

SUBMISSION to Environment Southland Land and Water Plan

1/8/2016

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Some Points:

1. I think all ground already worked above the 20 degree slope should be allowed to continue to be worked. Most of our farm has slopes above 20 degrees and this land will then just revert to Gorse and Broom as we are in a Gorse and Broom area and make the property unworkable.
2. Our Soils here are very stable, not Ash Soils like the North Island and therefore not at all prone to slipping.
3. To lump all farms together is unfair and ludicrous. In 50 years of farming working ground on very steep country I have only had one case of a paddock scouring. This followed a week of steady rain and then a 24 hour downpour. A weather Event. Even then there was no topsoil runoff into waterways as the small creek at the foot of the hill had been piped. We value our topsoil and guard it jealously.
4. Best practice should top arbitrary rules. Not working surface floodways. Piping risky small streams under slopes and using crop buffer zones are standard soil retention measures on this property mitigating all runoff into waterways.
5. A standard property cropping Limit will also be counterproductive. This will drive farmers to plant high tonnage crops on flat fertile land and go for maximum production with the use of high nitrogen rates and high stocking rates whereas a more extensive model with say

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swedes on hill country would be better in many cases environmentally.

6. If all these measures are put into place it will impact severely on the local economy. Farmers will have to cut stocking rates and incomes will fall and they will struggle to survive. Not only Dairy Farmers are struggling at the moment Sheep and Beef Farmers are too.
7. While the notion of all rivers being swimmable is laudable no one in their right mind would be swimming in Southland rivers in winter
8. Checking nitrate levels in and out of individual farms should be the priority so good operators can get on with the job they are good at and not so good ones can be helped to improve, not developing a fining mentality.