

**From:** [Sophie Allan](#)  
**To:** [info@tigamm.co.nz](mailto:info@tigamm.co.nz); [info@wrc.govt.nz](mailto:info@wrc.govt.nz); [GDC Planning \(Resource Consents\)](#)  
**Subject:** FORM 13: SUBMISSION ON AN APPLICATION FOR RESOURCE CONSENT UNDER SECTION 96 OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991  
**Date:** Monday, 9 October 2023 3:54:38 pm

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FORM 13: SUBMISSION ON AN APPLICATION FOR RESOURCE CONSENT UNDER SECTION 96 OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991  
Office Use Only

PART A: DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION CONSENT NUMBER: APPLICANT: WCRC: RC-2023-0046 GDC: LUN3154/23 TIGA MINERALS AND METALS LTD DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY: Establish and operate a mineral sands mine, including construction of associated infrastructure.

LOCATION: Barrytown Flats, west of State Highway 6 (Coast Road), 9km south of Punakaiki township and 36km north of Greymouth.

PART B: SUBMITTER DETAILS Full name: Sophia Josephine Allan

Postal address: [REDACTED]

I am the owner of the above property

Primary contact person Email address: [REDACTED]

Phone number Home and Business: [REDACTED]

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023

SOPHIA JOSEPHINE ALLAN

**I Oppose this application**

I wish to be heard in support of my submission. **Yes**

If you wish to be heard, and others make a similar submission would you consider making a joint case with them at any hearing. No

If you indicated you wish to be heard, you will be sent a copy of the S.42A Officer's Report and a copy of the Decision once it is released.

Please indicate below which format you would like to receive these documents in: Hard (paper) copy

I have served a copy of my submission on the Applicant as per Section 96(6)(b) of the RMA

**Yes To** [info@tigamm.co.nz](mailto:info@tigamm.co.nz)

I am not a trade competitor for the purposes of section 308B of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Important information – Please read carefully.

3 Public information The information you provide is public information. It is used to help process a resource consent application and assess the impact of an activity on the environment and other people. Your information is held and administered by the West Coast Regional Council and Grey District Council in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the Privacy Act 1993. This means that your information may be disclosed to other people who request it in accordance with the terms of these Acts. It is therefore important you let us know if your form includes any information you consider should not be disclosed.

**As is usual I would rather not have my full name ph number and address disclosed.**

West Coast Regional Council 388 Main South Road, Paroa, Greymouth 7805 PO Box 66, Greymouth 7840 Telephone (03) 768 0466 Toll Free 0508 800 118 Facsimile (03) 768 7133 Email [info@wrc.govt.nz](mailto:info@wrc.govt.nz) Website [www.wrc.govt.nz](http://www.wrc.govt.nz) Grey District Council 105 Tainui Street PO Box 382 Greymouth, 7840 [planning@greydc.govt.nz](mailto:planning@greydc.govt.nz) 03 769 8600 Note to submitter If you are making a submission to the Environmental Protection Authority, you should use form 16B.

The closing date for serving submissions on the consent authority is the 20th working day after the date on which public or limited notification is given. If the application is subject to limited notification, the consent authority may adopt an earlier closing date for submissions once the consent authority receives responses from all affected persons.

You must serve a copy of your submission on the applicant as soon as is reasonably practicable after you have served your submission on the consent authority. If you are a trade competitor, your right to make a submission may be limited by the trade competition provisions in Part 11A of the Resource Management Act 1991. If you make a request under section 100A of the Resource Management Act 1991, you must do so in writing no later than 5 working days after the close of submissions and you may be liable to meet or contribute to the costs of the hearings commissioner or commissioners.

You may not make a request under section 100A of the Resource Management Act 1991 in relation to an application for a coastal permit to carry out an activity that a regional coastal plan describes as a restricted coastal activity.

Please note that your submission (or part of your submission) may be struck out if the authority is satisfied that at least 1 of the following applies to the submission (or part of the submission):

- it is frivolous or vexatious;
- it discloses no reasonable or relevant case;
- it would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow the submission (or the part) to be taken further;
- it contains offensive language;
- it is supported only by material that purports to be independent expert evidence, but has been prepared by a person who is not independent or who does not have

sufficient specialised knowledge or skill to give expert advice on the matter.

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I request pursuant to section 100A of the Act, that you delegate your functions, powers, and duties to hear and decide the application to 1 or more hearings commissioners who are not members of the local authority.

I seek the following decision from the Local Authority: **OPPOSE THE APPLICATION**

#### NEGATIVE COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS EFFECTS

I seek that the application be turned down because it will (and already is) having a very negative effect on a large percentage of the local community. The Northern area of the Grey District is very much geared towards tourism, and this is not only paying sometimes very reasonable wages to many, but also fostering small and big businesses that are growing our economy, our community and our livelihoods in a sustainable way.

The resilience in our community straight after Covid 19 was incredible with the Punakaiki Great Walk fully booked and all the spin off from that, because our community is full of varied activities and accommodation at reasonable, family friendly prices.

My business was up 100% from normal pre Covid figures, in the months that followed the internal restrictions being lifted.

Proving that having all our eggs in the one mining, extractive industry basket that Greymouth seems to love is not a wise idea.

“Economic activity on the West Coast grew by 3.1% over the year to June 2023, according to economic consultancy Infometrics latest provisional estimates.”

“This growth pushed the region's GDP up by \$73 million, reaching a total of \$2,430 million.”

“The resurgence in our tourism sector and strong contributions from construction and rental/real estate services have helped keep the economy in line with the national GDP growth rate of 3.1%,” said Heath Milne, the chief executive of Development West Coast (DWC).

<https://westcoast.co.nz/news/tourism-revival-boosts-west-coast-economy/>

For Members of the Councils and TiGa to say “we're doing it hard” out here is a joke.

I would say most property out here is owner occupied, batches are even second or third property owned and used as holiday accommodation and/or tourism accommodation. It is not a poor area.

I know of many people who have stalled in their enthusiasm to invest in themselves, the area, and the industry lately because of the uncertainty that BJV, and now TiGa's proposal has caused them.

TiGa's proposal flies in the face of the millions that are being invested by the Government in Punakaiki right now with the new multi million dollar Punakaiki DOC information center redevelopment.

I don't believe that the two industries can sit comfortably together, especially with the added trucks causing stress and danger to the already stretched roading infrastructure. There is no doubt that there will be fatalities directly linked to the extra vehicle movements on this windy and narrow road that is already often down to one lane because of subsidence and slips throughout the year. The one lane bridge at Ten Mile for instance is already inadequate in the busy summer season.

Tourists don't come here to drive on stressful roads and overlook a mine site from our newest Paparoa Great Walk, this will just leave a sour taste and we won't receive the repeat custom and word of mouth bookings we rely on.

This will also negatively affect the many owners of holiday batches and the prices of everyone's property.

The DOC information Centre at Punakaiki has recorded over 500,000 visitors one year pre covid and numbers are getting right back up there.

#### JOBS

It seems to need to be pointed out to the councils and Greymouth that as in any industry, the tourism industry has a whole range of knock-on opportunities, and due to low unemployment, it is already often hard to fill these jobs locally. It is also hard to find staff accommodation.

According to Infometrics the annual average unemployment rate in the West Coast Region was 3.5% in the year to June 2023, down from 3.7% in the previous 12 months. We are often well below average for the country. <https://qem.infometrics.co.nz/west-coast-region/indicators/unemployment?compare=new-zealand>

Jobs such as IT and web design, graphic design for advertising, printing, building (and all jobs associated with it), building maintenance and handyman roles, earthworks and drainage, interior design (such as window treatments, etc. etc.). Shuttle Drivers, bicycle maintenance and hire shops, sports shops and art galleries (and the artists that supply them) are all intrinsically linked by tourism and offer reasonable income.

We are in dire need of a local commercial laundromat for all the linen that is hired, at the moment from Christchurch. The list goes on.

The number of jobs predicted for this mine have fluctuated wildly in press releases from TIGA. I have asked them to break down where exactly and in what areas people will be employed and the answers didn't add up.

Westland Mineral Sands for example promised 40 jobs, and only 4 people per shift has eventuated.

At the time we visited only one of which was a local. There are also truck drivers and existing contractors employed of course.

## NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON MY BUSINESS

As for my own business, [REDACTED]

We've been running since 2012 and the business has almost doubled year on year.

This business totally relies on the natural and quiet environment of the lagoons and beach front [REDACTED] It is also reliant on the low volume of heavy vehicles on the road as we must travel about 500 meters up the Main Road and then down [REDACTED] to the Beach.

As should be evident, horses, eco-tourism, and good relaxed conversation in an open wagon don't mix well with constant heavy traffic or the visual and noise pollution of mining equipment nearby.

If this proposed mine site goes ahead, it is more than likely, according to John Berry, and Robert Brant, TiGa's rep and managing director, that consent will be sought for land adjacent to Burkes Rd (as well as much of the farmland along the Barrytown flats further South.)

[REDACTED] and the guests it attracts (who also patronise local accommodation and businesses) will most likely become untenable if this occurs especially if trucks end up traveling North to Westport.

Not only have I been shut out of the first application to mine this site by BJV (fundamentally the same business as TiGa, under a different name), not being deemed an affected party by BJV, GDC or WCRC but I have also had no correspondence initiated from BJV or TiGa whatsoever.

The Coast Road Resilience Group initially asked to meet with TiGa reps and at the second meeting I asked if TiGa were aware of my business. They were obviously not.

They said my name sounded familiar, and then proceeded to call me by someone else's name. They suggested I could take my guests to see the mine site, not understanding at all that my business and the people it attracts are for the most part here to see and enjoy the environment in as natural and peaceful a state as is possible, traveling through some quiet farmland on the way. Never mind the health and safety issues this could cause.

Link to the second recorded meeting with TiGa reps attached below. Everyone at the meeting was made well aware it was being recorded.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vk3l0-8tDPZYGit4LbUp4moEkZEGVurz/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vk3l0-8tDPZYGit4LbUp4moEkZEGVurz/view?usp=drive_link)

## MISSING INFORMATION, HEALTH AND SAFETY and CONFIDENCE IN COUNCIL DECISIONS

Speaking of health and safety, where are the Job Safety Analysis or Job Hazard Analysis reports in this application? Also, it seems Earthquake and Tsunami Mitigation plans are missing. Are we as submitters and commissioners here to show this company their shortcomings like the last application?

The council opened this process for submissions before all the peer review information was released, which seems very unfair. Also they are sometimes not accepting submissions unless they are on the official form, which is not working properly.

The council has also put a Mineral Extraction Zone over the proposed mine site area in anticipation of this proposal being granted. This has not been ratified yet, it doesn't fit their own criteria. They have been gearing up for this for several years, which flies in the face of any semblance of objectivity or fair process.

[https://www.newsroom.co.nz/barging-into-an-ore-some-future?fbclid=IwAR24OVaucOulT2dMsakHT8\\_QvUiXns-S6vIRCc2sFoiNevlwuf8EFqyMzK4](https://www.newsroom.co.nz/barging-into-an-ore-some-future?fbclid=IwAR24OVaucOulT2dMsakHT8_QvUiXns-S6vIRCc2sFoiNevlwuf8EFqyMzK4)

Recently we have had issues on the West Coast where the WCRC permitted a toxic dump site above the Greymouth water intake without public notification or even considering the GDC who administer the water intake as affected parties.

This site is now leaking and releasing fumes.

Council's planning and science manager Fiona Thomson said an independent assessment was undertaken on the processing of the site's two resource consents.

It found the quality of the applications was not high and more information could have been sought.

She said the process for identifying affected parties needed to be improved, particularly with regard to iwi and a narrow basis for determining affected party status appeared to be used.

"The applications do not appear to have been reviewed appropriately by technical experts, or if this has occurred it is not well documented," she said.

It seems nothing has been learned.

[https://www.thepress.co.nz/a/nz-news/350050447/council-admits-consents-toxic-dump-were-not-done-properly?utm\\_source=newsshowcase&utm\\_medium=discover&utm\\_campaign=CCwqGQgwKhAlACoHCAowwtPPCzDx7uYDMI68hAlw98yyAg&utm\\_content=P\\_Q0ecc](https://www.thepress.co.nz/a/nz-news/350050447/council-admits-consents-toxic-dump-were-not-done-properly?utm_source=newsshowcase&utm_medium=discover&utm_campaign=CCwqGQgwKhAlACoHCAowwtPPCzDx7uYDMI68hAlw98yyAg&utm_content=P_Q0ecc)

Grey Star 12 SEP 2023

Landfill Consent Flawed – Report

'The West Coast Regional Council took "at face value" part of the consent application for the controversial Taylorville landfill.' Photo of article attached

Two men were hospitalised after being overcome by fumes and if one of them hadn't been able to climb out of the pit they both would most likely have died.

[https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/landfill-worker-critical-after-being-overcome-by-fumes-rescued-by-firefighters/JWB4U264LFB2NE5PBEUM7FQBPU/?fbclid=IwAR3\\_4bvVckML9A7Fxy1NEHupo92c\\_De770\\_x5xlx9F9GtPgXB20DQTUA0Hs](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/landfill-worker-critical-after-being-overcome-by-fumes-rescued-by-firefighters/JWB4U264LFB2NE5PBEUM7FQBPU/?fbclid=IwAR3_4bvVckML9A7Fxy1NEHupo92c_De770_x5xlx9F9GtPgXB20DQTUA0Hs)

[https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/landfill-worker-critical-after-being-overcome-by-fumes-rescued-by-firefighters/JWB4U264LFB2NE5PBEUM7FQBPU/?fbclid=IwAR3\\_4bvVckML9A7Fxy1NEHupo92c\\_De770\\_x5xlx9F9GtPgXB20DQTUA0Hs](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/landfill-worker-critical-after-being-overcome-by-fumes-rescued-by-firefighters/JWB4U264LFB2NE5PBEUM7FQBPU/?fbclid=IwAR3_4bvVckML9A7Fxy1NEHupo92c_De770_x5xlx9F9GtPgXB20DQTUA0Hs)

'Council slammed as 'boys club''. Headline Greymouth Star sep 30<sup>th</sup> 2022. Article also very relevant to the dysfunction going on.

Councilors from both councils have strong ties and business interests that will directly and indirectly benefit from this proposal. Peter Haddock is a minor shareholder in TiGa and our Mayor is a major shareholder in New Zealand Institute for Minerals to Materials Research Ltd

#### EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Some of the environmental impacts I'm concerned about are fairly well spelled out in this meeting as well, (link attached above) and although it is private property I believe the ratepayers may well end up subsidizing the clean-up especially if there is discharge into Canoe creek or onto the beach as has happened at similar sand mines at Taharoa and the Cape Fowle Wind Westland Mineral Sands mine.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/109185244/waikato-mining-company-fined-60k-for-polluting-wainui-stream>

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/102584172/two-directors-of-taharoa-ironsand-mine-quit-over-governance-concerns>

Who is to say this company won't sell and leave us in a similar situation?

(there are heaps more articles on the diesel spill and other debacles at Taharoa if you google it.)

Doc is managing 305 toxic sites on the West Coast, mostly from mining. The debacle with slash from forestry latterly is also case in point. <https://www.odt.co.nz/regions/west-coast/doc-managing-305-toxic-sites-west-coast?fbclid=IwAR0QHZABNjt6Z4xpiQvjju2DF6C2OZ7yf0hZMJTSPGvPXtad1k2eLvgTsQQo>

The known and unknown properties of the fines and slimes are of particular concern and were a bit of a disaster at Taharoa from what we hear at this recorded meeting. The percentage of slimes here are much higher and this company appears to be far less experienced in dealing with them.

Being down on this part of the beach regularly it's easy to see the differences in the erosion rate where land has been cleared of vegetation and humped and hollowed (where the land is turned over and modified to drain it better for farmland), where waterways have been messed around with, particularly where their marginal strips have been cleared. This is often done right to the beach front and immediately the sea starts aggressively eating away at this disturbed land. Disturbed creeks become silty, and chunks of land are washed away in flooding events that would have otherwise left them unscathed. Desterbith the land to a deeper level will exacerbate this, planting on top notwithstanding.

It is particularly evident that where the land, flax and raupo is left untouched it traps driftwood and rock and helps create a buffer that breaks up the force of the waves.

The WCRC in its wisdom, does not consider the sometimes-extensive lagoon system in front of the proposed mine area to be a wetland, despite a SNA, Significant Natural Area proposed but never ratified. There is some sinasism as to why this has not happened yet.

Where it's been allowed to, this area has to all intents and purposes resorted back to a natural state. In areas where there has lately been no protection from stock and encroaching humping and hollowing it would seem it is being quite intentionally destroyed, I believe to make it seem of no importance.

This lagoon/wetland helps support a great range of wildlife including the critically endangered Australasian Bittern which I have seen there myself. The area between the lagoon is an unusual and crucial area for breeding banded dotterel (and other shore birds, photo of pied stilt chick at lagoon in front of proposed site attached ) providing some protection from the wind, quad bikes, vehicles, and human foot traffic because of its relatively isolated location and boldrey topography behind the high tide mark, something that's becoming increasingly rare with encroaching sea and public presence.

This is also an important stopover spot for migratory birds such as royal spoonbill traveling between their colonies on the West Coast, occasionally wrybills and godwit etc. on their international travels, not to mention Kotoku and the threat to the Taiko that I know others will extrapolate on.

Much of the farmland itself does not seem to benefit from this practice in the long term either in my opinion. Disturbing the topsoil and messing with its structure and biome, continually removing carbon from the soil in a very high rainfall area is detrimental over time as evidenced by plant diversity and lack of weeds in the local areas that haven't been farmed in this way. If it was marginal for farming to begin with, over time it reverts to a state that is worse than before it was touched.

(I grew up on a high-country station and have had a lot to do with 'restorative farming' before it was a thing. We just called it good farming or gardening practice.)

Sand mines are being criticised globally for destroying biodiversity and creating saltwater intrusion. In the first Application JVL would have had us believe there was nothing of any significance to be protected and the neighbors, Forest and Bird and DOC had to prove otherwise, (as they

were some of the very few allowed to submit) now TiGa is talking about the 'fantastic Tako' Article attached and also this article is relevant when it's talking about land and river based mining, particularly the chapter "chemical and Elemental Composition" and the Conclusion <https://envirodm.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Sand-and-Biodiversity-Fact-Sheet-2-1.pdf>

[https://www.lareferencia.info/yufind/Record/ES\\_458d2ec1e16d58307f40c7c19b97f457](https://www.lareferencia.info/yufind/Record/ES_458d2ec1e16d58307f40c7c19b97f457)

I know of a place heavily altered by previous mining on the Southern end of the Barrytown Flats where brackish water surfaces after heavy rain and it is at least 15m above sea level so I cannot believe that digging down 9m much closer and lower to sea level won't cause seawater incursion. Removing the clay layer may well release a lot of spring water that is traveling underground at present also. This springwater can be seen quite obviously bubbling up all along the beach at low tide where the clay has been eroded away, in any season but particularly after heavy rainfall. Photo of eroded bank attached.

Rainfall figures are also misleading in this application. Our local figures are much higher than quoted.

We have rainfall figures going back 23 years (from the year 2000)

rainfall records taken from Golden Sands Rd at the Southern end of the Barrytown flats and over the last 8+ years from near Burks Rd in the central Flats area.

The average rainfall for that 23-year period is 3.2 meters.

In 2006 we recorded a yearly total of 4.025m, there are lots of yearly readings of over 3.5m


It is particularly worrying where they have proposed to site their settling ponds, as in the event of very heavy rain or natural disaster they are conveniently close to waterways to discharge. Using the pit as temporary storage will cut production a lot. There is also no independent monitoring except for the council which isn't really independent and will only be doing site visits if someone complains.


I could go on, but hopefully this gives you an idea of the mistrust we have had in the process so far, the vulnerability of the area and particularly the surrounding area proposed to be mined, the wildlife that needs to be left alone and not face more disruption, pollutants and runoff, community values and a robust local economy that doesn't need or deserve to be undermined by this project.

Hopefully all the attachments are indeed attached correctly.

Thank you.

 [IMG\\_20230221\\_080732.jpg](#)

 [IMG20230408163351.jpg](#)

 [IMG\\_20230923\\_152927.jpg](#)

er per capita in New Zealand

# Landfill

# consent

# flawed

# — report

▶ Regional council criticised

Brendon McMahon  
*Local democracy reporter*

The West Coast Regional Council took “at face value” part of the consent application for the controversial Taylorville Road landfill two years ago, an independent review has found.

Enviser was commissioned by the council in May to audit the council’s resource consent processes for approving the Taylorville Resource Park, following continued public unrest over the site and a series of environmental breaches.

The review says the process had been “highly reliant” on a

applications for the Taylorville Resource Park “was not high”.

The council could have requested further technical information from the applicant in several cases where it appeared to be lacking.

Overall, the council needs to beef up its RMA application processing function, Enviser says.

It had also failed to adequately consider affected parties, including Te Runanga o Ngati Waewae, and its interpretation of this needs to be improved.

None of the applications for the landfill site appeared to have been reviewed “appropriately” by technical experts.

Likewise, the review said

# Waimea Creek complaints continue

Brendon McMahon  
*Local democracy reporter*



Waimea Creek, one of the most actively mined areas for gold on the West Coast, again featured highly in issues dealt with by the West Coast Regional Council last month.

The Waimea catchment — which has nine active alluvial goldmining consents — covers the historic Stafford, Waimea, and Goldsbrough gold mining areas.

Each of the current consented goldmines has a maximum allowable disturbed area within their mining permit of between 2-5ha at any one time.

The compliance and enforcement report for the September Resource Management Committee notes each of the nine consented mines has a discharge condition — allowing the discharge of mine water that ends up in the creek.

“From 2018 through to the end of 2022 the council received 64

notifications relating to breaches of consented activities,” compliance team leader Chris Barnes said.

Of those complaints, 34 were proved with council slapping down 41 enforcement notices — either formal warnings, abatements, or infringements.

This year the council has dealt with 19 breach matters in the catchment. Of those were proved and seven saw council take formal action against miners.

For the July 27 to August 28 period the report to the committee detailed six fresh complaints around “discoloured” water in Waimea Creek at Goldsbrough, German Gully and Awatuna.

Some had since been traced to untreated mine water being discharged above the allowable limits, or from stormwater flowing over recently excavated material. In one instance a culvert washed out in a storm had been replaced with a ford.

Overall, for August, council compliance staff made 61

site visits including resource consent monitoring (42), mining compliance and bond release (12), and for eight complaints.

Among the most unusual incidents was a report of ‘green froth’ in the surf at Hokitika beach. It was since identified as *pinus radiata* pollen.

‘Fly tipping’ on a roadside at Taylorville reported to be contaminating a creek was referred on to the Grey District Council.

A report of toxic smoke at Gladstone was simply cardboard being burned in a drum, with no action required.

A report of stock impacting on the Okuru River at Haast was not founded after compliance staff checked winter grazing along the river and found no issue.

Another complaint about ‘goldmining’ at Dobson was, when checked, simply a contractor classifying gravel for use on the property concerned.

★ Public interest journalism funded through NZ on Air

# Mineral sand mine ordered to stop discharge

**Ellen Curnow**

The West Coast Regional Council has ordered Westland Mineral Sands (WMS) to stop discharging sediment from its Cape Foulwind mine site.

Compliance officers had visited the site after receiving a complaint, said a report to this month's Resource Management Committee meeting.

When the officers made a follow-up visit and found the site was still discharging sediment, they took samples and issued an abatement notice ordering WMS to cease the discharge.

"The analysis of the samples taken show that the discharge was over its consented limits."

The council hadn't recommended enforcement action at

the time the report was written.

WMS received one of just two formal abatement notices listed in this month's report. The other was for unauthorised discharge to water at a landfill at Coal Creek in Grey District.

The News is seeking comment from WMS.



# Visitor spending jumps 38%

Visitor spending on the West Coast experienced a 38% jump in April compared to the previous year, as Chinese visitors start to return.

It rose from \$14.7 million in April 2022 to \$20.1 million, according to data from Market View. The month also saw visitor expenditure surpass pre-pandemic levels, registering a 13.2% increase compared to April 2019.

New Zealanders have been a key driver of the jump in visitor spending, with domestic spending on the West Coast during April climbing 24.5% on 2019 levels.

Canterbury visitors led the way as the most significant domestic contributor, pumping \$5.9m into the Coast economy during April, followed by Otago \$1.4m and Auckland \$1.1m.

On the international front, expenditure made a near recovery to 97% of pre-pandemic levels. Australia led the international contingent, comprising 30% of total spending, followed by the United States (23%), Europe (18%), and the United Kingdom (14%).

The Chinese market is also starting to return, with Chinese visitors injecting \$157,078 into the local economy, reaching 39% of pre-Covid spending levels.

To maintain the region's appeal heading into winter, Development West Coast has just launched a new consumer-focused tourism website.

Destination and tourism manager Patrick Dault said it embodied not only the "unique personality and charm of Coasters, but also the values that Coasters hold dear", to share a snapshot of their way of life.

It aligns with DWC's upcoming winter campaign, set to begin on June 1, dubbed 'There's worse places to be this winter'.

It is a humorous and humble take on



**PICTURE:** Development West Coast The new West Coast winter tourism campaign, dubbed 'There's worse places to be this winter'.

the quirky charm that is synonymous with the West Coast, "including grammatical adaptation".

"The goal of the site isn't to convert into bookings — that's a job for our operators and their websites, DWC's goal is to engage visitors with clever and inspiring content — and some 'surprise and delight content' to ensure awareness and consideration for the Coast ..." Mr Dault said.

"But most importantly, it's about leading with values, so that visitors exhibit the same values our residents hold dear."



Meg Fulford

The expanding population of goats at either end of the Cobden Bridge is still posing a puzzle for the Grey District Council.

A number of the four-legged bandits have taken to trotting over Bright Street in Cobden, and some have taken to residents' plants.

Group manager operations Aaron

Haymes was hesitant when asked if the council had a control plan in place.

"As you know, the goat topic is a sensitive one — some people hate them, some people love them," Mr Haymes said.

"We have had complaints from Cobden residents with goats getting in gardens in and around and causing damage. It is mainly those

residents who have been asking that we do something with them, but you're damned if you do and damned if you don't," alluding to the uproar from previous mentions of culls.

A bow hunter had been used in the past to thin the numbers, but he could not say if that method would be employed again.

Mr Haymes said he was not aware

of any collisions being reported to the council, despite several near-misses noted on social media.

However, while the goats posed a hazard to traffic, they were also "hard to catch".

"The population has increased over the past few seasons and council is considering how to monitor and reduce the numbers so that everyone can live together harmoniously."

# Alarm over Westland petrels decline

Laura Mills

Concerns are held for the Westland petrel — which only breeds on the West Coast — with everything from climate change to Chinese fishing boats getting the blame.

The Department of Conservation thinks recent marine heatwaves during the triple-dip La Nina changed food availability, causing three years of decline of the Punakaiki petrel colony.

Westland Petrel Conservation Trust chairman Bruce Stuart-Menteath said the number of chicks that reached the fledgling stage in the sub-colony was down about 10% — from 92 in 2021 to 84 last year.

Brief fluctuations were normal so it was too early to say if there was a sustained downward trend, and

generally since 1987 things had been improving, he said.

However, due to their slow breeding — petrels only lay one egg a year — he believed they were vulnerable to predators, commercial fishing and climate change.

The major feeding grounds for Westland petrels were off the west coast of South America, where little was known about the bycatch, Mr Stuart-Menteath said.

"A downward trend in the petrels' breeding success could be a reflection of increased commercial fishing activity off the west coast of South America killing breeding birds, e.g. massive Chinese fishing fleets of hundreds of fishing boats."

In April 2014, Cyclone Ita caused major damage along the Coast Road when it blew down large areas

of forest, which caused slips that destroyed hundreds of burrows, at a time when they were occupied by the petrels.

"It is not known how many were killed, but it could have been in the hundreds. Cyclones reaching this far south in the Tasman Sea are highly unusual and may be a result of climate change," Mr Stuart-Menteath said.

"If we are to see more such damage to the breeding grounds — even just once every 10 years or so — it will have a major long-term impact on the petrels' breeding success. It could also affect food (small fish, krill, squid). If the water is too warm their prey species will remain in the deeper cooler water out of reach for the petrels."

El Nino/La Nina had similar

effects, but he presumed the petrels had endured that for many thousands of years.

"The future of the Westland petrel is fraught with danger.

"While the impacts of climate change look like they will be here for the foreseeable future, it is unfortunate that the Paparoa National Park management plan has failed to include a comprehensive plan for the recovery of the Westland petrel, which would include monitoring and elimination of those land based impacts that we do have the ability to control, such as mammal predators, and pests such as possum, goats and deer," Mr Stuart-Menteath said.

If a downward trend developed over the next few years, "that would be a cause for some concern".

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