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9th April 2009

Christchurch City Council
P.O. Box 237
Christchurch Mail Centre
Christchurch 8140
CHRISTCHURCH

To whom it may concern

Re: Submission on the Long Term Council Community Plan

I enclose a copy of a submission to the Christchurch City Council on its draft Long Term Council Community Plan on behalf of the Canterbury Biodiversity Steering Group. I would welcome the opportunity to speak to my submission.

Regards

Wayne McCallum
Regional Biodiversity Coordinator

Submitter Details

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Submission on the Long Term Community Plan of the Christchurch City Council

From: Wayne McCallum, Regional Biodiversity Coordinator

Background

The Regional Biodiversity Coordinator is employed to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy. Although contracted to Environment Canterbury the coordinator role is regarded as an independent position, with the individual being expected to work with a range of stakeholders to facilitate the accomplishment of the vision, goals, targets and actions of the Biodiversity Strategy. This includes the Christchurch City Council, which has adopted the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy.

In his role the coordinator may make submissions that promote the integration of the targets and actions of the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy into planning documents. This submission has been prepared under these auspices.

Biodiversity and the Christchurch City Council

In February 2008 the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy was officially launched. The journey to that point had involved an eighteen month process during which Environment Canterbury, the Strategy's initiator, sought to champion an approach to biodiversity management in Canterbury that was collaborative and inclusive of community values and concerns. Through an advisory group process, in which the Christchurch City Council participated, a *Strategy* was developed that draw support from a range of stakeholders and sector groups. Many of these organisations subsequently formally adopted the *Strategy*, including the Christchurch City Council.

Biodiversity and the Long Term Council Community Plan

Although the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy remains a non-statutory and non-binding document, adopting it can be interpreted as support for its vision, goals, targets and actions. If effect is to be given to this support it is important for the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) of the city reflects the themes and actions of the *Strategy*. There are numerous ways that this could be undertaken including:

- The harmonisation of biodiversity funds allocated by the Christchurch City Council into a priority site schedule being developed as part of the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy's implementation process. By way of explanation, the priority site schedule entails the recognition of areas of high biodiversity value through-out Canterbury, ranking their importance on the basis of significance and threat. Some of these areas fall within Christchurch city and it would be strategically appropriate for the city to direct its funding for on-the-ground biodiversity management towards such sites where they occur within its boundaries [Community outcomes].
- Collaboration on field day events that address certain biodiversity needs such as the planning and implementation of biodiversity projects, including plantings and pest control. Presently

the city is collaborating with other parties to develop and implement a Canterbury restoration Day event and it would be good to see this support recognised within the LTCCP of the city [Council activities and programmes, cultural and learning services].

- Management of weeds and pests. Any management undertaken for weeds and pest will accrue benefits for biodiversity, public health and the well-being of council open spaces and waterways. [council activities and programmes, parks, open spaces and waterways].
- The 'weaving' of biodiversity initiatives into city asset projects and annual management activities, including waterway enhancement, road reserve and stormwater management, and the operation of parks and reserves represents an ideal opportunity for promoting biodiversity while also achieving budgeted public works. A case-in-point is the development of stormwater basins that have biodiversity values. This can be achieved, for example, by developing retention basin systems that support an array of native species such as harakeke and native sedges [Council activities and programmes/ general and technical information, parks, open spaces and waterways, wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater].
- Part of the Regional Coordinator's role involves the supply of information and technical support for organisations and individuals interested in biodiversity management. Working with the Council's staff I can add capacity to its existing budget for information and learning services by supporting initiatives by the city that harmonise with the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy and its own management responsibilities [Council activities and programmes, cultural and learning services].

It should be noted, also, that into the medium term the position of Regional Biodiversity Coordinator will require support from other authorities and groups. Presently Environment Canterbury, in collaboration with the Biodiversity Advice Fund (Department of Conservation), meets the position's costs. It is hoped that the Christchurch City Council will recognize the benefit of supporting the coordinator position and include a budget line in its LTCCP of an annual contribution towards its maintenance after 2010 [Community outcomes].

Summary of Recommendations

In summary I recommend the following policies and activities for inclusion into the LTCCP of the Christchurch City Council:

1. Acknowledgment of support for the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy in the Christchurch City Council Community Plan.
2. Policy and budget support for incorporating biodiversity related factors into asset management projects undertaken by the Council.
3. The harmonisation of the city's on-the-ground biodiversity initiatives with the priority site schedule developed as part of the Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy.
4. Collaboration with the Regional Biodiversity Coordinator on the organisation of biodiversity field-days and information outreach.
5. Budgetary provision for an annual contribution to the support and maintenance of a regional biodiversity coordinator in the Canterbury region

I wish to speak for my submission.

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Regional Biodiversity Coordinator

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