

NEW ZEALAND EARNS FIRST GREENROADS CERTIFICATION

Mingha Bluffs Realignment Project creates safe, sustainable passage through Arthur's Pass National Park

Arthur's Pass National Park, New Zealand—Greenroads Foundation is pleased to announce that the Mingha Bluffs Realignment Project earned a Bronze Greenroads Certification. The project earned 34 points and met all project requirements of Version 1.5 of the Rating System. It became the first to fully complete the certification process in the country in 2019, and was the first successfully certified project located outside of North America.

In this \$22 million NZD project, Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency realigned a dangerous section of State Highway 73 within an ecologically-sensitive section of Arthur's Pass National Park, between Mingha Bluff and Rough Creek. It was the first demonstration project for Waka Kotahi NZTA, following the completion of a three-year Greenroads pilot program that included six projects around New Zealand between 2012 and 2015.

"This is a first for New Zealand, achieving Bronze Certification. We're incredibly proud of this achievement, as it has set the platform in our sustainability journey from this point on," said Rebekah Pokura-Ward, Principal Social and Environmental Specialist at Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. "When we adopted Greenroads, it really formalized our thinking, our good practice in the sustainability space, and it set a platform for future projects because you treasure what you measure. Engineers and project managers love structure, so Greenroads has been an invaluable tool on that journey."



The project realigned a dangerous section of State Highway 73 within Arthur's Pass National Park, between Mingha Bluff and Rough Creek. Photo courtesy of Waka Kotahi NZTA.

Prior to the project, the alignment was identified as one of the remaining high-risk sections along the SH-73 corridor, with several narrow points, tight corners, dips and hollows, and reduced visibility. The project team used a quantitative analysis and cost evaluation to design the project's safety enhancements. The realignment improved safety and reliability while minimizing environmental impacts on Arthur's Pass National Park.

The improved shape and width of the highway, in addition to pedestrian and cyclist enhancements, makes it safer for all road users. New and improved trail crossings have also increased pedestrian access to cultural and heritage resources. Sustainability features include enhanced ecological connections for sensitive aquatic species and birds, along with native, noninvasive landscaping that involved the preservation and translocation of endangered plant species within the park.



The project earned a Bronze Certification in Version 1.5 of the Greenroads Rating System.

"Coming from New Zealand Aotearoa, our environment, our culture, everything about that is extremely important, and protecting that, whether that's through our transport system or other systems is integral to who we are and what we do," said Ms. Pokura-Ward. "Greenroads and the program that we adopted in the Transport Agency really cemented those values and gave visibility, a structure, and a framework around how we could continue on that journey in a way that became a requirement instead of just something that we do."

Funding for the project was provided by Waka Kotahi NZTA. Project design was led by Opus, Ltd. and the prime contractor was Hawkins.



PRESS RELEASE

greenroads.org

Currently, there are over 130 registered Greenroads Projects valued at over \$35 billion in 11 states and 8 countries in the world. This project was the first project certification in New Zealand and the first located outside of North America since the program started in 2010.

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ABOUT GREENROADS FOUNDATION

Established in 2010, Greenroads Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, which advances sustainability education and initiatives for transportation infrastructure. As the developer of the Greenroads Rating System, the Foundation manages the sustainability certification process for surface transportation construction projects in the U.S. and internationally.

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