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**From:** A.G. Talbot <talbotjones45@gmail.com>  
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**To:** Mailroom Mailbox  
**Subject:** LTP Submission  
**Attachments:** ECan LTP 2018-28 (2) (1) (2).doc

Please find attached my submission to LTP 2018-28.

Thanks

A.G. Talbot  
3554409

## **Submission on ECan LTP 2018-28**

A.G. Talbot  
84 Mays Road  
St Albans  
Christchurch 8052  
[Talbotjones45@gmail.com](mailto:Talbotjones45@gmail.com)  
3554409

### **Freshwater Management**

1. **Support** the general focus of this section to provide clearer, easier to access information. I am particularly concerned that accurate data be supplied to substantiate progress. Some of the target reporting in the past has been too vague to make an informed judgement as to progress and raises serious PR problems with ratepayers.
2. **Support** linking freshwater management to biodiversity enhancement.
3. **Support** collaborative approach through zone committees, but concerned that ZCs do not always have balanced community representation, that farming and irrigation interests are over represented at the exclusion of residents and others.
4. **Support** greater focus on implementation of freshwater plans and policies in the next decade.
5. **Oppose** the appointment of three Cultural Land Management Advisors for Selwyn-Waihora zone. One should be sufficient to work with other Land Management Advisors.
6. **Strongly support** the review of historic water consents, particularly in over allocated areas of water extraction. This is urgent! Consent takes must align with minimum river levels in sub-regional plans otherwise the whole process of management is undermined.
7. **Strongly support** enhanced monitoring and data collection in relation to resource use and state of environment reporting. Ratepayers and the community need a clearer idea of what is working and what is not.
8. **Oppose** the move away from a targeted rate for the CWMS. Those who use the 'free' water resource should bear the bulk of the management costs. This cost should not be transferred to general rates as proposed, but be focused on major water users.
9. **Oppose** spend of 10% on CWMS facilitation. This should be reduced.

## **Biodiversity and Biosecurity**

Strongly support extra effort directed to enhancing and protecting indigenous biodiversity. Canterbury is the most heavily modified landscape in New Zealand and much of the Canterbury Plains can be seen as an increasingly 'boring green desert'. Overseas visitors have often commented on the extremely desolate appearance of the Plains in areas like Thompson's Track.

This situation has worsened since the development of extensive irrigation with the removal of thousands of trees and hedgerows, most of them exotic. Industrialisation of the landscape under intensive dairying, has had a negative impact on habitat for wildlife on the plains, on the birds, insects, lizards and other flora and fauna. It is not really clear as to the extent of these deleterious effects, but they are certainly ongoing.

**Support a significant and sustained** push for the restoration of native flora/fauna both on and off-farm. There are thousands of hectares of empty land on wide verges alongside rural roads which could be planted as indigenous biodiversity corridors instead of being mown at ratepayers' expense. There are also significant on-farm areas, such as corners of paddocks or along fence lines, which could be planted with native species to encourage birdlife, and I support any moves in this direction. ECan and district councils need to work much more proactively in this regard; there is much that could be done, but apparently isn't?

Finally **I support** more consideration being given to strategic planting so that critical indigenous biomass can be developed and genuine biodiversity corridors created. At present action appears too 'scattergun' in approach?

**Strongly support** the new programme for braided rivers and wetlands, although expenditure in this area at just 8% seems rather low?

**Support** Banks Peninsula and Port Hills Initiative programme and maintaining the Wilding Pines Control programme

## **Transport and Urban Development**

**Strongly support** ECan's role in maintaining and enhancing public transport in the region, including rail to mitigate climate change. Disappointed that ECan has been so unsupportive with regard to investigating and promoting rail commuter options north of the city.

I do not believe that 97% (p.14) of those who use public transport are satisfied with the system (source and what period?). Some of the buses are not up to standard mechanically, providing a noisy, rough journey because of poor suspension, worn out shocks, and apparently over-inflated tyres (?) on Christchurch's 'Ukrainian' roads. No wonder fewer people have returned to the public transport system.

**I support option two** regarding the future of the public transport system. Fares must be kept down, not raised by 7.5% over three years, if people are going to be encouraged to use buses rather than cars. Thousands of bus users are on low or fixed incomes, any fare increases are a major disincentive and bad marketing. There should also be a student concession, as in many other cities around the world.

A shortfall of \$4m is hardly significant in ECan's total budget. It undermines current patronage implementing further fare increases because of this small deficit.

### **Revenue and Financing Policy**

**Oppose the annual total rates increase of 4.5%.** This is excessive in a low inflation environment (1.6% CPI 2017). This means a 13.5% increase in total rates take in just three years. High rates are unsustainable in an environment where thousands of Christchurch ratepayers are now applying to the City Council for rates relief. ECan is part of this problem, even though it collects separate rates.

These rate hikes mean a continual decline in the standard of living for people on low and fixed incomes. There is a lot of talk on social media and elsewhere regarding excessive rate increases and a potentially damaging electoral backlash developing.

**Support** the proposals for funding pest management.

**Generally support** rating approach for Freshwater Management. However I am concerned there is no detail on the rural/urban split in the \$31.2m funding for this portfolio. Why has this not been detailed? Funding for this activity should be levied on the agricultural and commercial sectors who have the greatest responsibility, and not on residential users of freshwater.

At this stage I do not wish to be heard.

26<sup>th</sup> March 2018