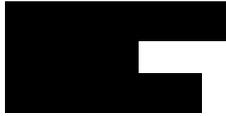


Neil Deans



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Submission on Greater Wellington Regional Council Plan Change 1

I am a resident and ratepayer of Wellington City and have worked in freshwater, conservation and recreational management throughout my career in many parts of the country. I am a former President of the NZ Freshwater Science Society, and have provided advice to councils and Government, and in consenting, planning and national policy decisions throughout the country, predominantly on freshwater issues.

A stream adjoins our property which flows into the Waitohi (Ngauranga) catchment. I contribute to a community group seeking to improve the water and habitat quality of our local stream and am engaging with Te Hononga, a collective of such community catchment groups which has recently been established, centred on the metropolitan area.

I have been impressed by the Whaitua process undertaken by Greater Wellington Regional Council, and support moves to implement those recommendations made by Whaitua members to address freshwater issues in those catchment areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this process.

General comments

The state of water bodies reflects the use of land, water and other resources in their catchments.

Many of our water bodies have been neglected, piped, drained or land uses in their catchments intensified to the point that their community values have been severely compromised. Despite this, these streams and other water bodies continue to provide species' habitats and are worthy of collective action to improve them to ensure they remain community assets. Only with the support of collective action through the regional plan can we secure and improve our water bodies.

I therefore support the thrust of Plan Change 1 to require specific actions intended to improve our water bodies over time. I am concerned, however, that timeframes to have achieved improved outcomes are not just set several decades in the future, but also include interim and measurable milestones (such as by 2035) in achieving the ultimate goal by 2050 or 2100, for example. Only in this way can we be sure that the measures being taken are proving effective.

Rule 5.4.8 makes activities such as dams which have existed for 10 years or more permitted, provided conditions associated with the original permission have been adhered to. This does not address issues around fish passage, which in many cases was not required in earlier consenting. I seek that discretion be available to the Council to require fish passage be provided in such cases, where this would be practical and is required to enable access for fish around an artificial fish passage barrier.

I support the requirement for Freshwater Action Plans required in section 6.16.

Methods M43 and M45 to support the health of, and funding for, urban waterbodies, particularly in relation to stormwater discharges in combination with Wellington Water, is supported. This would

also benefit from active endorsement by territorial local authorities in the development of existing and new urban development.

Similarly Method M44 to support health of rural water bodies is also supported.

Chapter 8 Whanganui-a-Tara

The objectives WH.01-WH.09 are supported, but as noted above, specific interim milestones are also required to be set to ensure the long-term objective will be achieved. This must be supported by numerical objectives and monitoring programmes to ensure actions are effective to meet the desired outcomes.

I support the numerical requirements for the lakes being accompanied by the equivalent for running waters; particularly the Hutt River catchment such as in Table 8.3. In all cases, human health for contact recreation should be the standard where the water bodies are used for that purpose. The desired target attribute states in Table 8.4 are supported.

Policies WH.P1 to WH.P33 are all supported, including the associated target attribute states and flow requirements.

Rules WH.R1 to WH.R36 are all supported. Note that, wherever possible, water sensitive urban design should be required to minimise increased runoff intensity due to increasing hard surfaces.

Chapter 9 Te Awarua-0-Porirua

I support the provisions in this chapter.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak to this submission if it was available.

Many thanks

Neil Deans