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## Consent for rock wall

By Lee Scanlon

The Buller District Council (BDC) has gained resource consent to build a 400-metre rock wall to protect Westport Airport from sea erosion.

Council would only build the wall if erosion came within 75 metres of the centre of the airport runway. It is currently about 90m away.

The wall would cost about \$350,000, which would be paid for by Westport Airport, said council's operations manager Steve Griffin.

This means the Ministry of Transport, which operates the airport with council, would pay half.

The resource consent granted by the West Coast Regional Council lasts for 35 years. It comprises three coastal permits: to occupy the coastal marine area; to construct a rock rip-rap structure; to disturb the foreshore or seabed.

BDC must notify the regional council at least 10 working days before starting work.

It would have to avoid damaging the coastal marine area and vegetation, use existing access routes where possible, and minimise machinery activity in the coastal marine area.

The colour of the rock used for the rip-rap must blend with the surrounds, wherever possible.

BDC must inspect the wall at least six-monthly and following significant storm events during spring high tides. It must keep the wall in sound condition and fit for purpose.

Where practicable, council must retrieve any rock debris on the beach that has come from the wall, use it for repairs or remove it from the site.

BDC must also take photos of the site within one month before the wall is built, and not more than three weeks after construction has finished.

The district council must take photos from the

same points at least every six months and before and after any major maintenance or repair works. It must complete a yearly report on the photos, showing comparisons.

The regional council can review the consent conditions if the rock wall harms the environment.

### No action

Meanwhile, nothing has happened since the BDC decided three months ago stone dredged from the Buller River might be used to help stop the sea erosion threatening the airport.

Councillors instructed staff to ask Westport Harbour Ltd to seek resource consent to allow the dredge to dump off Carters Beach.

Responding to questions from The News, Westport Harbour chief executive Trish Casey said today that she had heard nothing from council.

Mr Griffin said he had overlooked it, and was writing to the harbour company immediately. Council would ask the company - which runs the harbour on council's behalf - to come back with details such as any additional costs associated with the proposal, he said.

NIWA scientist Dr Graeme Smart told council in February that dumping stone dredged from the river could help trap sediment and reduce wave strength.

He said that, at worst, the stone could be carried onto the Westport harbour bar, in which case dumping would have to stop.

Dr Smart told council changing weather patterns meant more floods for Buller, providing more sediment to build up beaches. However, he said sea levels would also rise from global warming.

He also warned council that constructing a rock wall could create further erosion and result in a longer wall than planned.



i-Site staff member Edwina Dyson says the new Buller Touring Guide, recently completed by Buller promotion and development officer Dean Bermingham, has been very popular. (Photo - Keira Stephenson)

## Smith takes council role

By Keira Stephenson

Punakaiki ecotourism operator and marketing consultant Zane Smith will take over the Buller District Council's promotion and development (P&D) office next month. He temporarily replaces P&D co-ordinator Dean Bermingham, who left last Friday to travel overseas.

A self-described storyteller and educationalist, Mr Smith runs Havenz accommodation and Nature's Tours.

As transitional co-ordinator, he would ensure the P&D office continued to deliver on its objectives in the short term, said community and environmental services manager Craig Scanlon.

"Zane Smith is a passionate West Coaster who has extensive experience in the (tourism) industry - approx 18 years. He lives on the West Coast, and because of this local knowledge he has a real vested interest in seeing the area do well," he said.

However, as the P&D office was now moving its focus towards economic development, Mr Smith's contract would probably not be extended beyond August.

To learn more about Mr Smith watch this ReGeneration video on <http://vimeo.com/20945758>

Mr Bermingham began work in January 2010 on an 18-month contract, funded from council's controversial tourism and promotion rate.

He recently completed the new 44-page Buller Touring Guide.

The guide highlights Buller's tourist attractions and allows for marketing strategies to be put in place.

"We have received many very favourable comments regarding the touring guide from all around New Zealand, which is fantastic and this will continue to get the Buller name out there, so all of the district will benefit," said Mr Scanlon.

He could not give a final cost for the guide as all the invoices were yet to be received, he said.

It would be paid for from the P&D operational budget and by tourism operators.

Westport i-Site manger Jenny Anderson said the touring guides had been sent to all the i-Sites in New Zealand and she had already been asked for more copies.

## DHB performance improving

By Kim Fulton

The West Coast District Health Board (DHB) is meeting national targets for shorter stays in emergency departments, access to elective surgeries and cancer treatment waiting times.

It is, however, failing to meet targets for immunisations, heart and diabetes checks and quit smoking advice according to the Ministry of Health's statistics for the quarter ending March.

The Coast achieved 99 percent - the highest rate of all DHBs - for shorter stays in emergency departments.

The national target is that 95 percent of patients should be admitted, discharged or transferred within six hours.

Last quarter the Coast achieved 100 percent. The target was the only area where the Coast DHB's performance dropped in the quarter ending March.

The immunisation rate on the Coast was the lowest of all DHBs at 84 percent. However, the rate had the biggest jump on last quarter's performance, up 5.7 percent.

The national immunisation target is to have 95 percent of two-year-olds fully immunised by July 2012.

The Coast achieved 107 percent of the national target to increase elective surgery volume by an average of 4000 discharges per year.

All DHBs met the target of their cancer patients waiting fewer than four weeks for radiotherapy.

The West Coast achieved 92 percent for the quit smoking help target, up 6.4 percent from the last quarter.

The national target is that 95 percent of hospitalised smokers will be provided with advice and help to quit by July 2012.

The West Coast DHB achieved 55 percent for heart and diabetes checks.

The target is that 60 percent of the eligible population would have had their cardiovascular risk assessed in the last five years, a target that would increase each year.

Wairarapa was the only DHB to achieve the target this quarter.

### ON THE SIDE

## Principal resigns after 21 years

Westport is losing its longest-serving current school principal.

St Canice's principal Dan Moloney said his resignation was accepted by the board of trustees last week and would be effective from January 27 next year.

By giving six months' notice he hoped to give the board sufficient time to advertise and make a new appointment, he said.

It also allowed plenty of time for the successful candidate to resign from his or her school.

Beginning his teaching career at Gracuity School in 1972 and moving to St Canice's in 1976, Mr Moloney has been principal at St Canice's for 21 years.

"I had always intended to retire from teaching once I turned 60 and I have now reached that magical number," he said. "My future plans are uncertain but I am looking forward to a break and a holiday before weighing up my options."

He and his wife Barbara intended to remain in Westport.



Dan Moloney

## 620 Coasters call Healthline

West Coasters made about 620 calls seeking Healthline advice in the January to March 2012 quarter, about 1 percent of all calls the service received.

The most common advice sought was about vomiting, rashes, and diarrhoea in children. Other calls related to questions about medicines, chest pain and insect bites and stings.

Healthline is a free telephone health advice service that can be called from any landline or mobile phone in New Zealand. It's staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by registered nurses who can advise about what's best to do in cases of sickness, injury or medical emergency.

Depending on a person's symptoms, callers may be encouraged to seek medical treatment or be given advice on how to manage a condition or minor injury. Occasionally the nurse may call 111 for them.

Healthline is funded by the Ministry of Health and provided under contract by Medibank Health Solutions New Zealand. It receives an average of 1000 calls every day nationwide.



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