

WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN CHANGE 1
WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS

Submission Form

Submission on a publically notified proposed Regional Plan prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991.

On: The Waikato Regional Councils proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

To: Waikato Regional Council
401 Grey Street
Hamilton East
Private bag 3038
Waikato Mail Center
HAMILTON 3240

Complete the following

Full Name: Mark and Ruth Coleman

Phone (Hm): 07 877 8020

Phone (Wk): Same

Postal Address: 12 Main Street RDI Mahoenui

Phone (Cell): no coverage

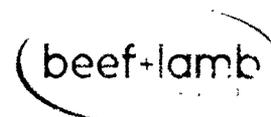
Postcode: 3978

Email: mcoleman@ihug.co.nz

I am not a trade competitor for the purposes of the submission but the proposed plan has a direct impact on my ability to farm. If changes sought in the plan are adopted they may impact on others but I am not in direct trade competition with them.

I wish to be heard in support of this submission.


Signature _____ date 28/2/17



WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN CHANGE 1 - WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS

<p>The specific provisions my submission relates to are:</p> <p>State specifically what Objective, Policy, Rule, map, glossary, or issue you are referring to.</p>	<p>My submission is that:</p> <p>State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether you support, or oppose each provision listed in column 1; • brief reasons for your views. 	<p>The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:</p> <p>Give:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • precise details of the outcomes you would like to see for each provision. The more specific you can be the easier it will be for the Council to understand the outcome you seek
<p>Provision</p> <p>as attached</p>	<p>I support/ oppose/ and for each whether or not you wish to amend</p> <p>The reasons for this are:</p>	<p>I seek that the provision is: Deleted in its entirety/ Retained as proposed/ amended as set out below</p> <p>As an alternative I propose</p>

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa River Catchments.

Introduction.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Waikato Regional Councils proposed Plan Change 1.

Our names are Mark and Ruth Coleman. We are sheep and beef farmers who currently own a 1600 acre property situated at Mahoenui in the Awakino catchment area. The contour ranges from flats at approximately 270 ft ASL against the Awakino river to rolling, to medium, to steep hill at the back up to 1370 ft ASL. We have been farming this property for the past 16 years.

Our property is still in the development stage as there are still large areas of old cut over bush falling which we intend to subdivide by fencing, stump, log up, crop and finally put back into good grasses. This would enable us to raise our stocking rate per hectare, which under today's climate, we need to do, to keep pace with the ever increasing costs imposed upon us.

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa River Catchments.

Restricting Land Use Change.

Policy 6. Rule 3.11.5.7 and any consequential amendments arising from these submission points.

I totally oppose this rule in its entirety for the following reasons:

1/. No one knows what will happen in the near future let alone long term. There are many issues that could arise due to issues such as the fast pace of technology, enabling us to bring in better and perhaps more profitable and sustainable farming techniques, health issues, old age, food shortages etc to name a few.

In my opinion, If this proposed PC1 was implemented it would curtail our whole farming future. It would mean we could not improve our production or change what we do on our land apart from planting it all in trees, from our status quo, for the next 80 years.

To put it another way, it is a bit like telling a car manufacturer that the car he manufactured last year is it. It cannot be improved upon at all, or changed for 80 years to come. Same thing.

2/. It would in no doubt devalue our farm equity quite considerably. We have worked hard all of our lives to build up an equity in our farm only to have it eroded away by a ridiculous plan dreamt up by unqualified persons, without any scientific qualifications and not backed up by true science who have no idea as to the long term effects and hardship it will place on farmers.

In my unqualified opinion, it is people themselves that are the main polluters of our waterways. I have been told back in the 1860s the population in the Waikato was approximately 25,000 and in 2016 it has grown to 450,000.

My point is, under this PC1, farmers are to blame for the reduced quality of our waterways. If farmers have their equity reduced quite substantially in their land, so should all the property owners in the towns and cities that bound the Waikato and Waipa rivers and its subsidiary's. It has to be fair right across the board.

3/. In our own situation, we are both getting older and in the near future we may decide to change our farming patterns to make things a little easier to manage. In my view it is our fundamental right as we actually own the land we farm on. For example we may decide to take on grazing dairy cows or heifers or plant crops such as maize on our flats etc. Both these examples would be prohibited if this plan goes ahead. What right has any one got to tell a land owner what he can do on his property? In my experience, over all my years farming, it seems to be the people who don't own land or are (wanna be) land owners, are always the ones who make up and want to impose all the rules and restrictions on the actual owners of the land and decide what we as owners can do, or not do, on our own land.

4/. Back in the 1950's an economic farming unit was around 200 acres (80ha). Today it is around 1200 acres (480ha). This is entirely due to the increased costs imposed upon the farming industry as a whole.

My point is, over the years we have had to increase our stock carrying capacity on the same area of land by the use of fertilizer and fencing and good stock management to try and keep up with the extra costs imposed on us. When we could no longer produce enough off the original area of land

we had to buy extra land and improve it by contouring , cropping and re grassing and therefore being able to raise our stock carrying capacity again to try and mitigate or keep pace with the rising costs. Hence the area of an economic unit today has got larger and larger and will continue to do so if this nonsense continues.

If this PC1 plan goes through in its present form not just us, the sheep and beef industry but the whole farming industry as a whole will be unsustainable.

The growing world population needs more and more food. Under this proposed PC1 it is prohibiting farmers from doing this. A lot of urban residents may not fully understand, they cannot eat trees. The outcome in the future, if sheep and beef farming is to survive at all under this climate of ridiculous costs and regulations, sheep meat, beef and dairy and vegetable crops will have to more than double in price.

Everyone seems to forget that in the year to August 2016, New Zealand exported \$48.8 billion worth of physical goods. Despite all the woes around dairying it contributed \$10.9 billion, or about 23 per cent of all physical exports. Meat added \$6.4 billion more (13 per cent) while fruit vegetables and wine added in another \$4.6 billion (9.5 per cent). All up, our primary exports generated around 72 per cent of all physical exports. New Zealand still spends more much more than we export or make. Even an idiot can work out if the farming industry is penalised by the proposed PC1 plan our overall deficit would be far worse or unsustainable. We all know what that would mean. NZ , if it doesn't curb its spending will go broke and perhaps China will buy us up. Your so called environmental plans will be the least of your worries then?

There is a growing sentiment among a few of our urban cousins that they don't need sheep, beef or dairy produce. Plant all the land in trees. They say, they can just live on chicken or pork. Think of all the pollution that would cause if we all became hormonal chicken or pork producers. Think of the health issue's we would face then?

The Decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:

Please think long and hard about what we are all trying to achieve. I agree that we all need to try and do something but in my opinion the goal posts are set far too high. With the population levels as they are today and will continue to grow in the future, there is no possible way we can turn back time and return the river back to what it was like before New Zealand was settled.

We can all help and do our bit to a degree but one must always remember to "never chop off the hand that feeds you"

I seek that the provision is deleted in its entirety for all sheep and beef farms.

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa Rivers.

Stock Exclusion from Waterways.

Policy 2. Schedule C and Table 11-2 Priority Sub Catchments.

Rule 3.11.5.1 3.11.5.2 and any consequential amendments arising from these submission points.

I partially Support this proposal but require some amendments.

1/. While we boundary the Awakino River in parts, under our FEP we have already allowed to cattle fence only those parts that directly bound the river. The only other permanently flowing stream that would require double fencing under the proposed PC1 plan flows out of our native bush block at the back of our property. This due to the physical nature of the contour and the ground structure, being extremely rocky it would be very difficult to fence. It would need a bulldozer or digger to prepare the fence line so the fence could be erected properly and maintained. This may then result in sediment discharging into the stream. It would be a very costly exercise. In my opinion , as we only graze a small number of weaner and yearling cattle and sheep in that area, it would be very impractical and would achieve nothing.

2/. In my opinion, fencing off drains , swamps and creeks on our sheep and beef property would cause or create, more ongoing problems than it would solve. Due mainly to the fact that the area's fenced off become a haven for weeds like blackberry, barberry, gorse and tutsan etc to thrive, which if left would become a seed source for birds to spread all around the district as is happening right now in many parts of the Waitomo district. It also provides cover and shelter for wild cats, possums rabbits and other vermin that we as farmers have been trying to control for many years.

3/. If this PC1 goes ahead, these fenced off area's would require spraying every year to keep these weeds and pests under control. No matter how careful one was, this could lead to chemical being sprayed directly into the waterways which would be very detrimental to the ecosystem and aquatic life present.

4/. In some cases fencing off all the waterways would affect stock management of paddocks by restricting stock movement. This would cause area's of paddocks not being grazed properly. This in turn would require a greater number of stock to be put in a paddock at a time or stock left longer in a paddock to keep the grass management under control. This could result in a higher chance of sediment run off.

5/. We would also be up for a major water reticulation scheme to be installed which under todays farming climate could cost anywhere in the vicinity of \$40 to \$50,000 or more. With the returns we are getting at the moment, it would be very difficult to slot into our budget.

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

1/. Water bodies to be re classified to read “Any water body that is 3 metres or wider across flowing permanently all year round in its normal state, ie: not in flood, to be fenced only where it is practical to do so” Common sense prevails. Full costs to be covered by the Waikato Regional Council.

2/. Dams, drains and swamps to be exempt on sheep and beef farms.

3/. That in the advent that a water reticulation scheme had to be installed due to the implementation of the PC1, that the Waitomo Regional Council covers full installation costs.

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa Rivers.

Nitrogen Management Plan

Policy 2 and 7 Rules 3.11.5.3 – 3.11.5.7 Schedule 1. and any consequential amendments arising from these submission points.

I totally oppose, this nitrogen management plan, for Sheep and Beef farmers for the following reasons:

1/. Sheep farmers, on a whole are very, very, low end nitrogen emitters. We should not be used to subsidise the high end emitters like towns and cities and dairy farmers. To place a property scale nitrogen point on all sheep and beef properties is absolutely ridiculous, unfair and not necessary and would be totally inaccurate!

2/. The use of "Overseer" a computer modelling program, by the Waikato Regional Council to set a nitrogen reference point for all farms is totally ridiculous. It is totally inaccurate. It is, at the end of the day, only a modelling program and is only a guide, which is not backed up by true science. How can any educated person or persons or councils in their right mind, think of using such a model to set a reference point on every farm and affect our wellbeing and livelihood for generations to come?

3/. The nitrogen restrictions would devalue our farm considerably. Some farms that have a low nitrogen reference point due to the fact that they are totally sheep or sheep and beef and only fatten bulls or steers as in our case would be penalised when we are not the problem. In our case we are still in the development stage and as I said earlier in my submission that would all have to stop. Our farm would stagnate, costs would become higher and higher and we would be put out of business for no fault of our own.

4/. Before Councils can entertain any idea as to implementing a nitrogen reference point on any, or all farms they need absolute scientific proof based on true science showing exactly how much nitrogen is emitted into the waterways via ground water and how long does it take to do so for every farm. If it is to be implemented, modelled on "Overseer" across a broad range of properties it may be quite interesting to see if it stands up in court? This is a very serious situation you are placing farmers in, not based on fact.

5/. All watersheds should be treated differently and have their own tests independently taken to see what and if any of the contaminants, nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and pathogens detected. I am sure there are many in which there may only be perhaps one out of the four or maybe none which may quite possibly be the case, so why bring out a blanket plan over a whole area when there may be only be a couple of dirty rivers.

6/. If a nitrogen management plan was introduced in some form, there should be a nitrogen reference point value placed on a whole watershed, not on each individual farm and only if nitrogen leaching was of concern in that particular waterway. It must be fair to all concerned, cities and towns included.

I seek that the Nitrogen Reference provision be deleted in its entirety for all Sheep and Beef Properties.

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa Rivers.

Conversion from Farming to Forestry.

Policy 5 and 7 Rules 3.11.5.3 – 3.11.5.5 schedule 1 and any consequential amendments arising from these submission points.

I Totally oppose this Plan. Due to the following reasons.

1/. We as individual farmers know our own farms and how they operate best. We already fence off area's to plant in trees such as tomo's , slumping hills and land too steep to graze stock on. We also leave area's of native bush and scrub on land not suitable for livestock. We do not need to be told by some inexperienced individual or Council that all land over a certain degree has to be planted in trees when they have no idea of the practicality of doing so. Because they have no idea or experience they just impose a blanket approach. eg " All land over say 25 degrees slope has to be planted".

2/. This plan gives us no certainty now or in the future to plan. Even if we can, just manage now, who's to say when more and more rules are imposed on us, that we are able to in the future?

3/. It is a well known fact that forestry kills off small communities and with that goes local schools and halls etc. as there are no farm workers any more and undesirables move into the empty houses and with that so does crime. With forestry they bring in workers from outside for the three pruning lifts and thinning. This is done in short periods between year 3 and year 9, with thinning on year 10 or 12. After that period there is nothing for the next 15 years or until the trees are harvested. That is only if the council will allow them to be harvested. Who knows? With the Councils track record up to date with trying to adopt this PC1. I would suggest a big NO!

I seek that the provision is deleted in its entirety.