

## OCC Vision and Objectives

**"To create and support an Otago wide network of Catchment Groups that are addressing environmental issues now and for generations to come".**

In the previous reporting year, our objectives were reviewed and consolidated from five to four objectives. These four objectives continue to guide our work during the 2025-2026 year.

The Otago Catchment Community vision is backed by its objectives; these are:

1. Assisting with the formation and direction setting of all Catchment Groups enabling them to run independently.
2. Enabling sustainable funding to support changing needs of groups.
3. Facilitate connections between catchment groups and linking with Govt, Iwi, Regional Authorities and Stakeholders.
4. Facilitating access to experts, information, technology and education.

### Wai Connection funding

In addition to our core work programme, OCC was awarded funding this year through the Wai Connection programme. This programme is led by the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust and funded through the Ministry for the Environment's Essential Freshwater Fund. This funding has allowed us to continue to build capability in Otago's catchment groups, by providing funding particularly for training workshops. Some standout features of the use of this funding are outlined in Section 3.2.1.

## 1.1 Support the establishment and direction of Catchment Groups.

Supporting catchment groups is a fundamental aspect of OCC's role. The table below presents the targets and outputs from our 2025-2026 work plan and illustrates the significant support and opportunities that OCC presents to Otago's catchment group network.

A particular highlight under this objective was the delivery of nine facilitated workshops to help groups establish or review their vision, priorities and work plans:

- Vision setting with Teviot (July)
- Vision setting with Lauder Water Users Group (Sept)
- Action plan with Friends of Bullock Creek (Sept)
- Action plan with Ida Valley (Nov)
- Action plan with Lowburn (Dec)
- Consensus method to prioritise woody plant pest control with Lowburn (March)
- Action plan review with Otago South River Care (April)
- Consensus workshop to identify biodiversity projects for Mid-Taieri Wai (April)
- Action plan review with Ida Valley (June)

| <b>Assisting with the formation and direction setting of all Catchment Groups enabling them to run independently</b> |                                                                |                                                                          |                         |               |                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Target Area</b>                                                                                                   | <b>Actions</b>                                                 | <b>Success Measures</b>                                                  | <b>Target 2025-2026</b> | <b>Output</b> | <b>Comments</b>                                                                                                                           |
| <b>1. Group Development &amp; Planning</b>                                                                           | Run group planning/review sessions                             | # of consensus workshops delivered                                       | 8 sessions – 2 per qtr  | 9 sessions    |                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                      |                                                                | # of groups with (strategic work plan) vision, work plan &/or comms plan | 17 groups               | 18 groups     | 18 groups have current strategic plan                                                                                                     |
|                                                                                                                      | Facilitate new group formation where communities show interest |                                                                          |                         |               | Several discussions continue with groups in different areas. Discussions are ongoing with the Lauder Water Users Group and Cambrian Group |
|                                                                                                                      | Facilitate governance setup for groups (constitutions, rules)  |                                                                          |                         |               | Three groups utilized funding support when reviewing their constitution this year – NOSLaM, Pomahaka, and Lake Wānaka                     |

Additional events and workshops OCC led, helped to deliver or played a major role included:

- Supporting ACE Community of practice event, & providing demonstration – Tapanui (July)
- Facilitated meeting between Lauder & MCG (July)
- Delivery of Succession Plan to KKT Puketeraki and the Toitū te Hākapupu governance group (Aug)
- Facilitated meeting to connect TVWC and MPI, ORC, CODC re Millers Flat rural waste workshop (Sept)
- Lake Hayes weeding event - provided morning tea and assistance (Sept)
- Lawerence Rural Users Group - Admin (Sep)
- Lowburn planting day - morning tea and assistance (Oct)
- Facilitated meeting between F&G, CFT, Lowburn CG, DOC and ORC re Lowburn fish distribution project plan (Oct)
- Facilitated meeting between Ida Valley & DOC for planting project (Oct)
- Facilitated meeting between Cambrian landowner & MCG (Nov)
- EOCG stream health session - running SHMAK station and help with eDNA (Nov)
- Facilitated meeting - Lindis & CODC re rural waste management (Feb)
- Facilitated meeting - Lindis & WAI Wānaka re rural waste management planning (March)
- Facilitated meeting - Ospri, Downer, ORC re Ida Valley predator control workshop (March)
- Facilitated predator control workshop with Ida Valley (March)
- Supporting ACE Community of practice event – Owaka (March)

- Facilitated meeting Lauder, Ida Valley, and Ballance regarding farm planning workshop possibilities (April)
- Otago South - Tuakitoko Planting day Coffee cart and parking warden (April)
- Lowburn planting event - OCC provided morning tea, spades and assistance (May)
- OCC contribution – Thomsons Creek planting event - OCC provided spades and assistance (May)
- OCC contribution - travel costs for catchment group members to attend national catchment group forum (June)
- OCC facilitated meeting Lauder, Ida Valley, MCG and agencies re farm planning workshop (June)
- Healthy Taieri project - Support on planting days for lower Taieri (May/June)

## 1.2 Enabling sustainable funding to support changing needs of groups

The breakdown of funding given to groups through both the direct group fund (DGF) and the project fund is shown in Section 3. Outputs are shown in the table below.

| <i>Enabling sustainable funding to support changing needs of groups</i> |                                                             |                       |                               |                                   |                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Target Area                                                             | Actions                                                     | Success Measures      | Target 2025-2026              | Output                            | Comments                                                                                            |
| <b>2. Sustainable Funding</b>                                           | Sharing information for groups to take up direct group fund | # of groups with DGF  | 17 groups uplifting \$230,000 | 21 groups with \$258,626.63       | More groups continue to request this ongoing support to help them achieve their environmental goals |
|                                                                         | Sharing information for groups to take up Kick-start fund   | # of kick-start funds | 12 groups uplifting \$36,000  | 19 projects with \$41,465 funding | Successful first year of Kick-start fund, allowing us to aid 19 different projects.                 |

## 1.3 Facilitate collaboration between catchment groups, government, iwi, regional authorities and stakeholders

Through our work programme we continued to provide opportunities for catchment group members to connect with stakeholders and mana whenua, which are outlined in the table below.

Opportunities for groups to connect with each other were primarily presented through two catchment group forums, the first was an urban forum, held online in December. The second was our annual in-person forum, delivered in collaboration with NZ Landcare Trust in May. Other opportunities for groups to connect included training events that enabled members from different groups to gather together.

| <i>Facilitate connections between CG's and linking with Govt, Iwi, Regional Authorities and Stakeholders</i> |                                                                                          |                                    |                  |             |                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Target Area                                                                                                  | Actions                                                                                  | Success Measures                   | Target 2025-2026 | Output      | Comments                                                  |
| <b>3. Partnerships &amp; Relationships</b>                                                                   | Create opportunities for groups & stakeholders (e.g. iwi, councils, industry) to connect | # of opportunities OCC has created | 10 per year      | 12          | 12 opportunities were created throughout the year         |
|                                                                                                              | Create opportunities for groups to connect with each other                               | # of opportunities OCC has created | 8 per year       | 6           | 6 separate opportunities were created throughout the year |
|                                                                                                              | Issue newsletters/updates to groups and partners                                         |                                    | 3 per year       | 3 delivered | Newsletters delivered in September, December and June     |

## 1.4 Facilitating access to experts, information, technology and education

Through this part of our work programme, we delivered 12 opportunities for CG leaders or coordinators to upskill. Part of these trainings were enabled through the Wai Connection programme. Training sessions delivered were:

- Engagement workshop with Ida Valley (Sept)
- Stream Health Assessment Kit training – Lowburn (Oct)
- Engagement workshop with Friends of Bullock Creek (Nov)
- Engagement workshop with Mid Taieri Wai (Nov)
- Newsletter training workshop with various groups (Nov)
- Newsletter workshop follow-up training (Feb)

- Canva training workshop (March)
- Predator Control workshop with Ida Valley (March)
- Stream health monitoring training in collaboration with ORC with Lauder Water Users Group (April)
- Rural waste management workshop with Otago South (April)
- Rural waste management workshop with NOSLaM (April)
- Bird count training with Thomsons Creek (June)

| <i>Facilitating access to experts, information, technology and education</i> |                                     |                                  |                  |        |                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Target Area                                                                  | Actions                             | Success Measures                 | Target 2025-2026 | Output | Comments                                                                                  |
| <b>4. Knowledge &amp; Expertise</b>                                          | Deliver training sessions/workshops | # of training sessions delivered | 12 per year      | 12     | 12 training events delivered                                                              |
|                                                                              | Maintain/update online resource hub |                                  |                  |        | Website has recently been updated to ensure it more accessible to catchment group members |

## 1.5 Governance

OCC benefits from a strong governance group comprising landowner representatives from throughout the region. We would like to acknowledge the support given on the governance group, through ORC Councillor representatives Kate Wilson, and Robbie Byars who attended OCC meetings throughout the year. ORC General Manager Environmental Delivery, Joanna Gilroy has attended the monthly meetings of the group, and her input has been extremely valuable. We would also like to acknowledge the support and direction provided by MPI Staff Representatives Janet Gregory (Regional Advisor) and Sandra Campbell (MPI On-Farm Support) who similarly attended online and in-person meetings throughout the year.

Key governance achievements include:

- Review of constitution, rules and policies.
- 11 monthly meetings (excluding January) and including one in-person meeting.
- Members feed into various committees with which they are associated.

## 2. OCC Financial Performance 2025-2026

### Financial Highlights

OCC's financial results for the year ended 30 June 2026 are summarised below and presented in the accompanying Profit and Loss Statement in Section 2.1

*The financial statements are scheduled for independent audit in September 2026. The completed Independent Auditor's Report will be provided to funders once available.*

**Total Revenue:** \$890,075.00

OCC's primary funding sources were:

- Otago Regional Council (ORC): \$430,000
- Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI): \$150,000
- Wai Connection: \$310,075

The funding was applied as follows:

- MPI funding supported OCC coordinator costs.
- ORC funding supported OCC's remaining core operating costs and catchment group activities.
- Wai Connection funding was managed under its own work programme, separately from OCC's core funding.

ORC had previously provided three years of funding in advance, at \$78,000 per year, to support an additional coordinator across the region. The 2026–2027 financial year will be the final year covered by this funding.

#### **Additional notes:**

- Legal expenses include fees associated with helping catchment groups update their constitutions to comply with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022.
- The Catchment Group Funding expense categories include funding paid or invoiced during the reporting period. They do not include the following approved funding, which had not yet been invoiced:
  - \$10,294 of approved project funding expected to be invoiced during the 2026-2027 financial year.
  - \$28,435 of the \$41,465 in kick-start funding approved for the period, which is expected to be invoiced during the 2026–2027 financial year.
- The Profit and Loss Statement reports a net profit of \$16,726.49. This includes \$20,672.93 of unspent funding relating to the Wai Connection project. Under the funding agreement, this amount is repayable to the funder and is not available for OCC's general operations. OCC had received an invoice for the repayment at the time this report was prepared.

## 2.1 OCC Profit and Loss

### Profit and Loss

Otago Catchment Community Incorporated  
For the year ended 30 June 2026

|                                    | 2026              |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Gross Profit</b>                | -                 |
| <b>Other Income</b>                |                   |
| Grant Income                       | 580,000.00        |
| Grant Income - Non-Government      | 310,075.00        |
| <b>Total Other Income</b>          | <b>890,075.00</b> |
| <b>Operating Expenses</b>          |                   |
| Accountancy Fees                   | 3,571.00          |
| Advertising                        | 3,783.80          |
| Audit Fees                         | 2,850.00          |
| Bank Charges                       | 60.00             |
| Catchment Group Events             | 11,194.06         |
| Catchment Group Funding - No GST   | 82,349.53         |
| Catchment Group Funding - with GST | 225,542.72        |
| Conference Expenses                | 1,300.78          |
| Contractor - GST                   | 295,451.09        |
| Contractor - No GST                | 29,842.00         |
| eDNA Testing Costs                 | 18,683.00         |
| Engagement & Communication         | 74,892.22         |
| General Expenses                   | 1,207.67          |
| Honariums                          | 10,800.00         |
| Insurance                          | 2,303.00          |
| Interest Expenses                  | 2,164.42          |
| Iwi Consultation                   | 586.54            |
| Legal Expenses                     | 6,240.00          |
| Mileage - Committee Members        | 574.56            |
| Mileage Reimbursement GST          | 32,007.22         |
| Mileage Reimbursement No GST       | 1,869.78          |
| Pest & Predator Management         | 33,934.83         |
| Printing & Stationery              | 740.07            |
| Sediment & Physiographics          | 18,326.09         |
| Subscriptions                      | 2,624.35          |
| Training                           | 10,449.78         |
| <b>Total Operating Expenses</b>    | <b>873,348.51</b> |
| <b>Net Profit</b>                  | <b>16,726.49</b>  |

## 3. OCC Funding and Operational Overview

In the 2025-2026 financial year, Otago Catchment Community Inc (OCC) encountered no significant funding issues. This stability allowed OCC to continue to effectively support Catchment Groups across Otago.

### 3.1 Catchment Group Funding

To ensure transparency and showcase the groups that have received funding from OCC the following tables 'OCC Direct Group Fund break down' and 'OCC Catchment Group Kick-Start Fund break down' have been included below. Twenty-one groups were funded through the Direct Group Fund, for a total of \$258,626.63. The newly introduced Kick-start Fund was well subscribed and provided groups with accessible funding to begin practical projects. Nineteen projects were funded through this fund, for a total of \$41,465. The funding criteria for Direct Group Funding is included for reference in Appendix 1. The funding criteria for Kick-start Funding is included in Appendix 2.

### 3.2 OCC Operational Overview

On the operational front, there were limited changes in this financial year. We continue to contract two full-time contractors, Sam Dixon, covering the Coastal Otago area, and Nicole Sutton, covering Central Otago area. In addition, we contract two part-time contractors, Camille McAtamney, who provides administrative direction for OCC, and Craig Simpson who fills the role of Otago Regional Manager for OCC. This has allowed an increase in coordination support, ensuring that OCC can offer targeted support to catchment groups throughout the Region.

In addition, Rebecca Begg came on in a part-time capacity to deliver the Wai Connection work programme.

#### 3.2.1 Wai Connection Funding

In the 2025-2026 year, OCC successfully continued to deliver Otago's Wai Connection programme, which is a project led by Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust (MSCT), funded through the Ministry for the Environment's Essential Freshwater Fund, aiming to build capability and capacity in New Zealand's freshwater management. This was the second round of funding offered through the MSCT.

Highlights from the Wai Connection programme included:

#### **Engagement & Communication**

- providing website and communication support to 7 catchment groups.
- 4x engagement training workshops.

- 4x newsletter, social media and Canva training workshops.
- supported two participants to attend a te reo Māori course.
- supported participants attending NZ Landcare Trust's Aotearoa Catchment Extension course.
- supported six participants to attend conferences.

**Sediment and Mapping**

Mapping support to two catchment groups helping them identify priority areas for mitigation strategies to improve water quality

**Pest & Predator Management**

Provided opportunities for predator trapping to 5 catchment group members.

Developed 3 pest management strategies for catchment groups.

**eDNA**

Provided opportunities for 64 eDNA samples to be collected, helping groups understand the health and values of their freshwater systems.

**Direct Group Support**

Supported 16 catchment groups with funding for a catchment coordinator (2.4FTE) to assist with administration and coordination of their group.

| OCC Direct Group Fund Break Down |                |              |                 |               |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group                            | Financial year | Date Granted | Amount applying | Total granted | key Contact          | Details on grant request                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Friends of Bullock Creek         | 2025-2026      | 15/12/25     | \$11,544.00     | \$11,544.00   | Andy Oxley           | \$37/hr, 6 hrs per week. Admin role to deliver communications, promotion and support of volunteer days, events, working with partners, funding sourcing and reporting, organising board meetings and papers.                                                  |
| Ida Valley                       | 2025-2026      | 15/12/25     | \$3,000.00      | \$3,000.00    | Vicki O'Neill        | \$35/hr, 85 hours. To ensure continued community engagement, collaboration, and environmental gains in the Ida Valley Catchment.                                                                                                                              |
| Lowburn CG                       | 2025-2026      | 15/12/25     | \$12,080.00     | \$12,080.00   | Jean Gibson          | \$35/hr, 328 hrs (8 hrs/wk x 41 wks). Administration, group/project coordination, community engagement. Annual premium payment for Public Liability Insurance (\$600)– condition of LINZ approval for Lowburn inlet restoration planting project.             |
| Manuherekia CG                   | 2025-2026      | 26/03/26     | \$10,000.00     | \$10,000.00   | Claire Hadley        | \$50 /hr, 200 hours. Ongoing administrative support for MCG. Communications, on-going database development/info collection, working with other catchment group/sub catchment administrators. \$10,000 is approx. 1/3 admin time on MCG activities.            |
| Open Valley Urban Ecosanctuary   | 2025-2026      | 15/12/25     | \$14,981.63     | \$14,981.63   | Jennie Wagner-Gorton | Retain & restore native urban wildlife & indigenous biodiversity & ecosystems. With focus on stream health and education, and Sycamore removal                                                                                                                |
| Sustainable Otago Peninsula CG   | 2025-2026      | 15/12/25     | \$10,000.00     | \$10,000.00   | Chris Arnison        | Build on the successful engagement of 24-25, by creating a website and maintaining the comms to keep the engagement of the catchment. In addition, mapping tools are being sought to increase SOP's ability to share their story and communicate their plans. |
| Otago South RC                   | 2025-2026      | 15/12/25     | \$14,560.00     | \$14,560.00   | Simon Davies         | Great support for our Catchment Groups through admin & facilitation. General Admin, Basic Accounting, Organisation of AGM, social media, Events and coordination.                                                                                             |

|                  |           |          |             |             |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Upper Taieri Wai | 2025-2026 | 15/12/25 | \$30,000.00 | \$14,000.00 | Renee Weir      | To fund the positions of administration and Catchment Coordination to continue the engagement received in 2024. noting there was additional support to UTW through the Tiaki project which ends June 2026. (Noting most of Tiaki work has already wound up)                                     |
| WAI Wānaka       | 2025-2026 | 15/12/25 | \$25,000.00 | \$20,000.00 | Serena Ottman   | \$5000 X 5 group. Provide ongoing support and facilitation for 5 urban groups. Foster collaboration. Document and share learnings. Expand the network - more urban catchment groups and/or expanding range of existing groups.                                                                  |
| AKV              | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26 | \$20,000    | \$20,000.00 | Paul Southworth | Coordination of baseline activities including community. evenings, education sessions and pest control admin.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Cardrona         | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26 | \$10,000    | \$6,500.00  | Sarah Scurr     | Applying for group coordination/financial manager \$45/hr, 67hrs (\$3015) + Facilitator (planning, execution and follow up) \$5000 + Experts (access to experts) \$5000. The funding will be put towards capability building, collaboration and community engagement, wellbeing and connection. |
| East Otago       | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26 | \$15,000    | \$15,000.00 | Steph Scott     | Admin and coordination of group, to promote sustainable practices and to engage with the local community and stakeholders.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Lauder           | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26 | \$5,671     | \$5,671.00  | Kelly Heckler   | Admin and coordination \$50/hr, 200hrs for: Farm planning - planning information event and workshops, group meeting and structure including constitution, action plan implementation, annual stream health monitoring of Lauder Creek.                                                          |
| Lindis           | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26 | \$12,000    | \$12,000.00 | Paula Macfie    | Administration \$50 per/hr, 240 hrs - group admin, coordination, engagement, implementation, project management, sourcing funding, progressing catchment water management plan (actions relating to water quality).                                                                             |
| Luggate          | 2025-2026 | 18/06/26 | \$10,000    | \$10,000.00 | Ben Trotter     | \$45/hr (\$4000) Organiser, \$150/hr (\$2400) Facilitator, \$1800/day (\$3600) Experts for increased engagement, knowledge growth, connection.                                                                                                                                                  |

|             |           |              |                     |                     |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maungawera  | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26     | \$10,000            | \$10,000.00         | Mylrea Bell      | \$45/hr (\$10,000) for coordination/administration for: Development and strengthening of Maungawera Biodiversity Group, Knowledge Growth, Increased Catchment Community Engagement, Connection.                                                                                          |
| Mid Taieri  | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26     | \$10,000            | \$10,000.00         | Bridget Roulston | Admin, coordination role for group. Established last year                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| NOSLaM      | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26     | \$25,650.00         | \$25,650.00         | Bridget Fox      | Admin, coordination and financial coordination of group. Facilitation of workshops/field days and engaging the community and stakeholder network                                                                                                                                         |
| Pomahaka    | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26     | \$15,000            | \$15,000.00         | Barbara Johnston | Continuation of admin and coordination roles. Ongoing Trib meetings and organising events.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| TVWC        | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26     | \$10,000            | \$10,000.00         | Deidre Perkins   | \$50/hr, 5rs per week for: Coordinating water testing, investigate beginning another trib group (in addition to Cave Creek), correspond with members, telling the Group's stories, activity coordination, attend workshops, deliver events, relationship with schools, apply for grants. |
| Lake Wānaka | 2025-2026 | 18/05/26     | \$8,640             | \$8,640.00          | Randall Aspinall | Jess Hishon (Catchment Group Lead) \$60/hour (\$8,640) to organise the groups and facilitate meetings/get togethers. Jess has come from E. Can so could also provide some expert advice to Group.                                                                                        |
|             |           | <b>Total</b> | <b>\$283,126.63</b> | <b>\$258,626.63</b> |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| OCC Catchment Group Kick-start Fund Break Down |       |              |                 |                 |                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group                                          | Year  | Granted      | Amount applying | Total granted   | Details on grant request                                                                                               |
| Lowburn                                        | 25-26 | 1-Oct-25     | \$380           | \$380           | Public liability insurance - a LINZ authorisation condition for the Lowburn Inlet riparian planting project            |
| Lowburn                                        | 25-26 | 2-Oct-25     | \$125           | \$125           | To cover Aon admin, charge public liability insurance premium                                                          |
| OSRC Owaka                                     | 25-26 | 21-Nov-25    | \$2,225         | \$2,225         | Trial of Penergetic Deer repellent on swedes and fodder beet to assess suitability to aid pest control on winter crops |
| Bremner Bay                                    | 25-26 | 21-Nov-25    | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Summer water monitoring and signage. Bremner Bay is a WAI Wānaka Urban Catchment Group                                 |
| Lowburn                                        | 25-26 | 24-Oct-25    | \$2,280         | \$2,280         | Logo/brand development                                                                                                 |
| WAI Wānaka                                     | 25-26 | 23-Jan-26    | \$6,590         | \$3,000         | Replacement of multiparameter water quality instrument                                                                 |
| FOBC                                           | 25-26 | 12-Mar-26    | \$660           | \$660           | Upgrade Mail Chimp subscription                                                                                        |
| Ida Valley                                     | 25-26 | 16-Mar-26    | \$300           | \$300           | Tear drop flag with Ida Valley logo/branding                                                                           |
| Lake Hawea                                     | 25-26 | 24-Mar-26    | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Towards a Predator-Free Lake Hawea Catchment: Community-Led Action for Biodiversity - \$3000 for predator control plan |
| Ōwhiro                                         | 25-26 | 19-Mar-26    | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Planting project                                                                                                       |
| NOSLaM                                         | 25-26 | 21-Apr-26    | \$2,744         | \$2,744         | Laptop and Cell phone for Coordinator                                                                                  |
| WAI Wānaka                                     | 25-26 | 18-May-26    | \$1,975         | \$1,975         | Event collateral - customised t-shirts, hats and table covers                                                          |
| Bremner Bay                                    | 25-26 | 18-May-26    | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Faecal Source Tracking, informed by water monitoring project                                                           |
| EOCG                                           | 25-26 | 22-May-26    | \$2,478         | \$2,478         | Focal Point for Waikouaiti School                                                                                      |
| EOCG                                           | 25-26 | 30 June 26   | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Andersons Lagoon Planting Project                                                                                      |
| NOSLaM (Kakanui)                               | 25-26 | 30 June 26   | \$3,000         | \$2643          | Fencing material for Kakanui estuary                                                                                   |
| Lindis                                         | 25-26 | 25-Jun-26    | \$1,655         | \$1,655         | Rural Waste Recycling event with AgRecovery. Coffee cart, catering, spot-prizes                                        |
| MCG                                            | 25-26 | 19-Jun-26    | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Signage to increase engagement                                                                                         |
| Thomsons Creek                                 | 25-26 | 12-Jun-26    | \$3,000         | \$3,000         | Tower Binoculars for Orkney wetland viewing platform                                                                   |
|                                                |       | <b>Total</b> | <b>\$45,412</b> | <b>\$41,465</b> |                                                                                                                        |

## 4. Contribution to improving water quality and wider environmental outcomes

The Otago Catchment Community (OCC) supports 29 catchment groups, together with 28 associated pod or tributary groups, all of which are dedicated to improving water quality and the wider environment. These groups work independently, each with their unique vision and objectives to address the specific environmental pressures they face. Through strategic support and facilitation, OCC enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of these groups to help them achieve their goals.

One of the primary ways OCC supports these groups is through group consensus method facilitation. These facilitated workshops help groups set action plans, visions, values, and conduct strategic reviews, ensuring a collective and cohesive aim among members. This approach reduces volunteer time in the planning stages, allowing more time for environmental action. Additionally, OCC connects these groups to the Otago Regional Council's (ORC) Catchment Advisor, Science and other applicable teams. This collaboration ensures that water quality data and council advice are integrated into the groups' plans, further enhancing their effectiveness.

Otago Catchment Community provided \$258,626.63 to 21 groups for administration, coordination and facilitation support. While it may be challenging to directly link this funding to immediate improvements in water quality and the environmental, it is crucial for formalising processes and ensuring that action plans are executed effectively. Having a paid coordinator ensures that tasks are completed, and goals are met, which indirectly supports environmental improvements. Nineteen kick-start group projects were supported with \$41,465 of funding. Examples of the projects supported include:

- Trial of Pengergetic Deer repellent on swedes and fodder beet (Otago South River Care).
- Summer water monitoring and signage at Bremner Bay (Bremner Bay).
- Towards a Predator-Free control plan for Lake Hawea Catchment (Lake Hawea).
- Replacement of multiparameter water quality instrument (WAI Wānaka).
- Wetland planting project (Ōwhiro).
- Faecal Source Tracking, informed by water monitoring project (Bremner Bay).
- Supporting a planting project at Andersons Lagoon (East Otago).
- Fencing material for Kakanui estuary planting (NOSLaM).
- Rural Waste Recycling event with AgRecovery (Lindis).
- Tower Binoculars for Orkney wetland viewing platform (Thomsons Creek)

OCC provided funding support for catchment group coordinators and leaders to attend NZ Landcare Trust's Aotearoa Catchment Extension programme, where they learnt new skills relating to catchment group work and collaborated with groups from throughout the country working through this upskilling programme. Additionally, OCC supported six Otago registrants to attend the National Catchment Group forum in Wellington in June, where catchment group representatives had opportunity to meet and connect with other catchment group representatives doing similar work throughout the country.



Finally, the training events OCC offered throughout the year included running stream health monitoring workshops, a predator control workshop, and monitoring environmental health of a wetland through bird count training.



## 5. Project Data Report

| Project Data                                       | Data                                        | Comments/additional information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Number of OCC members                              | 24                                          | Increase of two                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Number of new OCC members during 25/26             | 2                                           | Maungawera and Luggate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Total number of existing groups                    | 29 with 28 sub-groups                       | Sub-groups are tributary or pod groups with an umbrella group (Umbrella groups counted in total).                                                                                                                                                                |
| Number of new groups since last report             | 0                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Number of Groups by FMU with corresponding groups* | Dunedin and Coast FMU - 6                   | Aroha Kaikorai Valley, Open Vue, Tokomairiro (Otago South), Otago Peninsula Group, Ōwhiro, Tomahawk                                                                                                                                                              |
|                                                    | Catlins FMU - 1                             | Catlins (Otago South)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                    | Taieri FMU - 3                              | Lower Taieri, Mid Taieri Wai, Upper Taieri Wai                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                    | North Otago FMU - 2                         | East Otago, NOSLaM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                    | Clutha Mata-Au FMU - 19                     | Pomahaka, Teviot Valley, Cardrona, Glenorchy, Friends of Bullock Creek, Lake Hawea, Lake Hayes, Lake Wānaka, Lauder Water Users Group, Lindis, WAI Wānaka, Lowburn, Otago South, Ida Valley, Manuharekia CG, Thomsons Creek, Lake Whakatipu, Maungawera, Luggate |
| Locations of Group Operations                      | Appendix 3 & 4 OCC Map and CG location List |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

\*Note: Some groups operate across more than one FMU and are therefore listed more than once.



## 6. OCC future opportunities or directions

### Aligning work programmes

The regional manager role allows OCC to work more closely with ORC's Catchments Team and MPI's On-Farm Support team. This helps ensure that the respective work programmes complement one another and avoid unnecessary duplication. Staff are now meeting semi-regularly and we continue to build the relationships with both of our funders.

### Catchment group funding

Part way through the 2024-2025 year it was agreed by the governance group to halt OCC's project funding. The rationale was that the fund needed to be re-looked at, and if the uptake continued, the fund would provide a financial constraint on OCC in the long-term. A new 'Kick-start' fund has since been introduced in the 2025-2026 year. This allows groups to apply for up to \$3,000 per project. This funding amount is intended to complement ORC's Eco-Fund and was seen as a gap in the current offerings throughout Otago. As the kick-start funding was successful in its first year on offer, OCC intends to continue to provide this funding stream in the 2026-2027 financial year.

### Contract variation with the Ministry for Primary Industries

A contract variation with the Ministry of Primary Industries has been negotiated, following the ending of government funding for the Ministry of Primary Industries Integrated Farm Planning and the Ministry for the Environment's Freshwater Improvement Fund. The variation will ensure that the seven Otago catchment groups who have been involved in these funding opportunities are able to transition away from this funding, to ensure continuity of their work programmes and extension of learning from their respective projects. This contract variation will continue to allow OCC to support Otago's groups, with a small amount of additional support being directed to OCC Direct Group Funding rounds.

### Annual survey

The annual catchment group survey highlighted some areas where OCC can support catchment groups across Otago. The final survey report will be produced after the end of August, in the interim some highlights coming out of the survey for the year were:

**Group successes.** Successes commented on by groups included obtaining funding, event attendance, leadership, storytelling and collaboration across the catchment. An area that didn't appear in past surveys was the majority of groups commented that their systems and processes were key successes.





**Group challenges.** A continued challenge throughout many of the groups was landowner engagement, followed by engagement with stakeholders and internal communications.

**Support desired from OCC.** There were several key areas groups noted they would like ongoing support from OCC for the upcoming year. These included:

- Project funding support
- More information on upcoming regulations
- Examples of successful initiatives undertaken by other catchment groups and how they achieved them.





## Summary

This report has highlighted some of the many achievements of the Otago Catchment Community in the delivery of its 2025-2026 work plan. We continue to strive to find ways and opportunities to support Otago's Catchment Groups to achieve their water quality and environmental improvement goals.

Some of the highlights from the year include:

- 9 workshops delivered to help groups develop their vision or work plans.
- 21 groups were supported with funding to support their coordination or administration roles.
- 19 catchment group kick-start projects were supported.
- 23 catchment group events delivered where OCC had a significant role, through either leading or co-delivery.
- 12 training opportunities were delivered to allow groups or coordinators to upskill and increase capability in the region.
- 2 catchment forums were co-delivered with NZ Landcare Trust.
- OCC supported groups providing an increase in the opportunities for groups to connect with each and providing opportunities to connect with mana whenua.

We continued our strong connections with key stakeholders throughout the year, and of note this year was the increased connection with MPI's On-farm support team, key role at the Otago Extension Network and growing connection with ORC's Catchments team. These relationships allow us to make and expand connections between CGs and stakeholders, and this included the dissemination of CG events, workshops and stories.

In our income and expenditure report we reported our budget vs actuals for the year, including the Wai Connection programme income and expenditure. In Section 3, we provided a discussion on funding, and how this was distributed throughout Otago; we also outlined operational overview. In Section 4, we provided an assessment of the work of catchment groups to address environmental issues, providing some examples of positive work going on in the region.

Section 5 provided the Project Data Report, where we outlined the number of groups, memberships, and their locations throughout the region, highlighting two groups' memberships to OCC. Finally, in Section 6, we addressed the future opportunities and direction of OCC, with highlights discussing:

- Continuing connections with the ORC catchment and MPI On-farm Support teams.
- The continuation of our 'Kick-start' fund.
- Outline of a contract variation with MPI.
- And a review of opportunities as presented in our Annual Survey.





Looking forward to the 2026-2027 year, we anticipate many exciting opportunities to continue our work. Our work plan will be directed through the findings of the Annual Survey, and other opportunities that have presented themselves throughout the year.

Once again, we would like to thank our generous funders, the Otago Regional Council and the Ministry for Primary Industries, for their continued support as we work together to encourage Otago's Catchment Groups to achieve their water quality and environmental improvement goals. We look forward to working in partnership alongside both organisations in the year ahead.





## Appendix 1. Criteria + Terms & Conditions for OCC Direct Group Funding

### OCC Vision & Values

**“To create and support an Otago wide network of catchment groups that are addressing environmental issues now and for generations to come.”**

**THIS VISION IS BACKED BY OUR VALUES:**

- **Recognise the uniqueness of every catchment group**
- **Support all catchment groups no matter their size or stage**
- **Share knowledge and resources across the region**
- **Collaborate with the Otago community and all stakeholders**

**KEY OBJECTIVE OF OCC**

Guideline application amount \$10,000 per annum

### Background

The primary purpose of the Direct Group fund is to give catchment and water care groups an ability to finance personnel for administration, group coordination and community engagement for the purpose of pursuing activities. This fund is designed to help keep groups active and engaged by removing financial barriers to financing personnel.

### Direct Group Fund Description

- Contestable fund, amount dependent on funds available and at committee discretion. Guideline application amount \$10,000 per annum. There are two annual application windows
- Open 1 April, closes 30 April
- Open 1 November, closes 30 November
- Possible reapplication annually with co-funding preferred
- Potential for OCC to house funding on behalf of the group

### Direct Group Fund Application Description

**Available for:**





- Financing personnel for administration, group coordination, community engagement
- Costs for personnel only – this could be external contractors supporting your group
  - Overhead costs up to 30% of total application at committee discretion.

### **Expectations:**

- Work alongside and with support from OCC facilitators
- Invitations to OCC to attend events & workshops
- Agreement for OCC to promote your achievements through our communications
- Active community engagement of group should be demonstrated
- Groups application to align with OCC vision
- Show how the funding will benefit the group
- A plan with measurable outcomes, eg. # of events planned, community engagement success measures, how many hours the funding will cover and for what purpose
- OCC annual Catchment Group survey completed and returned during funding year.

### **What will not be funded:**

- Applications outside of Otago
- Applications that primarily benefit an individual
- Applications that are restrictive with results, data and learnings for other Otago Catchment Groups
- Political activity
- Capital items that primarily benefit an individual
- Commercial trials or Intellectual Property development
- Applications by businesses, agricultural levy bodies, local government and council funded organisations, unless they are participants within that catchment group in the Project
- Group activities related to water harvesting and allocation
- Retrospective funding
- Resource consenting (Please look into ORC's fund which is available to cover resource consent expenses for groups)
- Maintenance of existing projects
- Alcohol

### **Reporting**

- Summary report (1-2 pages incl photos) of group achievements for the period (12 months)
- Recognition of OCC in communications etc
- Stories and photos and attendance numbers in report
- Copy of financial reports or cashflow statements for the funding period





## Approval

Approval at OCC committee level following recommendation of the OCC funding group.

## Terms & Conditions

- Funding is for a 12 month period and can only be applied for in one funding round per year
- The catchment or watercare group applying has their own vision and values which should align with OCC vision
- All funding from OCC is GST exclusive
- Successful groups must be happy for OCC to promote their group
- All applications are assessed and ranked against the OCC funding assessment (outlined above)
- Grant funds will be transferred to recipients nominated bank account upon receipt of invoice
- Final funding decisions will be at the sole discretion of the OCC committee
- Any unspent funds will be reimbursed, within a reasonable time to OCC after 12 months from the funding agreement date, unless another agreement is reached (at the discretion of OCC committee)
- Groups who are successful are to provide their best contact information to OCC, for ease of communications between the two parties
- OCC Annual Catchment Group Survey completed and returned during funding year

OCC coordinators are available to discuss and support any ideas with catchment groups and help in the planning of applications

Email: [sam.dixon@otagocatchments.co.nz](mailto:sam.dixon@otagocatchments.co.nz) Or [nicole@otagocatchments.co.nz](mailto:nicole@otagocatchments.co.nz)





## Appendix 2. OCC Kick-start Funding Terms and Conditions

The purpose of this funding is to enable Otago Catchment Groups to build momentum towards achieving their visions for improving water quality and local environments, by assisting with start-up costs for new groups and enhancing the momentum of established groups.

OCC Kick-start Funding is a contestable fund, the amount allocated is dependent on funds available and is allocated at OCC committee discretion. This fund is open year-round.

### Conditions

- The activity must align with OCC vision and values.
- Multiple or single applications accepted for up to \$3,000 per group per annum.
- OCC must be acknowledged in any of your group's communications related to receiving this funding.
- OCC may use funded groups as case studies in our communications.
- Groups must provide details of a contact person for OCC to liaise with about the funding.
- Funding payment(s) can be made direct from OCC to a creditor upon receipt of invoice, or by way of the group invoicing OCC and providing receipts for payments made.
- Final funding decisions will be at the discretion of the OCC committee.
- Any unspent funds remaining after the funding term (usually 12 months) will be retained by OCC.
- The annual OCC survey must be completed upon request.
- A Kick-start Funding report must be completed at the end of the funding term (template on Funding page of OCC website)
- All funding from OCC is GST exclusive

### **What can be funded**

- Applications from Catchment Groups and Water Care Groups in Otago.
- Small projects e.g. logo development, planting.
- Capital expenditure such as banners, spades, signs, monitoring equipment, predator traps.
- Events/workshops/field trips, e.g. access to experts.
- Data analysis and reporting.

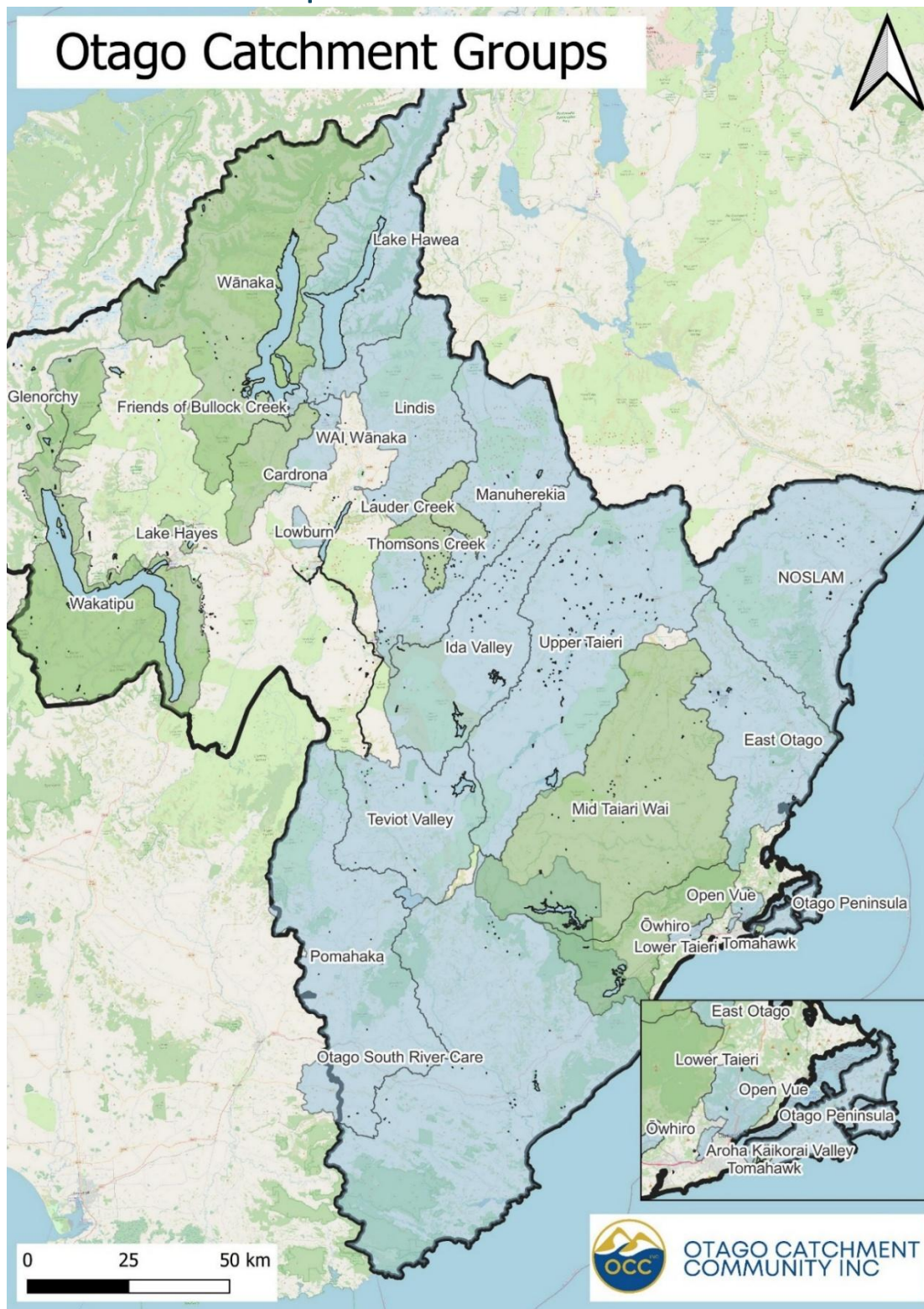
### **What cannot be funded**

- Applications from outside Otago.
- Applications that primarily benefit an individual.
- Applications that are restrictive with results, data, and learnings for other Otago Catchment Groups.
- Political activity.
- Commercial trials or Intellectual Property development.
- Applications by businesses, agricultural levy bodies, local government and council funded organisations.
- Restrospective funding.
- Resource consenting (please refer to ORC's fund for community group resource consent expenses).
- Alcohol.

Any queries regarding your application please contact:

- Nicole Sutton (Central Otago) [nicole@otagocatchments.co.nz](mailto:nicole@otagocatchments.co.nz), 022 128 3591
- Sam Dixon (Coastal Otago) [sam.dixon@otagocatchments.co.nz](mailto:sam.dixon@otagocatchments.co.nz), 027 777 0940

## Appendix 3: OCC Map and locations of Otago Catchment Groups



## Appendix 4. Locations of Catchment Groups by GPS coordinate

| GPS Locations of CG Activity |                          |                            |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| #                            | Catchment group name     | GPS Location of Activities |
| 1                            | Aroha Kaikorai Valley    | -45.867117, 170.480887     |
| 2                            | Cardrona                 | -44.871716, 169.013672     |
| 3                            | East Otago               | -45.595788, 170.668667     |
| 4                            | Friends of Bullock Creek | -44.704561, 169.130170     |
| 5                            | Glenorchy                | -44.843206, 168.394416     |
| 6                            | Ida Valley               | -45.045760, 169.860269     |
| 7                            | Lake Hawea               | -44.612262, 169.285429     |
| 8                            | Lake Hayes               | -44.967872, 168.814270     |
| 9                            | Lake Wānaka              | -44.606337, 168.985549     |
| 10                           | Lake Whakatipu           | -45.118485, 168.463931     |
| 11                           | Lauder Water Users Group | -44.986574, 169.681718     |
| 12                           | Lindis                   | -44.749113, 169.511333     |
| 13                           | Lowburn                  | -45.006525, 169.211822     |
| 14                           | Lower Taieri             | -45.871026, 170.276999     |
| 15                           | Luggate                  | -44.748645, 169.268988     |
| 16                           | Manuharekia              | -45.210390, 169.441550     |
| 17                           | Maungawera               | -44.654370, 169.221812     |
| 18                           | Mid Taieri Wai           | -45.5333375, 170.116324    |
| 19                           | NOSLaM                   | -45.093084, 170.973477     |
| 20                           | Open Vue                 | -45.844797, 170.539577     |
| 21                           | Otago Peninsula          | -45.854092, 170.630832     |
| 22                           | Otago South              | -46.238053, 169.748882     |
| 23                           | Ōwhiro                   | -45.896427, 170.315623     |
| 24                           | Pomahaka                 | -45.943581, 169.259180     |
| 25                           | Teviot Valley            | -45.570555, 169.395217     |
| 26                           | Tomahawk                 | -45.898001, 170.544704     |
| 27                           | Thomsons Creek           | -45.110942, 169.557458     |
| 28                           | Upper Taieri             | -45.114727, 170.090215     |
| 29                           | WAI Wānaka               | -44.700414, 169.147059     |