



Photo: Nimmo Photography

Showcasing Hands-on West Coast Activities

The excitement of winning a West Coast adventure and the region's many paid activities are the focus of the DWC-led emergency tourism marketing campaign which received \$280,000 in government funding last month.

The first of the funding enabled DWC to expand its tourism social media reach over the New Year. Next will be the launch of the upcoming "hands-on" West Coast activities marketing campaign.

Over the holiday period the DWC tourism team, along with a local camera crew, captured stories featuring people and paid activities across the region for the campaign.

"We are looking forward to releasing the latest videos that show the Coast is more than just spectacular scenery - there is so much to do here. We want the operators to reap the benefits, so we have focused on activities visitors pay for," says DWC chief executive Heath Milne. "It's important that local operators capture the economic benefits of tourism."

Mr Milne says the first stage of the campaign will target domestic audiences through digital channels to direct awareness and traffic to our local operators.

"We have been waiting for the bush fires in Australia to subside before engaging potential travellers from Australia, but we are planning to expand the campaign's reach across the Tasman too."

Videos to be played as part of Tourism New Zealand's Good Morning World campaign were also produced with the emergency funding.

The emergency funding aims to overcome the immediate reduction in visitor numbers experienced after a section of State Highway 6 was closed in December following a severe weather event.

"We are incredibly grateful to Government for recognising the impact of recent weather events and stepping up to support our marketing campaign now that motorists can again travel from Karamea to Queenstown," says Mr Milne.

Support for Kotuku Surf Life Saving Club

Assistance from DWC has enabled the Kotuku Surf Life Saving Club to replace a damaged motor on their inflatable rescue boat (IRB) allowing them to continue their vital work across the region.

The club's mission is to prevent drowning on West Coast beaches and to support local communities. Volunteers in the club provide beach patrols, develop our kids' water safety and rescue skills and respond to calls for assistance from West Coast Police for water-based search and rescue events.

Kotuku chairperson, Mark Bolland, says their IRB search and rescue team often find themselves in extreme environments and sometimes the challenging environments win. This was demonstrated last year when a rogue wave dumped their IRB onto the rocky Rapahoe shore damaging a motor.

DWC assistance has enabled the club to replace the damaged motor.

Mr Bolland says their IRB team recently responded to the Hokitika Gorge incident where the new motor was used for two days; initially to search for a missing swimmer and then to support the police dive team on the second day.

"Whilst the result was not what anyone would have wished for, the fact is that we directly contributed to locating and bringing back a family's loved member.

"Knowing that what we do makes a difference to lives, and that organisations such as DWC see the value in what we do, gives us the



Congratulations to Asher Lambert who recently completed his Advanced Lifeguard Award.

confidence that the volunteer time we give to prevent drowning on West Coast beaches and supporting local communities with water safety and search & rescue is headed in the right direction."

Living and Farming on the West Coast Roadshows

Property Brokers, with support from DWC, are presenting interactive seminars this month in Ashburton, Waimate and Pahiataua to promote living and farming on the West Coast.

Gareth Cox from Property Brokers says the roadshows will feature case studies of different West Coast farming systems, question and answer sessions with Coast farmers and an overview of investment opportunities in the region.

"The seminars are aimed at attracting investment through farm sales. This will help enhance the dairy industry by overcoming some of the succession issues we are seeing on the Coast," says Mr Cox.

"The unique West Coast way of life has always captured those with the courage to make the shift and farm here. The opportunity today given the capital structure of Westland Milk is now a game changer in terms of attracting new investment to the Coast.

"Property Brokers is looking forward to playing its part in representing the opportunities on the Coast in partnership with the broader local business community."

Chair Renee Rooney says DWC is proud to support this initiative showcasing living and farming on the West Coast.

Mrs Rooney runs a dairy farm with her husband at Inchbonnie, near Lake Brunner, and stresses the importance of maintaining a robust farming sector across the region.

According to Infometrics data, Dairy and other livestock farming contributed \$255.6m (14%) towards the West Coast's Gross Domestic Product. It also provided 1,306 filled jobs on the West Coast.

"This key industry contributes far more than just on-farm jobs. The benefits spill-over to the West Coast as a whole. There are a range of industries and professions reliant on farming, including engineering firms, retailers, lawyers, accountants and builders, who all benefit either directly or indirectly from farming money flowing through the local economy," says Mrs Rooney.

"Farming is not only an intrinsic part of our economy but is a part of the fabric of the West Coast. It has helped shape the character of the region and who we are as Coasters."

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

25 Business Breakfast | Hokitika
2020 Looking Forward: DWC Chief Executive Heath Milne
7:30am-8:30am | Hokitika venue TBC | \$10
Register online at www.dwc.org.nz

26 Business Breakfast | Greymouth
2020 Looking Forward: DWC Chief Executive Heath Milne
7:30-8:30am | Paroa Hotel | \$10
Register online at www.dwc.org.nz

26 Business Lunch | Westport
2020 Looking Forward: DWC Chief Executive Heath Milne
12:30pm-1:30pm | Denniston Dog | \$10
Register online at www.dwc.org.nz

MARCH

03 Unlock the Power of 'We' | Blanchard® NZ & Brannigans
09:00am-4:30pm | West Coast venue TBC | \$995+GST
Visit www.dwc.org.nz for more information.
Register with carole.peterson@brannigans.co.nz

20 Women in Business on the West Coast Event
12:00pm-2:30pm | St John, Franz Josef | \$20
Register online at www.dwc.org.nz

Free Business Development Clinics

These one-to-one clinics are open to businesses from all sectors, all sizes and at all stages of development. They are aimed at helping you gain knowledge, connect with the right people and grow your business. Visit dwc.org.nz to find out more.

Contact DWC to book a time.

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

Greymouth
10, 17 & 24 February

Hokitika
12, 19 & 26 February

Westport
13, 20 & 27 February



Chief Executive's Report

The start of a new decade is perfect timing to come on board and lead the DWC team.

Since my appointment as chief executive, I was itching to come back to the West Coast and get started. Two weeks in and my enthusiasm has only increased.

I haven't lived here for some time but I'm originally from the Coast and have always maintained a strong connection. I jumped at the opportunity to return and I can assure you I'm here for the long haul.

My time so far has mainly been spent engaging with internal and external stakeholders and I'm very encouraged by the quality and knowledge I've been encountering in both areas.

There are many challenges ahead but also many opportunities to tap into. My first job is to ensure the DWC team increases pace in helping West Coast businesses find and take advantage of those opportunities.

Later this month we will be holding business breakfasts and a lunch across the region to share my views and more importantly to meet and engage with as many local businesspeople as possible.

We encourage you to come along and look forward to an open dialogue.

Heath Milne | Chief Executive