

## Manawatū River Source to Sea Submission

### Horizons Annual Plan 2019/20

#### CONTACT DETAILS

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#### Hearing of Submission:

Manawatū River Source to Sea is seeking public speaking rights to Council's Strategy and Policy Committee on 9 April 2019.

#### Background

**Manawatū River Source to Sea** is a Community-led and Catchment wide initiative focused on providing positive outcomes for our community, from the headwaters of the Manawatū River in the Ruahine Ranges, through to the confluence at Foxton Estuary in Horowhenua. The positive outcomes include:

- Enhancing biodiversity, both flora and fauna;
- Building awareness and capability through citizen science;
- Providing recreational and leisure opportunities;
- Economic opportunities and outcomes, including sustainable tourism;
- Social and cultural well-being.

The Manawatū River Source to Sea Vision is *"An integrated network of biodiversity-focused initiatives, including sustainable business activities, and other nature-related activities that collectively contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity and provide benefits to the Manawatū River Catchment's community."* This community initiative is closely aligned with the work of the Manawatu River Leaders' Forum.

#### SUBMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Horizons Regional Annual Plan 2019-2020. In the Community Outcome Section of the Annual Plan (page 20),

Council states: "The community outcomes can only be fulfilled through Horizons working together with the community".

**Our submission is that:**

**Council continues the dialogue with Manawatū River Source to Sea to:**

- Continue building capacity and capability in the community sector
- Jointly explore emerging opportunities that align with Treasury's four capitals (e.g. UNESCO GeoPark)
- Maximise the opportunities of collective action
- Leverage new funding into the catchment

Council considers to make a financial contribution of \$20k in 2019/20 towards the Manawatū River Source to Sea programme of work.

## **Land Management**

SLUI: We appreciate and fully endorse the ongoing commitment to SLUI. We are delighted to learn that Council has been able to secure a further \$6.49m funding from the Hill Erosion Fund. At the same time, it is hard to gauge whether a 27% (50% in some priority areas) reduction of sediment loss by 2043 is going to be enough in the long run. We strongly feel that further reductions need to be actively pursued. As stated in the Annual Plan, Landcare Research modelling shows that Climate Change will offset some of the gains made. We would like Horizons to share the insights from the modelling more widely and engage with communities to explore innovative solutions to increase funding for SLUI, but potentially also develop new income streams from a change to more sustainable land use.

We urge Horizons to take full advantage of the 'One Billion Trees' project and work in partnership with land owners to access any opportunities offered. The redesign of the Emission Trading Scheme should offer further opportunities to earn income from retired land, wider riparian strips, as well as production forest.

## **Freshwater Management**

Water Monitoring: We welcome the ongoing focus on water monitoring. There is increasing awareness that plastic, and in particular microplastic in waterways is becoming an issue as it enters our food chains. Plastic is currently not covered by the NPS for Freshwater and is not part of the monitoring. We would like Horizons to be proactive in understanding this emerging issue.

In addition, we encourage council to help build capability and capacity in citizen science to increase public awareness around issues.

## **Biodiversity and Biosecurity**

Pest Control: We acknowledge the Council's increase in investment to increase possum control in areas where OSPRI are ceasing to operate. We would like to

explore opportunities to attract Predator Free 2050 funding to the Manawatu building on the work that has been done by Palmerston North City and is being proposed by community for the Ashhurst and Pohangina area.

Top bush and wetland remnants: At this stage, only 51% of the top 200 bush remnants are being actively managed and it is not quite clear how many of the top 100 wetlands (the report states 60 or 14% out of a total of 440 wetlands). We would like to see more emphasis on these remnants and in particular the wetlands which might be able to help mitigate some of the climate change impacts. Education: We share the sentiments expressed in Wildlife Foxton Trust's submission around the need for ongoing education.

We see an opportunity for Council to work with community on a collective action plan that could help leverage funding for biodiversity into the catchment.

### **Other:**

Compliance monitoring of rural resource consents identified in the annual rural compliance monitoring programme (Page 38) appears to be an issue. We would like to see more resource go into this area to identify the cause of issues and work with relevant parties on long term solutions. Other councils such as Hawke's Bay have clearly identified this area as critical to their long-term performance.

Holistic approach to climate change: We fully support the Council's work on a climate change strategy (page 75).

Climate change is a reality and we would like to better understand the effectiveness of initiatives such as SLUI on their current trajectory under different climate change scenarios and impacts. If climate change is likely to negate progress made to date, we will have a collective interest to find innovative ways to accelerate this programme.

Climate change driven erosion will increase the pressure on flood protection – this is in addition to the impacts heavy rainfalls might have on their own. We know that we cannot continue to rely on engineering solutions. Is there an opportunity to start conversations around soft engineering options in preparation for the next LTP? We are in particular interested to explore the options around restoring/recreating wetlands as sediment traps and integral parts of flood management.