

SW & RE Worsp submission

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Waikato Regional Council's proposed Plan Change 1.

My wife and I have farm as partnership under SW & RE Worsp the Matira (part of sub-catchment 16) since 1978. We have farmed sheep and cattle on 221ha of a mix of easy rolling and hill country.

Over the last 39 years we have planted many hundreds of poplar and willow poles established pine plantations on poor utility areas and created a QE11 covenant.

A large proportion of our water courses are fenced and harbour a healthy population of eel, kokapu, kura and other invertebrates, indicative of healthy water.

We have always used the best professional advice available when applying fertilizer and lime; nitrogen use has always been timely and minimal.

We have an ongoing policy of pest control.

As with most rural communities we are close knit, work hard, often with little infrastructural help in the form of schooling roading, internet and cell phone coverage and sometimes in remote locations; we represent a small proportion of the overall population and yet contribute to a major part of the economy and social health of this country.

This plan, in its present form, threatens to jepodise the local and broader economy, breaking up communities, including the closure of schools and local supporting businesses and to severely affect the mental health of many farmers.

It should be supporting farmers to combine environmental advancement with innovative farming practices not halting the process through draconian regulation.

We all want a healthier environment and we all need to take some share in the responsibility for where we sit at this point, in the good and the not so good.

Governments have promoted fertilizer subsidies, land development schemes and "skinny" sheep schemes, all to encourage farmers to maximize the production from the land ^{To grow NZ's economy} and now when we have created strong communities, maximized our debt levels in infrastructure and livestock you want to severely cut our income earning capacity and devalue our debt security cutting us off at the knees.

LONG TERM LAND USE-

I appose

Because

- This creates too much uncertainty in our ability to farm economically, to pay back debt and provide for our families.
- This creates potential capital devaluation compromising equity in our land and unwillingness to invest.
- It stifles initiative and innovation and the potential for advanced environmental and farming practices.

I seek that the provision is deleted in its entirety

NITROGEN REFERENCE POINT-

I appose

Because

- We are already low emitters and this does not support those who have done the right thing by the environment and effectively rewards high emitters
- This is a poor nutrient allocation process not allowing for the variation in seasonal and annual climate variations
- Sampling at the Rangiriri/Glen Murray Bridge shows that the sub-catchment is already at an acceptable level *WRC web site*

I seek that the provision is: Deleted in its entirety

STOCK EXCLUSION

I support

Because

- That the National Water Accord only recommends that slopes up to 15 degrees be fenced, and this should apply. Also, it recommends a different definition of a water body which we are more comfortable with.
- The cost of fencing hill country farms is prohibitive as demonstrated by the Federated Farmers study.
- In the past, there have been cost subsidies to achieve this and there is nothing in the plan to indicate that this will continue.
- The timing is unachievable for us in a priority 1 catchment. We require more time to plan and prepare in order to fence effectively and provide an alternative water source for livestock.

I seek that the provision is: amended as set out below:

continue over

As an alternative I propose

That the rules are changed to reflect recommendations by the National Policy Statement on Fresh Water.

That the timelines are extended to allow better decision making with any consequential amendments arising from the submission process

RESTRICTED LAND USE

I oppose

Because

- This impacts on the potential value of our land into the future.
- We feel that this is covered by all the other rules contained in the proposed plan.
- This restricts the ability of future generations to develop the farming business using advance farming and environmental practices
- It restricts our ability to react to changes in the market as well climatic changes and adverse weather effects.
- It undermines the land owners right to utilize their land with current best practice

I seek that the provision is: Deleted in its entirety

FARM ENVIRONMENT PLAN

I oppose

Because

- This is too restrictive and binding. It does not take into account any changes which may need to be made due to adverse weather conditions. It does not allow for farmers to produce their own FEP using national guidelines and these guidelines have not been developed yet and how and who will decided on the prerequisites?
- This will discourage innovation and development of new systems as farmers will be locked into a Farm Environment Plan. Retrogressive not progressive.
- The timing is unrealistic given how comprehensive and binding the plan is.
- There is a lack of Certified Farm Environment Planners which will result in inappropriate FEPs being signed-off, deadlines not being met and exorbitant charges from incompetent planners.
- The indicative cost of engaging a Certified Farm Environment Planner will be prohibitive.

I seek that the provision is: Deleted in its entirety

CONTAMINANT LOSS FROM FARM

I support

Because

A scientific study of all contributors to contaminants needs to be undertaken to put farming losses in perspective; a good example is the massive contribution that koi carp make to contaminant loss and city storm water.

I seek that the provision is: amended as set out below

As an alternative I propose

That the plan is adjusted to contain rules for the elimination of koi carp and the measurement of city storm water contribution. with any consequential amendments arising from the submission process

SUB-CATCHMENT

I support

Because

We support the policy of a sub-catchment approach this is a fairer way of governing, problem areas within the catchment and promoting good catchment management, pride and competition between sub-catchments.

I seek that the provision is: amended as set out below

As an alternative I propose

We would like the allowance for sub-catchment approach included in the rules with any consequential amendments arising from the submission process