



THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

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MEDIA RELEASE

Co-funding sought for Hokitika and Franz Josef infrastructure projects

The West Coast Regional Council is seeking co-funding for infrastructure projects for Hokitika and Franz Josef to secure funding allocated by Government.

The funding from central Government comes from the economic stimulus package for 'shovel ready' projects announced during the COVID-19 lockdown. The Regional Council submitted a package of projects worth a total of \$45.1M and have been successful in obtaining \$24M provided the relevant co-funding contributions are able to be secured from the communities for whom the resilience projects are targeted for.

For Hokitika the proposed project is the extension of the seawall to Richards Drive and the construction of a river flood protection scheme to provide far greater resilience and protection between Kaniere and Sunset Point from a 1:100 year flood event.

Up to \$3.8M of funding has been made available as long as the Council is able to secure \$3.2M of co-funding. Contributions of \$250,000 will be made by the West Coast Regional Council and Westland District Council, with \$2.7M to be funded by a merged and extended Rating District.

"We are working hard to secure additional co-funding," said Randal Beal, Director of Operations at the West Coast Regional Council. "This will reduce the amount sought from the Hokitika community but we are unable to confirm how much, or when that additional co-funding will be secured."

For Franz Josef, the proposed project involves raising all existing flood protection assets below the Franz Josef Bridge by 2m. New flood protection assets will be constructed from the Heliport Wall to the 55km Corner, as well as a new wall between Rata Knoll and the Milton and Others stopbank. The raising of the bridge and approaches is also included in the proposal.

A total of \$18M has been made available for the Franz Josef project by Central Government provided that Council can secure \$6M of co-funding. Contributions of \$3.6M from the New Zealand Transport Agency, and \$250,000 from both the West Coast Regional Council and Westland District Council leave \$1.9M to be funded via an extended and merged Rating District.

Mr Beal said that every \$1 invested by the new Franz Josef Rating District would attract \$9.50 from Central Government, up to \$18M.

"This is a great opportunities for the Hokitika and Franz Josef communities to fast track these projects with a significantly reduced financial impact on them. It is unlikely we would be able to access this sort of funding again."

Councillors and staff from the Regional Council will be holding drop-in sessions for those who want to find out more about these projects, changes to the rating district and how it will affect them. For Hokitika, these will be held at the Wests Rugby Clubrooms on 50 Brittan Street, Hokitika on 29 September between 10.00am and 6.00pm, and on 30 September between 9.00am and 2.00pm. For Franz Josef, this session will be held at the Franz Josef Medical Centre on 6 October between 10.30am and 6.00pm.

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