

Kaipara Harbour tidal turbine project approved

by [Hon Kate Wilkinson](#), Conservation

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Minister of Conservation Kate Wilkinson has today granted approval to Crest Energy for the staged installation of up to 200 tidal turbine power generators in the Kaipara Harbour as a restricted coastal activity under the Resource Management Act.

The Environment Court last month ruled the renewable energy project could proceed, with a number of conditions attached.

“The Environment Court carefully studied the project and I agree with its report,” Ms Wilkinson says.

“This is the first large-scale commercial approval for tidal power generation and it has the potential to play a significant role in the development of a new source of renewable energy in New Zealand.

“The potential environmental impacts of this development have been carefully worked through during a robust four-year consent process, during which the Department of Conservation had its concerns addressed in the Environment Court.

“I am aware of concerns raised by submitters and believe the conditions set out would ensure any possible negative impacts can be properly monitored and accounted for.”

A publicly notified review process would occur after each stage of installation and the development can be halted – and turbines ordered to be removed - if significant environmental impacts are detected.

The installation of the turbines would be deliberately staged as part of an approach to allow for ongoing monitoring of effects, clear reporting and enforceable consent conditions.

The first installation would involve three turbines.

Northland Regional Council would be tasked with monitoring the environmental impact on a wide range of marine wildlife such as sharks, rays, marine mammals and fish, including snapper.

If fully implemented, it is estimated the development could generate enough electricity to power the whole region from Albany to Cape Reinga.