

**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

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Complete the following

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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.

D. P. Hansen

Signature *3/3/17*
date

My wife and I have farmed on our hill country beef and sheep property in Waerenga since March 1992. We have three children aged between 21 and 16 years, all have an interest in farming and the farming sector. As a family we have faithfully farmed and developed our property for 25 years and believe that we have made many improvements to our property which have been a plus to the environment. We have planted trees, improved and added creek crossings and fenced off some swamps and waterways. We are strong members of our local Waerenga and Te Kauwhata community and support many organisations and clubs within the district.

I believe the water on our farm is safe and clean. The water on our farm supplies two homes, a woolshed and sale pavilion on our property, which we drink, cook and bathe with. We have eels and fresh water crayfish in our creeks and we have always fished and enjoyed swimming in the creeks on our hill country farm.

I wish to point out that other than drinking water, cattle as a rule do not like bodies of water. They don't congregate in it, deliberately stand or crap in it, as they know it is their drinking water. If you spend time watching cattle you will see this. They also don't like going up or down steep creek banks, so why bother going to the trouble and major expense of fencing them off.

I am concerned at fencing off some water ways. Some water ways often flood, the flood waters would take out fences and flood gates. Half buried treated timber, iron and wire over the land and creek beds after flooding will do considerable damage to water quality. To avoid damage to fences near creeks during flood time, farmers would have to place fences some distance from the creek and retire valuable land. Would farmers be compensated for any retired land?

As a hill country farmer I know, that fencing off hill country waterways requires some large and heavy machinery. This machinery disturbs the land and would contribute to fowling up the waterways, not just while working, but for many years to follow.

Not all steep land should be fenced. Some steep land in some catchment areas have brilliant soil types and is less likely to suffer from erosion, unlike some easy rolling country which has a completely different soil type and is prone to erosion. I think, every catchment area is different and it is not necessary to fence off and retire the better hill country, which is not causing any damage to the water quality.

Some of the required areas to be fenced as per the PC1 plan, requires hill country farmers to fence off areas which are extremely unpractical to access with necessary fencing machinery. They are dangerous areas and would be a major health and safety concern – there will be accidents.

As a hill country farmer, I believe that fencing off areas will create a major problem with weeds and pests, both in the water and on the banks of water ways. The first thing to take hold will be noxious weeds like gorse, blackberry, old man's beard, deadly knight shade, wilding pines alligator weed, privet etc. Many of the very weeds, that The Waikato Regional Council are presently spending a lot of dollars on, in an attempt to eradicate. Therefore, by fencing of these areas, will only create a bigger area for the weeds to grow, and create more work and dollars to control and keeping the environment in mind, does it make good sense to spray near water ways to control such weeds? I don't believe so and again, difficult areas to access will make it dangerous.

Pests will also be encouraged to thrive in these proposed fenced off water ways, I believe that an ideal environment will be created for Koi Carp. With weeds over hanging in the water, and alligator weed blocking the running water, preventing the sun to shine in the water – remember, running water and sunshine kills most ecoli.

If there is scientific proof that fencing off water ways improves water quality and Waikato Regional Council can control the weeds and pests, then I would support fencing off water ways where practical and the operator is not put in any health and safety risk.

If Waikato Regional Council expect farmers to spray and control the weeds in any new fenced off areas and retired land as directed by the existing PC 1 plan, farmers will simply say, Waikato Regional Council are not controlling the existing weed programme very well, so why should we bother as farmers to control weeds in extra areas, which have been created by your plan?

Yes, there may be some farmers who are slowly destroying our water ways. Identify these farms and these catchment areas and get them sorted and make them clean up their act. Farming is no different to any other business – a small percentage of offenders, give the others a bad name. Do not penalise every farmer. Each sub catchment area is different – there should not be one size plan fits all approach.

Getting scientific soil samples shows that some years it is necessary to apply more or less fertiliser or change your fertiliser to maintain an even balance of nutrients to support the health of the soil. This is only good for the water ways, why would Waikato Regional Council want to discourage this by limiting our fertiliser application.

If a farmer is currently dry stock farming and that sector becomes completely unprofitable and it is not possible to change their farming practice to dairy or cropping or upgrade to another profitable way of farming, they would then have to walk off their land. As a farmer, I don't that is very fair. I don't want to be dictated to, what I can or can't do on my land, I want to be able to make flexible decisions that would enable me and my family to make a living and consequently be part of a thriving community.

Thank you for considering my points.