

**WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN
CHANGE 1 - WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS**

Submission Form

Submission on a publically notified proposed Regional Plan prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991.

On: The Waikato Regional Councils proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

To: Waikato Regional Council
401 Grey Street
Hamilton East
Private bag 3038
Waikato Mail Center
HAMILTON 3240

Full Name(s): Rick Burke (Chairman of Farmers 4 Positive Change.)

Submitting on behalf of: Farmers 4 Positive Change (F4PC)

Phone (cell): 021 828587

Postal Address: 181 Lund Road, Rd2, Katikati.

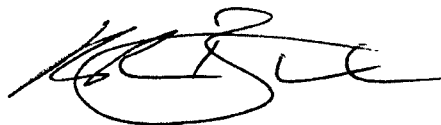
Postcode: 3178

Email: pukekaurifarms@netsmart.net.nz

SUBMISSION HEARING: F4PC wish to be heard in support of this submission.

If others make similar submissions, I would consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing.

Signing on behalf of F4PC:



Date:

8/3/2017

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FARMERS 4 POSITIVE CHANGE.

Farmers 4 Positive Change (F4PC) has the mandate to represent in excess of 1,000 farmers from the sheep and beef, deer and dairy sectors.

OUR VISION IS:

"Vibrant provincial communities underpinned by resilient pastoral farm businesses utilising the natural resources in a sustainable manner"

The F4PC committee are farmers who are environmental award winners and profitable environmental champions within their communities.

F4PC has been formed because farmers want to develop positive solutions that work for their farms and their communities. They care about their future and they care about their farms. They care about impact and making investments that work. Farmers are deeply concerned that the plan as it is, does not support farmers to change or to respond to our water quality challenges but divides our communities.

Within this submission we have aimed to comment constructively, suggesting amendments to PC1 that we believe to be flawed, inequitable or simply misguided, and have provided proven practical alternative solutions which based on our experience, will more effectively achieve the vision and strategy of Wai Ora Waipa Waikato.

Some of F4PC concerns in regards to PC1

- The Waikato Regional Council's response to some of our concerns, it states that the drystock sector have had a fair chance to voice their concerns during the development of PC1. This did not happen. It is important to outline exactly what the nature of that opportunity was.
- The Drystock sector was represented by one person on the CSG, a group of 24, despite being the largest sector by land area in the catchment.
- The Deer industry did not have a seat or a voice at the table other than through the drystock industry.
- The Dairy industry was represented by two seats, then by the Rural Advocacy and Rural Professional's seats whose members primary interests are primarily with the dairy industry.
- The proposed management regime for nitrogen through the establishment of a Nitrogen Reference Point was developed through a subgroup which was dominated by the Dairy sector.
- The Drystock Sector representative, with full support from his sector consultation and from B+LNZ, formally objected to the direction the CSG had taken to manage Nitrogen by applying the 'Grandparenting' principle which we believe is an expedient crude mechanism which is morally wrong and unsustainable and simply rewards the polluter by protecting the high leachers of Nitrogen. We also objected to the impracticality and unrealistic timeframes being set for stock exclusion.
- The dry stock sector has not and does not promote anything that would see the demise of the Dairy Industry, many of F4PC representatives have invested personally more in the Dairy industry than in drystock. F4PC stress the importance of recognising current investment, but we need to transition to something equitable, fair and sustainable if

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we are serious about achieving the Vision and Strategy in a way that works for communities.

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Farmers for Positive Change Members:

Rick Burke 021828587, Rob Macnab 027 320 3185, Robyn Williamson 07 8710809 ,
Graeme Gleeson 027 7273720, James Bailey 0274412014, Leveson Gower 027 2445737,
Heather Gilbert 021 979459, Bill Garland 027 444 6175, Oliver Saxton 0274 981 214, David
Gow 07 8285746, David Short 07 8267763, Steven Stark 078246162, Steve
Borland 078710117, Leith Chick 07 8725551, Neil Aicken 0272054754.

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The specific provisions of the proposal that this submission relates to and the decisions it seeks from Council are as detailed in the following table. The outcomes sought and the wording used is as a suggestion only, where a suggestion is proposed it is with the intention of 'or words to that effect'. The outcomes sought may require consequential changes to the plan, including Objectives, Policies, or other rules, or restructuring of the Plan, or parts thereof, to give effect to the relief sought.

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Specifically what objective, policy, rule, map, glossary, or issue you are referring to	My submission is that: Support or oppose and reasons	Decision I would like WRC to make is:
<p>Vision & Strategy: Take Mahinga-kai and swim in the Waikato/Waipā Rivers</p> <p><u>Objective 1</u> <u>Table 3.11-1</u></p>	<p><u>Oppose in part</u> We support the Vision & Strategy of the Healthy Rivers Wai-Ora Plan however:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The severe nature of PC1 Plan Rules: 3.11.5.2 and 3.11.5.4. will constrain objectives 2 and 4 making them unattainable to many 	<p>I would like the WRC to work with farmers to form a long-term Plan that achieves the Vision & Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-visit the interpretation, including numerical interpretation through Table 3.11-1, of the V & S, and amend to ensure that the numerical parameters are achievable while giving effect to the V&S • Amend PC1 so that the plan has realistic achievable goals • Amend PC1 so that the plan gives farmers confidence to invest and encourages young people into the sector
<p>3.11.2.2 Objective 2</p> <p>Objective 2: Social, economic and cultural well-being is maintained long-term</p>	<p><u>Oppose in part.</u> We support Objective 2 in principle however:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of Rule: 3.11.5.2 & 3.11.5.4 will see large tracts of farm land lost to trees/bush, leading to depopulation within our communities, and the direct contradiction of Objective 3.11.2.2 	<p>Amend Objective 2 so that it is made explicit that the objective is to enable people and communities to continue to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and to provide for future generations.</p> <p>The first section of Objective 2 "<i>Waikato and Waipa communities and their economy</i></p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst we value re-forestation opportunities, there is a real finality in the monocultural planting of large areas. Future generations could be economically compromised as innovative hill-country crops of the future, become available. 	<p><i>benefit from the restoration and protection of water quality in the Waikato River catchment” as currently proposed fits more appropriately within Objective 1. Delete this section from Objective 2 and instead include within Objective 1.</i></p> <p>Amend PC1 so that it adopts a sub catchment approach to managing land use and water quality tailored to the specific issues faced by the sub-catchment, and a 30 year time frame for achievement of its objectives. The first period to a 30-year initial Plan should provide communities and individuals with certainty in relation to what will be required of them and to enable sound business, succession, and investment decision to be made, including investment into environmental mitigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs to have targets and goals that are achievable with current technologies and 15-year review to ensure plan is on-track and assess the health of local communities
<p>3.11.2.4 Objective 4</p> <p>Objective 4 People and community resilience</p>	<p>Oppose</p> <p>We support objective 4 in relation to providing for People and community resilience, however as currently proposed the objective fails to provide for this outcome because it recognises that as</p>	<p>Include a new Objective which provides for People and Community resilience, adaptive management, and sub catchment approaches lead by communities.</p>

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	<p>currently proposed PC1 will not achieve its objectives and further plan changes including increasing stringency of land use controls will be required (Objective 4b). The outcome is a plan which fails to provide communities and individual's certainty about what will be required of them in the future, and which fails to ensure people and community resilience.</p> <p>The plan fails to provide a pathway for individual and communities to work together to achieve the V&S</p> <p>Enforcement of 3.11.5.4 and 3.11.5.2 will reduce farm profits, land values and community viability; making objective 4 " People and community resilience" unachievable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheep and beef production will be frozen, but farm costs will increase. With reduced profitability, effective environmental mitigation i.e protection fencing will be unaffordable. • With land values decreasing farmer ability to borrow will reduce • Our community will suffer through depopulation and reduced services 	<p>Delete reference to the staged approach and future plan changes including increasing stringency in land use controls and requirements.</p>
<p>Policy 4: <i>Enabling activities with lower discharges to continue or to be established while signalling further change may be required in future</i></p>	<p>Support with amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the intent of policy 4 to enable activities with lower discharges to continue or to be established; 	<p>Amend Policy 4 so that it enables small scale land uses, low intensity, and low risk land uses including forestry and farming to continue, to be flexible, and to be established.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However as currently proposed and reflected in the rules this aspect of policy 4 is not achieved; • The nature of Policy 4 creates future uncertainty to invest in our farming businesses • To comply with rule 3.11.5.4 on our farm the costs would be prohibitive and counter-productive if we were eventually required, after 10 years, to retire this land. • Further uncertainty if say pine trees are planted on our farm, and then after 20 years harvesting is non-compliant 	<p>Delete reference to further reductions in contaminate discharges.</p> <p>Ensure that existing biodiversity values of these land uses are recognised and that further establishment and protection of biodiversity is enabled and incentivised. This also provides management benefits Green House Gas Emissions in relation to climate change.</p>
<p><u>PERMITTED ACTIVITY RULES</u></p> <p>Rules 3.11.5.1 and 3.11.5.2</p>	<p><i>Oppose</i></p> <p><i>As proposed rules 3.11.5.1 and 3.11.5.2 fail to provide for low intensity and low risk land uses and fail to provide flexibility for these land uses.</i></p> <p><i>We seek that the rules permitting low intensity land uses and other land uses be amended so that they are consistent with policy 4, and actually provide for small, and low intensity, and low risk farming activities to be enabled. This includes ability to continue if existing, be established, and enabled to be flexible.</i></p>	<p><i>Amend rules 3.11.5.1, and 3.11.5.2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Blend into one rule.</i> - <i>Make amendments to allow as Permitted Activity land uses with stocking rates at or below 18 stock units and enable stocking rate to increase from current up to this standard, subject to land suitability.</i> - <i>Relate to soil and geology ie LUC I, II, III 20 stock units; LUC IV, V 18 stock units; LUC VI, VII 10 stock units, or and Delete 6 stock unit standard.</i> - <i>Delete 4.1 hectares and provide for up to 20 hectares.</i>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring into line with national stock exclusion requirements which relate to exclusion of cattle, deer, and pigs, from permanently flowing waterbodies, through fencing (temporary and permanent or natural barrier, or other technologies) on flat land and rolling land, but not hill country. - Enable flexibility in land use, discharges, and stocking rates up to these standards. - Remove any standards or clauses which hold land uses to historic discharge levels or stocking rates. - Delete standard 4c Rule 3.11.5.2 - Make change to riparian setback distances so they only apply to flat and rolling land and not hill country (ie slope ≥ 15 degrees)
<p><u>NITROGEN REFERENCE POINT.</u></p> <p>Rule: 3.11.5.2 <i>Nitrogen leaching grand-parented to the highest annual loss rate calculated for 2014/15 or 2015/16 and must be no greater than 15kg/N/ha/yr</i></p> <p>Rule 3.11.5.4, Schedule B, Schedule 1 <i>Application of the Nitrogen Reference Point (NRP) - Nitrogen leaching grand-parented to the</i></p>	<p>Oppose</p> <p>We oppose a cap on Nitrogen and the reasons are:</p> <p>N caps will suppress the low Nitrogen leaching farmer from developing his farm further in terms of optimising sustainable production as well as protecting sensitive environmental features on farm.</p>	<p>We would like to see the Nitrogen Reference cap removed. And an alternative as follows: and a sub-Catchment Planned approach be introduced using the FEP (Farm Environment Plans) as a monitoring tool.</p> <p>The sub -catchment approach is being promoted by Central Govt, it gives communities and farming sectors an understanding of contaminants in their local tributaries and streams which enables them to focus on</p>

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<p><i>highest annual loss rate calculated for 2014/15 or 2015/16</i></p> <p><i>In all other areas in PC1 which refer to this we oppose</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is unfair and may reduce land values. • Drystock farmers need flexibility within their farming systems to adjust sheep to cattle ratios as market forces and or climate extremes dictate. • Generally drystock farmers contribute more to sediment run-off and this has been and should continue to be our main focus for mitigation. The ability to retire some steep land from pasture and off-set this with some intensification of flat land. • Does not take into account or reward investment in biodiversity including mitigation of green-house gases. • Will allow the high leacher of nitrogen to continue in an unsustainable manner at the expense of the low leacher of nitrogen. • The N caps incentivise perverse behavior and gaming of the system by high leachers of Nitrogen exploiting the variabilities of Overseer. 	<p>reducing contaminants on their individual farms by adopting sustainable farm practices through their FEP's Benefits of this as listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farm has individual base discharge allowance set • Excessive nutrient discharge must be reduced in line with soils capability and land use suitability. • Setting catchment goals and individual farm goals to enhance aquatic ecosystems • Mitigation options with achievable timeframes to match land intensity
<p><u>STOCK EXCLUSION</u></p> <p>Rule: 3.11.5.2, 3.11.5.4, Schedule 1, Schedule C Stock excluded from all permanently flowing water-bodies, wetlands and lakes by date specified in Schedule C and the FEP</p>	<p>Oppose</p> <p>We agree that cattle/deer/pigs should be excluded from water bodies up to 15 degrees, and where farming is intensive -16-18 stock units/ha +</p>	<p><i>Bring PC1 Stock Exclusion Policy into line with the latest Government initiated National Stock Exclusion requirements, which relate to exclusion of cattle, deer, and pigs, from permanently flowing waterbodies, through fencing (temporary and</i></p>

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<p><u>FARM ENVIRONMENT PLAN</u></p> <p><u>Rules 3.11.5.4 - 3.11.5.7 schedule 1</u></p>	<p>We don't agree to physically fence stock from flowing water-bodies over 15 degrees and the reasons are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is prohibitive for minimal benefit – water reticulation + fencing for many farms with extensive operations with slope over 15 degrees \$100,000 + .. a farm carrying 8 stock units/per hectare • Large machinery required to clear a line for mechanical post driver – creates more erosion and sediment issues which in fact we are trying to mitigate against. • On-going cost of maintenance – fence repairs/weed control in difficult terrain is uneconomic. • We acknowledge marginal steep unproductive landscapes should be returned to their natural state. <p><u>Support in part</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The FEP is an essential tool for farmers to use in gaining how to manage contaminants leaving their farms. -The FEP must be introduced to farmers by registered approved farm consultants or industry good bodies ie Beef+lamb. - Farmers need to own their plans, NOT the WRC. 	<p><i>permanent or natural barrier, or other technologies) on flat land and rolling land, but not hill country.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable flexibility in land use, discharges, and stocking rates up to these standards. - Remove any standards or clauses which hold land uses to historic discharge levels or stocking rates. <p>By farmers using the FEP as a tool to understand land use suitability they can manage contaminant loss off their farms and also by working with their communities within their sub catchments begin to understand what contaminants they need to focus on in their tributaries. An example of this is by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of farming older cattle on slopes in winter or when wet • Farm cattle extensively on slopes
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	<p>- The roll out of FEP's across the Waipa Waikato will fail to get uptake whilst Grandparenting is used to drive regulation within PC1, because farmers will be locked down under an 'N' cap with reduced profitability giving no incentive to carry out further farm development ie farm systems or environmental protection work.</p> <p>- To incentivise farmers to carry environmental protection the WRC need to prioritise enviromental protection across the sub catchments and provide generous subsidies ranked against priority as the beneficiaries of environmental protection are the wider community including the urban dwellers and overseas tourists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence off swamps/plant-out this to provide silt traps to remove sediment • Construction of sediment traps up near the headwaters to help slow flow and trap sediment • Plant shade trees away from Waterway to discourage stock camps/nutrient build-up • Use of temporary electric fencing where/when it is necessary • Planting poplar poles on erosion prone slopes • Suitable Units maybe identified for Pine tree planting, but this decision should be well planned and left to farmer discretion. • Fence off waterways on more intensively farmed areas of the farm and provide reticulated water for stock.
<p>Plan Change 1</p> <p>Section 32 analysis</p>	<p>Oppose</p> <p>Plan Change 1 as proposed fails to achieve the purpose of the RMA and fails to achieve the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.</p> <p>The WRC has not given effect to the requirement to undertake a s32 analysis and show that this plan is the most effective and efficient means of achieving its objectives and the purpose of the RMA</p>	<p>Delete the plan in its entirety</p> <p>I would like the WRC to produce a cost/benefit analysis of the long term (at least 50 years) economic and social effects of the PC1 Plan on drystock farms and communities. This should be peer reviewed.</p>

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	<p>Alternative provisions which I have recommended (Sub-catchment approach) have not been assessed</p> <p>The WRC has withdrawn a large section of PC1, meaning that they cannot assess the provisions of this catchment in relation to achieving integrated catchment management and the objectives of this plan.</p> <p>The costs to land owners and impacts on communities have not been adequately assessed</p>	
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