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Application submitted

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REF210912271

Submission on Draft East Coast Beach Vehicle Bylaw

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Contact details

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I agree that the above email address can be used as my service address for this submission	Yes
Address for service (if different from above)	
Do you wish to speak to your submission at a hearing?	Yes I do wish to speak

We will contact you about the date and time for your presentation.

Motor vehicle access - Prohibited

Council is proposing to prohibit all vehicles on the beach and unformed legal road to and along Marlborough's East Coast between the Awatere River mouth and the Waima (Ure) river mouth.

Do you support where Council has proposed to prohibit vehicles? Support

My submission is (state why you support, oppose or are neutral towards this part of the draft Bylaw) Forest & Bird's main concerns are on the negative impacts that vehicles are having on the natural environment. The coastal environment is a complex system stretching from dry areas on land out into the sea. This area of coast contains many features from dune ecosystems, to rock platforms. The intertidal zone is an important feeding site for birds, and the zone above high tide is important roosting and breeding sites. Fur seals also haul out to rest along the coast. The intertidal area contains a multitude of sea life that is vulnerable to vehicles. The plant life throughout the zones is also important, and research is showing the importance of the need to provide for recovery following the 2016 earthquake. Additionally there are a number of small plants and animals that inhabit areas like the dunes, or coastal debris, e.g. logs - like katipō, lizards, and plants like the little shore daisy and pimelea. The outstanding limestone landscapes along this coastline are recognised nationally and must be protected as far as possible in their natural state. All of these natural features and species are required to be protected under the NZ Coastal Policy Statement.

Please see the attached presentation we made to Council in March 2018 for this area to be protected. Back then we were concerned that action needed to be taken. The situation has only worsened in terms of use, despite efforts by some to encourage vehicles to stick to single routes - there simply aren't any good places to drive. Above high tide and roosting and breeding sites are present and are exposed to vehicle damage, as well as plants and geological features. In the intertidal zone, the recovering coastal and marine habitats and the important feeding areas for birds are being negatively impacted. In addition, vehicles passing may inadvertently cause damage to nests, and/or chicks. The warning signals given by birds to keep away from nests are often not as easily recognisable when travelling in a vehicle, and are worsened by speed.

This stretch of coast is a piece of wilderness that holds extremely high conservation values for the public to quietly contemplate and appreciate the wonders of nature. Accessing it in a way that minimises disturbance (in a way we would a national park), is a much more appropriate way of dealing with our fragile landscapes.

We have read the reports prepared by Council and support the extensive work that has taken place, the consultation, and the technical evidence that Council have relied upon in wanting to progress this by-law. It has been a journey for everyone - including the Councillors - as more and more information has revealed the very high values this piece of coastline holds. It is imperative it is protected from vehicles that are causing significant impacts.

The decision I seek from Council is (provide details of what changes, if any, you would like to see, or state 'retain as notified') Retain as notified

[Environment 5 March 2018 Item 5 Protection of Coastal Habitats on Marlboroughs East Coast.pdf](#)

Exemption 1

Council is proposing to provide for boat launching at Marfells Beach and Ward Beach.

Do you support where Council has proposed boat launching? Support

My submission is (state why you support, oppose or are neutral towards this part of the draft Bylaw) Being able to appreciate the sea from a boat is an important part of the New Zealand way of life. These areas provide

relatively safe access. It is important that the areas are identified and that vehicles are crossing the beach rather than driving along the beach to launch their craft.

The decision I seek from Council is (provide details of what changes, if any, you would like to see, or state 'retain as notified') Retain as notified.

Exemption 2

The draft Bylaw will exempt employees, contractors or a nominee of an authorised agency or Dominion Salt Ltd who is carrying out the lawful functions or activities of that agency.

Do you support this exemption for authorised agencies and Dominion Salt Ltd to be able to access the coast? Neutral

My submission is (state why you support, oppose or are neutral towards this part of the draft Bylaw) Forest & Bird does not wish to impede the lawful functions of Dominion Salt Ltd. We trust that those permissions are already written to protect any important features at the site.

The decision I seek from Council is (provide details of what changes, if any, you would like to see, or state 'retain as notified') Neutral.

Motor vehicle access - Allowed

Council is proposing to allow motor vehicles to travel on the beach and unformed legal road between the Waima (Ure) River and the District Boundary with a speed limit of 30km/hr. Motor vehicles will not be allowed on the dunes in this area.

Do you support Council allowing (except on dunes) vehicles south of the Waima (Ure) River with a speed restriction? Oppose

My submission is (state why you support, oppose or are neutral towards this part of the draft Bylaw) Although this was not the subject of our original request to Council prohibiting access, there are important values south of the Waimā (Ure) River that are worthy of protection. These are also evidenced in the Council's technical report, with the area around the Waimā river mouth and hapua showing very high importance for a number of threatened and at risk bird species which use the hapua, including the freshwater/saltwater interface as important habitat. Map 5 (pg 22) shows important banded dotterel nesting sites around the Waimā/Ure River mouth, and at Wharanui.

At a last site visit there in early August, banded dotterel were already gathering to prepare for the breeding season. Although they were spread out throughout the area, within a 50 metre stretch of coast immediately south of the river mouth, there were 13 individual dotterel.

The decision I seek from Council is (provide details of what changes, if any, you would like to see, or state 'retain as notified') Looking at the technical information provided, we can see that the area south of the Waimā River mouth and hapua holds important biodiversity values, and our own experience shows this.

We would ask in preferential order that:

- a) access is not granted south of the Waimā River mouth; or
- b) that access is prohibited for 500 metres south of the river mouth and hapua; vehicle access to the beach is prohibited at the Waimā River mouth (to help restore the dune ecosystems there); with a single access point at Wharanui. The speed limit should be 20/km/hr for ALL vehicles and all vehicles must have appropriate warrants and driven by licenced drivers.

If a northern access point is required, we suggest it is accessed from the existing shingle quarry/works area - in the southern most part of the Waimā river area. However, we would caveat that with the request that any

consultation is done with iwi around any important features of that site.

We support the provision that vehicles are not allowed on the dunes - hence our request for no access routes at the northern/Waimā end.

General comments about the draft Bylaw

My comments are Forest & Bird appreciates the efforts the Council have undertaken in preparing this bylaw. Our chief concerns are that it has taken more years than we would've liked - especially given the extensive use of the coast over summer seasons, and we would hope that the 2021/22 summer season may provide some protection.

We urge you not to be swayed by those who may argue that the effects of vehicles on the beach can be managed. Even with the best intentions of vehicle users, (e.g. RAwE), damage continues to occur and there is sufficient photographic evidence to show that vehicles are straying from the marked tracks. Furthermore, the sites of the vehicle tracks are impacting upon the natural features that need protecting.

We urge you to progress with the bylaw. Thank you for receiving our submission.