

Media Release

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Southern Scenic route signals an electric future

The Southern Scenic Route is planning for an electric future with funding confirmed for electric vehicle chargers on the Southern highway.

Energy and Resources Minister Megan Woods yesterday announced co-funding for a Southern Scenic Route application and 18 other projects under the fourth round of the Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund.

The funding will result in eight electric vehicle chargers being installed along the Southern Scenic Route with locations likely to include Owaka, Papatowai, Waikawa, Tokanui, Riverton, Tuatapere, Manapouri and Te Anau.

A regional partnership between Powernet, ChargeNet and Venture Southland led to the preparation of the application which has resulted in \$164,500 of funding for the region.

ChargeNet CEO Steve West said the funding announcement supported the company's goal of removing barriers to electric vehicle adoption and use.

"The funding will ensure that one of New Zealand's most stunning, and popular, tourist routes will soon be able to be enjoyed by Electric vehicle drivers - both tourists and locals alike," West said.

Venture Southland Group Manager for Business and Strategic Projects Steve Canny said the partnership with Powernet and ChargeNet had ensured the application had wider industry support.

"The success of the application shows a regional proactive approach for sustainable and energy efficient initiatives," Canny said.

Canny said that the funding will support electrified transport along the major tourism route and connect to existing infrastructure in the area.

PowerNet chief executive Jason Franklin said a key element in encouraging growth in electric vehicle uptake in New Zealand is increasing the availability of fast-charging infrastructure.

Powernet is committed to promoting sustainable energy across the region and will be supplying the infrastructure required for the eight fast chargers.

"We manage significant network assets across Southland and Otago and envisage some major changes taking place as more people transition from fossil fuel vehicles to electric," Franklin said.

Installation of the proposed chargers will be rolled out over the next several months.

The Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund is administered by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) and aims to encourage innovation and investment in electric and low emission vehicles in New Zealand.

For more information please contact **Venture Southland Business projects** coordinator **Cathy Jordan** on **027 468 0530**

