

Proposed Natural Resources Plan:

Submitter:

Rob Kennedy

Submitter Number:

S174

5: Submission on the Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region
 Submission on the Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region pursuant to
 clause 6 of Schedule 1, Resource Management Act 1991

To: Freepost 3156
 Wellington Regional Council
 PO Box 11646
 Wellington 6142

Or email: regionalplan@gw.govt.nz

Your details

Full name: Rob Kennedy

Organisation name: _____
 (If applicable)

Address for Service: _____
 22 Dale Road, Raumati South, Paraparaumu

Telephone no's: Work: _____ Home: _____ Cell: 02108418073

Contact person: _____

Address and telephone no (if different from above): _____

Electronic communication

Wellington Regional Council has a preference for providing information about the Proposed Natural Resources Plan via email. We will send you updates on the process, information and provide you with details of any meetings and the hearing. Please tick here if you do not agree to receive communication via email.

Email address: rob@robpix.co.nz

Trade competition

I/we **could not** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission. [Go straight to **Your Submission**]

I/we **could** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.
 If you **could** gain an advantage please complete one of the following:

I/we **are** directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of my submission that adversely affects the environment and does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

I/we **are not** directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of my submission that adversely affects the environment and does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

Your submission

The specific provisions of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan that this submission relates to are:

The specific provision of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan that my submission relates to is (please specify the provision/section number):	My submission on this provision is: →	<input type="checkbox"/> I support the provision <input type="checkbox"/> I oppose the provision <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to have the specific provision amended
	Reasons for my submission: →	
	I seek the following decision from WRC (give precise details): →	

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If you have more submissions you wish to make, please find more boxes at the bottom of this document

Attendance and wish to be heard at hearing(s)

- I/We do wish to be heard in support of my/our submission
[Note: This means that you wish to speak in support of your submission at the hearing(s).]
- I/We do not wish to be heard in support of my/our submission
[Note: This means that you cannot speak at the hearing. However, you will still retain your right to appeal any decision made by the Wellington Regional Council to the Environment Court.]
- If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

[Person making submission or person authorised to sign on behalf of person making submission. NB. Not required if making an electronic submission]

Publication of details

Wellington Regional Council is legally required to notify a summary of submissions, including your name and address for service as provided on this submission form. Your name and address are included so that a person making a further submission is able to serve you with a copy of it.

The specific provisions of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan that this submission relates to are:

<p>The specific provision of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan that my submission relates to is (please specify the provision/ section number): I have been involved with environmental research in the Wairarapa for 10 years. I have BSc and BSc with Honours degrees from Victoria University of Wellington and a Masters Degree from the University of Bonn, Germany. My respective majors are Ecology and Biodiversity, Physical Geography, and Geography. My Honours dissertation investigated a groundwater abstraction, which adjoined a remnant stand of mature Kahikatea and mixed native lowland species. My Masters thesis proved the viability of applying tree-ring research methods (dendrochronology) for environmental research using Kahikatea in the Wairarapa.</p> <p>My motivation to submit information in relation to this proposed plan is to provide some perspective that is not widely, certainly publicly acknowledged either by this authority or within the community. I have attended several public engagement meetings, specially the December 2012 public engagement for this plan, the proposed development for the Waiohine Flood Management Scheme in the winter of 2013, various Whaitua meetings from the initial public engagement and then two of the "three question workshops" at Pirinoa and Gladston. Additionally I have taken the time to present the findings of my research to senior GWRC officials.</p>	<p>My submission on this provision is: →</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I support the provision <input type="checkbox"/> I oppose the provision <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to have the specific provision amended</p>
<p>For these reasons my views are validated with data, literature and observable evidence. I have personally observed the consultation process and I have little confidence that either the GWRC has the capability or capacity to achieve an improved state of water resource management, or recognises a large proportion of the environmental problems stem from the internal conflicts of interest existing between the branches of that organisation.</p>	<p>Reasons for my submission: →</p>	
<p>Conflicts of interest within the execution of environmental stewardship.</p> <p>The Council has different roles, which must be balanced to avoid one branch of the organisation reducing the capabilities of others. There are several examples of this relating to the philosophy of water resource management where we do not see a landscape process-wide integration of the different management goals and practices. Rather we are seeing goals (e.g. flood management, land-use management, and water quantity management) conflicting, competing and being compromised.</p> <p>Flood Protection versus landscape water management</p> <p>Currently hard engineering measures are the dominant strategy. There is a legacy of depending on stop-banks, gravel extraction and river straightening to reduce the potential for flooding. The consequence is that water flows more rapidly down the catchment and makes the lower reaches more flood-prone. In the Wairarapa these developments culminated in the Ruamahanga diversion, which, although effective, is causing a new suite of problems. Further flood engineering schemes must also consider not just the area of interest but both the up and down-stream effects as well.</p> <p>The development of improved flood management to reduce the flood risk for Masterton is a casestudy example of whether the council is aligning management measures with internationally recognised best-case practices or if there will be a return to hard-engineering methods. The key difference between flood management internationally and that in New Zealand is whether you control the flow of water, or expose to the hazard, and these are very different approaches. Recent and frequent flooding shows that constraining large volumes of water is incredibly dangerous and inevitably unsuccessful.</p> <p>Conversely by adopting mixed-method approach a reduction in the stresses on floodbanks are exposed to by widening the river channel, increasing the area defined as floodplain, developing water retention zones, planning such as to remove infrastructure/investment/structures etc from harms way is a method which is less likely to fail. These approaches avoid the levee effect where over-confidence in flood prevention methods has led to disaster when schemes have failed. For the Wairarapa a particular natural hazard is the threat from large instantaneous debris flows stem from landslides in mountainous and steep hill country.</p> <p>It is an error of judgement to design schemes to only the magnitude of 1-in-100-year event. Firstly these data a highly subjective extrapolation and very sensitive to change are more large flows occur. Secondly, large flows can be generated independently from large rainfall events if there is rapid slope run-off (e.g. after a forest is clear cut) or when there is a landslide blocking river flow. Both these types of event can generate an instantaneous flow, which, combined with baseload sediment transport can rapidly deminish the effectiveness of an engineered and floodbanked channel. Also, these types of event are likely to be very strongly felt and confluences.</p> <p>The developed world has a different best-practice paradigm and how they differ from the current methods is important for understanding that a sustainable balance is not achieved from a hierarchy of values. Currently in New Zealand the landscape's ability to store water is minimised by the flood prevention methods. Water is encourage to flow quickly, there are few wetland areas in upper and middle catchments, land is actively drained and the extraction of gravel and raking of riverbeds is reducing the groundwater infiltration capacity and causing the groundwater balance to flow to the rivers. Thus for what is needed infrequently (flood prevention) we are sacrificing what is needed annually (water availability).</p> <p>Rather than focussing on what we can take from the landscape we should learn how to work with landscape processes and to develop water resources intrinsically. To adopt land-use practices which support the landscape ability to hold water; the how, where, why and when. In doing so, we generate better coping capacity against flooding, and more resilience to drought, we rehabilitate our groundwater resources (rather than reticulating irrigation water), and we renaturalise our rivers. These again become places for nature, providing habitat for wild-</p>	<p>I seek the following decision from WRC (give precise details): →</p>	

<p>food, and potentially being commercial resources for timber and other products.</p> <p>If we do not look to protecting our water resources in situ and finding management synergies rather than compromises, we are in danger of developing irrigation reservoirs that become hazardous and progressively unaffordable. We force water users to needing these reservoirs because groundwater is increasingly depleted and we channelise the river between deep stopbanks to avoid the risk of flooding, while further intensifying land use and increasing nutrient loading etc. Comparing the aerial photographic series between the 1940s and today illustrates how little of the previously braided floodplain still is available for the rivers, which resemble more gravel yards than treasured rivers or beings.</p>		
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