

**WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN CHANGE 1 -  
WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS**

**Submission Form**

Submission on a publically notified proposed Regional Plan prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991.

**On:** The Waikato Regional Councils proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 -  
Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

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I am not a trade competitor for the purposes of the submission but the proposed plan 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 wish to be heard in support of this submission.**



# WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN CHANGE 1 - WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS

## Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Waikato Regional Councils proposed Plan Change 1.

My name is David Watson and I am a sheep and beef farmer. My wife and I farm in beautiful Glen Murray in the Waikato catchment area. We have a total farming area of 160 hectares. This is actually our first farm and we have been here for 5 1/2 years and love the area and the community. Our farm has its challenges which we are coming to terms with but feel we are about to turn the tide and achieve a goal of economics and lifestyle. We run both sheep and a small herd of Hereford cows which are our pride and joy. We also do a bit of dairy grazing. When we first came to the farm we started with a stocking rate of just 6 SU/ha and am aiming for 10 su/ha. We are getting there by using better farming practices like fencing, better pasture use and correct land utilization, as well as better infrastructure.

We are lucky to have some wonderful blocks native bush on our property which we are slowly fencing off and have seen great improvements within on bush already set aside.

## WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN CHANGE 1 - WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS

The specific provisions of the proposal that this submission relates to and the decisions it seeks from Council are as detailed in the following table. The outcomes sought and the wording used is as a suggestion only, where a suggestion is proposed it is with the intention of 'or words to that effect'. The outcomes sought may require consequential changes to the plan, including Objectives, Policies, or other rules, or restructuring of the Plan, or parts thereof, to give effect to the relief sought.

The specific provisions my submission relates to are:	My submission is that:		The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:
	SUPPORT / OPPOSE	REASON	RELIEF SOUGHT
Stock Exclusion  Schedule C  Schedule 1	I oppose	The reasons for this are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intent to exclude stock is OK but we have mainly steeper land and it is not practical to put in permanent fencing without causing more long-term environmental damage.</li> <li>• Excluding stock will not achieve any significant change due to our low stocking rate even if we achieve a stocking rate of 12 su/ha</li> <li>• The definition of permanent water is too blunt and unclear</li> </ul>	I seek that the provision is: amended as set out below. As an alternative I propose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclude areas with slopes exceeding 15 degrees and where no break feeding occurs.</li> <li>• Work with the farm plan on each individual farm to achieve the set goals on environment.</li> <li>• Define a waterway as contains continually moving surface water and exceeds 1m wide at any point and is 30cm deep on average.</li> </ul>

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The specific provisions my submission relates to are:	My submission is that:		The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:
	SUPPORT / OPPOSE	REASON	RELIEF SOUGHT
Permitted activity Rules 3.11.5.1 3.11.5.2	I support with amendments	The reasons for this are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stocking rates are set too low. 6 su/ha is a waste of productive land and not economically viable.</li> <li>• Clarification is needed on how 15 degrees is determined.</li> </ul>	I seek that the provision is: amended as set out below. As an alternative I propose. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stocking rate should be set at 18 Su per hectare to be same as Auckland and Gisborne.</li> <li>• Clarification is needed on how 15 degrees is determined.</li> </ul>

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The specific provisions my submission relates to are:	My submission is that:		The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:
<p>Permitted activity Rule 3.11.5.3</p>	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p>	<p><b>REASON</b></p> <p>I oppose the use of a Nitrogen Reference Point (NRP) as this is effectively 'Grandparenting Nitrogen'. Restricting farms to a Nitrogen Reference Point effectively rewards those that have historically been higher emitters of Nitrogen (Grandparenting), while disadvantaging those that have historically adopted low intensity and/or good management practices to reduce their emissions. This is completely contradictory to the intention of the Waikato River Authority Vision and Strategy (V&amp;S) and does not instill the behavioural and farming changes required to meet its objectives. Consequently, this has many unintended outcomes including capital devaluation, increased risk profiles with banks, loss of growth and succession planning, loss of innovation and will effectively work against the over-arching objective of improving water quality in the Waikato by protecting high impact intensive farming whilst undermining lower impact extensive farming</p>	<p><b>RELIEF SOUGHT</b></p> <p>I seek that the NRP is removed from the plan and that the plan adopts a sub-catchment approach addressing all four contaminants equally and specifically for each sub-catchment. Specific requirements can then be translated into farm specific targets addressed within the Farm Environment Plan</p>

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The specific provisions my submission relates to are:	My submission is that:		The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:
<p>Controlled activity Rule 3.11.5.4</p>	<p><b>Support</b> with amendments</p>	<p><b>Reasons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRP should not be used as they are set by OVERSEER which is not accurate enough to be used as a regulatory tool.</li> <li>• The Environmental plan should be written by the land owner/occupier with the help of suitable guidance to meet the standards required by council</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relief Sort</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove the use of NRP and work with the environmental plan to set mitigation for addressing all four contaminants equally and specifically for each sub-catchment.</li> <li>• The Environmental plan can be written by the landowner providing they have the appropriate support of their sector body.</li> </ul>

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	SUPPORT / OPPOSE	REASON	RELIEF SOUGHT
Land Use Change 3.11.5.7	<b>OPPOSE</b>	I oppose Rule 3.11.5.7. Restricting land use change on a broad scale across the Waikato and Waipa catchments will result in land being incapable of reasonable use and an inability of farmers to respond to market demands. The restrictions will have a big impact on the versatility of a farm as well as consequences for farm succession planning. This all will have an impact on land values with the economic issues that will arise from it.	Farmers should be able free to adapt their farming type and system to suit the land while staying within the restraints of their farm environmental plan.

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The specific provisions my submission relates to are:	My submission is that:	The decision I would like the Waikato Regional Council to make is:
<p><b>General</b></p>	<p>The 10 year plan does not allow for a long term farm plan. It imposes a lot of expense and then the goals may be changed. We need to have a scientific start point of what we have now and then the achievable goal that is based on proven science. This way we can focus on where we need to improve based on actual values.</p> <p>There appears to be a lack of measurable long term goals to work with. If the realistic goals could be agreed upon them we all have something to strive for.</p> <p>The economic impacts of PC1 on our community will be far reaching. As out lined by other submitters like "Hill Country Farmers Group" the cost associated with PC1 will impact on community events that I and others get behind, such as the local fundraising bike ride and monthly gatherings.</p>	<p>I would like to see measurable long term goals set that are achievable and relevant. They have to be supported and imposed on by all.</p> <p>Using a sub catchment system ensures that there is more buy in and a better outcome as the lack of meeting of goals and targets can be addressed at a more relevant level.</p>

Yours sincerely      David & Sheona Watson

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date