

WH:BB

→ HEAD OFFICE

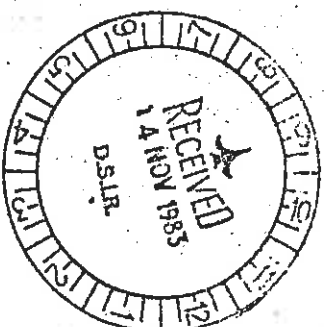
30/7/83

AK FORDE

B25/6

9 November 1983

Mr M.K. Holland
Chief Soil Conservator
Manawatu Catchment Board
P.O. Box 2043
PATERSON NORTH



Dear Sir,

FOXTON-HIMATANGI-TANGIHOANA COMMUNITY
SAND STABILIZATION SCHEME

Notice of this proposal has reached us from the Commission for the Environment. We accept that stabilization of sand may be necessary in some places along this coast, particularly in the rear dune system. However, we must point out that there are botanical values associated with the area that would be destroyed if afforestation occurs over the whole of it.

During the 1982/83 summer, some of our staff carried out a botanical inventory of the whole coastal dune system stretching from north of Patea to Paekakariki. This showed that the strip of fore-dune and associated sand plains between Himatangi Beach and Foxton Beach settlements is, botanically speaking, the least modified part of this whole coastal dune system. The northern part of the Himatangi-Foxton stretch, in particular, is almost completely lacking in both lupin and boxthorn, so that the only introduced plants of importance are marram grass and pampas. As a result, the natural communities now surviving there represent a kind of system that has almost completely disappeared from southern North Island. We are also aware that there are botanical values associated with the dune lakes and swamps of this stretch but we have no recent information.

The Himatangi-Foxton dune system is inherently unstable as a result of a continuing influx of sand from the beach. The plants present are peculiarly adapted to cope with this instability. We consider that this particular stretch of coastline warrants a careful study to isolate those parts where an absolute need for stabilization by pines, as opposed to marram above, can be demonstrated. If afforestation can be restricted to the rear part of these dunes, it may be possible to protect the indigenous values of the fore dune and its associated sand plains.

Yours faithfully,

Dr B.F. Forde
Head Office
DSIR

W. Harris
Director

Dr Ian Atkinson
Botany Division
C/ Soil Bureau
DSIR
LOWER HUTT

c.c.

c.c.

Saving the Dunes Atkinson