

19 June 2019



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File ref: OMS 10 02 19
MMcC:LB

By email: admin@enm.org.nz

Dear Mr Cole

SUBMISSION TO 2019-20 ANNUAL PLAN

Thank you for your submission to Horizons Regional Council's 2019-20 Annual Plan.

This year we received 57 submissions, all of which were carefully considered by Council. It is always a challenge to balance the diverse concerns and interests in our region and the submission process is an important one for Councillors to better understand the views of the people they represent.

Your submission to Council's 2019-20 Annual Plan related to:

Land and Water Management

Horizons Regional Council thanks Manawatū River Source to Sea for its support of our Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI). We acknowledge the support of the new funding that has been secured and the support to take full advantage of the One Billion Trees (1BT) project. Horizons is actively seeking funding for works in the region through the 1BT fund in partnership with landowners and other Regional Councils.

The submission notes that it is hard to gauge if the current level of activity is sufficient and seeks that Horizons shares more of the information from the modelling of SLUI outcomes and impacts of climate change. These topics form part of the Horizons State of Environment Report 2019 that was released in May and reported on in more detail at the June Catchment Operations Committee meeting. These two public items will provide further transparency around the modelling that has been undertaken.

Thank you for your submission that welcomes the ongoing focus on water monitoring and notes the increasing awareness of the issue of plastic in waterways. Horizons will continue to monitor the regions waterways and has supported through the Manawatū River Leaders' Accord a community project being delivered by the Manawatū River Source to the Sea group around education and removal of plastics from waterways. This work has been enabled through both ratepayer funds and funds from Central Government via the Freshwater Improvement Fund. Horizons notes your interest in building capability and capacity in citizen science to increase public awareness around water quality issues.

A further community project round will be opened for projects later in 2019 and Manawatū Source to the Sea may like to consider applying for further funds for project work around these issues.

In relation to the request for additional rural compliance, demand for compliance work continues to increase. In the LTP 2018-2028, Council added two new staff

Kairanga

Marton

Palmerston North

Taihape

Taumarunui

Wanganui

Woodville

over the first three years of the LTP. The recruitment of one of these roles planned for Year 3 has been brought forward to Year 2.

Council will continue to review the demands on this area of business and Councillors can expect a further update from staff in the next 3-6 months.

Biosecurity and Biodiversity Management

Thank you for your submission supporting Horizons increased investment in possum control in areas where OSPRI are ceasing to operate. Your submission outlines that you would like to explore opportunities to attract Predator Free 2050 to the Manawatū, Horizons welcomes discussion on this. Please contact Jon Roygard - jon.roygard@horizons.govt.nz to discuss this further.

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Thank you for your submission around the bush remnants and wetlands programme. Your submission seeks some clarity around the numbers of bush remnants and wetlands that are actively managed. Horizons' Environment Committee reporting provides some further information on this and we acknowledge your submission requesting more emphasis on these remnants and in particular the wetlands which might help to mitigate some of the climate change impacts. Horizons is currently reviewing its biodiversity programme including gathering more information on its bush remnants and wetlands to inform the operational delivery of the biodiversity implementation programme. Further information on this is provided in the recent Environment Committee report which can be found at the link below and further information on bush remnants and wetlands has been included in our 2019 State of Environment report released in May.

<http://www.horizons.govt.nz/HRC/media/Media/Agenda-Reports/Environment-Committee-2019-13-03/1924%20Annex%20C%20Biodiversity%20Activity.pdf>

Thank you for your submission that requests Council continue building capability in the community sector, jointly explore emerging proposal e.g. the UNESCO geopark, maximise opportunities for collective action and leverage new funding into the catchment, and your request to consider a financial contribution of \$20,000 in 2019/20 towards the Manawatū Source to the Sea programme of work.

Horizons continues to work with a wide range of partners and is committed to further building the capacity in the community sector. Horizons biodiversity programme currently has 34 biodiversity collaborations and budget has been provided in the Annual Plan to continue supporting these types of projects. These collaborations include funding for the members that make up the Manawatū Source to the Sea group. Horizons has actively sought further funding for supporting community projects including through the various Freshwater Improvement Fund projects, most of which include a community project component funded by a mixture of ratepayer and central government funds. As a result there is significantly more resourcing available for these types of projects in the 2019-20 year and beyond.

Horizons welcomes ongoing discussion around emerging proposals including the UNESCO geopark proposal for the Te Apiti Manawatū Gorge area. The Te Apiti Manawatū Gorge Governance Group have signaled an openness to investigate this concept further as a part of a wider look at tourism opportunities for the area in partnership with others.

Thank you for your request for \$20,000 of funding for your activity over the 2019-20 year. There is little detail in your submission as to what this would fund and what the outputs would be. It is recommended that you develop specific proposals and put these through the various community grant project rounds that will be opened over the year. Horizons acknowledges that this has been a successful model for the group who have secured funding via the Manawatū Freshwater Improvement Fund community grants round in 2018-19. Horizons also notes that it provides significant funding to the underlying members of the Manawatū Source to the Sea group across its non-regulatory programmes.

Regional Leadership and Governance

Council has embarked on developing a climate change strategy and this will be a focus for Council over the next 12 months. Council welcomes support from the submitter.

The Council's 2019-20 Annual Plan is available on our website, www.horizons.govt.nz/publications-feedback/the-annual-plan .

Yours sincerely



Michael McCartney
Chief Executive Officer
Horizons Regional Council