

## Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee Meeting Update – 4.4.24

### Update on Greater Dipton, Mid Oreti & Lower Oreti and Between the Domes Catchment Groups

This is a brief update on the main projects these Catchment Groups have worked on over the last year. More information on their events and work can be found on their individual Facebook pages and webpages -

<https://www.thrivingsouthland.co.nz/lower-and-mid-oreti/>

#### Greater Dipton Catchment Group:

- **Carbon Neutral Dipton** has been an amazing project and was the focus for the group for 2023. This project is all about exploring different ways to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions on farms; sharing information, starting conversations and starting people on their journey to reduce their GHG emissions and work towards becoming Carbon Neutral Dipton. They had five case study farms with active buddy groups, meetings with experts (like Dr Ant Roberts from Ravensdown) and field days. All information on the project – reports, videos, progress – can be found on the Project's webpage (<https://www.thrivingsouthland.co.nz/carbon-neutral-dipton/>), and the group are now thinking about their next steps, and sharing what they have learnt through talks and presentations on their project.
- Wellbeing (individual and community) has always been something that is really important to this group, and each year they run a spring wellbeing event where their community comes together to enjoy some good food and listen to an inspiring speaker. In 2023 we had Kristie Simpson come and share her experiences as a Southland Farmer, national and international netball umpire and New Zealand's most capped national league umpire.

#### Mid Oreti:

- **Mid Oreti Mini Forest Movement Project** – getting native trees in the ground in Central Southland. This project has been going for about two years now. AB Lime nursery opens its doors to volunteers on the first Tuesday every month to propagate native plants for community groups and landowners in the catchment. "Plant grants" open for applications once a year where these plants are divvied out and successful applicants give a \$1 donation per plant (waived for community groups and schools), and all funds go back into propagating more plants. This year the group was lucky enough to be a recipient of Westpac & Landcare Trust Watercare funding where \$10,000 went toward the project. This allowed 12 projects to have over 3000 plants to plant this year! Seed collecting and animal pest workshops are also run as part of this project too to help share skills and knowledge.

- **Marshalling the Best Project** (Thriving Southland funded project) – developing a spatial tool which identifies optimal locations for constructed wetlands and runoff control structures for better water quality and biodiversity outcomes in the Winton Stream Catchment. Kicked off in March 2024 and will go through until mid-2024. Field day and project launch coming up for this project on 10<sup>th</sup> of April 12.30-3.30pm at AB Lime nursery – looking at two runoff detainment bunds and a constructed wetland.

Lower Oreti – Report provided by Georgie Galloway (Lower Oreti Catchment Group Leader)

Between the Domes:

- **Describing, Understanding and Improving the Between the Domes Catchment with Wetland Development** (Thriving Southland funded project) - this project was completed in late 2022 and the group launched an information booklet summarising the findings of the project and catchment statistics, that will provide a baseline for the community to benchmark against over time. The wetland workstream of this project has helped upskill not only the project farmers but also the wider catchment group with wetland field days and planting days
- **Balewrap Recycling** - Balewrap waste and recycling have been close to the groups heart for a long time so in 2021 they started a project looking at ways they could help provide a link in the balewrap recycling chain to enable easier pathways for farmers to get balewrap recycled. This project has been a slow burner with many stakeholders and hurdles to jump but after huge amounts of collaboration between the group, AgRecovery, Recycle South and Northern Southland Transport in May 2023 a pilot programme was launched to collect balewrap from farms and deliver it to the recycling plant in Makarewa – meaning the plastic was being recycled right here in Southland. The pilot project was a huge success with over 570T of plastic delivered to Recycle South over the three-month pilot period, demonstrating the benefits of such an initiative. The group are now working with Northern Southland Transport to try and replicate this pilot on a user pays basis.

Working together:

Catchment Groups often work with each other, and in 2023 all seven Oreti Catchment Groups worked together to host a Mid & Lower Oreti Bus Trip to help understand their catchment better and all the great work that is being done to look after it.

The seven Oreti catchment Groups meet yearly, and share what they have been up to, their plans for the future and ideas on how they can work together.