

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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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. - If others make a similar submission I would consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing.

Signature



date

1/3/17

Waikato Regional Council Propose Regional Plan Change 1 – Waikato & Waipa River Catchments

Introduction

Thankyou for the opportunity to submit on the Waikato Regional Council's Proposed Plan Change 1.

My wife Jade & I, and our four young sons are a passionate farming family. We have always wanted to bring up our family in a rural environment as we both were. Our sons love getting out on the land as much as possible.

We farm with my parents at Mahoenui on a 550ha drystock property running a 50:50 sheep to cattle ratio. We also have farming interests with Jade's family where we stock manage several leased farms totalling 400ha at Kopaki (all drystock). Half of one of these leased properties falls in the priority one area of Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1.

We are always striving to improve all these properties with both production and sustainability. Our improvements always have the environment in mind. Most waterways and steep areas are fenced to keep cattle out and all the properties have reticulated water to more than 90% of paddocks.

While I do support the vision of the plan to have healthy and swimmable rivers. I am concerned with some of the uncertainties behind the plan after the first 10 years, some changes are needed to be confident that we will still have viable farming businesses in the future.

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Nitrogen Reference Point

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 oppose this for drystock sheep & beef farms.

- Puts a lifetime restriction on land for future generations of farmers.
- Limits any cattle policy changes and ability to move with markets even though stocking rates are much lower than farming.
- Will decrease land values and drystock farmer's equity in land.
- Rewards long term polluters and limits low end polluters.
- Use of Overseer is unfair. Overseer was never designed for drystock purposes and has up to a 30% error rate. It is known to give lower readings at the low end emitters and higher readings at the high end.
- Very unfair to have a dairy farmer emitting possibly three times as much as a drystock farmer.

Alternatives

I suggest some alternatives:

- Set a fair limit of 30kgN/ha/yr all farms & all farm types.
- All farms above this level to be closely monitored and incur costs if to continue.
- Possible rewards for low end emitters.

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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 submission points

I partially support this proposal but require some amendments

- I agree that major rivers on easy terrain be fenced.
- I agree that intensive areas of drystock farms have their waterways fenced.

I oppose to fencing all waterways in hill country. As:

- Stocking rates in hill country are much lower.
- Costs of fencing and installing reticulated water systems are also much higher than on easier terrain.
- Would require loss of land as larger areas of land will need to be fenced around the waterways, so the fences were in more practical and workable places.
- The fenced areas would become areas of noxious weeds requiring chemicals to be used and end up in waters.
- Would take access away for recreational activities to the water.
- Undergrowth in the fenced off areas will create increased flooding in future.

Alternatives

I suggest some alternatives:

- Needs to be assessed on farm by farm basis. Not on one rule fits all.
- Natural water is needed in hill country.

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Yours sincerely

Graham Briggs


Signature _____ Date 1/3/17