

**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
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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.

 3-3-17
Signature date



WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCILS PROPOSED WAIKATO 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.

My husband Jo and I (Rachel) farm a 1500Ha extensive hill country sheep , beef (60/40) and forestry unit in the west region, We have been farming with our three teenage children in the Aratoro Valley for 26years.

Our farm is surrounded by 3000acres of DOC reserve which is home to the rare Kokako bird. Over the years we have supported DOC and Researchers as they have worked on developing a recovery program in this area. We have also fence off a substantial area of native bush throughout our farm.

I am submitting today on areas in the Waikato/ Waipa plan change as I have grave concerns in some of the rulings and implementation of this plan and where it may head for the future for our business, the region and others surrounding it.

The specific provisions of the proposal that this submission relate to and the decisions it seeks from the council are as detailed in the following table. The outcomes sought and the wording used is as a suggestion only, where a suggestion is proposed it is with the intention of 'or words to that effect' The outcomes sought may require consequential change's to the plan, including objectives, policies, or other rules, or restructuring of the plan, or parts thereof, to give effect to the relief sought.

Thank you for your time and consideration with my amendments to the plan change.

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The specific provisions my submission relates to are:		My submission is that:	The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:
<p><i>Provisions</i></p> <p>Health Rivers Wai Ora Plan Change 1 In its entirety</p>	<p>Oppose plan in its entirety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the withdrawal Of Hauraki Iwi • This withdrawal create uncertainty within the catchment • The plan doesn't seek sensible and practical solutions when considering stock exclusion rule 3.11.5.1 – 4 fencing all waterways appear very impractically and costly expense with very little science to back up the evidence that it will give effect to the plans vision and strategy. • Evidence through case studies indicate it will make Hill country sheep and beef farmers unviable. • Therefore there can't have been enough sound cost / benefit analysis to support the outcomes that the plan will help objective 2 and 4 in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage that the plan change is put on hold or withdrawn until a resolution can be made with iwi. • Once resolution is sorted, work towards longer term planning that will create better certainty for all landowners. Through working with them at a sub catchment level to achieve better outcomes. • Fundamentally change the culture within regional councils to move away from regulatory rules/blanket rule approach, shift to working alongside, engaging and educating landowners and communities to achieve better outcomes for a sustainable long term view. Have national standard rules to work along side. • Create a better framework within the regional council for generational improvement to the environment not 10yr timeframes, as they create uncertainty in an area that is always evolving and changing. • Engage Community groups to work alongside regional council to help achieve better more targeted outcomes.

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<p>Objective 1 – Long Term restoration and protection of water quality for each sub-catchment and Freshwater Management Unit.</p>	<p>support this objective 1 with amendments</p>	<p>I support this objective, but have concerns on how realistic some of the aspirations of the plan are and the effects that will have on our business, the uncertainty it creates long term.</p>	<p>I seek that there is more science based evidence to ensure that these aspirations are actually achievable.</p>
<p>Objective 2 – Social, economic and cultural wellbeing is maintained in the long term.</p>	<p>support this objective 2</p>	<p>I support this objective, I believe it is important to maintain strong social, economic and cultural wellbeing for all.</p>	
<p>Objective 4 – People and community resilience</p>	<p>support this objective 4</p>	<p>I support this objective, People make up communities, if livelihoods and incomes are threatened people move away, so do businesses and communities disappear.</p>	
<p>Objective 5 – Mana Tangata – protecting and restoring tangata whenua values</p> <p>Section B New impediments to the flexibility of use of tangata whenua ancestral lands are minimized.</p> <p>Policy 16 : Flexibility for development of land returned under Te Tiriti o Waitangi settlements and multiple owned Maori land and any consequential amendments arising from this submission point</p>	<p>support the concept but amend objective 5 section b and policy 16,</p>	<p>I seek amendments in objective 5 Section B and policy 16. The main issues around the river is that it is degrading and requires restoration and protection of water quality from the four main contaminant .Therefore we should all be working with the same rules to give effect to this outcome.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I seek that the provision Objective 5 section B is amended to give flexibility to all land owners and that flexibility is based around the impacts that they are incurring on the land. • Amend policy 16 to allow for greater Flexibility to land that is still to be given through the Te tiriti o Waitangi treaty settlement process.

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<p>Policy 1: Manage diffuse discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens</p> <p>Section C; progressively excluding cattle, horses, deer and pigs from rivers, streams, drains, wetlands and lakes pg 30</p> <p>And any consequential amendments arising from this submission point</p>	<p>support policy 1 with amendments to section C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impractical and too costly on some farms. • Timeframe Under current plan too tight. • If objective 5 section B and Policy 16 stays in its entirety the work they do on ancestral land may counteract what other work is going on in the region. So overtime give no effect to the contaminant issues and vision and strategy of the plan. • Currently lacks evidence based detail for farmers to feel assured that the work and money they put into managing this diffuse will give effect to the long term health of the rivers. 	<p>I seek that the provision is amended with the following as an alternative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow national stock exclusion policy • Timelines are adjusted to be more practical in their approach. • Intensive farming unit with excess of 18su/ha fences all waterway. • Identify point source through targeted, evidence based data and work to reduce or mitigate it over time through better management.
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Policy 2 Tailored approach to reducing diffuse discharges from farming activities

Section C : establish a nitrogen reference point (NRP)

Section E : Stock Exclusion to be completed in 3yrs following the dates by which a farm environment plan must be provided to the council, or in any case not later than 1 July 2026
Pg30

And any consequential amendments arising from this submission point

We support with amendments to policy 2 section C and E.

- Have a tailored approach to all contaminants, using evidence based data to support this concept.
- Section C NRP establish, but don't use as a capping tool. We should place all contaminants the same. Main Issues in the Waipa and our region are sediment therefore don't require a NRP as a restraining tool on low emitting business systems. This allows higher NRP to be offset by Lower NRP (Grandparenting approach)
- Need more research in the lag time effect, as nitrogen hasn't been seen yet but need better science/evidence to indicate if it will be seen (reference pg 56 explanatory notes example Otamakokore stream.
- NRP hasn't helped Canterbury there is still the issue, placed communities against each other due to grandparenting approach
- Section E; stock exclusion, too tight a timeframe for some, expensive and in some areas impractical, whereas, good stock management practices could overcome this issue, placing that in your farm plan could highlight the ways around it through other mitigating ways, silt traps, wetlands, filtration culverts(still to be designed 13 yr old sons idea) etc.
- I Seek amendments to Policy 2 section C and E to be removed and replaced with:
- The stock exclusion requirements are based around a national standard ruling.
- That all contaminants are treated the same
- Using data from sub catchment approach which identifies relevant or significant areas that are causing the problem.
- Work through farm environment plans or contaminant plans to mitigate or reduce this discharge.
- Collect data through industry groups on NRP, but don't use it as a restricting tool for low emitting farming system where the problem doesn't exist.
- Collect data to see what does exist and deal with that, create flexibility during this process to ensure business and communities aren't economically restricted and unviable.

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<p>Policy 5: Staged approach</p>	<p>I support a staged approach with amendments</p>	<p>I seek that the provision is amended to focus on creating better data on where the real issues are and to allow for flexibility along the way while creating that data,</p> <p>Further assessment on whether the quality and attributes in table 3.11-1 pg 57- 67 are realistic and achievable when considering the complexities of the issues and when looking at the plan in a holistic way.</p> <p>These attributes and quality need to be realistic to ensure that all environments, not just the waterways, are sustainable for the long term, including social/cultural, economic and resilience in rural communities. I feel this plan currently doesn't do that it gives uncertainty with costly, impractical rules for landowners to follow yet gives little or no evidence that these costly rules will give effect to the vision and strategy long term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create sub-catchment plans to help identify priority areas and the point of contaminant source and what the true problem is. • Then WRC works with landowners and the community to help implement positive change to that issue that has been truly identified, not suggested. • Make the plan and changes evidence based.
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Policy 6: Restricting land use change.

Rule 3.11.5.7

Non-Complying Activity Rule – Land Use Change

Section 1 woody vegetation to farming activities and any consequential amendments arising from this submission point.

I oppose this provision based on the impacts that this rule could have on our farming enterprise for the future and for future generations if it were implemented in our region.

This rule limits and stops that long term development idea we had for our business.

Over the years we have seen the environmental, social and economic cost trees have had on our farm.

Environmental cost:

- House spring has dried up, had to be relocated.
- Waterways dried up affecting ecosystems and water tables, have the WRC considered the long term impact of more trees in the region and there effects on water tables Potentially long term affecting objective 1 and 3 of the plan.
- Trees planted close to the road have fallen affecting power lines and road access this is an area we would like not to replant, risk of fires if not grazed
- Limited in weed control on pasture land next them, increased pests (feral goats/pigs)

Economic costs

- Landowners loose there rights to adjust their businesses to help meet market demands
- Potentially affecting objective 2 and 4 of the plan
- Creates uncertainty for long term investment.
- Cost to replant \$2million for planting, pruning and thinning, banks don't loan on land with trees.

Social Costs

- Reduced service, rural delivery, longer bus runs,
- Reduced numbers at local schools,
- Poor council service due to less families in the area. School closures.
- Drug growers planting in tree/bush areas, stock missing, pouching and thefts.

Potentially not helping achieving objectives 2 and 4 in the plan.

Low emitters are offsetting higher emitters with no compensation- reduces land value, borrowing ability.

I seek that the provision is amended to allow for greater flexibility within farming systems and if they are trying to get more trees in the region and want to use blanket rules, that All land owners have to plant 10% of their land with tree, not just hill country sheep and beef farmers, with either plantation or native to offset emitting.

- Seek to promote positive land use change that will help support rural regions for continued growth in the future.
- That Farming units that have excess of 18 Su /ha are limited.
- Amend Blanket Rules as they limit flexibility, and stifles community growth and development.
- Compensation to land owners if implemented.

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<p>Rule 3.11.5.1 permitted activity rule – small and low intensity farming activities</p> <p>Section 5 For land grazed, the stocking rate of the land is less than 6 stock units per hectare.</p> <p>And any consequential amendments arising from this submission point.</p>	<p>Support with amendments to section 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel that farming systems that has 10Su/ha is a low emitting system and therefore shouldn't be subject to the restraints that this plan is suggesting • Areas within this plan will make low emitting extensive farming units unviable, therefore not helping achieve objective 2 and 4 in the future • Under this plan they are using low emitters to offset high emitters to help achieve the long term vision and strategy through a grand parenting approach. • Making Low NRP businesses stay undeveloped and high NRP units continue on, with the exception of the top 75% to come down, Over the long term low emitter will become unviable. • Low emitters are being penalized, it will effect land values, their ability to stay viable long term. Rules in the plan change are too costly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I seek that the provision is amended in rule 3.11.5.1 section 5 from 6su/ha to 10su/ha.
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<p>Rule 3.11.5.2 sec 4 a Schedule B nitrogen reference point</p> <p>And any other consequential amendments arising from this submission point.</p>	<p>Oppose this ruling .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This ruling puts industry groups against each creating negativity in rural communities towards different interested parties. I have seen that in the south Island and in discussions over this Plan Change. Hasn't worked in Canterbury, just placed disharmony amongst communities • NRP Within sheep and beef systems reduces the flexibility that is required to farm a hill country farm viably under differing economic and climatic conditions. The weather and world markets are becoming more volatile, with this volatility we need scope to be able to adapt quickly without constraints such as this one. • An Example of this change required is in a hard season such as a Drought, sheep and beef farmers will destock, conversely if it is a good season we may buy in more stock, however if we buy in more and don't sell them until after the normal timeframe such as the 30 June that increased stock on our place may affect the NRP • Restricts generational change and development long term. Especially for undeveloped farms with a low NRP. One end of our farm is like that and could get hit hard if this rule was implemented in our area. • Grandparenting approach is promoted, those with high NRP are offset by those with Low NRP. • Low emitters are penalized, no compensated. • Places one contaminant at a higher importance than the others, when on our farm and in the Waipa area, the main problem is sediment and erosion, as highlighted in the Waipa catchment plan, so therefore why create a NRP cap for this catchment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I seek that this provision is deleted in its entirety and that all contaminants are treated with the same level of importance in a catchment approach. • Seek that more information is sourced for the long term approach before expensive blanket rules are put in place that will affect our viability and the rural community's dynamics. • Collect industry data on NRP but don't use it as a tool to restrict positive land use.
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<p>Implementation Methods 3.11.4.3 Farm Environment Plans</p> <p>Schedule 1 requirements for farm environment plans And any consequential amendments arising from this submission point.</p>	<p>I support the concept behind the farm environment plan but seek amendments in its approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock exclusion rule (schedule C pg 50) fencing in some areas on farms is expensive and impractical to be put in place. Case studies from federated farmers are indicated a range from \$100 -750k to implement the requirements from the plan. Fencing on parts of our farm will be approx. \$150k before water reticulation is put in place. • Creation of farm plans has also been quoted expensive, ranging from \$5000 -\$10000 to farmers just for the plan not the implementation of requirements. • There is also questions around the monitoring and implementation from the council and how they will implement this plan change, given the certified people they need. • Implementation plan indicates the regional council won't get involved and everyone has to get a consultant to create and certify it, have become very hands off. • There is not enough supporting data to justify the cost/benefit analysis on farms to support this plan change, which creates uncertainty for farmers. • All contaminants should be treated as the same and the source of concern should be identified before expensive regulatory rules. • All farmers farm differently so greater flexibility to manage contaminants on their farms needs to be created. Blanket rule limits some farmers while rewarding others. • Overseer modelling is an inaccurate tool to be using for sheep and beef and deer systems. 	<p>I seek that the provision is amended to make it more affordable for farmers to implement</p> <p>Areas that require amending or removing are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm environment plans modified to make it more cost effective over a longer period 10yr gives no certainty for the investment required. • Nitrogen reference point – remove or create a national policy on it. • Overseer model – remove due to its inaccuracy • Stock exclusion. – Alter to national standards. Excess 18 SU fence all waterways. • Regional council needs to fundamentally change their culture and how they manage the environment, they should be working with communities in a more hands on role not at arm's length – whole community should fund this water objective not just farmers.
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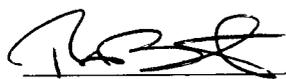
<p>Implementation Methods 3.11.4.5 Sub-catchment scale planning</p> <p>And any consequential amendments arising from this submission point.</p>	<p>I support this concept with amendments</p>	<p>This plans creates uncertainty as it doesn't show any detail on how this plan will be implemented and the overall costs to the region in developing and implementing this plan change. Is it realistic and achievable?</p> <p>The draft Implementation plan that has just recently come out has transferred all cost to farmers, WRC are overseeing it through third party groups that will charge farmers for their time, demand for that time will increase cost.</p> <p>Implementation plan is built around being most cost effective for the regional council, not about working with communities to create better outcomes to achieve V & S.</p> <p>Large amount of the cost of cleaning up the rivers for the communities is placed on farmers even if there businesses are low emitting.</p> <p>All New Zealanders should be helping to clean up waterways, not just farmers, as some farmers are lower emitters than some cities in the region. These low emitting farmers have plantation trees, native bush and stock.</p> <p>Don't treat it like how other rules have been put in place, as this area is too complex and requires more collaboration in order for it to work for everyone for the long term as it is an area that will evolve overtime.</p>	<p>I seek that the provision is given greater priority on point of source Versus a blanket rule approach. I feel this approach will target the problems a lot better and allow for greater flexibility which is required with such a complex issue, especially when you consider you want to take a holistic approach in looking after the wellbeing of not only the rivers, but the communities, people and regions that surrounds them. This more targeted approach ensures you take into account the social, Economic and environmental impacts of this plan Change for the long term. Please do not treat them in isolation.</p> <p>Create evidence based plans that are supported by actual data with a strong cost benefit analysis before you implement blanket rules that create uncertainty, excess stress and financial burden on businesses and communities in rural areas.</p> <p>Fundamentally change the culture in the WRC with its hands off approach and regulatory rule. Create a Stronger long term framework that works closer with communities to help achieve this forever evolving healthy rivers.</p>
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<p>Implementation Methods 3.11.4.6 Funding and Implementation</p>	<p>I support this method with amendments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs of the implementation plan and how it will be done, uncertainty in this area, this plan gives no detail on this. • Through the Waipa catchment group I have seen that the regional council is under resourced, unfortunately that will probably come through as an increase on rates to all landowners. Another expense to landowners that have already been affected by the costs in working to the rules in this plan. <p>Huge concerns on the Cost of implementing and creating the "right process" to achieve the vision and strategy versus spending the money where it will truly count and give effect, \$14.8m to date as reported in the Waikato times- imagine how much work could have been done on the ground if we weren't tired up in "process".</p>	<p>I support this provision with amendment to include funding from Government, Waikato river authority and Iwi. (those that are involved in co- governance).</p> <p>Government should also allocate out more funding to help support the national policy of freshwater management throughout the country.</p> <p>All new Zealanders /tourists should help fund/contribute to this freshwater management policy.</p>
<p>All of the above provisions</p>			<p>I seek that in relation to all of the above topics any consequences and or similar amendments to have the same effects</p>

Yours sincerely

Rachel Barton



Signature

2-3-17

Date