

## Response ID ANON-URZ4-5F8V-X

Submitted to Fast-track approval applications  
Submitted on 2024-05-03 23:56:23

### Submitter details

Is this application for section 2a or 2b?

2A

#### 1 Submitter name

Individual or organisation name:  
Lake Ōmāpere Trust

#### 2 Contact person

Contact person name:  
Dr Marise Stuart

#### 3 What is your job title

Job title:  
Trustee

#### 4 What is your contact email address?

Email:  
s 9(2)(a)

#### 5 What is your phone number?

Phone number:  
s 9(2)(a)

#### 6 What is your postal address?

Postal address:  
  
c/o Kay Baker Martin  
Secretary, Lake Omapere Trust  
PO Box 488  
Kaikohe 0440

#### 7 Is your address for service different from your postal address?

No

Organisation:

Contact person:

Phone number:

Email address:

Job title:

Please enter your service address:

### Section 1: Project location

Site address or location

Add the address or describe the location:

Lake Ōmāpere is located north of Kaikohe and south of Ōkaihau, between State Highway 1 to the east and the former Ōkaihau Branch Railway line (which now forms part of the Twin Coast Cycle Trail) to the west.

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Lake Omapere Trust FTA Bill application\_2.jpg was uploaded

Do you have a current copy of the relevant Record(s) of Title?

Yes

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Title\_Lake Omapere.pdf was uploaded

Who are the registered legal land owner(s)?

Please write your answer here:

Legal description: Lake Omapere Block

Title reference: 68795

Owners: Vance Aperira Andrews, Natalie Kay Janine Baker, Graham Dalton, Ani Martin, Colin Rameka, Myrtle Ann Sanson, Bryce Peda Smith, John Lenard Peter Tiatoa, Steve Temoko Turner, Tamaiti Wihongi [See Appendix attached - Title]

Note that this list of owners was updated in the Māori Land Court on 18 December 2023 AP-20230000021553 \A20230009307: Natalie Kay Janine Baker, Graham Dalton, Ani Martin, Myrtle Ann Sanson, John Lenard Peter Tiatoa, Steve Temoko Turner, Tamaiti Wihongi, Marianne Huhana Renee Parker, Sunny Michael Edwards, Marise Kerehi Stuart [See Appendix attached - 271 Taitokerau MB 106]

Detail the nature of the applicant's legal interest (if any) in the land on which the project will occur

Please write your answer here:

The waters and bed of Lake Ōmāpere were vested in the Lake Ōmāpere Trust on 22 February 1955 under section 438 of the Māori Land Act 1953, on behalf of Ngāpuhi iwi. Lake Ōmāpere Trust is the mandated legal entity and kaitiaki of the lake.

## Section 2: Project details

What is the project name?

Please write your answer here:

The Lake Ōmāpere Restoration Project

What is the project summary?

Please write your answer here:

The Lake Ōmāpere Restoration Project seeks to improve water quality, restore the mauri of the lake and its environment, and provide for the long term sustainable use of the lake for the benefit of Ngāpuhi. The project comprises removal of nutrients and sediment via dredging of the lake bed, establishment of artificial wetlands to mitigate sediment and nutrient inflows to the lake, and management of water level to achieve optimal lake health and resilience.

What are the project details?

Please write your answer here:

The Lake Ōmāpere Restoration Project seeks to improve water quality, restore the mauri of the lake and its environment, and provide for the long term sustainable use of the lake for the benefit of Ngāpuhi.

Vision:

Kia whakahokia mai te mauri ora o te roto a Ōmāpere ki tona ahua tuturu hei taonga tuku iho mo ngā uri whakatupuranga o muri nei

To restore the life force of Lake Ōmāpere to its original state at the time of Te Tiriti as a treasure from our creator for future generations.

Values:

Mena ka tiaki koe i te roto, Ka tiaki te roto i a koe.

If you look after the lake, it will look after you.

Mission statement:

Ko te kaitiakitanga o te rototapu o Ōmāpere na matou e tira na matou e tutuki

The kaitiakitanga of our sacred Lake Ōmāpere.....led by us, delivered by us

Key activities are centered around three workstreams, as follows:

1. Sediment removal – targeted nutrient sediment management/removal via dredging of the lake bed

2. Sediment and nutrient management – establishment of artificial wetlands to mitigate major sediment and nutrient inputs from surrounding land use at main point sources discharges into the lake
3. Water level management – construction of infrastructure to enable management of lake water levels in respect to flooding, drought resilience, water quality and sediment removal (extent and type to be confirmed depending on establishment of maximum desired levels).

Describe the staging of the project, including the nature and timing of the staging

Please write your answer here:

All three workstreams are able to occur concurrently or sequentially. It is envisioned that all three workstreams could be completed within a period of three years, with the sediment removal work able to be commenced within 1-2 months of consent being granted.

What are the details of the regime under which approval is being sought?

Please write your answer here:

Consent is required under sections 13 and 14 of the Resource Management Act 1991, pursuant to rules within the Proposed Regional Plan for Northland, the National Environmental Standard for Freshwater, and potentially the Far North District Plan (Operative and/or Proposed, dependent on timing of application).

Part of the land along the northwestern margin of the lake is identified as conservation area and marginal strip land administered by the Department of Conservation. Depending on the extent and nature of works required, the project may also require approvals from the Department of Conservation under the Reserves Act 1977 and/or Conservation Act 1987. The Lake Trust does however, have an indicative offer from Department of Conservation to manage this area of land, and is working through details at present.

Approvals may also be required under the Wildlife Act 1953 and/or Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 for the handling and/or salvage of protected wildlife and in relation to fish passage and activities relating to introduced carp or koi.

If you seeking approval under the Resource Management Act, who are the relevant local authorities?

Please write your answer here:

Relevant local and regional authorities for the project are Northland Regional Council and Far North District Council.

What applications have you already made for approvals on the same or a similar project?

Please write your answer here:

No applications for approvals for the project or similar works have been submitted to date. Several actions have been implemented over the past decades to attempt to address the declining health of the lake, including the introduction of exotic grass carp for weed control, and the lake continues to be monitored.

The Lake Omapere Trust has developed this application in partnership with the Tai Tokerau Water Trust (chaired by the Hon Murray McCully), which has delivered three water storage projects in Tai Tokerau totaling 8.3 million cubic metres with the intention of supporting up to 2800ha of horticulture production across the Mid-North and Kaipara production areas.

Is approval required for the project by someone other than the applicant?

No

Please explain your answer here:

The Trust is the legal owner of the water and bed of the lake.

If the approval(s) are granted, when do you anticipate construction activities will begin, and be completed?

Please write your answer here:

All three workstreams are able to occur concurrently or sequentially. It is envisioned that all three workstreams could be completed within a period of three years, with the sediment removal work able to be commenced within three months of consent being granted.

The Trust has established a relationship with local contractors Johnson Bros Limited (JBL), a multi-disciplinary marine contractor, which specialises in dredging and underwater construction, based in Northland. JBL have experience in maintenance and capital dredging projects, as well as specialist dredging such as; subsea mining, seaweed removal, and underwater explosive excavation.

JBL is presently contracted to Northland Regional Council to manage (develop and adapt) the technology to remove an invasive marine seaweed in the Bay of Island, known as Caulerpa. Caulerpa grows in very dense intertwined mats over a range of seafloor types (mud, sand, rock), and initial work by JBL has demonstrated successful removal of the seaweed in a systematic way.

Dredging is commonly carried out in a number of fresh water and saltwater applications around the world. The technology and equipment are readily available and can be applied to new environments. JBL, having visited Lake Omapere and discussed the proposed sediment removal, are confident their

equipment can be readily adapted to successfully remove the sediment, transport the sediment, and dispose of it ashore at the proposed disposal site.

The Trust intends to utilise local contractors to undertake dredging (in partnership with JBL as above), pest control and planting, and construction works, where practicable. Local procurement will have additional economic benefits for Te Tai Tokerau, beyond the positive ecological, cultural, recreational and economic effects and opportunities realised through the implementation of the project.

The Trust has lodged submissions with Northland Regional Council (NRC) on its draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034 and draft Freshwater Plan Change, and with Far North District Council (FNDC) on its draft Long Term Plan 2024-27.

As part of the submission to NRC, the Trust has requested funding of **s 9(2)(b)(ii)** per annum to resource the development and implementation of:

- a collective catchment management plan, including supported infrastructure subsidy for landowners;
- a pest weed (aquatic and terrestrial) management plan; and
- long-term monitoring programme (including procurement of capital assets to facilitate this)

As part of the submission to FNDC, the Trust has requested funding of **s 9(2)(b)(ii)** per annum to resource:

- The restoration of Lake Ōmāpere as a capital water supply project over the next 5 years
- The development of a Lake Ōmāpere centre for Matauranga Māori and Ecological Biodiversity which relates to the wetland restoration/construction aspect of this current application

As identified above, the Lake Ōmāpere Trust has commenced fundraising for this exercise with Far North District Council, and Northland Regional Council. The Trust will apply to the Regional Infrastructure Fund for support with this project, on the basis of the lake as a natural water source, contributing to critical regional water infrastructure.

### Section 3: Consultation

Who are the persons affected by the project?

Please write your answer here:

- Te Rūnanga a Iwi o Ngāpuhi (Iwi authority)
- Ngāpuhi hapū - Ngāti Korohue (Treaty settlement entity)
- Tangata kaitiaki - Richard & Jo Civil (Customary fisheries)
- Northland Regional Council
- Far North District Council
- Hokianga Harbour Care
- Ngāwha Innovation Park
- Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust
- Landowners surrounding the lake:
  - Beach Rd Farms 1996 Ltd
  - Te Totara Farm
  - Flood Farms
  - Okaihau Pastoral Holdings Ltd
  - Te Aranga Hou Marae (Ōmāpere X) - Kuia Ani Martin
  - Omapere Taraire E & Rangihamama X3A Ahu Whenua Trust

Detail all consultation undertaken with the persons referred to above. Include a statement explaining how engagement has informed the project.

Please write your answer here:

There is a long history of engagement between the Trust and various parties in relation to the ongoing care and management of the lake. Engagement undertaken to date—including 1) development of the Lake Omapere Strategy 2) the current proposal and 3) previous opportunities for restoration and development of the lake—has involved the following parties:

- Te Rūnanga a Iwi o Ngāpuhi (Iwi authority)
- Ngā hapu kaitiaki o te Roto Ōmāpere - Ngāti Korohue (Treaty Settlement Entity)
- Tangata kaitiaki (Customary Fisheries)- Richard & Jo Civil
- Northland Regional Council
- Far North District Council
- Hokianga Harbour Care
- Ngāwha Innovation Park (Skills & Employment)
- Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust
- Landowners surrounding the lake:
  - Beach Rd Farms 1996 Ltd
  - Te Totara Farm
  - Flood Farms
  - Okaihau Pastoral Holdings Ltd
  - Te Aranga Hou Marae (Ōmāpere X) - Kuia Ani Martin

- Omapere Taraire E & Rangihāmama X3A Ahu Whenua Trust

The Lake Trust has strategically engaged land owners surrounding the lake, given their firsthand experience with the poor state of the Lake, as well as effects from natural hazards/flooding.

- Department of Conservation - an agreement is being developed to support the significance of Lake Ōmāpere Nationally Critically Endangered Isoetes kirkii. Resourcing is being provided to support efforts to restore lake health so that Isoetes can return to the lake in the future. [See Appendices - Stakeholder Support: DOC agreement]

- Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment - advised of intention to apply for Fast Track approval

- NIWA - has resourced the literature review of all NIWA work conducted to date, and to support future actions. Memorandum of Understanding is currently in development with Lake Omapere Trust.

There is support and approval in principle for the proposed remediation project from adjacent landowners, many of whose landholdings already experience inundation during periods of severe weather and flooding. See attached letters of support as an appendix [Appendices - Stakeholder Support].

The Lake Ōmāpere Trust has signed a formal relationship agreement with Northland Regional Council (NRC) (dated 17 December 2023) to work collaboratively to improve water quality and biodiversity outcomes in a manner that respects the cultural significance of Lake Ōmāpere to Ngāpuhi [See Appendices - Stakeholder Support: Relationship Agreement NRC].

Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust (TTWT) has previously investigated options for converting Lake Ōmāpere into a water storage reservoir for commercial water supply as per the 2020 MBIE funded Feasibility . However, TTWT acknowledges that significant improvements in lake water quality need to be realised before any potential for large scale retention and storage is considered further, and is supportive of the proposed restoration work. [See Appendices - Stakeholder Support: Tai Tokerau Water Trust].

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Describe any processes already undertaken under the Public Works Act 1981 in relation to the land or any part of the land on which the project will occur:

Please write your answer here:

The lake (bed and water) was vested in the Trust in 1954. No Publics Works Act processes have been undertaken.

The relationships with landowners surrounding the lake are as such that landowners are supportive of land acquisition to support the aim of restoration, thereby nullifying the explicit need for the use of the Public Works Act.

#### Section 4: Iwi authorities and Treaty settlements

What treaty settlements apply to the geographical location of the project?

Please write your answer here:

There are no treaty settlements in the geographical location of the project as the hapu and iwi of Ngāpuhi have not entered into a settlement process.

There are a number of Treaty claims relevant to the geographical area, including on behalf of Lake Ōmāpere Trust itself, and are consistent with the aspirations of this project. These are:

Wai no: 820, 1.1 Date of Statement of Claim: 25 Sep 99 Date received: 14 Oct 99 Claimant: Ronald TeRipi Wihongi Representing: Trustees and Beneficiaries of Lake Omapere Concerning: The claim concerns contamination of Lake Ōmāpere by algal bloom and the lowering of the lake level. The claimant claim that lowering the lake has resulted in its contamination and that this action is contrary to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. Note that the current Chairperson, Tamaiti Wihongi, is the son of the said claimant, Ronald TeRipi Wihongi.

Wai no: 974, 1.1 Date of SOC: 17 Jan 02 Date received: 17 Jan 02 Claimant: Rosaria Hotere Representing: Concerning: Taking of lands under the public works legislation in "Kaikohe, Ngawha, Punakitere, Tairaire, surrounding land of Omapere lake Utukura, Te Ahu ahu, Waimate Nth, Okaihau, Mangamuka Kerikeri, Paihia, Waikare, Mitimiti, Moetangi and in other areas unspecified. The claim also refers to the minerals mining act in relation to Lake Ōmāpere and the native land act. The claim ends stating it is a blanket claim over Kaikohe Whenua.

Are there any Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019 principles or provisions that are relevant to the project?

No

If yes, what are they?:

N/A

Are there any identified parcels of Māori land within the project area, marae, and identified wāhi tapu?

Yes

If yes, what are they?:

Lake Ōmāpere is Māori land under Te Ture Whenua Act 1993.

There are Māori land blocks located adjacent to the lake, and we have taken the time to consult with the owners of these land blocks (Te Aranga Hou Marae (Ōmāpere X) and Ōmāpere Rangihāmama Trust) and gain indicative support.

Is the project proposed on any land returned under a Treaty settlement or any identified Māori land described in the ineligibility criteria?

No

Has the applicant has secured the relevant landowners' consent?

Yes

Is the project proposed in any customary marine title area, protected customary rights area, or aquaculture settlement area declared under s 12 of the Māori Commercial Aquaculture Claims Settlement Act 2004 or identified within an individual iwi settlement?

No

If yes, what are they?:

N/A

Has there been an assessment of any effects of the activity on the exercise of a protected customary right?

No

If yes, please explain:

The current degraded condition of the lake does not enable the safe practice of protected customary rights. The project aims to restore the mauri and taiao of the lake so that its cultural values can be maintained and protected.

Upload your assessment if necessary:

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## Section 5: Adverse effects

What are the anticipated and known adverse effects of the project on the environment?

Please describe:

Neither a detailed assessment of effects on the environment nor a consenting strategy have been prepared for the project at this stage. However, a preliminary review of proposed activities and information on previous proposals for lake remediation indicated that the primary activities requiring approval are likely to include:

- hydrological effects resulting from removal of sediment from the lake bed, potential changes to lake levels and/or reduction in outflows from the lake;
- ecological effects resulting from disturbance and removal of the lake bed substrate, removal of vegetation, and loss of habitat from inundation and or reduced streamflows;
- land use impacts from inundation of parts of the surrounding area, depending on the magnitude of any raising of lake levels;
- potential hydrogeological impacts on groundwater flows and levels within the Lake Ōmāpere catchment;
- adverse effects associated with construction of embankments, weirs and/or other structures required to manage lake levels.

The Lake Ōmāpere Trust is committed to undertaking a full effects assessment should the project be listed in Schedule 2 to inform detailed design and methodology development.

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## Section 6: National policy statements and national environmental standards

What is the general assessment of the project in relation to any relevant national policy statement (including the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement) and national environmental standard?

Please write your answer here:

The following national policy statements and national environmental standards are relevant to the Lake Ōmāpere Restoration Project:

- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM)

The project aligns strongly with the fundamental concept of Te Mana o te Wai, upon which the NPS-FM is centred. The restoration of the lake - a

Māori-owned resource cared for and managed by Māori - encompasses all six principles of Te Mana o te Wai, especially mana whakahaere, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, and governance. The actions proposed clearly elevate the health of the lake as the primary concern, followed by the health needs of people, and lastly provide opportunities for sustainably supporting the long-term wellbeing of mana whenua and the broader communities of Te Tai Tokerau.

The project is consistent with the objective and majority of policies of the NPS-FM, and represents a clear commitment from the Lake Ōmāpere Trust to enhancing the mauri and improving the health of the lake for future generations.

- National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HL)

Whilst in predominantly productive rural use and zoned Rural under the Operative Far North District Plan, the land within the Lake Ōmāpere catchment, and particularly that immediately surrounding the lake, is not considered to be highly productive in accordance with the Land Use Capability (LUC) categorization system. Parts of the adjacent land on the eastern boundary of the lake are categorized as LUC Class 2 and LUC Class 3. However, most of the land surrounding the lake is categorized as LUC Class 4 or Class 6 land, which is not considered highly productive and is does not fall within the scope of the NPS-HL.

If/where works are proposed within those areas identified as LUC Class 2 or 3, appropriate assessment of the proposal will be undertaken as part of a forthcoming approvals application. However, the project aims to provide an opportunity for the long-term sustainable use of the lake as a water supply source, which supports the overall objective of the NPS-HPL to protect highly productive land for continued use in land-based primary production.

- National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB)

The project aligns closely with the objective and policies of the NPS-IB. Whilst Lake Ōmāpere is not currently identified as a Significant Natural Area, it holds cultural and ecological significance and has potential to improve indigenous biodiversity values within Northland. The main driver of the project is to restore the natural and cultural values of the lake to enable it to support indigenous flora and fauna as it historically did.

- National Environmental Standard for Sources of Drinking Water (NES-DW)

The project aims to restore the water quality of the lake to enable it to eventually provide a source of water supply consistent with the criteria outlined in the NES-DW.

- National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F)

Lake Ōmāpere is an identified natural inland wetland and thus the regulations of the NES-F apply to activities within and in proximity to it. Whilst the project aims to restore and enhance the lake and wetland environment, it is acknowledged that some of the activities involved in the proposed works will likely trigger the need for consent, pursuant to the regulations in Part 3 of the NES-F.

- National Environmental Standards for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health

Whilst there are no known Hazardous Activities and Industries List sites mapped on NRC's Selected Land Use Register in close proximity to the lake, the potential requirements for managing risk of accidental discovery of soil contamination will be addressed through the regulatory approvals process and considered appropriately in the design and implementation of the works.

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## Section 7: Eligibility

Will access to the fast-track process enable the project to be processed in a more timely and cost-efficient way than under normal processes?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Access to the fast-track process will streamline consultation and engagement and consolidate the various approvals required to enable all three workstreams to proceed consistently. The project presents an opportunity to achieve good environmental outcomes that are consistent with the objectives of relevant regulatory agencies, including Northland Regional Council and the Department of Conservation, and allow those agencies equal opportunity to provide feedback on the project as a whole rather than its component parts.

Additionally, the fast-track process provides a mechanism for more efficient consultation and engagement. In the absence of a recognised and mandated settlement entity, the process of engaging with Ngāpuhi hapū tends to be piecemeal and protracted. Without collective agreement progress can become frustrated and stymied, and parties subject to consultation fatigue. The Trust does not wish to lose the opportunity to make meaningful and positive change to enhance and uphold the mauri of the lake because of inefficiencies in the engagement process. We have however, the unwavering support of Te Runanga-a-Iwi-o Ngāpuhi, the fisheries settlement entity for Ngāpuhi; kaitiaki hapu for Lake Omapere- Ngāti Korohue, and also Tangata Kaitiaki as per Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fisheries) Regulations 1998.

What is the impact referring this project will have on the efficient operation of the fast-track process?

Please write your answer here:

The project is not particularly large or complex, and is therefore not anticipated to require significant time or resources to process. There is significant empirical data that has been collated and analysed over recent years relating to the status of the lake and options for its ecological improvement and potential use. A number of experts have been involved in these investigations, so there is a wide range of existing technical knowledge that could be utilised efficiently to expediently process the application without compromising the operation of the process.

Has the project been identified as a priority project in a:

Other

Please explain your answer here:

The Lake Ōmāpere Trust has signed a formal relationship agreement with Northland Regional Council (NRC) (dated 17 December 2023) to work collaboratively to improve water quality and biodiversity outcomes in a manner that respects the cultural significance of Lake Ōmāpere to Ngāpuhi.

The Trust has lodged a submission with Northland Regional Council on its draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034 (LTP), and it is hoped that funding will be allocated to the project specifically in the LTP.

The Trust has lodged a submission with Far North District Council on its draft Long Term Plan 2024-2027 (LTP), requesting specific prioritisation of Lake Omapere restoration as a capital project over the next five years.

Will the project deliver regionally or nationally significant infrastructure?

National significant infrastructure

Please explain your answer here:

Lake Ōmāpere is Northland's largest lake and a culturally important taonga and waahi tapu for Ngāpuhi iwi. It has considerable potential as an environmental, economic, and recreational resource for Ngāpuhi and Te Tai Tokerau. Restoration of the taiao and improvement in water quality will open up opportunities for the potential of the lake to be realised in a sustainable manner consistent with the cultural values of Ngāphi.

Lake Ōmāpere was previously utilised as a source of municipal water supply for Kaikohe from 1970 until 1985, when the effects of poor water quality on consumers became apparent. More recently, the drought experienced during the summer of 2019-2020 highlighted the unmet need for household water supply in rural areas of Northland. Poor water quality in Lake Ōmāpere at that time prevented the ability for the Trust—a Māori organisation managing a Māori-owned lake—to respond and support whānau in need.

Whilst the immediate focus for Lake Ōmāpere is clean drinking water supply, the value of this taonga as a major water source within our region cannot be understated in terms of contributing to regional economic growth. Modelling by Williamson Water Advisory in 2020 demonstrated the financial value of Lake Ōmāpere to primary industries with a 30-year net present value of \$346.6 million and an internal rate of return of 18%, demonstrating the potential for long-term economic resilience.

Prime Minister Luxton confirmed aspirations for nationwide water infrastructure in early 2024.

The Trust has lodged a submission with Far North District Council (FNDC) on its draft Long Term Plan 2024-2027 (LTP), requesting a Public-Private partnership between FNDC and Lake Ōmāpere Trust, to develop a Lake Ōmāpere Centre for Mātauranga Māori and Ecological Biodiversity, which will (1) educate the community regarding the restoration of indigenous flora and fauna; (2) provide a tertiary education training facility for environmental excellence (3) provide tourism and recreation opportunities to experience indigenous flora and fauna, and (4) support the long-term sustainability of the Lake Ōmāpere environs.

This Lake Ōmāpere project does therefore reflect infrastructure with both Regional and National significance.

Will the project:

Please explain your answer here:

N/A

Will the project deliver significant economic benefits?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Whilst the immediate focus for Lake Ōmāpere is to improve water quality to the extent that the lake may be used for potable water supply, the value of this taonga as a major water source within Te Tai Tokerau cannot be understated in terms of contributing to regional economic growth. Modelling by Williamson Water Advisory in 2020 demonstrates the financial value of Lake Ōmāpere to horticulture production with a 30-year net present value of \$346.6 million and an internal rate of return of 18%, demonstrating the potential for long-term economic resilience. The future use of the lake as a water source highlights its regional and national significance as part of Aotearoa New Zealand's water infrastructure network.

The project will also have significant regional benefits for Ngāpuhi iwi and hapū in enabling the long-term and sustainable use of the lake as a resource for economic development, either through commercial supply of water or through unlocking more productive land use potential via irrigation (for horticultural production, as noted above). Facilitating the use of a Māori-owned resource for the benefit of Māori is consistent with Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi, which refers to the protection of tino rangatiratanga and self-determination.

Will the project support primary industries, including aquaculture?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:



Once the ability to manage water and nutrient levels in the lake is established satisfactorily, there will be the ability to distribute water to the wider community via the community water schemes being established by the Tai Tokerau Water Trust.

For context approximately 30cm of water on the lake surface is the equivalent of the 4Mm<sup>3</sup> reservoir being constructed by the Trust at Otawere (Waimate-Taiamai) expected to enable over 1000ha of high value horticulture use.

It should be noted that the ability for this to occur is dependent on the Trust installing adequately sized infrastructure, which support can be sought for from the Regional Infrastructure Fund. The intent would be that the Lake would be able to distribute water both west and east being linked to both Matawii and Otawere Reservoirs.

Will the project support development of natural resources, including minerals and petroleum?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

As part of the project, the Trust aims to recover high-value sediment from the bed of Lake Ōmāpere, which can be utilised for productive purposes due to the high concentration of nutrients.

Discussions have been had to date with AgResearch to understand the phases required, including: 1) sediment recovery 2) handling and storage and 3) soil applications. Early discussions have been had with Ministry for Primary Industries - Maori Innovation Fund, to support this work. Market need has been expressed by local kiwifruit growers, as well as a 6,000 hectare farming incorporation which requires soil improvement to support diversification of land-use.

Will the project support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The project is not anticipated to exacerbate the effects of climate change or natural hazards. Rather, the improvement of water quality and potential future use as a potable water supply will increase the region's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The activity of wetlands construction/restoration will potentiate the effects of climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration.

Will the project support adaptation, resilience, and recovery from natural hazards?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

The Far North District is subject to a number of natural hazard risks, including:

- inundation from storm-related coastal events and tsunami as well as high intensity rainfall events
- other weather hazards
- earthquakes
- landslides
- fire
- volcanic activity

Several areas around the margins of Lake Ōmāpere are subject to flood hazards during weather events with the extent of inundation varying depending on the magnitude of rainfall event (i.e. from 10 year ARI to 100 year ARI). Anecdotal evidence from surrounding landowners suggests that there are periods during winter and high rainfall events when parts of the adjacent farms are saturated or inundated.

Due to poor water quality and ongoing issues associated with invasive vegetation and eutrophication, the lake is also subject to environmental hazards, including toxic algal blooms. Shallow depth and high nutrient levels combined with high temperatures during drought conditions contribute to the growth and proliferation of the cyanobacteria that cause the blooms.

The project includes establishment of wetland areas around lake margins to facilitate better drainage and attenuation of flows, and to provide more environmentally efficient use of these areas that are ultimately not well suited for grazed pasture, particularly considering the increased incidence of severe weather that we are seeing because of climate change impacts.

Management of water levels through the construction of bunds, weirs and/or control gates may provide additional storage volume in the lake to attenuate flood flows and reduce impacts downstream. Higher lake levels could also assist in managing the effects of increasing temperatures on the levels of bacteria in the lake.

The project is not anticipated to exacerbate the effects of climate change or natural hazards. Rather, the improvement of water quality and potential future use as a potable water supply will increase the region's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Will the project address significant environmental issues?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Improving water quality and restoring the mauri and taiao of Lake Ōmāpere will correspondingly improve its ecological values. The lake is mapped by NRC as a Top 150 wetland and a biodiversity wetland, along with other small, identified wetland areas around its margins that form part of the wider Lake Ōmāpere ecosystem also classified under the Protected Natural Areas Programme (PNAP). Northland/burgundy mudfish, which are classified as Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable, are only found within a 25km radius of Lake Ōmāpere. The lake was also the last known location of Isoetes aff. Kirkii, a rare species of the quillwort family, a primitive aquatic fern that is classified as Threatened – Nationally Critical and regarded as extinct in the wild. It is hoped that the plants will one day be reestablished to thrive in their original habitat.

Is the project consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies?

Yes

Please explain your answer here:

Lake Ōmāpere is identified as an Outstanding Natural Feature, a Site of Significance to Māori, and is a mapped biodiversity wetland. The restoration of the lake supports the protection and enhancement of the values that contribute to the significance of the lake at a district and regional level.

The project aligns with the Far North District Council Infrastructure Strategy, which includes provision of land transport, water supply, stormwater and wastewater services. It is also consistent with the Rural Production and Environmental outcomes specified in the Operative Far North District Plan.

NRC, with whom Lake Ōmāpere Trust has a formal Relationship Agreement, has provided capability to support the overall restoration workstreams included in this application. Far North District Council, which supports Lake Ōmāpere Trust with its restoration efforts, has provided operative plan guidance to the Trust in order to assist in achieving its strategic priorities.

Anything else?

Please write your answer here:

The project is eligible for consideration under the fast-track process and is consistent with the purpose of the Bill in facilitating the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits. In particular, the Lake Ōmāpere Remediation project aligns with the following criteria in section 17(3) of the Bill:

- (b) will deliver regionally or nationally significant infrastructure;
- (d) will deliver significant economic benefits;
- (e) will support primary industries;
- (f) will support development of natural resources;
- (h) will support adaptation, resilience, and recovery from natural hazards;
- (i) will address significant environmental issues;
- (j) is consistent with local or regional planning documents.

Does the project includes an activity which would make it ineligible?

No

If yes, please explain:

Whilst the project is located on Māori land, the Trust is the owner of the land and the applicant. No additional written approval is required in order to satisfy section 18(a)(ii) of the Bill.

## Section 8: Climate change and natural hazards

Will the project be affected by climate change and natural hazards?

No

If yes, please explain:

The project is not anticipated to exacerbate the effects of climate change or natural hazards. Rather, the improvement of water quality and potential future use as a potable water supply will increase the region's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The activity of wetlands construction/restoration will potentiate the effects of climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration.

## Section 9: Track record

Please add a summary of all compliance and/or enforcement actions taken against the applicant by any entity with enforcement powers under the Acts referred to in the Bill, and the outcome of those actions.

Please write your answer here:

There have been no compliance or enforcement actions taken against the applicant by any entity with enforcement powers under the Acts referred to in Fast Track Approvals bill.

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## Declaration

Do you acknowledge your submission will be published on environment.govt.nz if required

Yes

By typing your name in the field below you are electronically signing this application form and certifying the information given in this application is true and correct.

Please write your name here:

Marise Stuart

Important notes