



## ORC Candidate Responses as they wrote them

	<b>Te Mana O Te Wai</b>	<b>Environmental Fund</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
<b>Eliot Weir</b>	The mana, mauri, and ecological health of our freshwater is important to indigenous biodiversity, public health, and economic development. There is a lot of uncertainty in the resource management and planning space right now, and how we might work towards finally having a fit-for-purpose Land and Water Regional Plan. Regardless of whatever policies from central government we have to work under, I believe the health of our waterways has to come first.	The new \$2M large-scale environmental fund will be a game-changer in empowering community groups and organisations to undertake landscape-scale restoration projects over several years. I'm proud that overwhelming support in the community through the long-term plan encouraged us to increase the fund to \$2M from the originally planned \$1.5M. This fund will build on the continued success of the Eco-Fund as well as our site-led pest management programmes (eg. on the Otago Peninsula). It should be a part of a wider Biodiversity Strategy and Biosecurity Strategy, which are both currently in the works.	In addition to the adaptation work we do in communities (eg. South Dunedin), ORC has a role to play in leading regional climate change mitigation efforts. We need to ensure that we are doing everything practical to reduce our own emissions as an organisation, encourage transport emissions reductions through increased public transport use, and coordinate emissions reductions initiatives with iwi, local councils, tertiary institutions, businesses, and community organisations.
<b>Alan Somerville</b>	Protecting the health of freshwater is central to the wellbeing of the wider environment and our communities.	If used well, Otago will get huge value from this fund, as it can enable the efforts of community groups and help them to pull in other sources of funding.	The effects of climate change cause immense economic damage, so reducing emissions and slowing the rate of climate change will help to sustain a healthy economy.

	Te Mana O Te Wai	Environmental Fund	Climate Change
<b>Gretchen Robertson</b>	As a freshwater ecologist, I see Te Mana o te Wai as essential. Eroding our natural capital is counterproductive—if we fail to safeguard water health, we undermine our own health, economy, and long-term viability. Te Mana o te Wai rightly recognises people as part of the ecosystem. It is often misunderstood and in reality is not about ‘locking away’ in a pristine state, but about balance, where people and the environment thrive together. Good primary producers and all cultures understand that caring for resources underpins enduring production.	I have long championed the creation of this fund within Council because it reflects both community priorities and sound investment. Consultation showed strong public support for investing in a dedicated fund to back large, well-structured projects with enduring outcomes. Otago has outstanding natural ecosystems – a real asset for so many reasons. Many endemic species and diverse ecotypes valued for tourism/recreational experience, environmental services and intrinsic value. Community-led initiatives, in particular, are far more likely to succeed—they attract local buy-in, deliver strong volunteer contributions, and stretch every dollar further. In today’s tight conservation funding environment, some excellent projects are struggling to survive. Allowing these gains to be lost would be short-sighted. It is always more effective—and financially prudent—to protect and build on what we already have, rather than face the far greater costs of restoration later.	Local government has a responsibility to act because the effects of climate change are felt most directly in our communities—through flooding, drought, coastal erosion, and biodiversity loss. Reducing emissions and building resilience is not only about environmental stewardship, but also about protecting people’s health, homes, and livelihoods, and keeping rates and insurance costs manageable in the long term. Every action we take locally contributes to national and global solutions, and councils are well placed to lead by example and support communities in making the shift.

<b>Tim Mephram</b>	I would like to retain Te Mana O Te Wai as a central policy for freshwater management however the government through the NPS-FW is going to change or ignore Te Mana O Te Wai and the hierachies. I have been involved in discussions with MFE as an ORC councillor attempting to protect the intent of Te Mana O Te Wai in the new NPS-FW, probably to no avail. We will need to work with the dumbed down version of the NPS-FW to deliver the best outcomes for our waterways until we can get rid of this government.	I was one of the creators of this fund through the long term plan process. I presented and moved the motion for approval to council. I will continue to support this fund.	We should all be looking at how we reduce our carbon footprint, local government is no exception.
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	Te Mana O Te Wai	Environmental Fund	Climate Change
Alex King	The inclusion of manawhenua values, an emphasis on the health of waterways and of the freshwater ecosystem is critical. Ecosystem health must come before commercial activities. A healthy ecosystem is required in the long term to support human activity. We have excellent health in some waterways, but where the water quality is poor we would need to phase in changes to water management to improve this.	Environmental protection is not optional. We are entering an era where the results of human maltreatment of natural systems like climate change threatens us all. The work of protection needs to continue. The annual fund supports community groups who tackle environmental problems, and do so at far less cost than paying contractors to do the same work.	Climate change threatens low-lying areas with flooding including South Dunedin. Globally climate impacts are starting to affect multiple aspects of society such as our food and energy supply. Otago needs to rapidly reduce our carbon emissions, and we need to join with other regions and countries around the world to do the same. If we fail to do this it will see direct impacts such as flooding in Otago, but we'll also suffer huge flow-on effects from the collapse of global systems.

Phil Glassey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water is essential for life. It is not owned by anyone, and needs to be treated with respect.</li> <li>Use for commercial purposes depletes the water resources, especially when in conjunction with inappropriate land use practices.</li> <li>Discharge as a result of commercial use can pollute waterways</li> </ul>	There are many examples where community-led improvement of catchment health has reduced run-off and flood flows, improved water quality and yet maintained agricultural and horticultural productivity. EBOP Focus catchments for example. Some good work in the Otago region also.	Yes, although our emissions are miniscule compared to most other countries we should set an example and realise the environment, health and economic benefits in reducing carbon emissions – improved air quality for a start. There are opportunities in cleaner energy technologies (solar, wind, Ground source heat, biomass and biogas).
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	Te Mana O Te Wai	Environmental Fund	Climate Change
<b>Chanel Gardner</b>	I support the principle of Te Mana o te Wai as a way to prioritise healthy waterways and reliable drinking water. However, my focus is on ensuring that its implementation delivers tangible improvements we can measure in Otago's rivers, lakes, and aquifers. The Regional Council must link this policy to transparent metrics and reporting, so the community can see progress, not just process. By aligning this with initiatives such as the proposed UNESCO Biosphere Reserve,** we can ensure that freshwater management is not just regulatory, but also collaborative, strategic, and efficient.	I believe the Regional Council has a role to play in both climate resilience and carbon reduction, but the focus must be on strategic, efficient investment that protects our communities while supporting local livelihoods. Projects should be assessed against tangible outcomes, not symbolic gestures.	By driving nature-based solutions, improving land and water management, and leveraging opportunities like the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve,** we can build resilience to climate impacts while unlocking economic opportunities in tourism, research, and sustainable business. This ensures climate action is not a cost burden but an investment in Otago's future prosperity.
<b>James Cockle</b>	Without healthy waterways and clean safe drinking water for our people, there is no rational case for commercial activities which utilise these resources. The wellbeing of our waterways and our people is at odds with the interests of capitalists, who seek primarily to make profit off these things.	Community led environmental work is essential to regenerating the health of waterways, along with improved soil health and biodiversity. This benefits everyone.	The effects of global warming are being felt globally with wildfires, floods, heatwaves. Fortunately we can cut emissions while reducing consumption and enable all our people to live well. Simple solutions like passenger rail and improved public & active transport will help with this.
<b>Hilary Calvert</b>	Without balance it will fail. It needs the community with it	Support if it is achieving environmental outcomes required	As long as it doesn't weaken the economy.

\*\* Biosphere reserves are 'learning places for sustainable development'. <https://www.unesco.org/en/mab/wnbr/about>

## For the DCC candidates we asked four questions:

**Issue: Cat management:** The DCC (unlike many other Councils in NZ) do not address cat management in their animal control bylaw. Which (if any) bylaw requirements would you support? **Issue: Waste Management:** Councillors have approved the development of the Smooth Hill Landfill, **Issue: Climate change,** **Issue: South Dunedin** faces a range of natural hazards like surface flooding, coastal inundation, and shallow groundwater. The overall flood risk is already high for a large part of the this and will increase over the next 75 years with climate change. Which 'South Dunedin Future' option would you support? Blue infill is the respondents chosen option.

Candidates 14 Vacancies	A Cat Bylaw				Climate Change	
Candidates who responded to Forest and Bird's Survey	Pro Microchip	Pro Desexing	Pro Household Limit	All three	Local Government should do all it can to reduce carbon emissions and slow the rate of climate change	Local Government should do all it can to reduce carbon emissions as long as it doesn't weaken the economy
AKERS, Lachlan						
BARKER, Sophie (Independent)						
BRAZIL, Rachel (Independent)						
CEBULLA-ELDER, Heike						
DAVIE-NITIS, Sarah (Independent)						
FINNIE, Rose (Green Party)						
GAREY, Christine (Independent)						
GROSHINSKI, Jett (Labour)						
KNIGHT, Anna (Building Kotahitaka)						
KNIGHTS, Richard (Independent)						
LUCAS, Cherry (Independent)						
MAYHEM, Mandy						
OLSEN, Jen (The Radical Action Faction)						
POOLE, Marian						
POPE, Paul						
RADICH, Jules (Independent)						
ROBERTSON, Evelyn (Independent)						
SIMMS, Andrew (Future Dunedin)						
SUTTON, Andrew (Future Dunedin)						
TAYLOR, Amy (Future Dunedin)						
TREADWELL, Mickey (Green Party)						
TWEMLOW, Rebecca (Future Dunedin)						
WALKER, Steve (Labour)						
WARRING, Lily (Green Party)						

Candidates 14 Vacancies	South Dunedin Options						Smooth Hill Landfill		
Candidates who responded to Forest and Bird's Survey	Keep Land dry	Space for Water & wetlands	Space for water & raised land	Relocate to raised land	Large Scale managed retreat	Don't know	Proceed	Stop & transport waste to Winton	Another option
AKERS, Lachlan									
BARKER, Sophie (Independent)									
BRAZIL, Rachel (Independent)									
CEBULLA-ELDER, Heike									
DAVIE-NITIS, Sarah (Independent)									
FINNIE, Rose (Green Party)									
GAREY, Christine (Independent)									
GROSHINSKI, Jett (Labour)									
KNIGHT, Anna (Building Kotahitaka)									
KNIGHTS, Richard (Independent)									
LUCAS, Cherry (Independent)									
MAYHEM, Mandy									
OLSEN, Jen (The Radical Action Faction)		Short term			Long term				
POOLE, Marian									incl reduce waste
POPE, Paul					Long term				Open to ideas
RADICH, Jules (Independent)									
ROBERTSON, Evelyn (Independent)									
SIMMS, Andrew (Future Dunedin)									Rail to Kate V
SUTTON, Andrew (Future Dunedin)									
TAYLOR, Amy (Future Dunedin)									
TREADWELL, Mickey (Green Party)						*			
TWEMLOW, Rebecca (Future Dunedin)									
WALKER, Steve (Labour)									
WARRING, Lily (Green Party)						*			open to solution

\* The option supported by South Dunedin residents