



# THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Proposed Regional Land and Water Plan

Plan Change 1

## **MINUTE OF HEARING COMMISSIONERS**

Further Information Requirements

(Minute 2)

1. Prior to hearing the staff right of reply, the Commission undertook two sites visits on Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 to gain a better understanding of the issues at hand. At the completion of the right of reply from staff on Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2018, the hearing was adjourned and the Commission began its deliberations. In relation to the submissions on the boundaries of the Schedule 2 wetlands included within the Regional Plan by the Environment Court decision, it became apparent to the Commission, after having carried out the aforementioned site visits and receiving the staff reply, that further information is required to make a fully informed and robust decision on those submissions that seek amendments to the wetland boundaries.
2. As a consequence, the Commission has commissioned a report (pursuant to Section 41C (4) of the Act) from an appropriately qualified person to determine whether the wetland boundaries under submission are correct as notified under Plan Change 1. The evidence of Dr Marshall for the Department of Conservation, who was involved in the initial ground truthing of the extent of these wetlands, advised that the process to determine the accuracy of the wetland boundaries was not an ecological assessment of the wetlands under Schedule 3 of the Proposed Regional Land and Water Plan. Rather, the exercise was merely to determine the physical extent of the wetland on the ground. The report to be commissioned will follow the same process i.e. it is merely to assist the Commission by advising whether the physical wetland boundaries that are subject to a submission are accurate or not. The evidence and submissions we heard indicated that some time has elapsed in relation to some of the initial assessments, or in some cases no new assessment had been carried out at all, and that physical changes may have occurred in the meantime.
3. Upon receipt of this report, the Commission will then determine the process that will follow and the associated timeline. This process will allow for the relevant parties to review the report and prepare evidence in response. The hearing will need to be reconvened to hear that evidence. The Commission may also consider it appropriate that the parties meet or mediate to resolve any dispute in accordance with Clause 8AA of Schedule 1 to the Act.

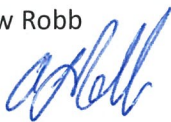
4. It is important to note that this process will only be open to those persons who have made a specific submission on the boundaries of a wetland included in the Regional Plan. It is not open to submitters who have requested that all the wetlands be removed from the plan or submitters who have submitted on wetlands where no boundary change is proposed, unless they also have a specific submission on a wetland where changes are proposed to the boundary.
5. The Commission also wishes to advise that a response to the written questions it put to Dr Jane Marshall, a witness for the Department of Conservation, has been received. This written response will be posted on the Council's website:  
<http://www.wcrc.govt.nz/our-services/resource-management-planning/Pages/Proposed-Plan-Change-1-Hearing.aspx>
6. This can be addressed in any evidence to the hearing in relation to the further information received but is limited to those parties who have standing in relation to the wetlands to be assessed in the further reporting process.
7. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Alyce Melrose at the Council office in Greymouth.

Issued by the Hearing Commissioners:

Allan Cubitt (Chairperson)



Andrew Robb



Terry Archer



9 July 2018