



2 April 2026

Brad Ward
Chief Executive
Ministry of Transport

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Notification of Referral application under Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 (Section 11)

Kia ora

Wi Pere Trust intends to lodge a referral application under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA) for the construction and operation of the Pouarua Water Storage Scheme (PWSS) at Tangihanga Station in Tairāwhiti (refer to the Appendix for location maps).

By way of background, the Ministry of Works and Development had assessed a range of dam options in the 1980's and favoured the Pouarua dam site. A recently released Proof of Concept Scoping Study has reconfirmed the technical and economic merit of the Scheme in this location.

The PWSS has the potential to transform the region's land-use profile, drive high-value horticulture process industries and port exports, and it will provide a climate-resilient and secure water supply in an area often affected by both drought and extreme weather events. The PWSS is considered to be of regional significance, with strong alignment with the Gisborne District Council, Trust Tairāwhiti and Government priorities.

The referral application relates to the construction and operation of a dam wall and water storage reservoir on the Pouarua Stream, a high flow water take from the Waipoa River, a distribution network for water supply across the Poverty Bay flats, and associated infrastructure and works.

It is intended that the referral application will be lodged with the Ministry for the Environment by early May 2026.

We would be very pleased to brief you and your organisation on this project, including where we are up to, who is involved and why we are doing this work. In accordance with Section 11 of the FTAA (recently amended under the Fast Track Approvals Amendment Act 2025), we would be very happy to hear any feedback or observations you might have about the PWSS.

Please advise if you or your organisation has specific Fast Track processes or policies, and the best way to continue to engage with you on this important proposal and a subsequent substantive application for resource consent.

Ngā mihi

Susan Jones
Pouarua Water Storage Scheme
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Appendix: General Location of the PWSS at Tangihanga Station



