

From: [Lionel Hume](#)
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Subject: PC7 evidence statements
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Dear Tavisha

Proposed Plan Change 7 to the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

Attached are 3 hearing evidence statements on behalf of the Combined Canterbury Provinces of Federated Farmers of New Zealand.

Yours sincerely

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BEFORE THE

Canterbury Regional Council

IN THE MATTER OF

the Environment Canterbury
(Temporary Commissioners
and Improved Water
Management) Act 2010

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

Submission and Further
Submission on Proposed Plan
Change 7 to the Proposed
Canterbury Land and Water
Regional Plan

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF PETER BONIFACIO ON BEHALF OF THE COMBINED
CANTERBURY PROVINCES OF FEDERATED FARMERS OF NEW ZEALAND**

Dated 17 JULY 2020

Introduction

1. My name is Peter Bonifacio. I own and operate a dairy farm at 145 Milford Lagoon Road, Temuka, with my wife Christine.
2. My submission relates to the proposed objectives and rules for the Mātaitai Zone in Plan Change 7 of the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.

The farm and its operation

3. We operate a 380-cow seasonal supply dairy farm. The total dairy platform size is 127ha, which includes a retired wetland area of 15ha. The effective milking area is 111ha. We also operate 3 support blocks, one of 18ha., another of 18.6ha. and a 20ha. block. These support blocks are used to provide supplementary feed, grazing of replacement stock and wintering of dairy cows
4. We started our farming career 37 years ago in the North Island. In 1985 we were judged the Manawatu Sharemilkers of the Year. In 1998 we converted our existing farm to dairying, fencing off all waterways and retiring any marginal areas. We have always done our utmost to operate our farms using best management practice and to minimise our environmental footprint.
5. We participated in Fonterra's *Open Gates* programme, when it was first introduced in December 2017, to encourage urban people to visit farms and learn how they operate. We have also been involved with Mountain View High School in Timaru and our local Opihi College with school visits.
6. We received funding from OTOP water zone committee ,18 months ago, for traps and eradicating willows. We have started a major planting programme as part of our biodiversity plan.


Impact of the Mātaitai zone on winter grazing

7. The Mātaitai zone rules will mainly affect two of our support blocks. The 20ha. block has the Orakiapoa stream on one boundary. The other block of 18.6ha. has the Taumatakahu stream on a small part of its boundary. We winter graze our young stock on the 18.6ha. block, but do not use a forage crop. This block is not irrigated. However, on the 20ha. block, which is not irrigated either, we do grow approximately 10ha. of fodder beet each year.

8. Our dairy farm, which falls inside the Mātaitai zone, should not be affected as we already have a consent in place. Our Farm Environment Plan (FEP) for this farm received an A at its first audit.
9. The support blocks currently do not have consents, but they do have FEPs in place. All the waterways are fenced off to exclude stock and 15-meter buffer zones are in place for those paddocks that are cropped. The proposed rules regarding Mātaitai zones would mean we would at least require a consent to farm the 20ha. block.
10. The requirement to obtain a costly consent would not achieve anything. All the requirements of the Mātaitai zone are already covered by how we currently farm the property. The processing fee to get a consent for our dairy farm was approximately \$8,000 and this does not include the many hours we put towards the application as well.
11. In addition to this there was an audit cost of \$1200, which we will incur every 3 years. To apply this level of cost to our 20ha. block is completely unacceptable and would not materially improve environmental outcomes.
12. The wider, proposed rules for similar sized blocks of land in Plan Change 7 should achieve the same outcomes as that proposed for the Mātaitai zone. Introducing extra rules for this zone will not only complicate the already complex set of rules, but it will also add significant extra cost for no real benefit than what can be achieved within these wider rules. The money should be better spent on enhancing the environment; for example, riparian planting.
13. When Plan Change 7 was notified, we were completely surprised by the extent of the coverage of the proposed Mātaitai zone. No information about this increased coverage was ever discussed during the OTOP zone committee consultations. My understanding was that when the Mātaitai zone was first introduced it was to cover the coastal lagoon and wetland areas only.
14. We believe that the Mātaitai zone should only cover these coastal areas. There was very little consultation or communication when the coastal Mātaitai zone was first promoted. However, I had no major objection to it in principle.

Conclusions

15. I am very concerned about the overall complexity of the rules proposed in Plan Change 7. Farmers are going to incur large costs associated with trying to be compliant, through having to rely on consultants to understand the complexities. Farmers are very busy people and do not have a lot of spare time to put towards all the compliance that is being required of us.
16. Time is of critical importance and the welfare of our stock is paramount. In addition, with a heavy snowfall, power and communication is usually lost. To apply for another consent, given the minimal benefit of the proposed zone, is unjustified.
17. This compliance is taking the enjoyment away from farming and is adding a lot of extra stress which ultimately affects farmers' wellbeing. These mental health issues should be taken into account when considering applying more regulation onto farming. Farmers do want to improve the environment in which they operate and want to ensure that future generations can enjoy it too.
18. I would recommend that the rules concerning the Mātaitai zone be removed completely from Plan Change 7, given the underlying freshwater issues will be appropriately addressed elsewhere in the Plan. Any specific Mātaitai concerns should be addressed by local rūnanga directly discussing with applicable landowners and working with local catchment groups. The desired outcome can be achieved by working together with the community. You will find that landowners would like to achieve the same results as their local rūnanga.



Peter Bonifacio

17 July 2020