



The C. Alma Baker Trust  
C/- DRK Chartered Accountants,  
PO Box 34  
BOMBAY 2579  
Phone: 09 236 0437  
Email: calmabakertrust@drk.co.nz

Submission to Healthy Rivers

8 July 2019

Margaret Millard DNZM  
Chair C.Alma Baker Trust (NZ) Ltd (Limestone Downs)

The purpose of the C.Alma Baker Trust is the furtherance of the science of Agriculture. It is a registered Charity and we commission independent research as well as fund a number of scholarships. Over thirty years priorities have always been agriculture with an emphasis on sustainability. Water quality, soil structures, fertiliser use and animal well-being are constantly under review.

A long standing relationship with Massey University has given us the unique opportunity to work with world leading scientists. Limestone Downs is one of the few large private properties in New Zealand dedicated to the practical sustainability of New Zealand agriculture. Our limestone outcrops and cliffs and the beautiful native bush will always be protected.

## **Part 2 Purpose and principles** of the Resource Management Act states

- 5 (2)** In this Act **sustainable management** means the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enable people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while –
- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations and
  - (b) safeguarding the life supporting capacity of the air, water, soil and ecosystems; and
  - (c) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

The key words in the Purpose and Principles are, sustainability, social, economic and cultural well-being. There is no doubt people of all walks of life modify the environment and have done so since humans occupied the country. Total depopulation would be a solution is not an acceptable option.

Removing all animals and transport using fossil fuels may get us nearer zero carbon emissions but since New Zealand is only 1% of the global problem it will not save the world.

Since New Zealander's, and in fact expect a relatively high standard of living compared to many countries such as the millions in Asia and Africa, it is imperative that there is a vibrant economy to which agriculture is currently a major contributor.

Cooperation and collaboration will achieve the best outcomes. There is a risk of alienating some sectors and communities by strong regulatory controls. That object will not meet the objective of social and cultural well-being. The three year trial recently completed at Limestone Downs has resulted in a "new generation beef". This is a new product which will appeal to the catering industry and has a light footprint on the environment.

Limestone Downs is offering to work with the Regional Council and a group of farmers to get accurate data and look for solutions where there are known problems.

Director Tom Mandeno will elaborate on the trial work already undertaken with Kessels Associates.

I am a sheep and beef farmer at Waikaretu and have been a director of the Charles Alma Baker Trust for the past 20 years.

Firstly, an apology from our Board Chair Dame Margaret Millard, who is recouping from an operation.

She has prepared this statement.

Mr Rice will have provided details of the C Alma Baker Trust website for your background information. The Trust is unique. Mr Baker, a New Zealander, purchased Limestone Downs in 1926. Following his death in 1941, his estate was settled in England. Limestone Downs became the primary asset of a charitable Trust owned by British Trustees. The farm is overseen by a New Zealand based Board of directors comprising a mix of Massey University senior professors and others with agribusiness experience. It shares with other large sheep and beef properties in the WRC West Coast Catchments area, (Sunset Station at Port Waikato and Nukuhakari Station north of Awakino), a long coastal boundary. Limestone Downs, as its point of difference, also includes a dairy farm.

Submission:

In summary our submission is proposing an ongoing study of the Kaawa Stream catchment.

Monitoring of water quality and related issues will compliment information being gathered at the nearest site 40 kilometres away on the Waingaro stream.

Detailed studies by Jennifer Price and Gerry Kessels since 2013 have been done in agreement with the local Tangata Whenua - Ngati Tahinga. The desired outcome is to protect and enhance the ecological values of taonga, or treasured species and kai moana shellfish, such as mud snails, eels and whitebait. The information regarding Jennifer Price and Gerry Kessel's Kaawa stream findings can be made available to commissioners. The Kaawa flats are a floodplain as these photos which were taken in 2017 show.

The Trust has an issue with the practicalities of stock exclusion and setbacks from waterways. Flooding is an ongoing issue and a carefully considered fencing policy will be required. The considerable number of streams and waterways (as shown on the map in front of you) to be fenced and retired will be a focus for the cost benefit analysis and the preparation of a tailored farm environment plan. West Coast catchment farmers are unsure of their future land use options. If the costs of meeting the finalised recommendations the WRC requires are deemed excessive, the present trend towards pine trees and carbon farming will result in considerable land usage change.

At present, there are a lot of balls in the air. Once the process of the commissioner hearings and decisions to be made by the WRC is completed, as well any legislation that is required then the cost/benefit analysis can begin. When we know what requirements the West Coast Catchments land

owners must meet, there would then be clarity for estimating the investment that is likely to be required by Limestone Downs to comply.

Limestone Downs has a highly regarded reputation for field trialling innovation. The farm would be a willing partner and would work with the WRC staff and others preparing this cost benefit analysis. On behalf of the C. Alma Baker Trust Board I would like to extend an invitation for commissioners to visit Limestone Downs as part of a West Coast Catchments introduction to a spectacular area off the beaten track.



PAGE 4.









