WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

29 November 2024

Council moving ahead to support Franz Josef community

At an extraordinary meeting today, West Coast Regional Council resolved to support the Franz Josef community through accepting terms with central government to jointly fund additional flood protection works on the Waiho River to 'hold-the-line' for that community.

Council chairman Peter Haddock says the issues the Franz Josef community faces are unprecedented with a rapidly aggrading river.

"Millions of metres of material are predicted to enter the Waiho River from the glacier catchment over the next decade."

"The works required to give the short-term protection the community needs are unaffordable for such a small rating base without government assistance. Council is very appreciative of the Government's offer of a grant of up to $6 million to help the community hold-the-line until a more permanent solution can be found."

On 27 November the Franz Josef Joint Committee agreed a motion that WCRC take action to obtain the central Government grant currently on offer for flood protection works. The committee made it very clear members wanted close engagement in the prioritisation and progress of works.

Peter Haddock says it's great to get this direction from the Joint Committee.

"Regional councillors present at the meeting relayed this motion to the full Council. I am pleased that Council, as decision makers, agreed with the motion passed by the Joint Committee to support our Franz Josef community.

"Cr Birchfield was the only councillor who voted against the motion which was put to Council today."

The proposed works will be a temporary solution to 'hold-the-line', ensuring flood protection assets continue to deliver while Westland District Council completes its future focused master plan for the Franz Josef community.

WCRC will now proceed to accept the Government's offer of a grant and will work closely with the Franz Josef community to fully develop this project.

–Ends–

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