

Gravel Management Fee



Gravel management:

Why does Regional Council support gravel extraction?

Gravel extraction is required on certain rivers and locations around the rohe where excess gravel in the riverbed can cause an increased risk of erosion or flooding. For example, along with the naturally occurring gravel supply from upper catchment headwaters, extreme weather events that result in increased river flows can cause large gravel deposits downstream. This may then divert the flow of the river into riverbanks (and increase the risk of erosion), or greatly reduce the amount of water the river can hold (and increase the risk of flooding).

By removing controlled quantities of gravel as part of scheme maintenance, we can manage these risks for neighbouring communities.

Regional Council plays a critical role in ensuring that gravel extraction does not adversely effect the river system, and works closely with relevant organisations and tangata whenua to achieve this. Our river engineers manage extraction rates to maintain the flood capacity of the river, by seeking a balance between extraction rates and the

naturally occurring gravel supply. It is important that any proposed extraction is assessed, approved, and monitored as over extraction can degrade the riverbed and increase erosion risk.

We operate under a Regional River Gravel Management Plan, which was developed to assist Regional Council in carrying out its role effectively. This plan is informed by the Resource Management Act and the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941.

You can view the full document on our website:
www.boprc.govt.nz/gravel-management

Do we need to remove gravel? What would happen if we didn't remove it?

Controlled gravel removal in key areas stops the riverbed from becoming perched (meaning the main channel of the river is higher than the surrounding floodplains). If this happens, it can cause flooding and erosion on the surrounding land.

By incorporating controlled gravel removal into our scheme maintenance programme for some rivers, we can manage this more effectively. We call this soft engineering, where we work with the natural environment to manage the potential for flooding and erosion (instead of building artificial structures).



The management fee:

Why is there a gravel management fee and what does it cover?

The fee helps cover the cost of Regional Council staff time required to ensure that any gravel extracted from the rivers is meeting our responsibilities under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941 (SCRCA) for river control and flood management.

This work programme includes ongoing surveying of the river (for example, riverbed cross sections, field work, information collection, aerial surveys, environmental data monitoring, allocation assessments and review), physical site inspection, relationship management with contractors and stakeholders, reporting and general administration.

Why is it increasing?



The fee has remained unchanged for more than 14 years. It needs to adjust for inflation and to meet current resourcing costs.

The proposed fee is based on:

- The resources needed to deliver the gravel management work programme. For example, the surveys we complete for the rivers have increased and the technical equipment we use to complete these has become more sophisticated. This gives us a more comprehensive picture of what's happening in and around the riverbeds, so we can more effectively manage gravel removal.
- Increases to staff charge-out rates over the past 14-plus years, which we need to account for in our fee. These charge-out rates can be viewed through Schedule A of the Fees and Charges Policy.

Why is this fee being included in the Fees and Charges Policy?

Including this fee in the policy gives us an opportunity to be increasingly transparent with the community by ensuring the fee is open for regular review and consultation. This will also support a more robust process around how the fee is set and what it is being used for.

To date, the gravel management fee has been in place either through consent conditions of gravel extraction or site allocation agreements (between Regional Council and contractors).

Does a change in fee change the process / rules?

No. If you are extracting gravel, you will still need to adhere to resource consent conditions in the consent or site allocation agreements, including engagement and discussion with local iwi/ hapū.

How does this fee compare to other councils who manage gravel extraction?

The fees vary widely across the country as it is impacted by the management approach and work programme required to reduce the risk of flood protection and erosion. Several councils charge their administration and monitoring separately to their gravel extraction fee, which means direct comparison is not possible. Through our research, and discussions with other councils, the fee varies from 0.15c through to \$7.70.

The consultation process:

How can I provide feedback on this change?

Consultation on the Fees and Charges Policy is being held in conjunction with the Long Term Plan 2024-2034 consultation process. There will be a dedicated section on the Fees and Charges Policy, which includes the proposed increase to the gravel management fee.

Council will receive feedback through written submissions.

You can make a submission online at www.participate.boprc.govt.nz or by email to feesand.charges@boprc.govt.nz

Submissions close at 5pm on Tuesday 9 April 2024.

Please note, any conversations with staff are not considered part of the consultation process, and won't be recorded as a formal submission.



What is the process after I have made a submission?

People who make a written submission can choose to speak to their submission at hearings scheduled for May 2024.

Following submissions, Council will make final decisions on the policy in June 2024. Any changes made through those decisions will be reflected in the final Fees and Charges Policy and published on Council's website, effective from 1 July 2024.

Full details on the Fees and Charges Policy (as well as supporting documents) can be found here: www.participate.boprc.govt.nz