

Date: 13 May 2025

To: Expert Consenting Panel

Letter of support for the Waitaha hydro project: Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024

1. On behalf of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae and Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio (**Poutini Ngāi Tahu**) we write in support of Westpower's application for approvals for the Waitaha hydro scheme (the **project**) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.
2. Poutini Ngāi Tahu exercise tino rangatiratanga within our respective takiwā and are the kaitiaki of the natural and physical resources on the West Coast. The Waitaha River is located within our shared takiwā within which the project is proposed.

Poutini Ngāi Tahu is a project partner and support the project

3. Poutini Ngāi Tahu strongly support the project and have entered into a partnership agreement with Westpower in relation to the project. If the approvals necessary to enable the development of the project are granted and the project proceeds, Poutini Ngāi Tahu and Westpower will be project partners and Poutini Ngāi Tahu will have a financial interest in the project.
4. The project will be of significant benefit to Poutini Ngāi Tahu and will provide an opportunity for us to reconnect with our whenua and to benefit economically from the project.
5. The project will also benefit the wider West Coast community. There is a shared vision between Poutini Ngāi Tahu and Westpower to protect and advance the interests of the West Coast, its economy and the environment. The project would provide electrical resilience to the region through green-renewable energy. Poutini Ngāi Tahu is keen to ensure security of supply for the West Coast, noting:
 - a. additional power generation will reduce the amount of energy being transmitted to the region, reducing transmission charges; and
 - b. the sharing of the benefits of the project with comparatively cheaper power (and line charges) for the West Coast.
6. This is important to us as part of our responsibility is to provide for our iwi and manaaki visitors and the community.

7. Security of supply is also an important consideration in the Ngāi Tahu Climate Change strategy: He Rautaki mō te Huringa o te Āhuarangi. In particular, Poutini Ngāi Tahu see the impact of climate change on us and the conservation of taonga within its takiwā as hugely significant issues. We see renewable energy as part of the solution and therefore strongly support the project.
8. The project would also create much-needed employment and training opportunities and would provide significant investment for the region supporting existing and new industry to grow.

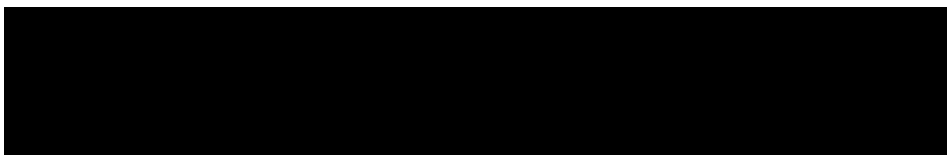
Ngāi Tahu Treaty settlement and other documents

9. The Ngāi Tahu Treaty settlement as reflected in the deed of settlement and Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (together the **Treaty settlement**) is highly significant to Poutini Ngāi Tahu. We can confirm that the project is consistent with the relevant principles and provisions of our Treaty settlement. There are no statutory areas, statutory acknowledgements, deeds of recognition or other specific redress mechanisms or documents that cover the project site. The cultural effects and the effects on the environment, wildlife, taonga species and taonga fish species have been appropriately addressed to the satisfaction of Poutini Ngāi Tahu.
10. We confirm that Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu supports the position of Poutini Ngāi Tahu and the project itself.
11. We also confirm that the project is consistent with our Mana Whakahono a Rohe with West Coast Regional Council and other relevant documents.

Conclusion

12. As noted, Poutini Ngāi Tahu strongly support the project and are a project partner.
13. Poutini Ngāi Tahu have been working with Westpower for many years on this project and as project partners we have been involved in the process throughout, including without limitation in relation to the impacts of the project on wildlife and the related approvals being sought under the Wildlife Act 1953.
14. The expert panel can take this letter as unequivocal confirmation from Poutini Ngāi Tahu that all relevant effects on Poutini Ngāi Tahu, our takiwa and our taonga as well as our Treaty settlement have been carefully and appropriately addressed, and that from a Poutini Ngāi Tahu perspective the approvals for this project should be granted through the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.

Ngā mihi



Chairman
Te Rūnanga o Ngā Waewae

Chairman
Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio