



Kia ora koutou

Welcome to the second in a series of newsletters updating you about the Hector legacy landfill seawall project.

## Introduction

In September 2020, Council was granted \$1 million to build a seawall to prevent waste from the Hector Legacy Landfill washing into the environment.

Severe erosion from 2018 onwards had opened up the landfill site exposing and mobilising waste material causing risk of contamination.

The project funding came through central government's Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund announced in May 2020.

This external funding means there is no cost to Buller ratepayers for this vital project.



## Work progress

The fully engineered solution specifies a 310 metre long seawall with a 50-year life span that will utilise rock armouring to protect the landfill.

The seawall design takes into account the predicted tide range, storm surge and sea level rise well into the future.

An estimated 13,000 tonnes of high-quality rock will be used for the wall. Council was aware that sourcing rock for this type of project could be challenging. It therefore called for early registrations of interest from parties which could supply the necessary quality and quantity of rock needed in the required timeframe.

A number of local companies expressed interest in the project. They had to demonstrate that they had the ability to construct a seawall and provide support services. A successful tenderer is expected to be confirmed by early February.

## What's next?

The next key step is to appoint a competent construction contractor to supply all materials, equipment, and services required to build the seawall. This will occur by early February and the contractor is expected to begin site work later in February.

Construction of the seawall is expected to take about four months and will be finished by June 2021. The Hector Legacy Landfill seawall will be integrated with a seawall constructed by Waka Kotahi NZTA to protect a section of state highway between Granity and Ngakawau including the north abutment of the Ngakawau Bridge where the two walls will meet.

# Local action helped spur solution

Former Buller High School deputy head girl Tara Shepherd helped bring the Hector Landfill problems to national attention.

In 2019 she advocated for urgent remedial action to stop the Hector Landfill leaking waste to sea.

Tara drew up a petition to request that the House of Representatives “makes funds available and makes an effort to solve the potential environmental catastrophe at the historic Hector Landfill site”.

She said Buller District was facing a potential environmental catastrophe at the Historic Hector Landfill “with the sea eroding the sand bund and exposing harmful substances that will be washed into the ocean unless urgent remedial action is taken”.

The petition attracted 724 signatures and was referred to Parliament’s Environment Committee.

Tara’s efforts attracted local attention with articles in The News. Then John Campbell interviewed her on TVNZ’s Breakfast show thereby gaining national attention for the issue of state-owned legacy landfills.

In July 2020, the Government announced \$1 Million from the Provincial Growth Fund to progress in the protection and clean-up of the Hector Legacy Landfill.

Tara made a presentation to the Governor General Her Excellency The Rt Hon Dame Patsy Reddy when she visited Westport last year accompanied by her

husband Sir David Gascoigne, kaumatua Joe Harawira and kuia Ranui Ngarimu.

She gave them information about the Historic Hector Landfill, her advocacy, progress and solutions.

“I enjoyed talking to her Excellency and distinguished guests with great discussion surrounding the local environmental challenges along with the nation’s challenges.”

Tara has also had the opportunity to meet with the Minister for the Environment to discuss the issue as well as serving on the Ministerial Youth Advisory Group for 2020 under Minister Chris Hipkins. The Education Minister set up the group in November 2017 to provide insights and perspectives on education issues that are important to young people.

Tara’s aspirations include working for the United Nations or becoming an MP or working in a field of governance creating valuable impact for all.

“I believe it is valuable to talk to and work with groups to improve areas like healthcare, environmental impact, and social justice.”

Last year Tara worked as Support Officer Solid Waste Management for the Buller District Council. This year she starts studying at Otago University undertaking a Bachelor of Laws (first year) and a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Education, minoring in Environmental Management and Politics.



Tara Shepherd making her presentation to the Governor-General Her Excellency The Rt Hon Dame Patsy Reddy  
Credit: Office of the Governor-General.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

email [info@bdc.govt.nz](mailto:info@bdc.govt.nz)

[www.bullerdc.govt.nz](http://www.bullerdc.govt.nz)