Development West Coast

The West Coast now boasts two of the country’s best cycle trails with the opening in late November of the Greytoun to Hokitika sections of the West Coast Wilderness Cycle Trail.

The four-day, 130km trail is a joint venture between the Grey and Westland District Councils and will ultimately take cyclists from Greytoun to Ross. It is one of the New Zealand Cycle Trail Great Rides and along the way, cyclists will see $3.2 million from the Government, DWC, has also contributed significant funding to the trail.

DWC chair John Sturgeon says the Trust was pleased to support the project.

“At the end of the day it will be great for both districts. It will give locals opportunities to develop a bit of boast here and bring tourists into the region and we are already seeing locals using the trail so that is great too,” he says.

Initially DWC committed $750,000 to the project and then both councils allocated funding from DWC’s Extraordinary Distribution Fund (EDF). Westland District Council is spending its entire $2 million EDF on the project with Grey District Council contributing $3.1 million.

Grey District Mayor Tony Kokshoorn says the cycle trail wouldn’t have been possible without the nearly $3 million funding from DWC.

“It’s another example of DWC getting in behind a community project in the region. It’s also a good example of collaboration between councils which will bring tourists here and keep them in the region.”

It is hoped the cycle trail will revitalise small rural townships along its way, providing employment and business opportunities. Already the cycle trail is fielding inquiries from groups wishing to use the facility.

As training for other industries that work in confined spaces, with breathing apparatus, and in gas awareness and detection.

This cycle trail also provides an opportunity for the mining industry and the facility will also be available to other West Coast industry and community groups,” he says.

WCC manager Trevor Watts says the centre is already fielding inquiries from groups wishing to use the facility.

“We have had interest from other industry groups about using the centre and encourage them and other community groups to get in touch so we can see how they can best utilise the facility,” says Mr Watts.

THE West Coast wilderness trail opens

DWC farewells John Chang

It was with sadness that the board and staff of DWC said goodbye to CEO John Chang earlier this month.

Dr Chang joined DWC in January 2009 with a strong executive management background. He previously led Canterbury Ltd, the University of Canterbury’s commercialisation company from 2004-08 before establishing DWC in 2008.

A successful change manager who focused DWC on its core business, he helped manage the fund through the global financial crisis. During his tenure, he oversaw DWC’s move to a bulk community funding model and concentrated the Trust’s efforts on developing the West Coast economy and supporting local business.

Although he was instrumental in launching the West Coast Leading Light Business Excellence Awards to celebrate business achievement, Dr Chang says he leaves the Coast with the money to the Mines Rescue Trust to provide high quality training in both real life simulated training in limited visibility underground training tunnel that allows for accidents and this will be a fitting tribute to the mining industry as well as training for other industries that work in confined spaces, with breathing apparatus, and in gas awareness and detection.

This cycle trail also provides an opportunity for the mining industry and the facility will also be available to other West Coast industry and community groups,” he says.

The $50m building includes three seminar rooms and office space as well as an underground training tunnel that allows for real life simulated training in limited visibility.

It will enable Mines Rescue to continue to provide high quality training in both underground and surface extraction as well as for regaining his Mayoralty of the Grey District Council.

It was a great day for the opening of the DWC Mines Rescue Training Centre which was well attended earlier in the month.

This facility is a fitting tribute to the many people who have lost their lives in the West Coast’s mining industry and will be a true asset to the whole community for years to come.

DWC farewells Chief Executive John Chang during the month and is now in the process of finding a new chief executive.

Chairman of the Board, John Sturgeon and his family all the very best for the future.

Thank you for all your work and dedication to the community and trust that you have in the future.

DWC Chair John Sturgeon