

To: Waikato Regional Council
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Submission on: Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1: Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

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Submission by: Graeme Henderson (GJ Henderson Family Trust and SM Henderson Family Trust)
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Background:

I farm 436ha (owned since 1985) running from the Waipa River through to the skyline, to the West of the Te Kowhai township. Contour ranges from river flats on 2 levels through gently rolling to more rolling grass areas then the steepest land has remained in bush.

We milk 600 dairy cows on 200ha, heifer grazing on 40ha, and pines on 26ha.

Native Bush covers 80ha, Willows and swamp approx 50 ha, man- made pond 8ha.

The remainder is in regenerating bush, fenced off riparian margins and other non- productive areas.

We have installed approx. 20km of fencing as part of the Fonterra waterway exclusion scheme.

We have installed 10,000m3 of effluent storage to mitigate risk in this area.

I also own 50ha dedicated maize and winter ryegrass cropping block in Matangi. (Owned 2 years)

I have one son dairying on his own property(5yrs) in Canterbury after getting an Engineering degree with honours and BComm.

Another son works as a research agronomist in charge of the Pioneer maize seed trialling program for NZ and is in charge of the Pioneer Seeds base near Hamilton airport.

The reason I add the info re my son's activities is that we have taken on significant debt to purchase land for their future which is financially anchored by the home farm at Whatwhata.

I own one of the properties where significant stream- water discolouration occurs (due to clay washing out of the bush clad hills)when significant rainfall events occur. This then gets photographed where the Waipa joins the Waikato River at Ngaruawhia and labelled pollution when really it is naturally occurring erosion.

Submission Point 1:

I am in support of the intent to improve the water quality in the Waikato and Waipa Rivers. The current Plan change as proposed has had significant input by well placed experts and representatives through the CSG process, and I support their recommended Plan as endorsed by Waikato Regional Council subject to the following submissions:

I have read the submissions by my industry representatives being Dairy NZ, Fonterra, Fed Farmers and FAR and am in support of their submissions.

Submission point 2:

There will be significant financial effects on both profitability and asset value to my farm from enacting the provisions of Plan Change 1. We need time to work through the adjustments that will be needed to debt loading, farm systems change, and possibly asset value change. Therefore I am in support of the current timelines included in the Plan.

Submission Point 3:

The formula for capturing N loss data, establishing a benchmark number, and then what needs to happen under the proposed Plan creates a management challenge to my existing farm production levels.

However I think the Plan gives the breathing space for farm businesses such as mine to work through the issues so I am in support of the provisions in the plan relating to establishing existing N loss numbers and the ensuing actions needed over the life of the Plan.

Submission Point4:

As I have already invested significant time and money on fencing off waterways I submit that retaining the proposed rule about not needing to move existing fences erected for this purpose is kept in the Plan.

I do wish to speak in support of my submissions at any relevant hearings.

Graeme Henderson