



Chair's Message

I hope you've all had the chance to make the most of the great West Coast summer we've been having. As I've travelled up and down the region I've been struck by the sheer number of visitors – from around New Zealand and the world – enjoying everything the Coast has to offer.

It's been great to see the work of Council's Environmental Science team reflected in the Can I swim here? section of the LAWA website and how many people are using it. The site provides water quality information from popular swimming spots to help people decide where and when to swim.

Council samples 21 river, lake and coastal sites identified as popular recreational sites on the Coast. As I write this all our sites were showing green meaning safe for recreational activities.

The low river flows over the past couple of months have also been useful for our hydrology team. Staff have been able to do work such as low-flow gauging, site repairs, radar and telemetry upgrades.

As part of its work in managing the region's natural and physical resources, Council monitors groundwater, lakes, rivers, coastal beaches and air quality across over 120 locations.

In July, we'll release our three yearly State of the Environment Report. This provides our communities with a snapshot of the state and trends of some of our natural resources, including land cover, water quality, water quantity and air quality.

Regulatory and Policy work over recent months has included significant work on updating our Total Mobility scheme. Total Mobility helps eligible people with long-term and short-term impairments to access appropriate transport to meet daily needs and help them participate in community activities.

Later this year we'll be issuing users with a card to replace



McKenna Stopbank sod turning. Left: Chair Peter Haddock, Cr Mark McIntyre and Jo Dooley.

the current paper vouchers. This will make it easier for users and transport providers alike.

Our consents team has been collaborating with Westland Milk Products and Poutini Ngāi Tahu on joint ways of working through resource management issues and solutions.

The compliance team has enhanced its monitoring and compliance activity to prioritise the riskiest environmental effects, in the most under pressure catchments.

This work allows Council to direct its resources effectively and proportionately address the riskiest activities which promotes better focus on target areas.

Continued...



Peter Haddock
CHAIR, WESTLAND CONSTITUENCY



Chair's Message

Continued...

Sincere thanks to all those who have participated in our latest round of rating district and joint committee meetings from Karamea through to Neils Beach. Your input is essential to our work.

Our catchment management team is making good progress with the major capital works projects co-funded with central government at Hokitika, Franz Josef, Greymouth and Westport. Stage 1 works been completed at Hokitika and Franz Josef.

I also want to close by paying tribute to the late Cr Frank Dooley.

Frank was a fierce advocate for, and protector of, local control and economic interests. He told me on many occasions his main reason for standing for Council was to see Westport's flood protection completed.

At the sod turning event at McKennas Stopbank late last year. Frank's wife Jo joined myself and Cr Mark McIntyre to mark the start of Westport's first major stopbank using a spade which had belonged to Frank.

He believed in paying it forward to help the next generation to enjoy success, in improving the richness of the local community and the lives of people in it.

The West Coast Regional Council and Buller have lost a great champion in Frank. He is very much missed at our Council table.



Do we have your correct contact details?

When we send out rates invoices or other information mailouts, we often find some are returned by NZ Post because the physical address details are incomplete or incorrect.

If you don't receive your rates notice in your letterbox you will not know the correct amount to pay or when it is due and may be charged additional costs.

Our Council covers a large region, and we rely on our ratepayers to supply us with current address information when they sell or purchase a property, or change their postal address.

Our database shows most of our ratepayers have not supplied us with their email address or phone number. If you complete the form on our website: wcr.govt.nz/services/rates/rates-invoice-by-email we can send your rates invoices out electronically. This is also a more efficient and environmentally friendly method for us to communicate with you.

Alternatively, you can update any of your contact details with Council by emailing info@wcr.govt.nz or calling us on **0508 800 118**.



Chris Coll being sworn in. Photo: Paul Madgwick

New WCRC Buller representative

Westport's Chris Coll is the new Buller Constituency representative on the Regional Council. He replaces the late Frank Dooley.

"Chris and his wife Jan have run their Coast wide surveying and resource management consultancy out of Westport since 1981," says Council Chair Peter Haddock.

"He has extensive experience of the issues confronting Westport and very valuable knowledge of West Coast rivers from Karamea through to Haast. Actually, one of his first jobs before going to university was as an Engineering Assistant for the Westland Catchment Board (a pre-WCRC entity)."

Chris served as Buller District Civil Defence Controller for 35 years, finishing in 2020.

The appointment followed an expressions of interest process which attracted five candidates. As the vacancy fell within 12 months of the next local government elections a by-election was not required.

"We had some very high calibre candidates and really hope the interest they demonstrated in the vacancy translates into standing in the local government elections in October," says Peter Haddock.

Cr Coll was sworn in as a Councillor at the Council meeting of 4 March 2025 held at Te Tauraka Waka a Māui in Bruce Bay.

Cr Coll's daughter Laura Coll McLaughlin was a Buller constituency representative on the Council from 2019-2022. His wife Jan was a Buller representative from 1989 to 1992 and was deputy chair of council from 1990-92.



Low flow gauging conducted by hydrology technicians in January 2025 at Mokihinui River, Welcome Bay.



Low flow gauging conducted by hydrology technicians in January 2025 at Mokihinui River, Welcome Bay.

A season of low flows: Slow recovery after a dry start

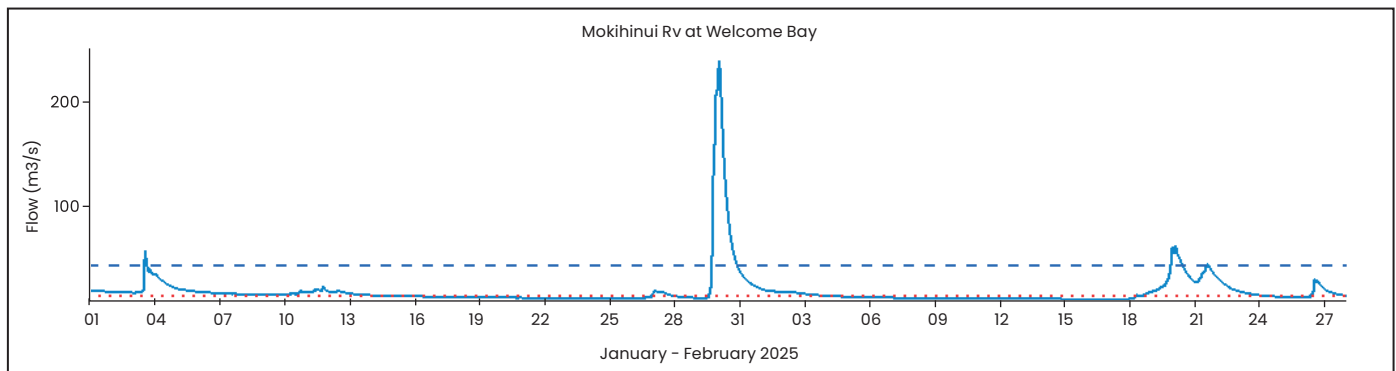
January and February saw persistently low river flows and occasional brief rainfall, with both months experiencing extended dry spells.

Many rivers hovered near or below their seven-day Mean Annual Low Flow (MALF), a measure of how low a river's flow typically gets each year. When rivers dip below this threshold, aquatic ecosystems can experience stress, and water availability becomes a concern.

Relief came with rainfall on February 18–21 and 25, boosting flows across the region. However, despite these increases, most rivers remain below their median annual flow, highlighting how slow recovery can be after prolonged dry conditions.



Aerial view of Mokihinui River hydrometric site during low flows with exposed areas of the riverbed.



Persistent low flows at Mokihinui river with the occasional rainfall events, a similar trend is seen across the region at Karamea, Buller, Grey, Hokitika and Haast catchments.

2025 is local body election year

This year is local government election year when you can have your say about who represents you at the regional council, district councils and Development West Coast (DWC).

Councils and trusts such as DWC play an important role in the wellbeing of our communities.

Who can vote in the elections?

To be eligible to vote you must:

- be 18 years old or older
- be enrolled on the parliamentary electoral roll, either the general roll or the Māori roll
- currently live in New Zealand; be a New Zealand permanent resident or citizen; hold an open-ended resident visa (a resident visa with no end date); have been living in New Zealand continuously for 12 months or more and
- You can vote for your regional council representatives from your constituency (Buller, Grey and Westland), councillors and mayor for your district and your constituency representative for DWC.

You may also be eligible to enrol as a non-resident ratepayer elector in a council district if you are on the district valuation roll and pay rates in the council district but the address where you are registered as a Parliamentary elector is outside that council district.

For further information visit:

www.electionz.com/ratepayers/index.html

Who can stand for election?

To be eligible to stand for election candidates must be:

- a New Zealand citizen;
- enrolled on the parliamentary electoral roll
- have lived at their current address for at least one month
- be nominated by two people (a candidate cannot nominate themselves).

A person cannot stand if they are currently serving a prison term of three years or more.

How do I enrol?

If you are registered to vote in Parliamentary elections, you are automatically enrolled as a residential elector to vote in local authority elections.

If you have never been enrolled, it's easy to do so. Visit the Electoral Commission website.

If you're eligible to enrol to vote, and you live in New Zealand, it's compulsory to enrol to vote.

If you are on the electoral roll you will receive your voting document in the mail so that you can vote by post.

More information visit:

www.votelocal.co.nz/information-for-voters/

What's the difference between regional and district councils?

Regional and district councils have distinct roles based on geographic and administrative boundaries.

West Coast Regional Council is responsible for managing Coast-wide issues such as biosecurity control, including pest control and noxious plants; resource management – quality of water, soil, coastal planning, Civil Defence Emergency Management and flood and river management.

Buller, Grey and Westland councils manage more localised services and responsibilities within their specific districts. This includes infrastructure services, such as wastewater, stormwater and drinking water; local regulatory services, such as building consenting, dog control and liquor licensing; parks and recreation and cultural facilities; libraries and museums; cemeteries.

WHEREVER YOU PAY RATES YOU CAN VOTE.



Do you live in one area and pay rates on a property in another area?

You may qualify to vote in both areas at the local authority elections in October 2025. You may like to vote in this election. Voting is a way to have your say on what happens in your local community. This information is designed to help you. It notes who you can contact to enrol, and ways you might qualify to vote.

There are two types of electors

Residential Electors – If you are registered to vote on the electoral roll, you are automatically enrolled to vote in local authority elections. You will receive a voting document so that you can vote by post.

Ratepayer Electors – You may also be eligible to enrol as a non-resident ratepayer elector in a council district if both of these apply:

- you are on the district valuation roll and pay rates in the council district
- the address where you are registered as a Parliamentary elector is outside that council district.

Your eligibility to enrol or be nominated as a ratepayer elector may also depend on your individual circumstances as determined by criteria in the Local Electoral Act 2001 and its regulations.

An organisation can nominate one of its members or officers to vote on its behalf

If a firm, company, trust, corporation, society partners, joint tenants and tenants in common collectively pay rates on a property in a council district, one of the group may be nominated to be the ratepayer elector.

The person nominating and the nominated person must be registered as Parliamentary electors at addresses outside the council district where the property is located.

You can only enrol once

You can only enrol, or be nominated to enrol, once in a council district, no matter how many properties you own in that council district. Council district includes: a city, district and regional council area; a community board area if established; the area of Auckland Council and the local boards.

New Ratepayer Electors

If you think you may be eligible to enrol or to nominate someone as a ratepayer elector, get an Enrolment Form for Ratepayer Electors from the local council where you pay your rates. The Electoral Officer will be able to help you with your application.

Enrol now – the Ratepayer Electoral Roll closes on 1 August 2025
Enrol online – www.electionz.com/ratepayers

electionz.com 
voting made easy