



The South Coast Environment Society

Environmental Inspiration and Action

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR



My name is Geoff Dembo and I am Chairman of the South Coast Environment Society Inc. We are a highly energised group which has sprung from the village of Riverton, a small coastal community in Southland. We have established and developed a vibrant environmentally friendly community of people whose aim it is to improve and support both the local environment and the quality of the local community, and are now extending our influence and activities throughout Southland and further afield.

We have initiated and maintained a number of projects that support our kaupapa, the most significant of these being the South Coast Environment Centre on Riverton's main street. The Centre serves many purposes: a venue for an organic food co-operative and information on how to live sustainably and in an environmentally-friendly way, a source of tools, materials and advice for growing safe, healthy food, a seed-savers' network, an information library, a meeting place for a variety of associated groups in the area (an estuary care group, pest-busters team, organic gardeners group) and a raft of other purposes. We provide meeting space for visiting lecturers and experts in the fields we support, and organise festivals and functions that promote our vision and the needs of our community. We are very proud of the projects that we have developed as a Society, the most well-known being the Open Orchard project which seeks to restore the once common-place orchards of Southland. We have attracted a number of nationwide media organisations which have featured our work on television, radio and print, and this has focused positive attention on our Society, its members and our lovely town.

It is the intention of this document to 'broadcast' our achievements and our aims for the future to a wide audience and I trust that they will be as excited and inspired as we are about what we have achieved already and what we have planned for the future. It has to be said that we do not operate alone. Our supporters and funders are essential to our success and we are enormously grateful for their involvement as we continue to refresh and expand our mission. I thank them very much for their support.

THE SOUTH COAST ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY

The South Coast Environment Society (SCES) was formed as a non-profit legal entity in 1996 to operate the newly established South Coast Environment Centre in Riverton. The Centre was to provide a base for and support three existing Riverton environmental groups and promote environmental awareness. Since then the Society has provided constant and reliable management for the Centre, making it the oldest continuously running Environment Centre in New Zealand. The initial three environmental groups are still going strong, and an impressive array of other projects and initiatives have been able to develop that otherwise would have been difficult to facilitate.

Riverton is a small coastal community on the south coast of the South Island, with a population under 2000. Although small, we are very well known throughout the country. Our profile has grown, and in 2015 we experienced increased nationwide media coverage and record attendance at our annual Harvest Festival. The organic food co-op in our centre has experienced increased sales, reflecting an increased interest in eating healthy organic produce. We are in a phase of increasing our capacity to deliver services to a more aware public. The Society is also having an impact outside Southland. Our ideas and projects are being duplicated throughout New Zealand and overseas. We are mentors for some of these projects via email, internet and phone. We are continually told that we are an inspiration and it is always uplifting to hear about the projects happening elsewhere that were originally inspired by us.

We are now working formally in collaboration with Environment Centres around Aotearoa / New Zealand, as a nationwide hub has been formed.. The formal collaboration began at a national hui (meeting) held by the Ministry for the Environment in 2011 to look at how environment centres could work together to share resources and address national issues. We enjoy being part of this wider network and see our important work at our Centre as a local response with a regional, national and worldwide impact.

VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is a sustainable and resilient Aotearoa / New Zealand where there are good leaders, resources, systems and examples available to assist and support all types of people to adopt sustainable lifestyles and care for and about their environment. To achieve this vision we plan:

- To play a leading role in promoting environmental sustainability in Southland and actively contribute to the creation of a 'Sustainable Southland Region'.
- To be an active and committed member of a wider network of Environment Centres throughout Aotearoa / New Zealand, sharing resources, skills and experiences.
- To provide a local hub for sharing resources, skills, and experiences, and to provide a physical space where examples of sustainable methods can be demonstrated. Also to encourage and support others to develop their own local hubs.
- To develop and collate resources related to our core activities and to make these widely available to as many people as possible.
- To have a core of self-self-funded sustaining funding and good financial security.
- To be flexible, adaptive and responsive to the needs of our community by providing education to the wider community and support for our members, volunteers and staff.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STRUCTURE

We have developed a strong organisational structure that has withstood the test of time. We have a committee of 12 plus our Patron and have meetings monthly. Our four management subcommittees cover finance, funding, human resources and media/advertising – they meet when necessary and report back monthly to the main Committee. We also have a Centre and Projects Manager who coordinates the projects and Centre on a daily basis (including staff/volunteers) and also reports to the Committee members monthly.

Our finance subcommittee keeps a close eye on our budget, comparing it with 'actuals' throughout the year to keep on track. Our human resources team ensure all paid employees and some volunteers have performance appraisal guidelines and 'task and tick' sheets to ensure the effective use of paid hours. Our Centre and Projects Manager facilitates the overall smooth running of the Centre and projects. This role also has some discretionary funding for unexpected costs and can make decisions between meetings by contacting the Committee via email and following the resulting consensus. This enables us to make the most of opportunities that arise within the month around a busy Centre like ours, such as using skills and expertise of short term visitors and securing speakers or tutors.

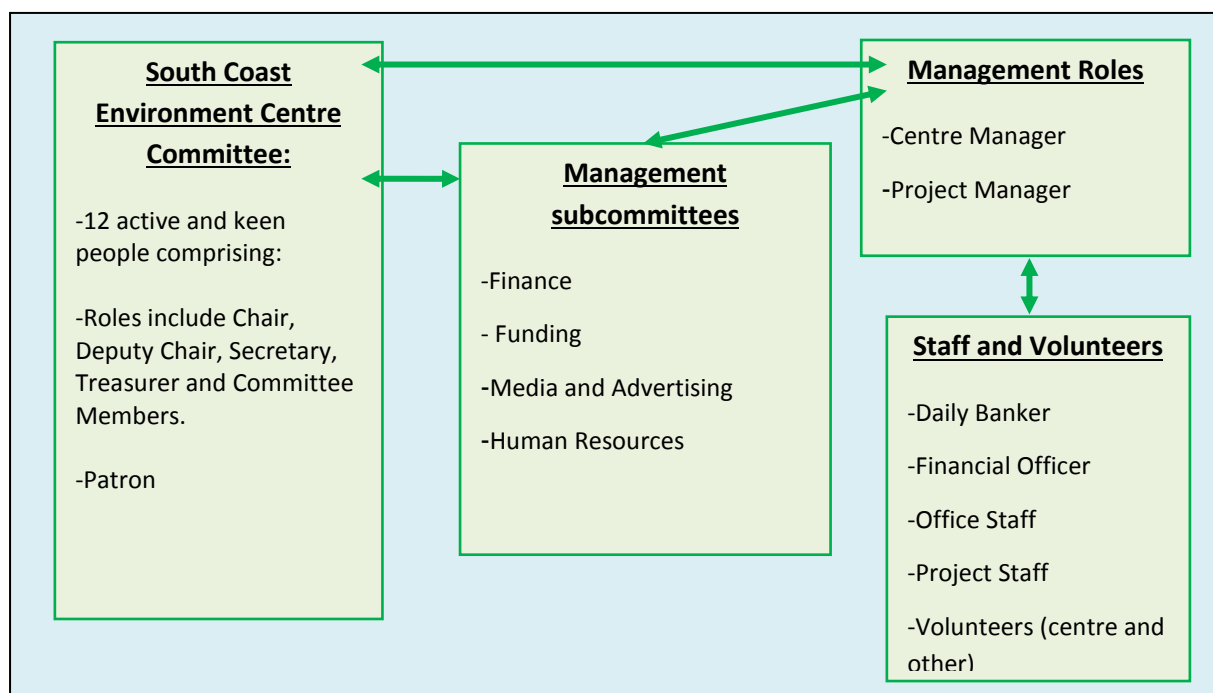


Figure 1: Diagram showing the South Coast Environment Society's Structure



OFFICE BEARERS



Chair: Geoff Dembo hails from the UK, where he was involved in promoting Permaculture and L.E.T.S. (Local Exchange Trading Systems). He has been in the South Coast Environment Society since the late 1990's, first as a volunteer on practical projects before joining the committee, with a stint as Secretary before becoming Chair. Geoff is also active in long-term conservation projects in Southland such as managing habitat for yellow-eyed penguins. He has been an IT professional since 1981."



Secretary: Karla Evans is a local who has a wonderful family who regularly pop in to volunteer at the centre. She has been involved with the centre for more than 5 years, first as a volunteer, then staff member and now also a committee member. Karla is particularly interested in healthy foods.



Treasurer: Kathryn Menpes has had an extensive background in administration and finance, and is delighted to be part of this organisation. Kathryn lives on a sheep farm at Orepuki with her husband and two children, and enjoys the opportunities and rewards of a rural lifestyle. She enjoys trail running which gives her a chance to explore off road and into the back blocks of an untouched and picturesque Southland. Kathryn is passionate about making positive changes to the environment and leaving minimal negative impacts for our future families.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Robyn Guyton B Ed TTC, has been a teacher for more than 28 years, our Centre and Project manager for more than 18 years and one of the driving forces for the Environment Society since 1996. She has passion, energy, knowledge, experience and enthusiasm in and for all aspects of eco living, community building, resilient skill acquisition and environmental care. Robyn multiplies our capacity to achieve on limited funding through using innovation and initiative.



Robert Guyton has been with the Society from its inception. Along with his wife Robyn, he has been involved with all aspects of the Society's development and continues to help steer it through his role as a committee member and as an on-the-ground volunteer for its many projects. Robert is a columnist for the NZ Gardener magazine, the on-line magazine, "Get Growing" and the Society's own, "Coastline" magazine. He is a councillor for Environment Southland, our regional council, and has been vocal in his support for the environment from that position. Robert is chair of the Riverton Estuary Care Society Inc and he manages the Community Orchard. He spends a good deal of time in his food-forest garden at home, growing all manner of food crops and hosting visiting groups keen to learn how it's done.



Elizabeth Chittock B.A. (Hons); M.A., and her husband, John, have been living a self-sufficiency type lifestyle and working with natural therapies for approximately 30 years — and are now doing so with their daughter and granddaughter. After living in various places around the world, they returned to New Zealand in 2009. Elizabeth enjoys reading, writing, crafts, homemaking, the beach, music, and ongoing learning. She likes to encourage and inspire people to learn, experiment, and explore, and to develop and extend their life skills, their self-worth, confidence, and dignity.



Tamsin Scott is a regular volunteer and co-ordinates the centre's Seed Saving project. Tamsin is a keen gardener and Bowen Therapist with a particular interest in healthy food and natural methods of healing. She is also passionate about music and plays the violin and guitar in a band, travelling far and wide. Tamsin is also keen on community led projects that provide sustainable benefits.



Peter Aalders along with his wife Marijke has been living in close to self sufficiency on their two acre property at Otahuti for over 25 years. They emigrated from Holland with four young children so have had very busy lives. They both bring a wide variety of worthwhile skills, experience and knowledge to our Society. They are both organic gardeners, bee keepers and Peter is a self employed wood craftsman.



Denis Bartley is particularly passionate about the big sustainability issues of society. A local Anglican Church Minister, Denis plays a key role in supporting our local community and that extends to volunteering with his wife Ngaire at the Centre and being a valued member on our committee.



Jude Sullivan is a local grandmother who first got involved volunteering at the centre. She now does some paid work at the centre, helping with opening and closing most days, and is one of our committee members.



Dave Clapp and his wife Carol live in New Zealand seasonally at their crib at Riverton Rocks. When in town they are regular volunteers for the centre. The rest of the year they are based in the USA. Dave and Carol are particularly interested in the arts and music, taking an active role in the annual Heritage Harvest Festival in Riverton.



Pleasance Hansen runs the PH Factor – a company specialising in *“empowering people and transforming organisations”*. She is a Leadership Coach and Facilitator and a motivational speaker, with a deep-seated interest in how to sustain the human spirit. Pleasance is based in Dunedin, but works around New Zealand. She has a retreat space in Riverton, which she visits often.



Julia Middleton-Chapman is a professional Baker and Chef and chooses organic, seasonal and local produce for her products. She is a Silver Smith Jeweller and runs workshops from her studio. Julia and her husband Simon, who is also a committee member, moved to Riverton in 2012 and began planting out a permaculture food forest on their new land after meeting Robyn and Robert Guyton. They had always been avid gardeners and care deeply about the micro organisms beneath their feet. They strive to rejuvenate their soil by using a chemical free no dig approach. In two years they have planted approximately 200 trees on their one and a half acre block.



Simon Chapman is part of the Riverton Estuary Care Group Committee and teaches Chinese energy based health and martial arts. Simon and his wife Julia both volunteer at the Environment Centre working on Southland Seed Saving, the Heritage Fruit Tree Sale and Heritage Harvest Festival.



Patron: Malcolm MacKenzie (MNZM, ONZM) has had a lifetime of farming at 'Heatherlea' East Limehills, on a farm that has been in the family for more than 111 years. There are two QE2 covenants on the farm, one of bush and the other a peat wetland. He has had many years involvement in numerous projects dealing with conservation and sustainability. These include raising native trees, planting to restore areas of native bush, grafting apple trees with old heritage varieties, and working with yellow-eyed penguins, kakapo, mohua, and Snares Island snipe. Malcolm has a special interest in, and passion for, all our native birds.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND VOLUNTEERS

The South Coast Environment Centre has a good reputation within Riverton and the wider Southland Community. Our involvement in many geographic and specific-interest communities means we receive support from a range of contributors.

Our volunteer contributions come from a wide range of sources, including individuals, businesses, and other community groups from within and outside our Riverton and Southland communities. We also receive in kind support from organisations like local government and other support agencies.

We have a wonderful group of 20+ volunteers who each man the Environment Centre public area for a few hours each week or month. As a result of these volunteers' support the paid office administration staff can focus on their work without interruptions but still be there, when needed, to support the volunteers. The volunteers' involvement in the centre mean it is open to the public for over 40 hours a week.

In addition to volunteers who put time in at the Environment Centre, we have a host of people who support us in other ways, by contributing their skills and time when needed. Here is a list of volunteer contributions we regularly receive throughout the year:

- Skilled workshop tutors and teachers
- Donations of time & materials towards centre maintenance & display set-up
- Donations of prizes and raffle contents
- Contributions of time/volunteerism towards annual or one off events and projects run by SCES (from groups, businesses, individuals, organisations)
- Loans of personal specialised equipment (such as an apple press) for use in events and courses.
- Skilled volunteers in specialised areas (IT, art & painting, finance, marketing, social media, community development).

PAID STAFF

We have a small team of professional and qualified administrators and educators working together and doing, on average, a total of 60 hours a week. We only have enough funds currently to cover 38 hours paid work a week between them, funding which is partly covered by the groups and projects they support. The balance is covered voluntarily at present but this is not sustainable long term, and there is so much more we could do if we had more paid hours. We need to look to at least double our paid staffing hours next year as we ideally need a minimum of just over 2 full time equivalent staff. Ideally we would have 85 hours: 20 hours for project management, 15 hours project staff, 20 hours centre management, 25 hours office staff, and 5 hours for a financial officer. Additional roles such as an education and events coordinator would also be extremely useful.

Funding options often mean we are reliant on short term grants, never sure what changing funding priorities or criteria might mean for our ongoing financing. We will actively find ways to build our staffing capacity rather than reducing our activities. We know we are providing an excellent service and the demand for this is increasing year by year.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

As a registered charity the South Coast Environment Society Inc. manages the centre and these projects with the help of part time staff & volunteers.

Children's Educational Projects	Adult Educational Projects	Festivals and Events	Southland Seed Savers	Open Orchard Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Fingers Garden Club • Kiwi Conservation Club • Specialist teacher visits to schools • School visits to Riverton ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self Sufficiency workshops (40 topics offered in Southland) • Hosting & speaking to visiting groups • Advisory Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Harvest Festival • Earth Craft Festival • Spring Eco Fest • Estuary Festival 	Saving Southland seeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage vege seeds • Heritage potato varieties • South Coast Seed Company to be established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pruning & Grafting workshops • Heritage fruit tree sales • Community Heritage orchards • Food Forests • Identification of fruit trees

In addition, Riverton Organic Group's food co-operative, and sales of moon calendars and natural cleaning charts take place in the centre. Riverton's Estuary Care group also base their activities in the centre.

The Society is in a very strong position in its 2015/16 year and is into its 20th year of operation. Our achievements to date have earned Riverton a national reputation as a community that leads in innovative environmental education and action. We are very proud of that. During the 2015 – 2016 year, the Project Co-ordination role will be involved in the following projects:

Project	Funding
The South Coast Environment Centre in Riverton (Our Base)	Funded by Ministry for the Environment and the Community Trust of Southland, membership fees and fundraisers.
The Open Orchard Project (gets fruit trees into schools, community gardens, and public lands)	Partly self-funded through fundraisers (e.g. fruit tree sales). Funding for earlier phases of the project (getting scions from old orchards and identifying varieties), received some funding from the Sustainable Farming Fund. Although 80 varieties have been identified we still have another 400 yet to be identified – we need funding to pay for someone's time to do this work, and their support services. International collaboration is likely given the varieties in some cases are extinct from their country of origin..
The Green Fingers Gardening Club (children growing vegetables in their backyards)	Funded by participant fees. The first year was partially funded by the National Lottery's Community Organisations Grants.

<p>Southland Seed Savers Network</p> <p><i>(saving the diversity of vegetable seeds that do well in Southland)</i></p>	<p>We have plans to restructure this project to make it more self-sustaining financially, by generating income from sale of seeds and providing more incentives for those who contribute seeds.</p> <p>Part of this project involves researching and data sharing on the varieties available, and testing germination rates. We are keen to collaborate with other stakeholders in this project.</p>
<p>The Resource Library</p> <p><i>(Books and materials available on ecology, conservation, self sufficiency, gardening, renewable energies, health, and more.)</i></p>	<p>Self-funded through sales of moon calendar, cleaner charts and donations. By taking orders online in the future we envisage this to be a growth area for income generation.</p>
<p>Resource Development and Information Distribution - public advisory service</p> <p><i>(One stop advice on a wide range of environmental and sustainability topics)</i></p>	<p>Self-funded through volunteer-teacher availability (travel expenses funded by the Centre). We have recognised strengths in this and seek funding to reach our potential / meet increasing demands for information/services.</p>
<p>Grow Local – Buy Local projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Farmers’ Market • The Food Co-op 	<p>Self-funded through sales of produce. Looking to expand support services to local producers in collaboration with other stakeholders.</p>
<p>Annual Festivals</p> <p><i>e.g. Heritage Harvest Festival in Riverton during Autumn (March), Earthcraft Festival during Winter (July), Ecofest in Invercargill during Spring (October)</i></p>	<p>Mainly self-funded through community donations of labour/resources. Seeking funding/sponsors for advertising and administration costs.</p>
<p>The Community Food Forest Park</p> <p><i>Local demonstration food forest plot in Riverton</i></p>	<p>Self-funded through community donations of labour, plants and seeds. The Society paid rates on the land, but these are now waived.</p>

Programme	Funding
<p>Adult Education Programmes</p> <p><i>(Health, lifestyle, gardening, etc...)</i></p>	<p>Funded through participant fees, but looking for more funding to expand</p>
<p>Children’s Education Programmes</p> <p><i>(Conservation, gardening, eco friendly crafts)</i></p>	<p>Funded through participant fees, but looking for more funding to expand</p>

Over the years we have initiated and been involved with a huge number of projects, many of which are still active. Sometimes, when a project gets firmly established, it will form its own legal entity and become independent. All projects tend to increase and decrease in members along with current trends and awareness at the time, and the projects we run reflect how we respond to community interest and demand – providing what is topical or requested by our local and regional communities. Some past projects have included the Riverton Kiwi Conservation Club for children, the Bellbird group and the Longwood Line Conservation group, to name but a few. For a full list of the projects and programmes we have been involved with since the Society was established, please refer to Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

WEBSITE

Since 2006 we have maintained a website where you can find more information on the South Coast Environment Society, our Environment Centre in Riverton and the projects we are involved with. We are constantly adding more content and links to enable people to access quality information on line. We have 2000 page views a month, which reinforces for us just how vital this resource is – we are focussed on upgrading the site in 2015. You can visit it here:

www.sces.org.nz



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

While our day to day activities are focused around the projects we have underway and the running of the Environment Centre, our lively Committee keeps our strategic direction focused and ensures that we and our activities are working solidly towards our 'big picture' vision.

The South Coast Environment Society is an organisation operating within a diverse and dynamic society. As a result of these changing times and community needs we adjust our focus over time as we strive to fulfil our vision.

We have a strategic plan, which we revisit every 5 years as a Society. This is a process guided by our Committee but contributed to by our members, stakeholders and the general public. As well as this we review our yearly plan before each Annual General Meeting to ensure we are on target with our aims and objectives and know where we should concentrate our energy during the year.



In addition to strengthening and continuing the projects listed earlier in this document, the Society has identified the following areas to focus on during 2015 - 2020 in order to support the wellbeing and sustainability of the Society:

1. SCES will focus on succession planning
2. SCES will increase financial sustainability
3. SCES will increase participation in its courses and education
4. SCES will maintain a physical presence in Riverton
5. SCES will increase resource availability in Southland
6. SCES will further develop and strengthen its local and nationwide networks
7. SCES will raise the profile of the Riverton Environment Centre and the Society

These areas of focus are broken down into a 'why', 'how' and our desired 'outcomes' from each point, to guide our work over the 5 years. For a copy of our strategic plan, please contact the Environment Centre Office, or download it from our website.

NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS FIVE YEAR PLAN

- Continue to work together with the wider community to increase the benefit to our local environment.
 - Maintain our strong partnerships with Riverton Organic Group and Riverton Estuary Care.
 - Continue to promote and represent local and national environmental groups where they are relevant to the South Coast area.
 - Develop closer links with Iwi working together on common areas of interest and with their help develop a better understanding of our role in honouring the Treaty.
 - Continue to work with other community development groups and local councils on areas of common interest.
 - Develop more ways we can work collaboratively with the Invercargill Environment Centre and other Environment Centres around NZ.
 - Steadily build these partnerships when appropriate and at a pace that we can sustain them into the future.
-
- **2015** Establish relationship with Venture Southland and business community.
 - **2016** Seek out relationships with stakeholders focussed on housing insulation and eco alternative energy sources to help promote their assistance.
 - **2017** Have sponsorship agreements in place for some projects.

MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES FIVE YEAR PLAN

- To continue to be an efficient organisation that operates in a professional manner.
 - Continue careful use of incoming funds to maximise the benefits to achieve our goals.
 - Annually prepare an operational budget as a guide to maintaining a low cost structure, troubleshooting any overspending or low cash flow times.
 - Continue to think laterally for ways to raise funds and work towards having many aspects of our operations become self-funded. This will gradually lessen our dependence on Community and Government Funds and build financial security.
 - Staff, paid and voluntary, continue to provide quality training and management and make them feel valued by our organisation.
 - Provide support as necessary for groups using the Centre as a base, so that their operations can continue during any periods of shortage of their own volunteers
 - Continue to maintain and protect current equipment and fixtures, updating the inventory of all these resources annually.
 - Continue to develop and expand on our equipment, fixtures and educational resources to keep up with the needs of the community.
-
- 2016** Have four of our present projects operating in a self-funded way. Be covering 30% of our operating costs outside of Government or Community Funding.

FINANCES

The South Coast Environment Society generates its own revenue, receives support through community donations (including in kind donations), and receives supporting grants from our generous funders for the community work we do. We are very mindful of our financial resources, and endeavour to break even each financial year.

Part of our approach over the next 5 years includes improving our financial stability by generating a small pool of savings which we can then put towards the running of our operation, the projects and any unexpected costs – such as a reduction in grant funds available, or unexpected maintenance costs. Below are our Annual figures (to the 31 March 2014) for the running of the Environment Centre, and the overall project budget.

Project	Yearly Cost	Grants/Funding (2013/14)	This covers:
Running Environment Centre	\$120,190	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry for the Environment Community Trust of Southland Subscriptions/donations Interest Sales Fundraising activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration resources Power/Rent/Phone Maintenance/Repairs Advertising Volunteer expenses Staff costs
Running our Projects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Organisation Grants Scheme Community Trust of Southland Donations Interest Course Fees Fundraising activities (Main fundraiser is our annual Fruit tree sale) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor fees Administration staff Advertising Resources & Printing Venue hire Volunteer expenses

The breakdown of these figures (grants received, specific costs for activities) can be found in Appendix 2, at the end of this document. More detailed figures, such as the individual project costs, can be provided on request.



PROJECTS 2015-16

ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

Project description and benefits

The Environment Centre opened in 1996. It acts as an environmental information centre as well as the office space for the SCES administration. It hosts the Riverton Organic Co-op and eco-shop, a resource library including books and other information media, and displays information for local environmental groups.

The Centre is located in Western Southland, at 154 Palmerston Street, Riverton. It is open 42 hours a week, including weekends. Additional hours include hosting community meetings, soup and social evenings, video screenings and discussion nights. Regular festivals and workshops are also run throughout the year from the premises. Every month continues to be busier than the last, and the centre is an invaluable asset. We often need two people at a time to staff the counter. People are not just browsing, they are coming in for information or advice on all aspects of sustainable living and ecosystem care, including the development and management of their own and community lands, and for networking - and most of the time we can help them on the spot. The Centre's ever increasing utilisation demonstrates how important it is for Southland as a source of information, support and inspiration. We get on average 60 phone enquiries, 80 email enquiries and 300-500 visitors to the centre each week.



Activities

- Hosting local environmental groups and visiting groups.
- Educational window displays.
- Providing information on a wide range of ecological products, and selling a small range of these as a fundraiser.
- Office and administration space, including providing photocopying facilities, fax and internet for local groups.
- Internet access on a public computer for research, with support as needed from our staff.
- Establish a robust and efficient waste management system.

Five Year Plan

- 2015** Undertake a waste audit and improve recycling system.
- 2016** Investigate options for reducing waste organic produce in the food co-op
- 2016** Investigate a purpose built building for our premises, then design, secure funding, build and operate. Or retrofit and extend present building.

ANNUAL FESTIVALS

Project description and benefits

In 2009 the first Heritage Harvest Festival was held in Riverton and since then, every year this annual event has grown. In March 2015 an estimated 3,000 people attended, and almost 600 people participated in workshops. The festival includes workshops and activities - everything from weaving to cheese making and bee keeping. Fresh fruit and vegetables are for sale in a 'mini market' and children's vegetable creatures are displayed. This festival is also a chance for local projects, such as the Open Orchard project, to celebrate and raise their profile amongst the local community. Project groups (including those not already linked to the Society) get the opportunity to hold stalls and displays featuring their activities and sharing their discoveries.



This festival project has also linked in with activities held by other groups in the Riverton area. One example is the Heritage Month activities. The businesses of Riverton's main street also play a part in promoting these events, with window displays on the theme and donations of prizes for the competitions.



Some of the winning children's vegetable art entries

The Harvest Festival has gone so well, and the buzz it creates in the community so wonderful, as well as showcasing all we are about, we are preparing to run four festivals – one for each season throughout Southland. In winter, an Earthcraft Festival, in spring the Ecofest in Invercargill, and in Summer potentially a technology related festival. We are looking for sponsors for these events.

Activities

- Annual autumn Heritage Harvest Festival
- Winter Earthcraft Festival
- Ecofestival¹
- A summer event – possibly technology or estuary focussed.

¹ The Ecofestival used to be run by Transition Town Invercargill and SCES had stalls and gave workshops. In 2014 SCES became more active in organising it. In 2015 SCES hope to collaborate with Invercargill Environment Centre with the festival organisation.

Five Year Plan

Hold as many of these festivals and events annually as we can comfortably manage without over committing ourselves or risking volunteer burn out:

- Develop a manual for events
- Seek sponsorship for events to cover advertising and administration costs
- Build up to running workshops as part of the events
- Scope out a technology related event for the summer
- Consider alternative locations for events – e.g. Winton or another town could host Earthcraft Festival

OPEN ORCHARD PROJECT

Project description and benefits

There are two projects wrapped up in this. The first focus is locating and identifying the heritage apple trees in the Southland District, and then preserving these and the information for future generations. This is the Heritage Fruit Project aspect. The second element is the distribution of apple and other fruit trees (e.g. quinces!) into schools, homes and community gardens around Southland. This helps preserve the heritage stock, and makes food available for current and future generations.



Since the project started in 2008, we have visited 40 Southland heritage orchards and 75 single trees, and gathered 600 varieties of heritage fruit. We have also been holding grafting 'working bees', and collecting, recording and identifying samples of early apples.

Marshwood Garden owners Jeff and Adair Genge kindly host our collection for the first five years. This West Plains orchard has 370+ grafted heritage apple trees in well mapped 'orchard blocks' of trees from heritage orchards from all over Southland, from the Howell orchard at Thornbury to the Deans orchard at Waikaia as well as many single trees. It is Southland's biggest and most valuable orchard and a resource for Southland that will provide material for hundreds of new orchards over the next decades.



Alongside this heritage work we encourage Southlanders and Southland Communities to put these young trees back into all corners of Southland. There are now 22 schools with school orchards and 9 Community orchards.

The project has grown in popularity and we are now selling over 500 heritage fruit tree each spring as our annual fundraiser for this project. People in Southland are keen for local heritage varieties. The project, through our website and other media, has attracted interest from all over New Zealand, and is

being replicated in several places, as well as plans to roll it out nationally under the National Environment Centre Hub. It is great work and we are very proud of it.

We now have a heritage orchard park in Riverton, and in five years time we look forward to around 10-12 more heritage orchard parks throughout Southland, along with distribution of historic information about the original orchards these varieties were from. We think it will be a new tourist attraction for Southland!

Activities

- Collecting apple trees and their history from around Southland.
- Running grafting workshops and working bees.
- Identifying varieties whose information has been lost.

- Ensuring that species grown in Southland for years are protected and available for redistribution.
- Inspiring and facilitating homes, schools and community locations to plant and care for fruit trees.
- Annual fruit tree sale raising approximately \$2,000 each year to assist fundraising for this project with the aim to becoming fully self-funded.

Five Year Plan

- Annual tree sales as fund-raiser to continue for this project.
- Annual pruning and grafting workshops and school/community orchard support.
- Sites for community Heritage Orchard Parks secured and developed

2015 Last trees grafted in collection so all known Southland varieties saved

2016 Apple varieties up on website for international ID project.

Source permanent sites for Heritage Orchard Parks.

2017 Start shifting first trees to permanent sites.

2018 Most trees have been identified; most selected trees (200) now at parks.

Doubles donated or sold back cheaply to the communities they came from.

2020 10 Community Heritage Orchard Parks are established in Southland.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

Project description and benefits

1. Development of Resources

The SCES develops many of its own resources and makes these available nationally. These can be resources and templates for specific projects, such as the Open Orchard concept, or information resources such as our Moon Calendars and natural cleaners charts. We send some of these resources all over New Zealand, and true to our objectives keep these as low cost as possible to make them available to everyone. Any money we do make from sales is directed back into projects as a fundraiser.

2. Monthly Magazine

The Coastline: The SCES regularly produces the Coastline, which is always jam packed with things we do, and information about what is going on in the environmental scene in Southland. In 2015 we are trialling distribution via mobile friendly platforms given many people read it electronically.. It is currently posted to around 30 or emailed out to almost 600 (on average) a further 30 monthly visitors to the Riverton Environment Centre also pick up free copies to read.

3. Website

Our website is full of useful information and contacts and continues to have nearly 2000 visits per month. It is a portal for requests, advice, information and a means for local groups to reach a wider audience as well as networking with each other. The website is being redesigned in 2015 as it is in need of a refresh.

4. Information Provision

Through our Library, and by providing free internet access at the Environment Centre, we provide people with access to information on environmental and eco topics. We also display relevant information for the community to access, including resource management information, and brochures or leaflets developed by local and national government, or conservation bodies.

Activities

- Moon Calendars
- Newsletters production
- Resource development for our projects, general eco-lifestyle information and other projects
- Making information available to local communities and citizens
- SCES members attend workshops and conferences wherever possible, and bring back the information to our networks.

ADULT EDUCATION PROJECTS

Project description and benefits

1. Monthly Workshop and Presentation Programme

We run many of our workshops through our Harvest Festival weekend and on demand throughout the year. We have found festivals an ideal time to deliver up skilling opportunities to our target audiences. Aside from this we run workshops according to demand and the seasons throughout the year. This is a way to share local knowledge and skills, as well as build local knowledge and skills in the Southland area. Some of the workshops we run have included making natural cosmetics and cleaners, beginners guide to gardening, cheese making, pruning, poultry rearing, permaculture and vegetarian cooking classes. We try and keep our workshops as cheap as possible to enable everyone interested to be able to attend them, we use fees to pay the tutor, transport and purchase materials for the workshop. We hold these workshops in other townships around Southland when requested.

We host soup and discussion evenings at the Centre during the winter, as well as talks and video screenings throughout the year. Examples include a film and discussion evening we had on the 1080 issue during 2010. This was organised and hosted the request of community members. A large group attended as well as representatives from the Department of Conservation. Even though we had people with quite opposing views on the issue the discussion was well run and both sides felt heard and their contributions appreciated. This is one way we respond to topical issues and address community needs; it allows us to be flexible and relevant for the people using our service.

2. Talks and Seminars

Throughout Southland and beyond, we are becoming very well known, and without exception, very well received. Many individuals and groups follow up their discovery of the South Coast Environment Society with a visit to us in Riverton. We had around 30 speaking engagements during the 2014-15 year -even some in the North Island! They provided great platforms to spread the message and hear the messages of our audiences, allowing us to further tailor our services to meet the current demands. One of our most popular talks, with a slide show is: 'Best of the Old, Best of the New'. This promotes the good skills, habits and resources of the past that are still best today along with new thinking and new technologies that are now available.

Activities

- Monthly workshop programme building community skills and capability.
- Hosting discussion evenings.
- Regular opportunity for social engagement within the community, e.g. soup evenings.
- Speaking engagements, talks and seminars.
- Guytons Forest garden fundraiser

Now this garden is recognised both nationally and internationally a wonderful example of an established food forest attracting visitors from around the NZ and the world. Centre takes bookings for these and in return gets a share of the proceeds. This fund is used to develop the town food forest 3 full day workshops held and held over 30 food forest tours half those organised through the centre other informal.



CHILDREN'S EDUCATION PROJECTS

Project description and benefits

Education has always been a big part of the work we undertake here as the South Coast Environment Society and we are steadily increasing our involvement with schools throughout Southland.

1. School Gardens and Orchards

Through school gardens and orchard projects alone we now have 190 heritage fruit trees planted in over 50 schools and early childhood centres. The fruit trees that are being planted now will provide increasing yields of fruit for 80 to 100 years so this is a long term investment latest school to set up an orchard is Mossburn



Many schools in Southland have now set up vegetable gardens often with our resources and support. We continue to offer free support, pruning training and also encourage more schools to get involved. We would like all Southland students to know how to grow and care for their own fruit and vegetables as these skills are important as our world is changing fast and cheap national and international food may not always be available.

2. Green Fingers Garden Club

SCES started this project after receiving positive feedback from our series of 'garden in a bucket' workshops during community fun days and holiday programmes. We also heard community recognition of the value of children gardening at home (including the community worker at Ohai / Nightcaps saying that after we sent 75 children home with their own self planted bucket garden that a good many of their families started vegetable gardening!). Educating children is proving to be an effective way to educate parents who can also be first time gardeners.



The Green Fingers Garden Club is our modern version of the old 'Boys and Girls Agricultural Club' where for a nominal price students get a selection of vegetable seeds, planting information and a diary to fill in. They plant their small garden at home and a local gardener comes to visit them in autumn to give them praise, advice and a certificate has been running successfully for 5 years after initial 'start up' funding from the lotteries 'Community Organisation Grants' for the first year is now self-funding. However we would like to seek funding so we can gift packs to low decile schools....

3. Earth Craft Skills

We plan to share skills utilising natural and recycled materials. We would like to build on the successful model of the Harvest Festival and deliver this training through our Earthcraft Festival in winter. Tutors teach knitting, felting, spinning, kite making, and paper making.



Activities

- Provision of education materials, resources and information to schools wanting to run environmental programmes, gardens and orchards.
- Physically attending and supporting schools with growing projects (gardening and orchards).
- Running and expanding the Green Fingers Garden Club including generating all resources (programme, seeds, garden diary, certificates).
- Including skill sharing with children into the Earth Craft Festival.
- Kiwi Conservation Club – (not run every year).



Education and Advocacy Five Year Plan

- Provide effective learning experiences and information to empower others to make environmentally friendly choices.
- Provide a stimulating experience to involve, inspire and inform visitors to the Centre.
- Provide busy varied seasonal programmes to have at least a dozen events including practical workshops, talks, working bees and fun activities.
- These experiences will be on a wide range of environmental topics: coast care, native trees, organic vegetable growing, sustainable lifestyle options, waste awareness etc.
- Our travelling educators continue to run excellent educational programmes to all interested Southland schools and communities.
- Aim to have one new attractive window display every two months.

2015-	Refresh the Centres Info Sheets to a modern format, reload new versions onto web. Green Fingers Garden Club offered to all Southland schools
2016	Look into feasibility of an Eco Academy senior student course operating in partnership with another learning institution, Aparima College or SIT.
2016-2017	Post educational you tube footage that can be accessed all over NZ, linked from our website.
2018	Source volunteers so we can restart Kiwi Conservation Club. If Green Fingers Garden Club model is successful share model and resources with other Environment Centres and Communities around NZ.
2018	Source funding for Travelling Environmental Educator programme for outreach to all Southland schools (similar to Life Education bus)

SOUTHLAND SEED SAVERS NETWORK

Project description and benefits

This project was established in 1999 to develop a system whereby growers can share non-hybrid seeds that grow well in Southland, as well as saving those locally adapted varieties threatened with extinction. Individuals can sign up for an annual membership fee (which helps fund the project), purchase local heritage seed varieties, and are expected to save and return these seeds in larger quantities at the end of the season.

The Seed Savers offer workshops and resources on how to save seeds, and we are part of a nationwide network of Seed Saving Groups. This group has been relatively independent in the past, but lack of volunteers and the passing away of the old seed savers has meant that it is now an endangered group! The SCES volunteer crew have taken its organisation and management into its fold, and we hope to revitalise and grow it again. We are looking at potential models to incentivise growers, and this may include starting an enterprise to manage seed sales in order to be able to generate income to distribute to growers. We have some interest from other stakeholders keen to collaborate with us.



The preservation of heirloom fruit and vegetable varieties is crucial to the development of sustainable local food growing enterprises that are not dependent on increasingly expensive and environmentally-degrading inputs, as well as reducing dependence on the supply of seeds being concentrated in the hands of a small number of overseas companies. Otago and Southland organic growers see this as a priority as no-one is doing it in Southern NZ.

Activities

- Identifying and saving a library of living seeds acclimatised to grow and produce well in Southland
- Collating and distributing information on the seed varieties available
- Preserving and protecting threatened local seed species
- Teaching people how to save their own seed season to season
- Making local seed available for purchase in Southland
- To establish a 'Southern NZ Seed Enterprise' to save these heritage vegetable seeds and multiply them to the point they can be sold throughout Southland.

Five Year Plan

2015	Collate and share data on available seeds
2015	Investigate and establish Southland Seed Enterprise
2016	High profile promotions to attract and train a large team of Southland Seed Savers.
2016	Enterprise has first seeds for sale with their own branding looking towards being an independent enterprise if feasible. If successful sell nationally?
2017	We have enough people saving the vegetable seed collection to keep it viable.

RIVERTON COMMUNITY FOOD

FOREST PARK

Project description and benefits

This land was purchased in 1997 during a recession and the SCES intention was to run it as a Community Garden for teaching people how to grow their own food and contribute to the Food Bank with the produce.

However, it proved challenging as the soil was mainly sand and it was riddled with couch grass. It wasn't a good medium to start beginning gardeners off and made even worse when there was no water supply available to the section. Even the raised beds were unsuccessful with the dry conditions. After several years the project was all but abandoned until we thought we could utilise the space as a Community Orchard instead. Quietly behind the scenes over the last 5 years we have planted 40 fruit and nut trees, over 80 berry bushes and spread lupins, herbs and wild flowers throughout to add to the fertility.



It is now a public example of community orchard, and set up as a low maintenance permaculture food forest garden. It provides a living space to study seasonal changes, insects, pruning, and permaculture methods. In addition, it provides fresh fruit, nuts, berries and herbs for the Riverton Community, and visitors to access.

Activities

- Planting of fruit trees and herbs on an annual basis
- Care for fruit trees (e.g. pruning)
- Low maintenance set up – but ongoing development as time and space are available on the site.

Five Year Plan

- 2015** Official opening of the Community Food Forest Park
- 2016** Information panels on display e.g. What you will see here nut, fruit trees, berries, herbs, wild flowers and beneficial plants, insects.
- 2017** The park is well known within the town as an interesting place to visit and enjoy the seasonal changes. There is a good team of people involved in its care.
- 2018** *The park is productive and gives the produce freely out to the Riverton Community especially to those who otherwise haven't got access to fresh fruit and vegetable.*

GROW LOCAL – BUY LOCAL PROJECTS

Project description and benefits

Every day we have opportunities for local growers to sell produce through the in-store sales of local fruit and vegetables via the Riverton Organic Co-op. We also encourage and teach local growers, both farmers and home gardeners. When we have more local growers (tends to be seasonal) we promote a regular market as a Saturday morning event.

1. Riverton Organic Co-op

The Co-op was one of the original environmental groups the SCES worked with. In association with the society it has gone from strength to strength and now turns over close to \$200,000 per year and is 100% self-funded. This is a non-profit group run by volunteers and operates out of the Riverton Environment Centre – this enables people to buy organic food at near to cost price and in doing so support natural and sustainable practices. The Co-op volunteers are also usually Centre volunteers and they run the Centre for between 20-30 hours a week in return for free rent. This enables us to be open 7 days a week and it is a very symbiotic relationship. While listed as one of our projects and operating under the roof of the centre, this project is actually an independent entity with its own Committee and management.



2. Farmers' Market

Even when the seasonal allows us to have more local produce available, the Riverton Farmers' Market is modest when compared to those held in larger centres but it is unique in that it is entirely organic. It is also the first example in Southland of a 'Pocket Farmers' Market' that suits smaller scale growers and smaller communities. These markets are managed by volunteers on behalf of the growers where usually the grower must be there to sell his own produce. Our growers/farmers provide a good range of produce and have established regular networks and friendly relationships with their customers.

In 2010 a local 'fruit and veggie box' system was trialled for several weeks. While it was a huge success from the customers point of view, it was a struggle to cover costs. We would consider restarting in a way that could be sustainable. We believe that whenever possible Southlanders should be growing food for Southlanders. Local food means less travel miles, fresher and therefore more nutritious produce with less waste. It also gives us some food security should national and international food networks get disrupted. If Southlanders could grow all of their food 100 years ago we surely could again now!



3. Encouraging Organic Farming/Gardening

We run workshops and provide information booklets we have developed to encourage the return of home organic vegetable and fruit gardens in our area. The workshops cover all aspects of organic gardening, biodynamics, seed saving, composting, worm farming and are held regularly as well as being available on request by a group. We have also made some educational programmes which were aired regularly on Channel 90, and are available at the Centre.

Activities

- Weekly Farmers' Market during the summer/autumn season
- Sale of local fruit and vegetables, and other locally made products at the Riverton Organic Co-op in the Centre
- Education opportunities for local growers and farmers

Five Year Plan

- Educate Southlander's about our "Pocket Farmers' Markets" where volunteers run them on behalf of the growers as this model (our model) would suit smaller Southland Towns and small or emerging suppliers.
- Allow the Riverton Organic Food Co-op to continue to operate in our premises as an example of an ethical not for profit business and example of what smaller towns could aspire to when, by scale, a 'for profit' shop would not be a viable option.
- Continue to mentor new organic growers, new organic shops so they are more widespread.
- Continue to mentor new food co-ops/ local 'Pocket Farmers' Markets' in Southern NZ.
- **2015** Develop an information resource for locals looking to produce food to sell.
- **2015** Identify local needs for collaboration for food processing for commercial sale.

RIVERTON ESTUARY CARE SOCIETY INC.

Project description and benefits

While listed as one of our projects, and overlapping with many of our education and projects such as the community orchard project, this project is actually an independent entity with its own committee and management.

Fed by the Pourakino and Aparima rivers, the estuary is an integral part of the township of Riverton. Created to protect and promote the natural features of the Jacob's River Estuary, the Riverton Estuary Care Society Inc operates a number of projects on and around the estuary.



Around the township, the society has created plantings of native trees, especially alongside of creeks leading into the estuary as part of their aim to improve habitat for native fauna.

Their most significant project is the 6 hectare flax wetland development sited at the northern entrance to the town. Te Wai Korari Wetland Reserve provides a sanctuary for myriads of whitebait and other native fishes, under threat elsewhere in the estuary from over fishing and habitat loss. The Society at times employs a contractor to continue the development of the reserve and remove pest plants. Agencies such as World Wide Fund for Nature, Queen Elizabeth II Trust, South Pacific Conservation and Development Trust and NZ Aluminium Smelters have generously funded and continue to support the project.

They have acted as an umbrella group for the Aparima Pest Busters which is now also an independently managed organisation well supported now by Environment Southland.

Activities

- Maintain wetland reserve.
- Drains are for rain project.
- Advocacy and Education.

APPENDIX 1:

Summary of Projects and Programmes – Past and Present

The list, below, summarises the projects and the programmes we have been involved with since the SCES was established:

Date Est	Project Name	Project Details	Funding	Other
1988	Riverton Organic Growers Group	Gardening Club	Self-funded via membership.	Still active but intermittent
1989	Riverton Organic Food Co-op	Non profit shop runs from the Environment Centre	Self-funded through sales.	Still active
1995	Riverton Estuary Care Group (Inc)	Land Care Group	Independent from SCES.	Still active
1996	Riverton Environment Centre	Centre open to public 40 hours per week, hosts a number of environmental groups and activities, library and resources for community use.	Community Trust, Ministry for Environment, Project contributions and sales.	Still active
1996	Riverton Kiwi Conservation Club	Children's after school club.	SCES subsidised Fees.	Active until 2010 want to restart if resources can be found.
1998	Riverton Community Garden	A community Resource for food and education.	Community donations.	Since 2007 this has become a community orchard.
1999	Southland Seed Savers Network	Education and maintaining a Seeds Bank.	Self-funded (membership, donations and seed sales).	Still active just but now under SCES umbrella for revitalising.
1999	Bellbird Group	Encouraging the planting of Trees and shrubs to attract the birds.		Replaced by Aparima Nursery Group which is no longer active.
2002	Longwood Line Restoration Group	Creek side replanting on estuary side mainly by neighbourhood children.	Was self-funded.	No longer active as plantings accidentally removed by council as they were clearing the surrounding broom.
2003	Aparima Nursery Enterprise	Local native trees for local projects and backyards.	Self-funded and contributes to SCES sales fundraising.	No longer active..
2003	Riverton Community Market Days		Self funding	Still active but now run by the stall holders themselves.
2004	R.A.T.S. Rivertonians for Alternatives to Toxic Substances	Education for alternatives to endocrine disrupting Chemicals.	Self funding community group based in our Centre.	In recess as main driver has passed away.

2006	Riverton Organic Farmers Market	Weekly local produce market each Saturday morning.	Run by volunteers no costs involved.	Still active in summer months.
2007	Riverton Community Orchard	Re-development of the community garden site begins.		
2007	Open Orchard Project	Returning Heritage Orchards to the Southland Communities.		Still active and growing steadily.
2008	Permaculture Design Certificate course	Two week course tutored by international tutors.	Subsidised by Society to increase local knowledge and skills.	Permaculture education now part of our education programme. Tutors also involved with Go Organics certified course.
2009	Heritage Harvest Festival	An autumn festival, displays, workshops.	Initially fully subsidised by the Sustainable Farming Fund and the Community Trust of Southland but now partly self funding.	Has become an annual event.
2010	Organic 'Harvest Box' trial	A selection of mainly local fruit and veges delivered to homes in Invercargill.	Self funding and voluntarily run, but too labour intensive.	No longer operating..
2010	Green Fingers Garden Club trial.	Home gardening club for school children.	50% subsidised by Community Organisation Grant.	Offered to all Southland school children Oct/Nov 2011.

APPENDIX 2

Financial Details for the year 2014 – 2015

South Coast Environment Society Inc

Consolidated Statement of Financial Performance

For the period ending 30 June 2015

Annual General Meeting held 18 August 2015

	2015 \$	2015 \$	2014 \$
Income			
Sale of Goods			
Sales	52,537		41,255
Services	5		206
Fees	1,090		3,306
Subscriptions	763		640
		54,395	45,407
Less Cost of Goods Sold			
Purchases	37,989		36,309
Staff payments	63,714		51,780
Travel	842		686
Freight	-		-
		102,545	88,775
Gross Profit/-Loss		- 48,151	- 43,368
Expenses			
Advertising & Promotion	1,049		3,328
Communication	4,354		4,628
Fees	972		1,416
Occupancy	14,028		13,493
Printing & Stationery	1,902		-
Repairs & Maintenance	2,112		935
Miscellaneous	1,359		545
Travel & Equipment	207		-
Staff Development	910		195
Volunteer Expenses	7,736		6,431
Total Expense		34,628	30,971
Other Income			
Interest received	939		498
Grants received	74,600		75,000
Donations	781		1,968
Total Other Income		76,319	77,466
Other Expenses			
Depreciation	292		444
Total Other expense		292	444
Net Income/-Loss	\$ -	6,752	\$ 2,683

APPENDIX 3

Selected Letters of Support

The following are a selection of letters of support received by the South Coast Environment Society for various funding applications and projects. They have been provided by the Riverton, Invercargill and International community.



Southland District Council

Mayor's Office – Council Chambers – Invercargill – New Zealand

July 2015

To Whom It May Concern

LETTER OF SUPPORT: SOUTH COAST ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

I write in support of a funding application for the South Coast Environment Centre.

I have watched the South Coast Environment Centre go from strength to strength with the Society's enthusiasm, energy and commitment since it opened in June 1996.

The Society has grown from a Riverton asset to a Southland asset, now serving the whole province with its educational programmes, projects and events. This has been only possible through the thousands of hours put in by volunteers. Their wealth of knowledge and resources built up over the years is shared widely and effectively.

Self sufficiency skills, resources and knowledge, once well known in Southland, have been largely lost with modern lifestyles. The Societies efforts to teach our current generations how easy it is to grow their own food, use appropriate technology and live sustainably are much needed.

Their mission to save and promote Southland Heritage fruit and vegetables and redistribute them throughout Southland is just one of their widely valued projects.

The South Coast Environment Centre is a Southland Treasure and we hope that they continue to grow their capacity to benefit Southlanders and the Southland environment.

I strongly support this application for funding as I believe the work the Society does is vital to not only Southland but to New Zealand as a whole, especially in these hard economic times.

Yours faithfully



Gary Tong JP
MAYOR

r/15/7/12309

8 February 2011

The Ministry for the Environment
PO Box 10362
Wellington 6143

Our Reference: 109/03/01
Refer Accession No:



Cor North Rd & Price St
Waikari
Invercargill 9810

Private Bag 90116
Invercargill 9840
New Zealand

Phone 03 211 5115
Fax 03 211 5252
Tollfree (Southland only)
0800 76 88 45
Email service@es.govt.nz
Website www.es.govt.nz

Dear Sir

South Coast Environment Centre

I wish to express my support for The South Coast Environment Centre's funding application.

The South Coast Environment Centre (SCEC) has been operating for 15 years, and has a most attractive and well developed facility on the main street of Riverton that is open 45 hours a week.

The Centre:

- undertakes a wide range of community focussed projects and workshops, including community gardens, school programmes, providing environmental information to the public and active programmes of environmental improvement.
- is strongly supported by a network of volunteers and is a central focus for a community that is very active in its regard of the very special environment in which it lives.
- has Environment Southland's information brochures on display.
- supports Council's pollution hotline and the Centre's volunteers and staff are active in encouraging people to report pollution and pest plant issues.
- displays water quality results provided by Environment Southland for south coast rivers and beaches.
- promotes the planting of native trees and has locally sourced native trees available for only \$3 each for stream bank plantings.
- undertakes habitat restoration directly through the Riverton Estuary Care Society that it funds and administers. The Estuary Care Society employs two part timers for broom and gorse eradication in the Riverton Estuary at the mouth of the Aparima River, supporting Council's region-wide riverbed



for now and your future

02 South Coast EC funding
support.doc

Environment Southland is the brand
name of Southland Regional Council

woody weed control programme. Council also contributed to the purchase of land. The South Coast Environment Centre now maintains through developing the area as a wetland reserve. I understand the Centre will be applying for funding support from Environment Southland for this project this coming financial year.

- has a children's magazine "Squawk" on display, and supports Environment Southland's "EnviroSchools" programme with advice and resources including providing fruit trees, instant gardens, talks and workshops for local schools. This programme is the Council's key initiative for educating young people in the region about the need for care for the environment.
- holds regular beach and estuary shoreline clean-ups that support Environment Southland's coastal programme.
- provides administrative support and actively participates in the work of the Aparima Pest Busters programme that is supported by Environment Southland. The "pest busters" run a most effective predator control project in native forest along the south coast to a programme developed in partnership with Environment Southland's Biosecurity staff.
- provides a number of community initiatives for sustainable living, organic growing and self-sufficiency which, while not of direct benefit to Council's own programmes, are a valuable contribution to making our community more resilient and more aware of the need to care for our special environment.

Yours sincerely



Charan Keogh
Chief Executive

Registered office:
Southland Museum and Art Gallery
Victoria Avenue
P.O. Box 1012
Invercargill 9840

South Coast Environment Centre
154 Palmerston Street
Riverton 9822

Attention: Karyn Owen

24 July 2015

Dear Karyn,

Letter of support

At its meeting last week, Heritage South trustees were unanimous that we write a general letter of support to assist South Coast Environment Centre with its various initiatives.

We applaud your pro-active and often innovative approach on a number of fronts. From our own heritage perspective we note in particular:

- SCES active support and participation with Heritage South events that bring together the Southland heritage community in a collaborative way, e.g. Southland Heritage Forum and informal gatherings
- SCES significant contribution to Heritage Month through the popular and well attended Heritage Harvest Festival in Riverton. By clustering with other local heritage events over one weekend, the combined attraction is a drawcard for large numbers of visitors, including some from out of the region.
- SCES leadership (recognised nationally and internationally) with its Heritage Orchard project.
- Heritage Seed Saving is another project with multiple benefits for Southland heritage. In addition to the contribution both these projects make to heritage plant conservation, both have a strong educational component (e.g. through workshops) and inspire those involved to share their stories, for instance, through the Southland Oral History Project.

We wish the South Coast Environment Centre every success with its future projects.
Best wishes

Cathy Macfie

Cathy Macfie
Acting Chairperson



ISLA BANK SCHOOL

Isla Bank - R.D.3 - Otautau - 9683 - Southland
Telephone 03 224 6171; Fax 03 224 6174; email: office@islabank.school.nz
Principal: Clare Robinson; Chairperson: Rodney Shaw

TO: Robyn and Robert Guyton and the South Coast Environment Centre
Palmerston St
Riverton

Dear Robyn, Robert and team,

Re: Support for the work of the South Coast Environment Centre

As editor of *Organic NZ*, which is as far as we know the world's longest-running journal of organics and sustainability (established in 1942), I would like to congratulate you and support you in all the great work you do for the environment and in educating the people of the Riverton area and indeed in Southland.

Having first visited the South Coast Environment Centre in 2002, and several times since, I am very impressed with the energy, effort and enthusiasm you have put into building up the centre and expanding its role and number of projects over the years.

The Environment Centre provides an extremely valuable role in educating not just your immediate community in Riverton and surrounds, but also in educating everyone who comes into contact with it – other Southlanders, other New Zealanders travelling through, and indeed foreign visitors as well.

Because some of your projects involve outreach and links with other groups and individuals in Southland and further afield, the South Coast Environment Centre punches well above its weight for what could otherwise be just a small centre serving its own immediate community.

The range and scope of your projects – including the Open Orchard project, seed saving, organic food co-op, community garden, farmers' market, reforestation, courses such as keeping poultry, information sheets for schools, just to name a few – is impressive, especially on top of staffing the Centre seven days a week. I don't know of any other Environment Centre in New Zealand that is open seven days a week.

The Riverton area and wider Southland environment is undoubtedly richer for your efforts. *Organic NZ* will continue to support the South Coast Environment Centre by including notices of your courses in our What's On events column, and appropriate articles and photos.

Keep up the good work!
Best wishes,

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