



WELCOME TO OUR

Newsletter



Quarterly Update



Welcome to the second edition of the Mackenzie Basin Catchment Collective Newsletter!

This quarterly update is packed with exciting news, project highlights, and valuable insights into our ongoing efforts to protect and enhance our local environment. Inside, you'll find success stories from our dedicated members, updates on current and upcoming initiatives, and tips for sustainable land and water management.

Thank you for being a part of our collective journey towards a healthier, more vibrant catchment area.



In this newsletter you will find:

Latest projects, workshops, free resources, and more. Keep Reading!



Words from the Chair

Kia ora,

I'm honoured and deeply grateful to have been nominated as Chairperson for a second term following our first AGM. Thank you for the trust and support and it's been a privilege to help get the Mackenzie Basin Catchment Collective off the ground. As we move into the next phase, I'm excited about the projects ahead and the opportunity to engage more closely with the public and wider community. Together, we're building a steady momentum for meaningful, collaborative change across the Basin.

Looking ahead, I warmly invite everyone to participate in our upcoming events, projects, and workshops. Your involvement is vital to the success of our collective efforts, and we're eager to hear your ideas, insights, and aspirations for the region. Thank you for continuing to support local—your engagement makes all the difference.

Ngā mihi nui,

Douglas Lee
Chairman,
Mackenzie Basin Catchment Collective

Farewells, Welcomes, and a New Chapter

As we continue to grow and evolve, the Mackenzie Basin Catchment Collective is saying farewell to two valued committee members and welcoming new faces to the team.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Peter Saywell and Rebecca McIntyre for their time, energy, and commitment to the MBCC. Their contributions have helped shape the direction of our work, and we're incredibly grateful for all they've done to support catchment health and community collaboration.

At the same time, we're excited to welcome Brent Anstis, Ray Parker and Beth Scully to the committee. With them they bring a wealth of local knowledge and a strong passion for environmental stewardship, and we're looking forward to the fresh perspectives they'll bring to the table.

We also have a change in roles within our team: Mikayla Wells, who has served as our Treasurer, is now stepping into the Coordinator role. Her experience and dedication make her a great fit to lead MBCC's next phase of work.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support MBCC. With new energy and continued collaboration, we're looking forward to what's ahead.

Sustainable Aquaculture in Action: Mt Cook Alpine Salmon's Open Day

There's something powerful about inviting people in—not just to see what we do, but to understand why and how we do it. On Saturday, 31st May, Mt Cook Alpine Salmon had the privilege of hosting an Open Day at our Twizel site, in partnership with the Mackenzie Basin Catchment Collective. It was a chance to connect with our community, share our story, and highlight the environmental values that underpin our work.

As a seasoned aquaculture farmer, and now Environmental Manager, I see firsthand the care and science that go into every aspect of our operations. So, it was especially rewarding to welcome a full house of guests who were genuinely curious about sustainable aquaculture and the role it plays in the Mackenzie Basin.

Below: Mt Cook Alpine Salmon's team welcoming guests in.



Above: Open Day tour of the Ruataniwha farm.

The day began with presentations that explored our environmental monitoring programs, the principles of low-impact salmon farming, and the importance of responsible feed sourcing. Our partners from Skretting joined us to explain the nutritional science behind our salmon diets—reinforcing the idea that sustainability starts long before the fish reach the plate.

Speaking of plates, our team prepared a spread of tasting platters and a BBQ that showcased the quality and flavour of our product. It was more than just a meal—it was a tangible expression of our farming philosophy, and a delicious way to connect with our guests.

The highlight for many was the guided tour of our Ruataniwha farm. Seeing the rafts up close and walking through the daily operations gave visitors a deeper appreciation for the complexity and care involved in farming salmon in such a pristine environment. It's one thing to talk about sustainability—it's another to see it in action.

Throughout the day, one theme kept coming up: environmental protection. Guests wanted to know how we safeguard our waterways, how we measure our impact, and what we're doing to ensure the long-term health of the Mackenzie Basin. These are the kinds of questions we welcome. They reflect a shared commitment to the land and water we all depend on—and they give us the opportunity to show that our sustainability efforts are grounded in science, transparency, and respect for the environment.

Aquaculture can be misunderstood, which is why openness matters. By inviting people in, we're not just sharing our operations—we're building trust. We're replacing assumptions with understanding and creating space for meaningful conversations.

The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive. Guests left with a deeper appreciation for the work we do and the care we take. I'm incredibly proud of our team for making the day such a success, and grateful to everyone who joined us.

If you missed this Open Day, we hope to welcome you next time. Until then, thank you for being part of our journey toward a more sustainable Mackenzie Basin.

Mikayla Wells
Environmental Manager
Mount Cook Alpine Salmon

Resource Highlight: A call for project submissions!

This month, instead of highlighting a tool or resource we already have, we're turning the tables—and asking you what resources we can bring to your catchment group.

The MBCC team will be meeting on 19th August to review project proposals from across the Mackenzie Basin. If you're working on an initiative that could benefit the environment and your local community, we want to hear about it.

Head to our website to submit a proposal and let us know how we can support your work—whether it's funding, technical expertise, or boots on the ground. Together, we can make a real impact.

Let's collaborate to protect and restore our catchments—starting with your ideas.

If you don't have a project in mind, we still want to hear from you! **Please fill out our survey at:**

<https://forms.office.com/r/b5sXxWBbC9>

Or scan the code below:



Annual General Meeting

With 26 community members gathered, the MBCC Annual General Meeting was more than a formal catch-up — it was a celebration of progress and an invitation to shape what comes next.

Chairperson Douglas Lee opened the evening by welcoming attendees and introducing both the Steering Committee and Janet Gregory from MPI. From there, he offered a heartfelt reflection on a year of growth: securing funding, building a dynamic team, and launching hands-on community initiatives such as the Open Farms event, the Pest Information Night, and the water monitoring and hydrology mapping projects.

Looking forward, Douglas encouraged everyone to contribute ideas for future initiatives. Whether bold or small, each suggestion matters.

You can submit your ideas through the MBCC website — **submissions close on 18 August 2025**. Not every proposal will be tackled immediately, but all will be considered and potentially folded into future planning.

Leadership Update

At the AGM, the positions for Chair and Vice Chair were decided through a vote. However, due to Mikayla's absence, the Secretary and Treasurer roles were finalized at a later time. The new appointments are as follows:



Emeritus Prof. David Norton

- Douglas Lee – Chair
- Ray Parker – Vice Chair
- Mikayla Wells – Coordinator
- Beth Scully – Treasurer

A Powerful Closing Message

The night ended on a high with a compelling talk by David Norton, whose decades of experience in ecology and conservation offered rich insights into integrating biodiversity within farming practices.

David shared his work with farmers, sector groups, and initiatives like Recloaking Papatūānuku, which promotes native reforestation to strengthen climate resilience, enrich biodiversity, and sequester carbon. His passion and practical wisdom made a strong impression — reminding us that thoughtful land management and community collaboration go hand in hand.

Annual Report - Financial Statements

Income Statement



Funding

In 2024, Mackenzie Basin Catchment Collective recieved a total of **\$125,000**, from the Ministry of Primary Industries. This was the second year of a 4.5-year contract worth **\$625,000**.



Expenses

Our total expense for the year was **\$61,023.71**. This was primarily used for operational costs associated with co-ordination, administration, communications and facilitation.

Unspent Funds

The unspent funds totalled **\$63,976.29**. This has been reallocated to upcoming projects.

Additional Financial Support

We did not recieve any additional financial support as funding, grants or donations this year.

In-kind Support

We were fortunate enough to also recieve **\$225,900** worth of in-kind donations in the form of water quality data, mentoring and land-owner time. These contributions are highly appreciated and valued.

Balance Sheet

Funding & Income

Income:	
MPI CES Funding	\$ 125,000
Interest Recieved	\$ 556

Expense Breakdown

Expenses:	
Coordination	\$ 23,351
Administration	\$ 9,344
Accounting & Bookkeeping	\$ 2,557
Advertising & Marketing	\$ 3,337
Communitcation & Engagement	\$ 3,544
Facilitation	\$ 4,572
Staff Training & Education	\$ 2,687
Office Supplies	\$ 2,119
Travel & Accommodation	\$ 345
Water Testing	\$ 5,250
Specialists & Contractors	\$ 3,825

In-kind Donations

Donation & Estimated Value:	
Mt Cook Alpine Salmon - Water Quality Data	\$ 200,000
Landowner Time	\$ 9,260
NZ Landcare Trust Mentoring	\$ 16,640

Restoring Wairepo Creek: A Farmer Led Initiative

The Wairepo Catchment Group (WCG) is a small catchment group that has been operating since 2021. It comprises farmers (including aquaculture) that are within the Wairepo Catchment. The WCG has recently worked on a project to restore the ecological health and connectivity of Wairepo Creek, a vital waterway near Twizel. This project has reconnected the creek to the Wairepo Arm, improved fish passage, reduced flooding and removed pest plant species.

The creek, long obstructed by very large invasive trees and sediment buildup, has suffered from blocked flows and seasonal flooding. The restoration work included:

- Spraying and clearing willows and alders
- Reinstating the flood overflow path
- Reinstating a direct flow and fish passage down the original channel
- Improving water flow into the Wairepo Arm
- Ongoing weed maintenance
- New fencing
- Water quality monitoring



Above: General area - flow paths, culverts under road.

The project has already seen visible progress, with the main works completed and more planned. While planting is on hold for now, the groundwork has laid a strong foundation for ecological recovery and stream functioning.

The initiative was backed by:

- The Upper Waitaki Water Zone Committee provided the majority of the funding for the project.
- Central South Island Fish & Game supported the project for its potential to enhance sports fish spawning and recruitment
- Department of Conservation (DOC) has been involved by providing advice around important bird species and for spraying success
- Tricorp, who carried out the works and provided regular reports to be shared with interested parties including Meridian Energy Limited.

Left: Flow backing up into paddock.



Restoring Wairepo Creek: A Farmer Led Initiative

The project required navigating complex and costly planning and resource consent processes with various approvals and licenses needed from many parties including LINZ.

The WCG were careful to:

- Treat the invasive vegetation with herbicide before removal
- Consider long-term outcomes and ongoing management
- Ensure suitable depths for fish passage could be achieved
- Identify potential unexpected outcomes of the works
- Liaise with rūnanga, Meridian Energy Limited and LINZ

The WCG would like to thank all involved in the project and the individual group members who helped to keep the project on track and have committed to ongoing maintenance and water quality monitoring. Photos of the creek before and after restoration and during flooding are shown below. The group is now working on its next project – watch this space!

Bridget Pringle
Wairepo Catchment Group Facilitator

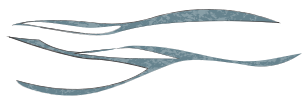
Below: Looking downstream with road submerged during flooding at overflow culvert before project.



Above: Looking downstream with road submerged during flooding at overflow culvert before project.

Below: Same place after the project.





WATER QUALITY

Protecting our waters is a priority for us. We want to support farmers and groups to preserve our environment.



PEST CONTROL

Maintaining biodiversity is key to protecting our environment. We work with groups by collaborating with industry experts to create effective management strategies.



RESOURCE SHARING

Our website is constantly being loaded with resources to help you keep up with regulatory and compliance changes. However, if there is something you want to know more about or think would be valuable; let us know so we can get it added!



EDUCATION

We are always looking to connect people to information and experts on a range of environmental matters. Please reach out if there are any initiatives or programs you want to highlight in the community!



Visit our website!

EVENTS | RESOURCES | BLOG | TOOLS

Dedicated to enhancing environmental, social & economic outcomes, ensuring a resilient community for future generations of the Mackenzie Basin

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