opportunities_for_the_coast

COVID-19 has presented a significant economic shock to the West Coast. Unemployment amongst our working age population has risen to 7.7%, up from 6.1% at the start of the year, and there will likely be more job losses once wage subsidies run out. Without doubt it’s a challenging time, but it’s not all doom and gloom on the Coast.

Retail spending on the West Coast has bounced back at a faster rate than the rest of the Country, with spending during June 8.8% higher than it was last year - compared to 0.6% nationally. The last few weeks have also seen positive news for the region with the resumption of Sounds Air, InterCity and now TranzAlpine services. We also saw NZTA reversing their controversial plan to close the Arthur’s Pass highway to all traffic when it snows.

Connectivity is vital for our region and the recovery. DWC and the West Coast Mayors, Chairs and Iwi have been working together to advocate for the return of these key services.

Other recent good news for the Coast includes the restoration of guided tours on the Franz Josef Glacier, thanks to a collaboration between Ngāi Tahu Tourism, the Department of Conservation and The Helicopter Line with support from Te Rūnanga o Mākaawhio.

These recent achievements are all very important for the Coast and our economy, but they are largely related to protecting what we had. In the post-COVID environment we also need to be looking ahead at new opportunities.

Significant work is going on in the background to ensure our region comes through this stronger than before. DWC is working closely with other key stakeholders on a number of projects through the West Coast Recovery Group, and together with the West Coast Mayors, Chairs and Iwi we are pushing to attract more investment into the region.

We are already seeing significant funding for new projects that will not only create jobs during this difficult time, but provide opportunities going forward.

Recent Government announcements have included: $17.9m for the Pouparua Pathways project, $1.2m for digital hubs (two of which will be administrated by DWC), $2m towards a regional employment scheme (DWC’s Upskill programme), $1.9m for the revitalisation of the Westport Waterfront and $4.4m towards the $15.7m Mt Te Kinga predator free project. These are just a few of the projects within the $147.2m allocated to the West Coast through the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) and other recent funding streams.

On top of this, last week the Government announced it will be investing a further $90m from its COVID-19 infrastructure fund, and an additional $7m towards our ports. It’s encouraging seeing these projects get over the line. DWC has contributed to the initial business cases and applications for a number of them. For example, our contribution of $87k (PGF) and other recent funding streams.

With all these different opportunities and all the regional projects underway or due to begin, we are expecting more jobs on the way.

There is never a better time to think about new or growing businesses. The West Coast employers are already noticing a rise in job applications and are looking to create a funding management mechanism that will give Treasury greater confidence to allocate funds to the West Coast.

West Coast Governance Programme

The West Coast Governance Programme will commence in August 2020, facilitated by Richard Westlake and Vaughan Renner, and will be delivered across the West Coast to make it accessible for all participants. It consists of four workshops covering governance matters.

Attending this programme will help you understand the key roles and responsibilities of the board and individual directors. You will learn about board relationships, good governance matters.

Introduction to Governance, the Board and its Role.

| DATE: Wednesday, 12 August |
| LOCATION: Westport |

Governing Strategy and Risk.

| DATE: Thursday, 1 October |
| LOCATION: Westport |

NOTE: Maximum of 16 participants.

Cost: $2000 (+GST) per participant.

Contact DWC to see if you are eligible for NZTE business capability funding.

DWC’s Economic Development Manager, Jo Binme, says “this is an exciting opportunity to support businesses and the people of the West Coast at such a critical time.”

Delivering the project in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) alongside their complementary Mana in Mahi initiative will enable the greatest benefits for both employees and employers.

Upskill Project Co-Ordinator, Tania Washer, has been engaged to deliver the programme, and will be coordinating the needs of businesses and individuals with the necessary training providers, while also working closely with MSD and other agencies to ensure the greatest outcomes for all involved.

If you are a business or individual and believe this programme can assist you, or you would like more information, email Tania on upsilk@dwc.org.nz or visit www.dwc.org.nz

West Coast Resilience Programme

The West Coast Resilience Programme is all about building skills, knowledge and resilience for our region’s workforce. The programme will provide opportunities for people to upgrade their skills in a range of areas.

DWC have Partnered with The Knowledge Academy to bring PRINCE2 Project Management Training to the Coast

PRINCE2 is a structured project management method and practitioner certification programme. PRINCE2 emphasises dividing projects into manageable and controllable stages.

The PRINCE2 course combines training and exams for the PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner certifications into one 5-day course. Passing the course will provide you with a recognised qualification to gain employment, or support existing employees to undertake new training or education to move up or transition into a new role.

The course is run over August and September and is open to all industries. Fees are discounted for West Coast residents.

DWC ‘UPSKILL’ Employment Programme ready to launch

DWC has announced the launch of West Coast Employment Scheme, “Upskill”.

Upskill, a Provincial Growth Fund: Skills and Employment (Te Ara Mahi) funded programme, is a DWC led initiative focused on supporting people to attain recognised qualifications and creating sustainable employment opportunities to keep both people and businesses on the West Coast.

The programme will implement an employment pathway scheme that matches people to employment opportunities. Supporting sustainable positions which are either new or vacant and are for at least 30 hours per week, it can assist people to gain a recognised qualification to gain employment, or support existing employees to undertake new training or education to move up or transition into a new role.

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These courses will be run over August and September and are limited to 14 per course.

Cost: $1091 (+GST) per participant.

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