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**Subject:** NGFT - PC7 - R Stalker evidence  
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**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[NGFT - PC7 - R Stalker evidence.pdf](#)

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I act for the Waimakariri Next Generation Farmers Trust (submitter 425). In addition to the statements of evidence on behalf of the Trust filed by Ms Ruston earlier today, please find attached an additional statement of evidence on behalf of the Trust.

Yours sincerely

**Mark Christensen**

Director

E hara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini.  
My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective.



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**IN THE MATTER OF**

The Resource Management Act  
1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

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

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF RICHARD STALKER**

**17 JULY 2020**

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### **Introduction**

1. My full name is Richard Westley Stalker. My original submission is numbered 537.
2. I milk 700 cows between Rangiora and Woodend and have 200 ha of runoff located in various locations around Fernside, Tuahiwi and Woodend. My main property is located in the “run off zone”.
3. I am a member of the Next Generation Farmers Trust. I support the changes to PC 7 requested by the Trust. I consider the Trust to be an example of farmers working collaboratively with each other and with the councils and the wider community to achieve good outcomes for both the community and the environment.

### **My existing farm operation**

4. Nutrient management is presently the number one challenge to our farming businesses. We have spent over \$500,000 in the last four years investing in infrastructure that has significantly reduced our nitrogen leaching, including more efficient irrigation and monitoring tools, as well as general education of ourselves and our staff. We actively fence waterways to exceed the minimum legal requirement.

### **Reducing nutrient losses in the future**

5. For my farming operation, achieving a 15% reduction from baseline is a big ask. We need to keep investing just to even achieve good management practice. Due to our heavy soil type, we have a relatively low nitrogen leaching numbers of between 20 and 30. To achieve a 15% reduction from baseline by 2030 will involve us upgrading our irrigation system at a cost of over \$500,000, and a reduction of cow numbers, with resultant decrease in profitability. Due to our heavy soil types and relatively low nitrate leaching, a 15% reduction requires a massive infrastructure investment, but with a low absolute nitrogen reduction.
6. If we leave the further reduction zones the same, there are very few (if any) alternative land uses. Historically, an alternate land use in Waimakariri has

been subdivision to lots of 4ha for rural lifestyle properties. The Waimakariri District Council is proposing to stop the ability to subdivide in many of our rural locations, which removes this option. This leaves some farmers with land that is unprofitable to farm, and not suitable for any other purpose. The emotional and financial impact on individual farmers will be severe.

### **The proposed community partnership with Environment Canterbury**

7. I support a collaborative approach as proposed by NGF to reduce nitrates across the district, rather than imposing unrealistic and unattainable regulation on a subset of our farmers. As a community, we need to look after each other, and share the burden of unforeseen implications of our farming operations. I am concerned about the impact on the mental and financial health of our farmers if the burden is not shared evenly. Farming is who we are. It is what many generations of our farmers have poured their heart and soul into. I believe we need to find a way to ensure this passion and commitment is channelled into producing a positive outcome. I believe the collaborative approach suggested by the NGF Trust is the best way to achieve this positive outcome.

### **Conclusion**

8. As farmers, we know and value the social, environmental, and economic impacts of our actions. The founding principles of rural cooperatives are based on these “three legs of the stool”. Farmers are part of the community, and we are all in this together. We need to create “win, win” situations, and not situations where the most vulnerable are penalised for something that is not their sole responsibility.

Richard Stalker

17 July 2020