

From: Environment Canterbury
Sent: Sunday, 3 April 2022 12:31 pm
To: Have your Say
Subject: Submission on draft Annual Plan 2022/23

Anonymous User just submitted 'Draft Annual Plan 2022/23 submission' with the responses below.

First name

Marie

Last name

Gray

Email address

Suburb

Christchurch, Christchurch

Phone number

Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?

Yes, I'm submitting on behalf of an organisation

Which organisation are you submitting on behalf of?

Summit Road Society

Do you wish to speak to your submission at a Council hearing?

Yes

Would you support a levy to accelerate action in response to climate change?

Yes

Upload any supporting documents (if applicable)

Attachment appended
to end of submission

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ddda8/original/1648945820/830aeae2a9dbe9d5393
in_2022_Final.pdf?1648945820](#)

Where did you hear about the consultation?

Email



a passion for the Port Hills

The Summit Road Society is a grassroots conservation charity based in Christchurch. The Society was formed in 1948 to further the vision of Harry Ell to preserve and protect the Port Hills. We own and manage four reserves on the Port Hills and also lead the backyard and community project 'Predator Free Port Hills'.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Environment Canterbury's Draft Annual Plan.

The scientific evidence is clear, we are facing dual crises - climate change and biodiversity loss. We support ECAN's focus on climate response, both in terms of reducing emissions and taking action to build resilience. However, plans alone cannot achieve the step-change needed; initiatives need to be properly resourced. We therefore support the introduction of a climate change levy to accelerate progress on reducing emissions and responses to climate change. The sooner we start to practically address these crises, the more likely we are to be successful and the cheaper it will be in the long run. Nature-based solutions will also be critical. We were also pleased to read that ECAN is partnering with the Christchurch Foundation on a new green philanthropy fund to support major environmental projects.

We support the focus on accelerating the regeneration of the natural environment by co-ordinating and supporting landscape-scale projects. In particular we support the following measures:

- Collaborative catchment-based work programmes
- A collaborative work programme to improve urban waterway quality including reducing sedimentation and run-off from the Port Hills
- The revitalisation of the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy
- The development and implantation of a regional biodiversity monitoring framework
- Acting early and taking a partnership approach to managing invasive weeds and pests
- Community engagement to increase awareness of the threat weeds and pests pose
- Catchment-based protection and regeneration through Me Uru Rākau including a focus on community engagement and participation

We support the increase in the number of Enviroschools. The Society has organised Arbor Day activities with local school children for decades. We have seen first-hand the value of involving children in protecting and restoring our natural environment. We have been working closely with EnviroSchools and Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour on a joint environmental programme for schools around Whakaraupō (Lyttelton Harbour) as part of our Predator Free Port Hills project.

We acknowledge ECAN for their support, funding, leadership and commitment to achieving the vision of a Pest Free Banks Peninsula. The Society is a partner in this initiative. ECAN's funding commitment of \$3 million over five years has enabled the partnership to secure a further \$7 million from other sources for the elimination programmes on Kaitōrete and the Extended Wildside. Pest Free Bank Peninsula is a game changer for landscape scale predator control in Canterbury.

The Summit Road Society is leading community trapping efforts on the Port Hills with our Predator Free Port Hills initiative. ECAN has helped support the growth of this programme through providing grants to the Society and by funding a student in the summer of 2020/2021 to establish a pilot predator monitoring programme. We are now active in 15 community areas across the Port Hills and Lyttelton Harbour. Over 1200 households are now trapping in their backyards and more households are signing up every week. We are also seeing the emergence of Predator Free Christchurch groups. It is an exciting time for the Predator Free movement. This work supports local action in response to the crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, and also supports physical and mental health, community cohesion and connection, and the enhancement of our natural environment.

The funding that ECAN provides to community organisations is critical. It is also a very economical use of resources as volunteers can achieve a great deal with a small amount of money. ECAN can provide a leadership



a passion for the Port Hills

role by providing pathways for community organisations to access funding including for multi-year projects. The new community contestable Waitaha Action Fund is a fantastic initiative and should be continued. However it was heavily over-subscribed. There were 46 applications, totalling over \$810,000, but only \$215,190 was allocated. We urge councillors to increase the amount of this fund. Similarly, zone committees are an important voice of the community and we support increased funding of the Zone Committee Action Plans.

ECAN is also one of the few organisations that can provide the necessary co-funding for projects funded by central government. This is the case with our Avoca Valley restoration programme. Thanks to Jobs for Nature we are planting 45,000 trees and other plants in Avoca Valley over the next three years. In time, we intend to restore the entire Avoca Valley catchment. This project will help restore Avoca Valley Stream (a tributary of the Ōpawaho/Heathcote River), create habitat for native fauna, protect and enhance the rare flora on the bluff eco-systems, support mahinga kai values, reduce erosion and sediment run-off, provide recreational benefits for the community and support carbon sequestration. The new bush will be covenanted with the QEII National Trust and protected in perpetuity. We could not have raised the co-funding required without support from ECAN.

We acknowledge and thank ECAN for the financial and other practical support given to the Pest Free Banks Peninsula, Predator Free Port Hills and Avoca Valley projects. But the truth is, we and many other community organisations need more support. The funding provided is a great start but it is not enough. There is much more to do and the funding treadmill is a daily reality. As an example, we are midway through an ambitious programme to contain spur valerian at Ohinetahi Reserve in Governors Bay. Spur valerian is an invasive weed which is threatening the rare flora on the rocky outcrops of the Port Hills and the Peninsula. This includes the Banks Peninsula forget-me-not (*Myosotis lytteltonensis*), prostrate kowhai (*Sophora prostrata*) and the endemic Banks Peninsula hebe (*Heliohebe lavaudiana*). Spur valerian is currently listed as an “organism of interest” under the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan. Due to the nature of the terrain, we need to engage specialist abseil contractors. We know it will be cheaper and easier to contain this invasive weed now, rather than allowing the problem to escalate further. Every year we struggle to find the necessary funding to keep this programme going.

We would also draw the Council’s attention to the issue of feral pigs and deer on the Southern Port Hills and adjacent areas. Following the Port Hills fires, we saw a surge in feral pigs and deer at Omahu Bush, an old remnant 80 ha bush above Tai Tapu. Control programmes can only help to reduce numbers, as these animals breed so quickly. As a consequence, we have had deer fencing installed at a cost of over \$200,000 to protect this precious remnant. We have been very fortunate to receive philanthropic support for this major programme of work. The deer fence is now finished and we are already starting to see the forest understory regenerate. Feral browser control in our living carbon sinks is a climate response. Forest and Bird have estimated that controlling feral browsing pests to the lowest possible levels across the country would increase the carbon sequestration of native ecosystems by 8.4 million tonnes of CO₂ per year, which is equivalent to nearly 15% of New Zealand’s 2018 net greenhouse gas emissions.

In summary, we support ECAN’s strong focus on the climate response and on accelerating the regeneration of the natural environment by coordinating and supporting landscape scale projects. There is a great deal of work to do. The sooner we start to take action the more likely we are to be successful and the cheaper it will be in the long run.

We would like the opportunity to speak to our submission.