

Member of Te Whiatua o Te Whanganui-a-Tara, set up by Greater Wellington to deliver a series of recommendations about implementing the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management

Several years working at MfE on the Freshwater NPS

Whaitua:

- Three-year long process where we met on a regular basis to consider the many water issues in the Wellington region
- Representatives of mana whenua, councils, and the community
- It also had ongoing support from Wellington Water
- Started as a group designed to make recommendations about implementing the freshwater NPS but morphed into one that considered the wider context of water in the region and ultimately focused on restoring te mana o te Wai
- Ultimately we delivered a comprehensive and achievable set of recommendations to restore the health of our water that were thoroughly considered and had the support of all the representatives in the committee, mana whenua, all the participating councils and the community representatives
- These recommendations inform much of the content of this plan change and I urge to carefully consider the ramifications of going against any of those recommendations that were put forward by the whaitua

Cut to the chase, the state of water in the Wellington region is not good enough and te mana o te Wai is not being provided for

- E. coli is below or near national bottom lines nearly everywhere its measured in our urban areas.
- there are worrying trends for many other pollutants such as heavy metals and sediment in many of the catchments across the Wellington region.
- In order to address these challenges, we have to stop our wastewater pipes leaking and we have to roll out water sensitive urban design solutions across the region.
- I believe the direction of this plan change will drive councils and developers towards these solutions
- Add to that, it's clear far too much water is being lost through leaks.
- If we factor in more severe droughts caused by climate change and the forecast increase in population this puts the health of our drinking water sources at too high risk.
- We can't keep taking more water out of the Hutt, Wainuiomatua and Orongorongo Rivers to compensate for our failure to maintain our pipes,
- we must address the problem and invest to improve the state of our pipes. I believe this plan will drive councils towards this investment

You'll no doubt hear from other submitters that the costs are too high. And to an extent they're right.

The costs are astronomically high but the fact is the more we delay, the healthier our water becomes, and the costs just get bigger and bigger.

You're faced with a difficult task and I would like to just leave you with one final thought: please don't let this become a process that is centred around the false idea of the economy v environment

- making these changes is ultimately the best thing for our economy and our environment.
- the alternative is continuing to allow environmental degradation and if we follow that path for too long we will no longer have an economy to protect.

