

Hon Mark Patterson

Minister for Rural Communities
Associate Minister of Agriculture
Associate Minister for Regional Development



AM25-1039

17 DEC 2025

[Redacted]
By email: substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz

Dear June,

Thank you and the expert panel for the opportunity to provide comments on the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 FTAA-2505-1069 Waitaha Hydro Scheme Project as part of my responsibilities as Minister for Rural Communities. My comments on this application are outlined below.

I am strongly supportive of this application from Westpower Limited as the project is anticipated to deliver significant national or regional benefits and will improve outcomes for the rural community by:

- generating a significant amount of renewable electricity annually of approximately 12,000 households;
- creating approximately 70 jobs during the construction phase of the project;
- have a significant impact on helping to lower wholesale power prices and reduce carbon emissions; and
- building resilience into an isolated region reliant on imported electricity.

This application as described is consistent with the Government's commitment to double the overall volume of electricity from renewable sources by 2050 and transition to a low-emissions future.

I would be interested to learn more about the long-term employment opportunities this may provide for local rural communities on the West Coast.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I look forward to learning about the outcome of this application in due course.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]
Hon Mark Patterson
Minister for Rural Communities