

# Water And Land Plan Hearing

Environment Southland

Presented by Michael Beattie

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# 1. Introduction

- My name is Michael Beattie
- I am a fourth generation farmer
- Being brought up on a 140 Ha sheep farm on Tiwai road
- I was educated at Tisbury School and then Cargill High School
- Upon leaving school I was given an electrical apprenticeship and become a registered electrician
- In 1986 Lynley & I; leased my parents farm which was then purchased in 1988, we worked 3 jobs as well as the farm, to make things work financially.
- In 1992 seeing an opportunity to buy a bigger farm. We purchased 1795ha being Braxton Hill Station at Mossburn. We sold 235ha into Forestry to be the current size of 1560ha.
- Our 2 sons were educated at Mossburn School and then Northern Southland College, Anthony become a qualified brick layer and Brendan is a registered plumber & drain layer.
- Lynley and I have worked the farm for quite a few years by ourselves, but time and age started to take its toll, 2 years ago Anthony came home to help and in time Brendan will too; as both boys have always wanted to go farming.
- Having struggled financially for many years it is only been in the last few that we been able to do more development work.
- Over the years we have planted several blocks of trees & shelter belts, and fenced off waterways.
- The farm has gone from a 4300 SU store property with 60% lambing in 1993 to a 7500 SU today with 135% lambing finishing all stock.

This is our property



## 2. Comments on plan

### A. Intensive Winter Grazing

1. The 50 Ha area of winter grazing on crop is too small. It doesn't recognise the total size of a farm (e.g.) Farmer A who has a 50 Ha farm can intensive winter graze 100% of his farm whereas Farmer B who has a 2000 Ha farm can only do 2.5% of his farm before a resource consent is needed.
2. It will not matter what size of area is intensive winter grazed; if good grazing management practices are not used.
3. Our own case 70 – 80 Ha of turnips are grown each year and only grazed by our own ewes & ewe lambs.
4. Grasses only last 10-12 years before needing replaced.
5. I believe 15-20 % of a farm should be allowed to be intensive winter grazed provided good grazing management practices are followed before any resource consent is required.

## 2.B. Stock exclusion

1. Beef cattle don't stand in water; when grazing in a low stocking rate and extensive areas.
2. Our own case we would need to fence out 14 km of waterways depending on the definition of a waterway.
3. There needs to be a recognition of stocking rates as low stocking rates generally don't cause problems to start with.
4. It may not be practical or economical to fence all waterways.
5. Bulldozing fence lines could do more harm than the issue needing fixed.



2.B.5







120 cows with their calves have been grazing this 20 ha block briefly with no visible damage to the waterway and the bank.



There have been 80 cows  
in this block for 6 weeks  
and there is no visible  
evidence of water course  
damage or damage to the  
vegetation





## 2.C Cultivation on Sloping Ground

Cultivating sloping ground 20 degrees or more should be allowed in the plan, provided buffer zones can be meet. The buffer zone is clear and would not be cultivated





- Buffer zones examples





Another example of a natural buffer zone for both drainage and cultivation



## 2.D. Farm Environment Management Plans

1. I support the idea of these plans; but they need to be simple & easy to complete and update so farmers can do them.
2. Plans should be based on good management practices.
3. A down-loadable template should be made available for farmers to use; that has all the information that is required.
4. I believe a overseer nutrient budget should not be required for sheep & beef farmers who are self contained and graze their own stock on their land. This will be an extra burden for no benefit.
5. Time must be allowed for plans to be completed and implemented as our core role is to look after our livestock.
6. Environmental Farm Management Plans must remove the need for resource consents and the need for consultants to complete.

### **3. Closing Comments**

- 1. This water & land plan needs to have rules that are practicable and workable without the need to obtain a resource consent to farm.**
- 2. Most farmers are environmental minded and caring people because de-grading the environment affects them directly.**
- 3. Farmers want to leave their farms in a better state both environmentally and economically for their future and for the future generations.**
- 4. Braxton Hill station is not just my workplace, home it is my life.**
- 5. I support the Appendix N principal, but this needs to be executed easily without adding significant costs to operations who are improving water quality.**