Submission Form

Form 5: Submissions on a Publicly Notified Proposed Policy Statement or Regional Plan under Clause 6 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991

Complete the following

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I am not a trade competitor for the purposes of the submission but the variation has a direct impact on my ability to farm. If changes sought in the plan are adopted they may impact on others but I am not in direct trade competition with them.

I do wish to be heard in support of this submission.

[Signature]

[Mark Heslop]
Rule 70: Stock Exclusion

We oppose this rule.

We agree with sheep being excluded from this rule; however we disagree that cattle need to be kept out of all water ways on our farm.

Currently our water ways have a natural filtering system which needs to be extensively grazed to be kept in best health i.e. red tussock needs to be grazed to stay healthy also those buffers provide shelter and shade.

We are deeply concerned about the financial cost – fencing, maintenance (this would include spraying of water ways, cleaning by ditch digger yearly) spraying would not be good for the environment.

Loss of income due to destocking because of increases in ineffective land use.

Putting Troughs on this class of land is economically prohibitive and causes a whole new range of issues i.e. severe pugging to and from water troughs
We would like Environment Southland to

- Consider appointing a case manager that would discuss/negotiate a plan with the owners of each class of land e.g
  Hill country Dairy grazing,
  Hill country Traditional farming,
  Hill country Deer farming.
  This person would have to have some experience and understanding of hill country farming practices.

- Also for Environment Southland to undertake the total costs of any new establishments to our farm that are requested from the ‘Water and Land’ plan.
Rule 23: Intensive Winter Grazing

We oppose this rule.

Our Farming practice has not changed i.e. class of land, quantity of crop and classes of stock, eg no dairy grazing.

We have natural buffers around water ways, gullies etc.

It would be very impractical to assess and fence off or not cultivate suggested buffer zones.

The monetary cost to our farming operation would be significant and would vary according to particular paddocks. We estimate between $15- $30 thousand per year in lost production.

In our experience we recognise the grazing of steep land is mostly affected and limited by climate conditions such as snow and heavy rain so that we can maintain and preserve the integrity of our land.

Our suggestion is to have a personalised plan for our property that reflects the environmental lay of the land but also allows best animal husbandry.
Rule 25: Cultivation on Slopes

We oppose this rule.

Practical implications

1) Loss of crop/ production
2) Health and safety leaving plough finishes which may cause an accident /cast stock.

This would add more cost and environmental risk because we would need to cultivate more area to get required crops to provide for our stock.

We would like to see no restrictions, however allow, and trust farmers to have good practice when grazing (i.e. graze steep country when dry as per our farming practice?)

We are yet to see any evidence that our farming practices are having a detrimental effect on our environment. We love farming and do our best to look after the environment and our stock.

It would seem grossly unfair and costly to apply these rules to those who have not caused the issue.
This sort of regulatory approach takes away the joy and pleasure of farming this beautiful parcel of land.

We have practical common sense, wise decision making which takes place day to day.

The implementation of these rules across the board will impact massively on family circumstances.
Rule 20: Farming Environment Plan

We oppose this rule.

Our reasons being as follows;

- The paperwork would be too onerous, and we question whether this helps meet the objective. For our property supplying the relevant information would be a nightmare.

We would like Environment Southland to consider taking water samples where water enters the property and where it exits the property to assess how well each property is looking after the environment.

Our question,

Is forcing farmers who have not changed or intensified their farming operation, to have an environment plan when they have not been the major reason that has caused the problem that you now have to deal with, a fair and reasonable solution?