

1 April 2024

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-26199

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Request for information 2024-045

I refer to your request for information dated 18 March 2024, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 18 March 2024. You have requested the following:

“Under LGOIMA, are you able to assist me with the following information.

I’m looking for data over the last 5 years, based around funding or co-funding, made available to the public (either through application or contestable) for land slips, erosion or land management (or any related activities).

This could be hillside erosion, or streambank erosion, effectively I’m looking at any funding that is available for the public to reduce sediment flow into bodies of water.

I’d also like the total number of staff involved in awarding/managing/assessing this funding, per year (nearest FTE is fine)

If this questionnaire is too onerous, I am able to refine it to ensure it is easy for you to capture.”

On 26 March 2024 you agreed to clarify/refine your request to the following:

- The total operating expenditure (OPEX) of our relevant programmes (further defined below) over the last five years. This will be operational costs only, exclusive of overhead and staffing costs associated with the programmes.
- A description of the types of works and grants available to landowners through our programmes.
- The number of staff involved in delivering the programmes over the past five years to the nearest FTE.

As the clarification of your request was done within the statutory seven working day timeframe provided for under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, Greater Wellington restarted the 20-working day timeframe to respond.

Greater Wellington’s response follows:

Operating expenditure and staff - erosion or land management related programmes

The table below shows the total operating expenditure (OPEX) of our relevant programmes over the last five years. This is operational costs only, exclusive of overhead and staff costs associated with the programmes.

The table also outlines the number of staff involved in delivering the programmes to the nearest full-time-employee (FTE). Staff costs have been assessed to determine the FTE involved in delivery, however the staff costs is not included within the OPEX figures listed.

Note that for 23/24 financial year, we have provided the costs up to the end of March, 9 months of the year.

	23/24 YTD March	22/23	21/22	20/21	19/20
Hill Country Erosion					
OPEX	1,606,894	2,987,472	2,112,440	1,966,458	1,339,549
FTE	4	10	8	7	5
Riparian					
OPEX	527,058	1,493,018	1,168,775	657,841	778,518
FTE	2	2	2	1	1
Sustainable Land Use Fund					
OPEX	703,182	1,486,645	1,032,410	532,044	483,899
FTE	2	2	2	1	1

Programme Descriptions

Below is a description of the types of works and grants available to landowners through our programmes.

Riparian Programme

The riparian programme supports rural landowners in high priority catchments to achieve freshwater and biodiversity outcomes through stock exclusion and native riparian planting. It involves advising landowners on stock access to waterways as well as financial incentives for landowners to manage riparian margins on their properties. Financial support includes staff time involved in planning and advice (100% Greater Wellington funded with no landowner contribution), and a 34% grant towards physical work including fencing costs, and a 50% grant towards native planting and associated plant establishment costs (pre spray, planting labour and post spray).

Hill Country Erosion Programme

The Wellington Region Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI), co-funded by the Greater Wellington, the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) and landowners, aims to enhance community resilience and promote sustainable land use by implementing erosion control measures on vulnerable land. Through collaborative efforts with landowners and communities, WRECI aims to treat 2,650 hectares of land between 2024 and 2027. This involves utilizing a range of farm planning tools and management practices such as land retirement, planting native and exotic seedlings, and space-planting Poplar and Willow poles. The initiative provides grants to support these efforts, offering a 34% grant for P. Radiata projects, a 50% grant for Native/Reversion and alternate forestry species, and also a 50% grant for space planting of Poplar and Willow poles. The programme is part-funded by MPI's Hill Country Erosion Programme.

Land Environment Plans

Land Environment Plans refers to the budget line in Greater Wellington's Long Term Plan. Internally and when communicating with farmers staff refer to this programme as the Sustainable Land Use Fund (SLUF). The SLUF supports landowners in the Wellington Region to implement on-farm works to mitigate nutrient, sediment and pathogen loss from farmed landscapes to achieve freshwater and biodiversity outcomes targeting priority catchments. The programme supports a range of on farm mitigations including, fencing to exclude stock from critical source, riparian and wetland areas; native planting within these areas; water reticulation in areas where stock are excluded from waterways; stock crossing points; planting of small ex-forestry blocks into native; and the release of dung beetles. The programme offers grants to landowners to support these works at 34%. Reticulation work is supported at a 20% grant rate and works in the Porirua Catchment which is high priority for sediment are supported at 50%.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Lian Butcher
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