

Proposed Natural Resources Plan:

Submitter:

Christine Stanley

Submitter Number:

S87

Greater Wellington Regional Council
regionalplan@gw.govt.nz
Submission on the Proposed Natural Resources Plan

From:
Christine Marjorie Stanley
325 Grays Road
Pauatahanui
RD1
Porirua 5381

tel: 04 2331148

Trade Competition: I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this competition through this competition.

The success of the Plan in the Porirua Catchment area is very much dependant on the success and rigour of the Whaitua Committee process. Hence most of my comments are made with the local Whaitua Committee in mind.

Submission:

General: Much of the Proposed Plan quite reasonably relates to large farming areas. A search of the document for the words 'lifestyle', 'small block', 'farmlet' brings no results. Porirua City consists of 80% rural land with 2 % of the population and of that there are only 6-7 large farms over 200 ha, the rest being 5ha or less.

So as the Plan stands, the relationship with these small-block land owners is going to be through the Whaitua process.

At the time of writing I am still unable to open the detailed maps relating to this Proposed Plan. I did get a USB stick from the Council but it does not have maps on it, and it refers one on to the GW regional plan review site and the GW mapping site. Perhaps it is because I live rurally and do not have ultra fast broadband that I cannot open them but it makes things a bit difficult to comment on and is a flaw in the submission process.

P.39 RP.023 I find the use of words like significant values, outstanding values to be rather subjective.

What does Objective RP.023 really mean when it says 'the significant values of outstanding water bodies are protected'? This is quite subjective. I live on the northern shore of Pauatahanui inlet, on part of a farm that was in the 1850's cleared of native forest and features fairly bare hills, which have become outstanding because the view from Whitby looks across at the wonderful shadows cast on the bare 'Don Binnie' landscape. From an ecological and natural resource point of view it would be better if the hills were covered in trees, but this 'bare' view has become

enshrined in the local city landscape management plan. Objective RP.023 is meaningless from a natural resource point of view.

Presumably in this objective 'restored' means to the point where kai moana can be collected free of pollution and suitable for eating. If so, this standard of restoration should be repeated.

P.55 Likewise Policy P23 The significant values of Te Awarua o Porirua Harbour, Wellington Harbour and Lake Wairarapa are protected and restored - restored to what?

P.38 Objective O10

Recreation and public access should be maintained only where the effects of such use are well regulated within the local bylaws. The Pauatahanui Inlet is the only large estuarine wetland left in the lower half of New Zealand's North Island. It is at risk, mainly from human activities in both the Inlet and its catchment. It is recognized in this Plan as a regionally important stopover for several migrant shorebird species.

Within the inlet the Pauatahanui Wildlife Reserve adjoins the Horokiwi Wildlife Reserve which adjoins the Motukaraka Reserve which in turn links into the Kakaho Reserve. All of these reserves are soon to be linked by a pathway which has received critical acclaim for its recreation values and yet at the same time the ornithological society have warned that many of the birds visiting the inlet are decreasing in number and many are now threatened. This Proposed Plan also lists in Schedule F2c (p 388) the eleven threatened or at risk indigenous species that are known to be regular visitors to this area. The Ornithological Society put the reasons down to a change in the local environment particularly with a loss of roosting space and the effect of dogs chasing birds, which are trying to feed. In the middle of this precious space, Motukaraka Point is an off leash dog exercise area. Years of submissions to the local Council on this simple point have failed to make any impact. Perhaps this Plan will have more effect.

P 64, P96 Domestic and Outdoor Burning. Policies P54; P54; P55 and P56 all relate to domestic and outdoor burning. The Pauatahanui area has seen a gradual decrease in the air quality over the last 40 years. The increased subdivision around the inlet has resulted in more pollution from domestic fires, and the increase in lifestyle blocks has seen an increase in the number of outdoor fires. There is rarely a fine still day that does have some open fire going somewhere. The regional fire rules are not working well in a more confined and intensive lifestyle block area such as this. Schedule L1 Regional Ambient Air Quality Targets are listed but I cannot find anything in the Plan that shows how the local area measures up. Perhaps this information is on the maps that I cannot open.

P 243 - 6.7 Contaminated land states that GWRC will continue to work closely with city and district councils to further identify and assess contaminated land. Adjoining Pāuatahanui Inlet is a piece of land identified as contaminated land. This is because it was the site of a WWII American marine camp and the dumping and disposal of goods took place here. There seems to be no clear indication to landowners as to what this really means. They continue to dig ponds, bulldoze large areas all with existing rules. What is the point of labelling this land unless it is clear what it means in terms of its use?

p. 109 5.1.13 Agrichemicals

This section insists that all non-domestic spraying is done by those who hold relevant qualifications. How does this apply to 5 ha lots/lifestyle blocks? Why should this apply to herbicides which the applicator can both buy and use without requiring certification. Many herbicides state on their containers that you do not need an approved handler certificate for use except in a 'wide dispersive manner or over water' and give strict instructions on its appropriate use and storage. This section needs some addressing for small non-domestic lots.

The requirement for annual spray plans simply will not work in this sort of area. Most landowners tackle mainly gorse as and when it appears.

P 81 4.9 regarding the minimum flows and water levels, and taking and using water. Over the last few decades with the increased subdivision in the catchment there has been an increased taking of water from the local streams. This water is used for stock use, gardens and swimming pools. In various years of drought, particularly those of El Nino weather events, there is much anecdotal evidence of the amount of water actually flowing into the inlet being much reduced by the increased take of water during its journey from its source to the inlet. This obviously in turn affects the flushing ability of the inlet. Whatever levels of acceptance are decided on should take this all into account.

P 151 - 5.4.3 Livestock exclusion.

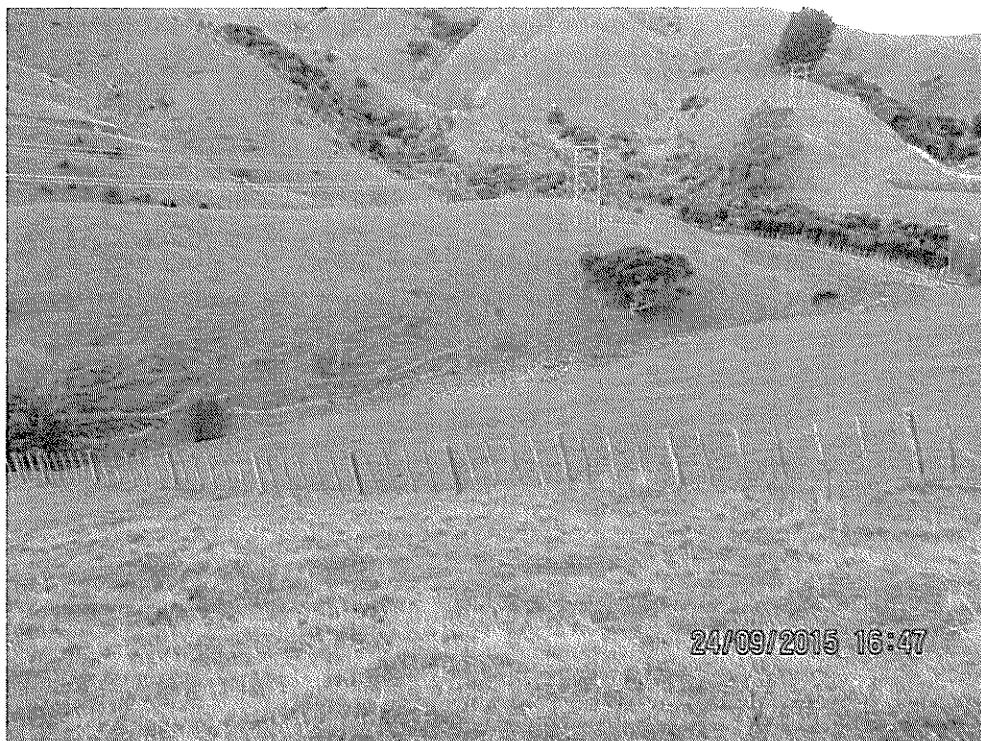
At a local presentation of the plan by GW representatives, the local attendees were told not to worry about any provisions excluding stock from water areas because this area was classed as being hill country and therefore excluded from the requirement to exclude stock out of gullies etc.

I think this is a mistake because the type of farming that is carried out in this area is very different from a truly rural area. Many people have a 5 ha piece of land on which they will often have quite a lot of stock to the point of being overstocked. Cattle are preferred over sheep as they require less frequent intervention. Many have horses as well. Much of the lifestyle land is flat and often has the local stream running, or water channels though it. One can see a lot of pugging and muddy areas.

The first image below shows a larger farm in the first image showing sheep grazing an unfenced gully with water seeping though. The boundary fence can be seen running from the right hand side and then it turns to the right at the large tree in the centre.



The second image shows the neighbouring lifestyle block management of the same waterway - devoid of growth, boggy and cattle free to roam. This water then flows directly into Pauatahanui Inlet. The planting in the background is on the large farm.



The Whaitua Committee needs to recognise the intensive type of stock management that is widely practices in this area to ensure such practices are not effectively encouraged or protected as they are by the Proposed Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission
I wish to be heard in support of my submission.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Stanley

25 September 2015

