

From: [Laurie](#)
To: [Policy and Planning Team](#)
Subject: Submission Notes 713 WALP.
Date: Thursday, 21 September 2017 6:26:26 p.m.

NOTES TO SUBMISSION 713 WATER AND
LAND PLAN.

Submitter Laurie Selbie on behalf of Selbie Farm Partnership,

It is a 3 way partnership with my brother David and son Rob (manager)

We are sheep and cattle farming at Five Rivers on 4170 ha of flat to steep hill country. Ranging from 200m a s l at Oreti/Irthing rivers to 1000m alpine snow tussock on Lowther Peak.

Our farm straddles the watershed of Oreti and Maitara catchments.

I have been farming this property for over 40 years and have a perspective of changes that have occurred over this time. I attended Lincoln University in the 1970s and attained a degree in Ag. Science. I also have a daughter who is a senior scientist at Ag Research, Ruakura.

She majored in soil science and in particular nitrate leaching of soils under pasture. She has been involved with Overseer and similar nutrient management type projects.

We have some healthy discussions on the interaction of science and farming on the environment!!!

Addressing our submission.

We agree with sheep having continued access to hill country creeks and streams (Rule 70) but strongly disagree with the exclusion of beef cattle

Cattle have a very important role in hill country pasture management. By eating seedhead and stalk material, they keep quality in the pasture and complement sheep to give an essential boost to profitability on this land type. This cattle "topping" is nothing new and has been

successfully managed in a long term sustainable way. ie. by good management practices of low to moderate stocking over winter and spring. Hill grazing by cows over this period is very important to relieve pressure on arable pastures from tramping and soil structural damage. Excluding cattle from waterways on this type of country would reduce profitability and in some cases be unviable to farm. The best way, I believe, is to adopt commonsense, best practice farming by not overgrazing by not concentrating cattle in large numbers for extended periods and aiming to retain some native tussock cover. (We agree with no cultivation over 700m a s l.)

Accompanying photos show how impossible and ridiculous it would be to fence off hundreds of waterways on our property.

We would be happy to show how we have achieved profitability, while maintaining native cover and clean streams and watercourses over a long number of years

My additional issue which I hope to raise, is a new improved way of helping farmers adjust to the requirements of long term sustainability.

What has changed in recent years?

Farming has in general terms :-

- 1) Intensified. (esp. dairying, but also cropping and stock wintering)
- 2) Drifted away from long term best practice principles. eg. a) much less rotation of crops.
b) nitrogen from a bag, rather than from clover fixation.
c) multiple crops per season
d) dairy on flats causing inflexibility and further pressure on hill country to perform profitably.
- 3) Yielded to the market and commercial interests, rather than seek independent advice based on peer reviewed science.
ie. the company supplying the service or product (via their rep.) decides treatments are needed.

What needs to be done to return to sustainable farming and clean waterways??

- 1) Value science ahead of the market.
- 2) Reintroduce Government sponsored independent farm advisory service to deliver this to individual farmers and farm discussion groups
- 3) Advisors (preferably Ag. Science graduates) can then also convene discussion groups based on shared catchments and/or farming type.
- 4) Exchange of ideas and experiences in both directions and between farmers. (with market and company reps as servants to the industry, not advisors)

"I believe this will achieve a more democratic outcome and encourage farmersto view the big picture of sustainability and community good while still remaining profitable"

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