

PC1 - Submission Presentation

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I was brought up in Wellington city, obtained a B.Ag.Sc from Massey University, worked in Te Kuiti for eight years as a Rural Bank Appraiser, and then with my wife, started share-farming 4,500su at Aria before buying the 130ha property at Piopio in 1991. It was a property that my Mother-in-law was brought up on.

In 2009 we leased 120ha to a neighbouring dairy farmer and shortly after I was elected to the Waitomo District Council. For six years I have been a member of the Waipa Catchment Committee and last week I attended my second 'Making Good Decisions' recertification course.

I wish to speak to my submission that I signed off in the seemingly distant past, of February/March 2017.

I fully support the concept that New Zealanders must halt the degradation of our environment that has occurred over many generations as a consequence of chasing lifestyle aspirations and ignorance.

Restoration of the quality of our waterways is fraught. Scientific progress over the past 50 or so years has allowed us to identify and then measure what we now consider as the primary contaminants of our waterways – nitrogen, phosphorus, E'coli, and sediment. Consequently we have little or no accurate records of what the levels of these contaminants may have been in the past. However I understand from Bill Vant that the Government ran a series of measurements on the Waikato River in 1950 that showed that E'coli levels were 100 times greater than they are today.

The Vision and Strategy states that the Waikato and Waipa Rivers are degraded and require, amongst other things, restoration and protection. The restoration of water quality within the Waikato River so that it is safe for people to swim in and take food from over its entire length, is an objective being given particular focus.

Page 69 of the S32 Report suggests the Water Quality in the 1863 scenario was considered a good fit for the desired water quality to meet the vision and strategy. There is no commentary on the population at that time that would be expecting to swim in or take food from the river, though Michael King had estimated a Waikato population of 3,400 prior to the arrival of British settlers after 1863. The 2015 population of 439,100 with a projected rise by 2063 to 601,259 raises the question about the river's ability to provide safe swimming and food for those numbers on a logistical basis alone, thus suggesting the above objective will be very difficult to measure against.

A quote from Catherine Knight's book NZ Rivers; An environmental history, pg. 263 – 2nd paragraph, "But a country where all rivers are in a pristine, free flowing condition would be a country where no human could exist. Our economy, lifestyle

and social wellbeing are only possible because we exploit rivers, as we do other elements of our environment.”

I've taken the opportunity to note some queries I have following my reading of S42A report 5/4/19 on Officer's Block 2 'Tracked Changes' Recommendations.

Policy 1 (page 30)

- a1. Good Farming Practice – What are 'Good Farming Practices'? How will achievement be judged and by whom?
- b3. How can Land use and discharge consent applicants demonstrate clear and enduring reduction in diffuse discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens when it appears there is currently no practical method to make those assessments at the property level?
- c. Does this requirement include DOC and Forestry Companies with 'wild' animals on their land?

Policy 7 (page 32)

a 'Land suitability' – can only be expressed through management skill of the owner in my opinion.

Schedule A (page 48)

'Properties with an area greater than 4.1ha (excluding urban properties) must be registered with WRC.' Does that mean all properties, other than urban, that is commercial, industrial, rural (farming and forestry), and conservation land must register?

f'....stocking rate of animals grazed on the land'. There is no clear definition of 'stocking rate'; per effective area, or total area.

Schedule C (page 51)

2 'Newfences installed aftermust be located....

This suggests that no new fences can be erected on a property if they are not excluding animals from a bed of a water body.

Explanatory Note to Table 3.11.1 (page 57)

3rd para: 'The achievement ofanalysis of 5 – yearly monitoring data. The variability in water quality.....etc.

With acceptance of variability, how can resource consent condition standards be enforced?

Definition – Stock Unit (page 84)

There is still no value in the table for Bull Calf <1year (weaned)

There is also no definition for 'stocking rate' as used in Schedule A.

I have been concerned at the paucity of water quality data collection sites and the short period over which some of that data has been collected. Take as an example site number 63 for the Mangaokewa Stream at the Lawrence St bridge. It appears sampling only commenced in January 2013, for E.coli at least. On page 122 of the S32 Report, the Waipa River Freshwater Management Unit current state 2010-2014, suggests there is only one year of data to establish the current state, which I would suggest is totally inadequate.

The Waitomo District Council's waste water treatment plant is approximately five kilometres downstream and is required to provide monthly water sampling data for three sites relative to its discharge point. Is this data not used as well to provide the current state numbers. All point source discharges would be providing water quality data as a condition of consent so is this information being used to aid the PC1 process?

I think I have covered enough now.

You have an 'Everest' in front of you, but please don't forget to consider the collateral damage to the rural communities, as you 'knock the bastard off'.