

Resource Consent submission

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
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Date	17/04/2024 14:54
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Applicant details

Name of applicant	Glenn Puna
Activity location	5 Bluecliffs Beach Road, RD 1, Tuatapere 9691
Application number	APP-20233670

Submission details

My submission relates to the whole application

Yes

Details of my submission

The acceleration of erosion at Bluecliffs Beach Road can be directly attributed to the alteration of the natural flow regime in the Lower Waiau River resulting from the operation of the Manapouri Power Scheme. This power scheme has altered the natural flow of the Waiau River and affected the way in which the gravel bar at Bluecliffs is replenished. The sediment and gravel that used to come down the river is now not coming

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Submission uploaded

down the river which is why the erosion over the last few years is taking place. The erosion at Bluecliffs is river erosion not sea erosion.

No

I am a trade competitor of the applicant (for the purposes of section 308B of the Resource Management Act 1991)

No

Outcome sought

I wish Environment Southland to make the following decision

To oppose the application.

Why I wish Environment Southland to make this decision

Submitter's reasons for opposition to the proposal
Given the situation outlined above, and in the absence of any realistic mitigation, it is imperative that the flow and sediment regime in the Lower Waiau River is properly managed and enhanced towards a stable state, and towards its natural state, at every opportunity. Doing this will, at the very least, help prevent the Bluecliffs erosion problem from getting worse, which will in turn provide for more sustainable mitigation options.

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater (NPS-F) stresses the fundamental importance of water, and the concept of Te Mana o te Wai, which is "about restoring and preserving the balance between water, the wider environment, and the community".

In this context, the proposal fails to achieve this test of the NPS-F (i.e. progression towards a stable, more natural state), and is therefore considered a retrograde step.

Specific concerns are as follows:

1. The proposal does not necessarily meet the S104(D) gateway tests for non-complying activities. Section 104D(1)(a) specifies that the adverse effects of the activities on the environment will be no more than minor. Despite the reports presented with the application, this is a subjective assessment largely based on the "temporary" nature of the works. The applicant has not considered the possibility for effects to occur much further down river, for up to 50 years. This is a glaring gap in their assessment. Furthermore, the applicant seeks a 35 year consent, so these works may not be as "temporary" as assessed in Section 7 of the AEE.

Section 104D(1)(b) specifies that the activities will not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the relevant plans. An assessment of this is provided in Section 9.5 and Appendix J of the AEE. The Appendix J assessment leans heavily on this application providing an "upgrade" of the power scheme

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operation. This is balanced against the actual and potential adverse effects of the proposed works (for 35 years) and thereby justified as meeting this gateway test.

The AEE describes the purpose of creating a second flow channel as “to facilitate the provision of flushing flows”, with difficulties with manipulating lake levels at times of low inflows being cited. However, the present situation is that the provision of flushing flows can be engineered at any time, providing lake levels are managed with this in mind. There is no absolute need to create the second channel at MLC, and the proposal appears to be more a matter of convenience than necessity.

2. Not all alternatives have been explored, as is the requirement of Schedule 4 of the RMA for activities that are likely to result in significant adverse effects on the environment. Other options include: 1) Increasing the minimum flow below the MLC to assist in transporting sediment through the MLC into the Lower Waiau River. This would also have the effect of moving the Lower Waiau River towards a more natural state. 2) Reduce the NTU limit at MLC so that less sediment-laden dirty water is diverted into the Waiau Reach. This would restore the sediment to the Lower Waiau River, and reduce the amount of sediment deposited in the Waiau Reach; thus reducing the need for ongoing dredging in this area.

3. The proposed disposal of sediment is unnatural. This sediment would have naturally flowed down the Lower Waiau River, and would have ultimately contributed to natural geohydrological processes at the rivermouth. The artificial upstream placement of this sediment on an intermittent wetland/paddock is an artificial stopgap measure which in no way mirrors natural processes. It is questionable whether this is sustainable in the long term.

4. The Assessment of Effects does not adequately assess or address all relevant matters of National Importance (s6), including:

- (a) The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins;
- (b) The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate use and development;
- (d) The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers;
- (h) The management of significant risks from natural hazards.

The impact the proposal will have on the existing environment and community at Bluecliffs is not explored by the applicant.

5. The 35-year consent period is excessive and does not match the description of the proposal and accompanying AEE, which states that the activities are “temporary”.

Relief sought: The submitter would like this application APP-

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Hearing details

- | | |
|---|-----|
| I wish to be heard in support of my submission | Yes |
| I would consider presenting a joint case if others make a similar submission | Yes |
| I wish to be involved in any pre-hearing meeting that may be held for this application | Yes |

Confirmation

I will serve a copy of my submission on the applicant and I confirm all of the above information is correct

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