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Q1

Our Vision is: A district where biodiversity is protected and enhanced from the mountains to the sea (ki uta ki tai) by a community that values and cares for it. Think about what our district, thriving with biodiversity, could look like in 20 years' time. What do you see?

rewilding and native planting of council land and easements.

wetlands recreated to mitigate flooding and filter surface runoff.

islands of habitat for native species with control of introduced predators.

shelter belts and other strips merged to create wildlife corridors, linking habitat islands.

Q2

Do the goals and objectives of the strategy capture what you see as the key issues facing biodiversity in the district?

No,

Please explain::

Goal 1 takes too narrow a view of what is 'significant' and gives too much attention to rare, threatened and taoka species, over a broader ecological context. It's not that these species aren't important, but the pressure on them is cumulative and interlinked and needs to be addressed at a greater scope. For example, wrt high country land development, consents granted for development of original landscapes with native vegetation ought to be publicly notified, with transparency around the reasoning behind any granting of such consents. Future development ought to be discouraged and all original landscapes ought to be treated as having significant natural value. Consents for exotic forestry should be notified and require environmental impact reports.

Q3

What do you see as the top five priorities from the objectives mentioned in the strategy? Tick up to five objectives:

Identify and protect ecological values,

Increase indigenous vegetation cover,

Interconnect biodiversity sites and threatened species habitats

,

Support projects that aim to restore and interconnect indigenous biodiversity sites

,

Research and collect data on the state of biodiversity

Q4

We have identified 55 actions to reach the goals in the strategy. You can read about them in the Action Plan on pages 28 - 35 of the draft strategy. Is there any specific action or anything else Council should be doing to support biodiversity in the district? Note – Goals and objectives related to water quality for rivers, lakes and wetlands are regulated via the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan and therefore not part of this strategy.

Related to Goal 2: restore and interconnect...

Biodiversity strategy needs to be aligned with decisions by domain boards, etc, which typically favour financial goals over environmental ones, such as use of surplus land for exotic planting or leasing to farmers, rather than rewilding. The chief objections of these boards to native planting proposals are: lost financial opportunities and/or uncertainty about responsibility for ongoing care of indigenous planting. There need to be processes to facilitate decisions favouring biodiversity over short term fiscal management. Financial decisions should take the long view, for example: over a longer term, permanent native planting may be worth more as carbon credits than Pinus for carbon or logging.

More attention should be given to weed control and regeneration of native species in braided riverbeds. The council should participate in biocontrol trials for noxious weeds like old man's beard, and use these methods if indicated. Riverbeds can function as valuable habitat, even when degraded, and also have a role in flood mitigation, so they are the site of overlapping concerns. There needs to be a more flexible approach to collection and discharge of surface floodwater (ie, exceptional flows) into rivers, and a program of swale and wetland development to capture silt and pollutants. This implies explicit coordination with the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.

Another concern with waterways and water quality is the spraying of the banks of races, especially around built up areas. This is typically done with chemicals that are highly toxic to fresh water species. There needs to be an education campaign to discourage this, and to encourage vegetation that provides shade and habitat. Some research into ways to combine this approach with ditch cleaning may be required.

Q5

Do you have any other comments or feedback?

I've provided (by email) a draft proposal for a native planting and walkway in Mount Somers, on the site of a previous Domain Board managed shelter belt. (This site may already be replanted with Pinus, I'm not sure..)

The same site has since been proposed for construction of a swale, to redirect flood water away from the village, into the Sth Ashburton River. This swale could potentially coexist with and enhance the proposed walkway and planting (and I'll add it to my proposal when I have time).

There's an opportunity for a productive synergy that could achieve multiple goals and provide an amenity and service for future generations. It seems more likely that competing interests will contradict one another and miss the opportunity.

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Q6

Your contact details

Name **Jono Poff**

Q7

Do you wish to speak in support of your submission at the hearing?

No - I do not wish to speak in support of my submission and ask that my written submission be fully considered.
