Submission on Proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

Form 5: Submissions on a Publicly Notified Proposed Policy Statement or Regional Plan under Clause 6 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991

Return your signed submission by 5.00pm Friday 5 October 2012 to:
Freepost 1201 Proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan
Environment Canterbury
P O Box 345
Christchurch 8140

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Trade Competition

Pursuant to Clause 6 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991, a person who could gain an advantage in trade competition through the submission may make a submission only if directly affected by an effect of the proposed policy statement or plan that:

a) adversely affects the environment; and
b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

Please tick the sentence that applies to you:

☑️ I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission; or
☐ I could gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.

If you have ticked this box please select one of the following:

☐ I am directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that adversely affects the environment and does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.
☐ I am not directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that adversely affects the environment and does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

Signature: [Signature]
Date: 2/10/12

(Signature of person making submission or person authorised to sign on behalf of person making the submission)

Please note:
(1) all information contained in a submission under the Resource Management Act 1991, including names and addresses for service, becomes public information.

☑️ I do not wish to be heard in support of my submission; or
☑️ I do wish to be heard in support of my submission; and if so,
☑️ If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing.
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<th>Sub-section/Point</th>
<th>Oppose/support (in part or full)</th>
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(1) The specific provisions of the Proposed Plan that my submission relates to are:  
(2) My submission is that: *(include whether you support or oppose the specific provisions or wish to have them amended and the reasons for your views.)*  
(3) I seek the following decisions from Environment Canterbury: *(Please give precise details for each provision. The more specific you can be the easier it will be for the Council to understand your concerns.)*

Add further pages as required – please initial any additional pages.
Gregory Partnership

Submission to the Proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

WE SUPPORT the FEDERATED FARMERS and HYDROTRADER Submissions IN THEIR ENTIRITY, on the PROPOSED LAND AND WATER REGIONAL PLAN INCLUDING the REASONS and RELIEF SOUGHT

AND as a stake holder in the development of these submissions we request that we be able to speak on all or any part of these submissions if so required during the hearing process. We also request to speak on any of the appendages attached to this document.
The specific provision to the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan that our submission relates to is:

SECTION 13 – ASHBURTON

POLICY 13.4.5 – Enabling applicants to take Deep Groundwater
and 13.4.6 – Re-allocated Water being left in the river

Policy 13.4.5 is an admirable policy but unfortunately for a lot of Hydraulically connected wells on the south side of the Ashburton River Zone, there is very little deep ground water available to allow an exchange from surface water and/or stream depleting groundwater takes to deep water takes. Stream depleting groundwater or surface water out of the ground are NOT direct takes from the river so therefore only small amounts of water will flow back into the river and are unlikely to make a difference in any kind of timely fashion in terms of raising water levels to relieve pressure on the water monitoring trigger points.

We seek the following decision from Environment Canterbury:-

That the non-direct extractions that are hydraulically connected, both shallow groundwater takes and ground fed surface water takes, should be treated separately and differently from direct takes from the Ashburton River. This should happen on a pro-rata basis, based on the rate of each individual's hydraulic connection ie:- if the hydraulic connection to the river from a shallow ground water well or ground fed surface water well is only 5.1 l/s, then river restriction should be based on a pro-rata basis of 5.1 l/s.
A direct river take/extraction from the river has immediate influence on the river flow/volume, whereas a hydraulically connected surface ground water take and shallow wells have a much lesser affect and take longer to influence river flows.
The specific provision to the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan that our submission relates to is:

SECTION 13 – ASHBURTON

POLICY 13.4.7 (b) – Ashburton River/Hakatere Catchment in respect to abstraction of Surface Water and Stream Depleting Groundwater.

All abstractions except the Rangitata Diversion Race intake shall be subject to the State Highway 1 minimum flow and monitoring point as per Table 12. We disagree and oppose the provision of the location of a recorder site being installed upstream in the vicinity of the Rangitata Diversion Race (RDR) intake. There are many Farming Business’s and hydraulic connections that will be negatively impacted by this move. At present RDR is obliged to have cognizance of the water levels as they affect all participants in this water catchment of Ashburton River. Currently the location/monitoring recorder is below the last hydraulically connected farm at the Ashburton Bridge on State Highway 1. This ensures that water is available for all. More importantly when water levels drop to the lowest point all uptake users/farms are responsible for reducing usage. If a recorder site is placed upstream negative impacts further downstream will not be recognized or reacted to in a timely fashion. Another concern is that under the proposed regime the Ashburton District Council is being asked to reduce the volume of their direct water take thereby leaving water in the Ashburton River. This water comes out of several intakes, of which the Brothers Intake is one of concern, as this intake is before the proposed siting of the RDR monitoring point which enables the RDR to continue to take water over and above all other users and substantially reduces the likelihood of any additional water ever reaching the State Highway 1 monitoring point which will trigger the new restriction regime at 6,000 l/s. It unfairly privileges the RDR group at the expense of lower Farming Business’s and by increasing the number of locations of recording sites there is potential for dis-unity in our community. At present we all work together to monitor our water flows. This new monitoring regime splits us all up and has the potential to create groups that work against each other as each tries desperately to maintain the lives of their business’s and the lives of their families and our communities.

What happens if the RDR is still taking water after everyone else has been shut off? Every Farmer below RDR and above the State Highway 1 Monitoring point will be disadvantaged and their reliability will be compromised.

We seek the following decision from Environment Canterbury:-

To leave the RDR monitoring / recording site at the State Highway 1 Bridge, Ashburton.
The specific provision to the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan that our submission relates to is:

SECTION 13 – ASHBURTON

POLICY 13.6.1 – Environmental and Allocation Limits for Ashburton/Hakatere.

The Hypothetical “paper” water that is increasing the trigger point at the State Highway 1 Monitoring point to 6,000 l/s in 2012 and 10,000 l/s in 2022 appears to have merit on paper but historically the water in the North Branch of the Ashburton River actually disappears underground after the water intake of Green Street Irrigation. ECAN needs to prove to the affected Farming Community along the Ashburton River that this water will not follow historic water tracks and disappear underground therefore influencing the minimum flow levels at the State Highway 1 Monitoring point which will affect the possibility of reaching 6,000 l/s. If the water does do this then there will be no extra water at the Ashburton Bridge State Highway 1 monitoring point and those farms affected by this monitoring point will be grossly and adversely affected to the point, we feel, that we have the potential of losing enough productivity to affect our financial income, thereby forcing us into an untenable position.

What contingency plans have been put in place for when this water does not appear at the State Highway 1 monitoring point? No access to water due to unreliable and unreasonable restrictions will severely affect productivity and therefore the sustainability of farming businesses’.

We seek the following decision from Environment Canterbury:-

If Environment Canterbury Experts scientific information is wrong and the proposed levels of water do not occur at the State Highway 1 monitoring point at the Ashburton River Bridge as predicted within the first 12 months, that the current Status Quo be re-instated immediately and another review take place in a timely fashion with the data that has been gained by the exercise and the abandonment of the 2022 targets.
The specific provision to the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan that our submission relates to is:

SECTION 13 – ASHBURTON

TABLE 13 – Hakatere/Ashburton River Restriction Regime

This Table is not demonstrating cut off restrictions for the new regime in parallel terms to the existing cut off restrictions, (where half a cumec above total restrictions there is only a 50% cut off at present). This is concerning because it is a serious disadvantage to hydraulically connected and surface ground water wells that have small takes of the likes of 23 l/s and are not direct takes from the river. The immediate influence of these wells on the river is minimal and very slow therefore not allowing a quick increase in water flows to cut back restrictions and basically kills any cost effective way of us extracting.

We seek the following decision from Environment Canterbury:-

That the proposed river restriction regime be kept in the same relative terms as the current river restriction régime in regards to cutting down to 50% when half a cumec above 100% cut off, ie:- 50% cut off at 6.5 cumecs at State Highway 1 monitoring point and 100% cutoff at 6 cumecs at State Highway 1 monitoring point.
The specific provision to the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan that our submission relates to is:

SECTION 13 – ASHBURTON

Green Street Irrigation?

We are asking for clarification about which stream or river branch the Green Street Irrigation’s abstraction is being taken out of under the new proposal. At this point we were unable to see this information in the proposed plan. We understand at this present time the abstraction may be coming out of the South Branch of the Ashburton River.

If Green Street Irrigation’s take is now being abstracted from the South Branch of the Ashburton River, then we strongly oppose this as it will further lower the flow of water down the South Branch of the Ashburton River to the State Highway 1 monitoring point therefore affecting the trigger point of 6 cusecs.

We seek the following decision from Environment Canterbury:

That the regime stay at Status Quo until such time as it can be proven that there is enough water in the South Branch of the Ashburton River.
The specific provision to the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan that our submission relates to is:

SECTION 32 – SUMMARY

TABLE 2 – Comparison of current and proposed full and partial restrictions

The proposed plan quotes that there should be a "minimal impact on existing activities” but looking at Table 2 in the summary it indicates that in the present regime we would be on 50% restriction for 7.5% of the time over a 120 day period, whereas in the new regime this would increase to 31% of the time over the peak of an irrigation season which would SEVERELY impact the growth of the crops and the potential income. The fact that the new proposal suggests that full restriction will be reduced from 12.2% to 2% is of no advantage for cropping farmers because the restriction is normally happening at the other end of the season when crop growth has finished and harvest has started to take place.

We seek the following decision from Environment Canterbury:-

That the Status Quo remains as it is at present

DATE:  4.10.12

SIGNATURE:  [Signature]