

Tabled at Hearing 17/10/14.

Selwyn/Waihora Zone Plan Submission from John Grigg

Commissioners,

My first area of concern regarding sheep in is drains is well covered in my submission. Again I reiterate that I find it frustrating to have to challenge this again.

Re the Phosphate Sediment risk area:

I was interested to read a recent study of the sediment sources of the Waituna Swamp in Southland. The fact that the sediment came from sheep farms is quite logical. Topography, high rainfall and the predominant use of swedes for winter grazing will allow sediment to reach the waterways leading to the Waituna. That is why I agree with the grazing to bare earth policy near waterways.

It is precisely my argument re the Phosphate in Lake Ellesmere. Canterbury Plains are flat and the rainfall is much less than Southland. Baring earth on the hills and heavy rain leads to floods carrying sediment which I see go past me in a flood and down to the Lake. That is why I have repeatedly asked where the data and research on this is?

My streams very rarely carry any sediment. Only when I have to clean the introduced weed out (I understand it was from someone tipping out their fish tank with the Cape weed in it). The other time is when the Hororata River floods into the lower reaches of the streams.

On another note regarding the fencing of all waterways. Through a life time of experience I know that Native Swamp plants are by their inherent nature invasive. They will grow into the stream and block it. Steep gullies will correct this by a flushing effect. Very different on the plains. If we are to co-exist with these areas we need access to manage them. They will be fine for the first 10 – 20 years but will cause problems after that.

Just in the last couple of months I had a stream block and create quite a dam of water. Being very wet we couldn't get machinery near and had to clear by hand. A heavy Carex (with a lot of weed around it) caused the block. It was very dangerous clearing it. When my drag got stuck, the Carex powered by the water had a lot of momentum and when it started to move and it nearly took me with it.

My Health and Safety Plan would be quite different if all my streams were totally fenced with no access.

My third area is probably the area of greatest concern. The surreptitious inclusion of deep wells being tied to surface flows after 2025 appals me. I find it incredible that you are trying to legislate out of one of the fundamental principles of the RMA. If this goes through I will seriously consider challenging it legally. When we went through a public hearing in 2002 we had to be in the third aquifer so it was proved that the effects were minor.

If I have miss read these regulations then it shows one thing. Farmers need to have Law degrees to be able to keep up with all the rules and regulations. Or employ expensive Lawyers which lots of us can't afford.

My final concern is in regard to River Management Plans.

When the Selwyn District Council proposed Esplanade Strips on the Hororata River I opposed it. I asked why they weren't Esplanade Reserves which would mean that the Council would be responsible for the river management. Being a Council sub Committee they chose the "strip" which means that the Landowner loses all their rights but has all the responsibilities. This is my same argument. Why should I have to pay for someone to write a plan to be overseen by someone who has very little knowledge of this river system? The fiasco on Mitchell's road is a prime example of this.

All the work I do on submitting is UNPAID. All the work I do on maintaining the Hororata River is UNPAID. When we as Farmers are criticised by certain officials I get annoyed. The increase in bureaucracy in the last twenty years has been expediential and I would ask the officials to seriously consider the relevancy of any piece of regulation. It will get harder to encourage the next generation into Agriculture when it is so bound up by regulation with little or no thought to the practicalities of farming.