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### **Submission in support of Eastland Port Twin Berth Stage 2 project**

Kia ora,

My name is Kevin Jones, I am the director of Jquip and we specialize in general earthworks, rock cartage, house and rural sites, paddock contouring, tree and section clearing, drainage work and retaining walls. I have grown my business on the back of our region's strength in sheep, beef, grain farming, horticulture, and forestry. Over the past 4 years my company has grown from two staff and a single digger to seven staff and a range of machines.

I support Eastland Port's Twin Berth development as I believe it is going to create greater log export capacity and allow for more opportunities like containerisation. Having the capacity to excel when the market is wanting wood is key and extending the wharf can do this.

Currently there are a lot of delays caused by the southerly swell and surge so if the port can extend the berth and fix the breakwater, this will reduce the amount of time log ships are waiting to load. I believe also if we are able to service demand when our forest sector needs to move wood then this extra berth should give us more opportunity to do so.

There are many examples of businesses along the coast that have done well from forestry and the twin berth project will only keep this going. If the port can have two ships, then they will have a much smoother operation which will keep the logs flowing. Expansion of forestry has generated higher paying jobs allowing people to better support their whanau. Thanks to forestry a lot of our men and women employed in the industry do not need intense education to obtain a good paying job.

We must remember that logging used to be seasonal, this may still be the case in the near future but more driven by the wood price. We need to be ready so when our purchasers want wood, we can be sure that we are getting as much out the door as possible when demand and price is high.

We have also seen the port stop for bad weather, all our log capacity is full, price of wood is high, but our restrictions see us miss out on any chance to capitalise on a strong market. Our local guys either step down to 3 or 4 days a week or some owner operators that have used their family home as collateral are the first to park up, unfortunately these types of operators aren't in a position to ride a storm out. Finance companies aren't very favourable towards these guys either.

Might I add, a lot of contractors have been in and out of interest only payments for some time given last season, covid, rain and the lack of staff when demand needed it. Businesses have struggled to cash flow their operations very well because of some uncontrollable events like these. Throw a slow payment in the mix and some of these guys lapse. For example a massive pack house that carts all



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there fruit to Napier founded by 4 good men had just bought the J2 pack cool stores at Muriwai back to life but was sunk due to the perfect storm. I'm not saying carting the fruit to Napier ended them but it would have cut costs down if they were able to ship out of our port here to increase their margins.

If we upgrade our wharf and help the orchard boys and gals out it gives our locals orchards the means to keep an eye on their fruit and manage it better until it is put on a ship. The payment schedule for the likes of gold kiwifruit is scattered and moves regularly. The more money we can save by not carting kiwifruit to Bay of Plenty means a better grower ready to pay that expensive license back sooner.

The twin berth will also mean less trucks on the road heading out of town. If the horticulture industry has more money in their pockets, they will be able to spend more on their properties and infrastructure. Being able to spend more on your farm increases team moral and gives you the ability to service more debt faster. It will create more consistent work for small businesses like us and generate other opportunities such as transport and forestry jobs and contracts. It will also reduce the likelihood of slow payments keeping industry flowing. I'm also in the mind that there needs to be plenty farmland left for food so don't think I favour the forestry or lean toward a biased opinion.

The project creates opportunities like devanning containers, cheaper on sold containers instead of paying to be trucked in from Napier or Tauranga, brokers for fruit and cash flow for everyone. We would also increase Gisborne's ability to be serviced better by general freight.

Eastland Port are a community focused company with cultural roots, if the port does good then we do good too, they have a strong team in place that hasn't had too many faces change for some time now which shows me the commitment they are willing to put in to get this done, whether it be collaborating with Iwi or even the public. I support the twin berth application for the port expansion and opening up opportunities for many people and businesses in our region.

Kevin Jones  
Jquip - Director