



# THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

**MEDIA RELEASE – 22 April 2024**

## **Hokitika Seawall Emergency Works**

The West Coast Regional Council has completed emergency repair works on a section of the Hokitika Seawall following the recent extreme weather event on the West Coast.

In conjunction with the West Coast Penguin Trust and the Department of Conservation (DOC), Regional Council engineering staff and contractors Henry Adams agreed on a scope of works which made the best use of material onsite to ensure public safety. The team considered all adverse environmental impacts prior to works occurring which included assessing the time of year penguins typically nest (July-November). Being outside this key season, there is very little penguin presence in the area.

The works included relocating some of the rock that was moved during the weather event and material delivered to site to remediate the worst affected areas of erosion. Overhanging rock that could potentially fall on beach users was removed and the site secured making the best use of onsite material. Disturbance of overhanging vegetation was kept to a minimum and only removed what was necessary to ensure public safety.

Acting Infrastructure Manager Shanti Morgan says the works were completed under emergency consent conditions as a risk to public safety was identified.

The team will bring a proposal to the Hokitika Joint committee meeting schedule on May 6, which will detail options for reinstating the seawall to provide an increased level of service to protect the community from coastal hazards.

“Our team worked closely with DOC and the Penguin Trust to ensure biodiversity was protected throughout construction and that Council fulfils its obligation to the Wildlife Act and to protect the coastal ecosystem in Hokitika.”

The Regional Council is currently working on a long-term solution for the Hokitika Seawall, advancing a consent application for the Hokitika Seawall Extension Project which will provide a complete river-sea flood protection around the Hokitika township. A hearing date to be set by the Independent Commissioner is currently pending.

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