

Waitaki Biodiversity Condition Fund 2019

For landowners

Everything you need to know about making an application

PURPOSE OF THE FUND

This fund has been established to support landowners who are taking practical steps to protect and enhance indigenous biodiversity in the Waitaki District, principally on private land.

Priorities are the:

- Protection of native habitat through fencing and other measures.
- Long term legal protection of native habitat through covenants (i.e. QEII).
- Management of threats to biodiversity such as pest animals and weeds.

Please note:

- The fund is a contestable fund and each application will be assessed on its merits on a cases-by-case basis.
- Funding is only available for projects taking place on land within the boundaries of the Waitaki District.
- Government Departments and Local Authorities are not eligible for funding.
- Funding is not available for beautification projects.

FUNDING CRITERIA

To be eligible for funding a project should either:

- Be protected by a formal covenant (i.e. QEII), OR:
- Be recognised as a Significant Natural Area, OR:
- Meet the Significant Natural Area criteria

If you are unsure whether you are eligible under these criteria please visit the WDC biodiversity website or contact the biodiversity coordinator for more information.

TIMING OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be assessed three times a year in February, June and October. Each round will be allocated \$10,000 with a total fund amount of \$30,000 a year. It is not essential that all funding be allocated in any given funding round.

HOW TO APPLY

You can register your interest by contacting the WDC Planning Department by email or phone, or by completing an expression of interest form.

Once you've made contact we'll organise a time to carry out a 5-10 minute phone conversation to cover the basic questions about your project. These questions will allow us to determine whether your project may be eligible for funding. **See Appendix A of this document for a**

list of the interview questions. If your project is eligible, a staff member from WDC will arrange for a site visit to discuss the project and assist you with writing your funding application.

WHAT CAN I GET?

The maximum grant allocation under the Biodiversity Condition Fund is \$10,000 (incl. GST). There is no minimum grant amount. A covenant or other long-term legal protection may be required for projects requesting over \$5,000.

All grants are allocated with a 50:50 proviso. In practice this means that the Council will fund up to half of the total project cost and the applicant must make up the difference, either through cash or in-kind contributions.

In-kind contributions can include voluntary labour, transport, machinery and/or materials – there are some restrictions with this; WDC will provide a schedule to assist you with assessing the value of in-kind contributions.

HOW WILL SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS BE SELECTED?

The number of projects and their total value are likely to exceed the amount of grant money made available by Council each year.

Therefore, applications will be ranked in order of priority using as set of criteria that reflect the Waitaki District Plan (2004), the Waitaki Biodiversity Strategy (2014) and the National Priorities for Protecting Rare and Threatened Biodiversity on Private Land (2007).

Furthermore, discussion and consultation will be undertaken by the Council with other agencies such as the Department of Conservation, Otago Regional Council, Canterbury Regional Council and the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, as is appropriate.

HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE PROCESSED?

Once the applications are completed and have been ranked according to the funding criteria they will be placed in the funding pool. At the close of the application period, the applications will be sorted into two categories:

1. Applications that will be given to the Grants and Awards Committee for consideration.
2. Applications that are considered to fall outside the criteria.

Meetings of the Committee are advertised and any member of the public is welcome to attend.

You will be notified in writing within 10 working days of the Committee making a decision on your application. If your application is successful, you will be sent a letter of approval specifying the grant and terms of agreement.

You will be requested to accept the offer by entering into a formal agreement with the Waitaki District Council stating that you agree to carry out the objectives of the proposed project.

For more information, please contact the Waitaki District Council Planning Department.

Email: planning@waitaki.govt.nz phone: 03 433 0300

APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

There are a number of checks that council need to carry out to ensure that ratepayer funds are spent appropriately. In order to speed up this process we would be very grateful if you could answer the following questions. *Interview may also be carried out over the phone or in person by the Biodiversity Coordinator.*

1. Are the works proposed in this project required under any consent plan or plan rule (from any relevant authority)
2. Who is the legal owner of the proposed site?
3. Do you have the legal authority to authorise this project on this site? If not, please note that they will need to provide their consent.
4. For trusts, incorporated societies, companies – please tell us who has the authority to sign any eventual grant agreement
5. To the best of your knowledge, are there any caveats or land improvement agreements on the property title which may affect the proposed project?
6. Are the proposed works within the property boundary
7. Are you aware of any Heritage Orders within 250 m of the proposed works?
8. Are there any known entries on the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga register in relation to the property?
9. Have you applied to other funding agencies for a grant to do this proposed project or are you planning on doing so? If so, which Fund/agency?

APPENDIX B – GRANT CONDITIONS

The following conditions apply to any grants made:

1. The applicant must notify the Planning Manager of the acceptance of the grant by signing a legal agreement supplied with the letter of offer and returning it.
2. Any expenditure on a project prior to the application being lodged will not be accepted for funding.
3. Any work must be commenced within 12 months after the approval of an application.
4. The Council requires that at least half of the total project cost be met by the applicant, either as a cash contribution or in kind.
5. Upon accepting a funding application, the council will deposit the first payment comprising 50% of the total funding allocation into the applicants' nominated bank account.
6. The applicant must notify the Planning Manager upon completion of the project. At this time a final report on the project must be prepared by the applicant and forwarded to the Planning Manager. Council officers will present the final report to the Hearings Committee. The payment of the balance of the Council's contribution may be withheld and only paid out after the final report is received.
7. A Council officer will inspect the completed project prior to releasing the grant monies.
8. Any grant approval remains with the site on which the project is located and cannot be reassigned without the written approval of the Hearings Committee.
9. Grants must be uplifted within the time specified in the approval. The Hearings Committee may consider an extension on request.
10. Grants are made subject to the Hearings Committee being satisfied that the information given is true and correct and that there has been no omission of any relevant fact or any misrepresentation given. The Hearings Committee retains the right to refuse payments to approved applicants in cases where it determines that it has been misled by the applicant or if the applicant has been placed in receivership, voluntary liquidation or declared bankrupt.
11. In all cases, the decision of the Hearings Committee shall be final and there will be no rights of appeal or review.
12. The Waitaki District Council reserves the right to visit any project or use it for promotional purposes where grant assistance has been given. In all cases the applicant will be notified in advance of a visit.
13. The Waitaki District Council reserves the right to refuse grant payments if in the opinion of the Hearings Committee the grantee wilfully or through neglect causes the project to

fail. The decision of the Council shall be final and there shall be no rights of appeal or review and no right to compensation or damages of any nature.

Please Note: Additional conditions may be imposed at the discretion of the Waitaki District Council.