

1 July 2026

Environmental Protection Authority

Attention: Ms Cindy Robinson

Chair of the Expert Panel appointed to consider the Southern Link Inland Port

By email: contact@fasttrack.govt.nz

Southern Link Inland Port: Request for the Otago Fish and Game Council to be invited for comment

Tēnā koe Ms Robinson,

I am writing to respectfully request that the Otago Fish and Game Council (**Fish and Game**) be invited to provide comments on the Southern Link Inland Port fast-track application as a section 53(3) party.

The project site is located beside the Silverstream, a productive trout spawning stream that is a significant source of recruitment for the lower Taieri River fishery, a regionally significant fishery. The lower Taieri, from Outram to the Taieri Mouth, is the second largest river fishery in Otago measured by usage. In the most recent National Angler Survey, it was estimated to host 9,846 $\pm$ 1,659 angler-days of use in the 2021-2022 season.¹ The lower Taieri provides easily accessible, wild fishing opportunities for the urban population of Dunedin and its surrounds.

I have attached an illustration of observed spawning in the Silverstream from our electronic spawning survey database, to further illustrate its importance as a recruitment source for the fishery.

The application proposes in-stream works and the discharge of stormwater, including contaminants, to the Silverstream. This has the potential to negatively impact this valued community resource.

As the statutory manager of the sports fish and game resource in Otago, Fish and Game can offer a unique insight into the impacts on trout recruitment in the Silverstream which is likely to assist in robust decision making.

In addition to this, I note that the Fish and Game office is located at 5 Hazlett Road and may be affected as an adjacent landholder by traffic movements resulting from the application. I acknowledge that this is dependent on how 'adjacent' is interpreted in the context of this application.²

I respectfully request that Fish and Game be invited for comment under paragraph 53(3) of the Act.

Yours faithfully,

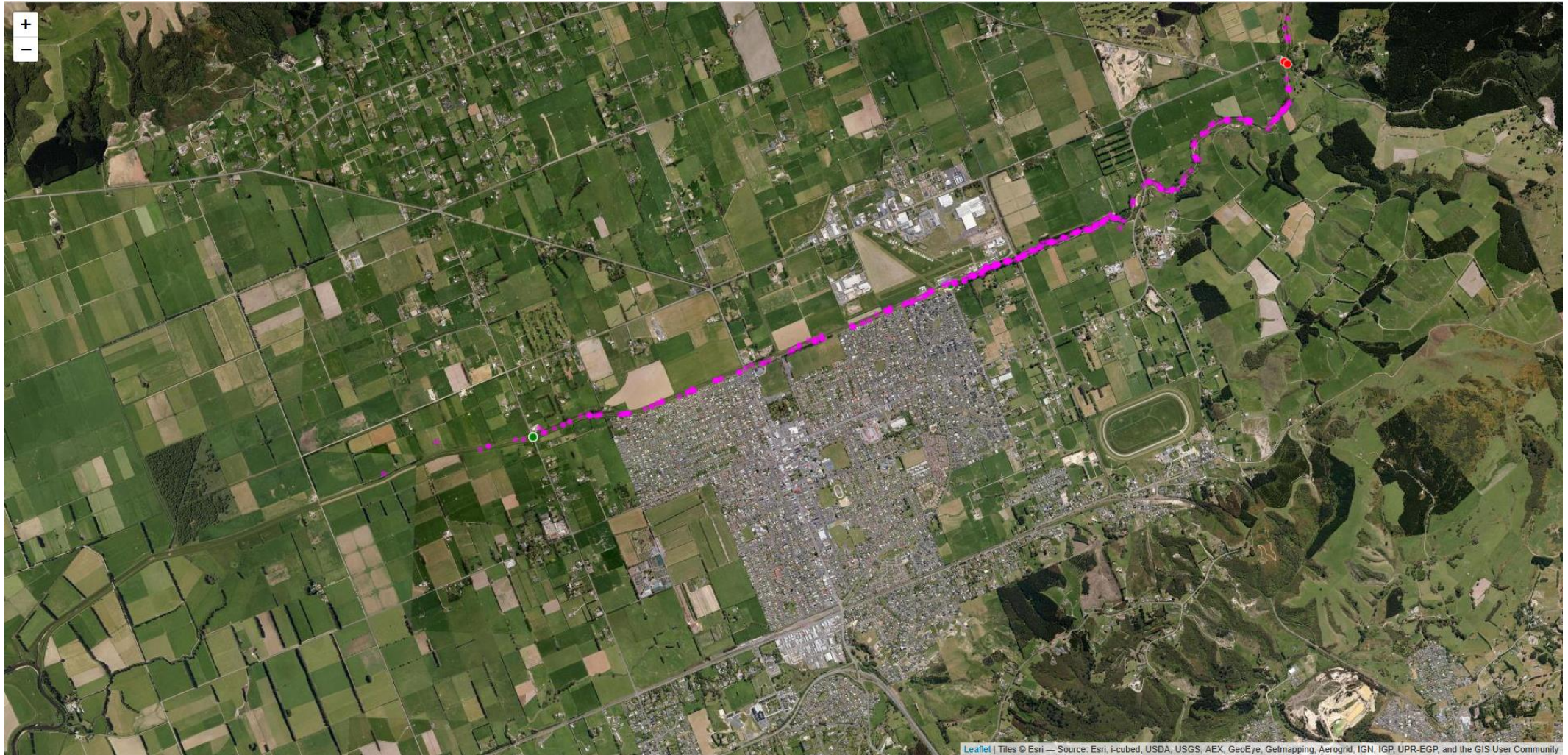
Jamie Ward

Acting Chief Executive for the Otago Fish and Game Council

¹ Stoffels, R. and Unwin, M. (2023). *Angler usage of New Zealand lake and river fisheries: Results from the 2021/22 National Angler Survey*. National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research Ltd, July 2023, Report No. 2023189CH, prepared for Fish and Game New Zealand.

² For example, in the Bendigo-Ophir Gold Project Fast-Track approval process the Panel noted in Minute 3 (11 March 2026) "... that "adjacent" land may include land that is not 'contiguous' and may extend to other land which is part of the context of the application."

Statutory managers of freshwater sports fish, gamebirds and their habitats.



Above is a screengrab of identified redds in the Silverstream, from Fish and Game’s unpublished electronic spawning survey data, gathered over multiple years. Redds identified on spawning surveys are shown in pink. A redd is an excavated ‘nest’ on the substrate in which eggs are deposited. Fertilised eggs are incubated within the redd for 6 – 10 weeks and once hatched, the young alevins remain in the gravel for about a month. During this time, the eggs and alevins are sensitive to physical disturbance and the discharge of contaminants – particularly sediment. In Fish and Game’s experience, a brown trout population like the one in the Silverstream will have a sensitive spawning and incubation period that typically runs from mid-April until the end of October. However, there are multiple, differing estimates for the beginning of this sensitive period, ranging from March to May.