

Proposed Natural Resources Plan:

Submitter:

Friends of the Paekakariki Streams

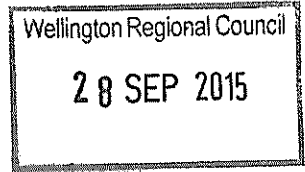
Submitter Number:

S112

To: Freepost 3156
 Wellington Regional Council
 PO Box 11646
 Wellington 6142

Or email: regionalplan@gw.govt.nz

#152669



S112

Your details

Full name: Florence McNeill

Organisation name: (If applicable) Friends of the Paekākāriki Streams

Address for Service: 137 Tilley Road, Paekākāriki 5034

Telephone no's: Work: Home: 04 904 2622 Cell: 021 139 3581

Contact person: Flo McNeill

Address and telephone no (if different from above):

Electronic communication

Wellington Regional Council has a preference for providing information about the Proposed Natural Resources Plan via email. We will send you updates on the process, information and provide you with details of any meetings and the hearing. Please tick here if you do not agree to receive communication via email.

Email address: florencemcneill@gmail.com

Trade competition

I/we could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission. [Go straight to Your Submission]

I/we could gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.
 If you could gain an advantage please complete one of the following:

I/we are directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of my submission that adversely affects the environment and does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

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Your submission — Please see attached document

The specific provisions of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan that this submission relates to are:

The specific provision of the Proposed Natural Resources Plan that my submission relates to is (please specify the provision/ section number):	My submission on this provision is: →	<input type="checkbox"/> I support the provision <input type="checkbox"/> I oppose the provision <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to have the specific provision amended
	Reasons for my submission: →	
	I seek the following decision from WRC (give precise details): →	

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If you have more submissions you wish to make, please find more boxes at the bottom of this document

Attendance and wish to be heard at hearing(s)

- I/We do wish to be heard in support of my/our submission
[Note: This means that you wish to speak in support of your submission at the hearing(s).]
- I/We do not wish to be heard in support of my/our submission
[Note: This means that you cannot speak at the hearing. However, you will still retain your right to appeal any decision made by the Wellington Regional Council to the Environment Court.]
- If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing.

Signature: _____



Date: 25th September 2015

[Person making submission or person authorised to sign on behalf of person making submission. NB. Not required if making an electronic submission]

Publication of details

Wellington Regional Council is legally required to notify a summary of submissions, including your name and address for service as provided on this submission form. Your name and address are included so that a person making a further submission is able to serve you with a copy of it.

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The Friends of the Paekākāriki Streams

Greater Wellington Natural Resources Plan Submission 25th September 2015

The Friends of the Paekākāriki Streams have for nearly 2 years been working to improve our local streams and have been seemingly thwarted at every turn. From an ecological perspective, there are failures in the consenting process to protect habitat and vulnerable species, and a failure in the ability to implement some good council plans. The well intentioned documents fail to have any real beneficial effect on the ground, additionally the resulting damage of activities is seriously impacting on our stream ecosystem health. Continuation of this, we believe, will ultimately lead to the collapse of this precious ecosystem. With the latest research stats showing 74% of our country's indigenous fish species are threatened, this needs to be taken seriously, and given priority.

Issues we have experienced just within the past 18 months:

1. **We have been blocked from accessing riparian margins.** Despite our repeated approaches to the landowner (NZTA), and the district council negotiating on our behalf, we are denied access for re-establishing native forest cover so essential to stream health. We have been told by the landowner, that there is no requirement to reserve or protect riparian margins, and therefore they won't allow it.
2. **Illegal, and highly damaging dredging** has been carried out by one government agency (KiwiRail), on land belonging to another government agency (NZTA). We are not even dealing with rogue independent property owners here, the level of disregard for the importance of our streams is disturbing, and needs to be addressed at its core. Protections need to be in place that clearly communicate they are not open to be abused.
3. **Cattle, sheep, and horses having access to the stream**, and immediately near the stream. Even newly installed fencing allows stock to graze (and relieve themselves) within centimeters of the stream. The fence was installed so close to the stream that it is in places directly on the line of the bank.
4. **Fish passage barriers.** It is acknowledged in the council's own documents that the fish passage barriers currently in place are not permitted by today's regulation standards, yet due to their age, there is no obligation to remove them. How can something that is clearly identified as 'wrong' then be 'okayed' by another 'clause that ignores all evidence to the contrary? The end result is that our fish populations are dying out, or diminishing.
5. **Toxic discharge released into the stream**, as a result of stormwater pipe relining works. This Cured In Place Pipe (CIPP) product, and method was somehow approved with little knowledge of the chemical profile of this material, nor of the lasting impacts of long term leaching into the waterways. The styrene off-gassing was significant and 2 months later, is still on-going, as is visible water contamination. We not only question the oversight into how this was implemented, but that it should have ever been approved in the first place. The burden of proof of product safety should be on those contracting the work, not the community.
6. As a condition of the Resource Consent **fish are to be relocated** 'temporarily' (for up to several years) to another tributary during the prolonged works for Transmission Gully. These are to be moved into an area which is reported to have a minimal or nonexistent fish population due, in large part, to identified fish passage barriers. The issue could be debated for many complex reasons, however the main point here is that even requirements to protect a range of species as required for Resource Consent approval, are badly lacking and ill thought out. It is promised that the fish passage barrier will be removed at a later date, however plans for this have not been

devised, nor approved, and yet the fish transfer is long since permitted. The fish passage barrier removal is not tied to the RC conditions around fish protection.

7. Currently consideration of **works affecting the stream's health is approached in a manner that allows the stream to be 'chopped' into sections and viewed as disconnected pieces.** A stream ONLY functions as a continuous ecosystem, with all sections contributing to the survival and thriving of its populations and overall health. Currently the same landowner that is required to protect species upstream, is in no way obliged to follow this through lower down the stream. Their consent should require them to have a consistent approach to the stream, and to have a protection plan in place for the entire length of stream (and all its tributaries) crossing land that they own or otherwise control. Without this consistency, much of the protections required for a given RC can be wiped out by other activities as we have experienced this year. The RC process is reduced to a box ticking exercise with little resulting benefits for the eco-system for which it was designed to protect.
8. **We currently see a marked increase of sediment discharge coming down the Te Puka tributary from the Transmission Gully site.** This was investigated by GWRC's pollution response team. They were assured by the Leighton Heb representatives that this was not the result of any works. What are we to believe? We are not permitted to go up there to check for ourselves, and yet we see the results very clearly downstream. Sediment doesn't just appear magically like fairy dust, something is definitely causing this. There is a disconnect between the rules and box ticking, and the results we see adversely affecting our streams.
9. **Systemic problems.** Activity as basic as clearing of weeds covering the stream, is problematic in that it has all been allowed to wash downstream, causing great piles and blockages for hundreds of meters. The damage and disregard is occurring on so many levels, it's not accidental, it's a systemic problem, it's a cavalier attitude to water that is allowed to proliferate in the absence of clear, legally binding, and enforceable regulation.

There is the lack of linkage between objectives around protecting Wainui Catchment Stream's significant indigenous fauna (listed in Schedule F for rivers and streams) to any direct policies or rules in the plan to protect these rivers and streams from sediment discharges (and stormwater discharges too!)

Activities in catchments identified as significant cannot be allowed as permitted activities by the plan, but should instead be discretionary activities, requiring consent, so that the effects on these ecosystems can be taken into account on a case by case basis and the community (including groups like the friends) can have input into how consent conditions will address monitoring and any adverse effects on the life of the stream.

The regional council, under section 70 (1)(g) of the Resource Management Act, cannot have a rule in a plan which permits a discharge (of stormwater, sediment or any other contaminants) that has (g) "any significant adverse effects on aquatic life."

Sediment is well known to cause significant adverse effects and this issue is particularly relevant to the Wainui Catchment Streams and it's tributaries because of the indigenous fish and macroinvertebrate life there.

We want the following included in the Plan:

1) That any discharge of sediment or stormwater to the Wainui Catchment Streams (and other significant streams in the Region listed in Schedule F) is a discretionary activity (not permitted through rules in the Plan as it is currently proposed);

2) We support that the Wainui Catchment Streams be listed in Schedule F as having "high macroinvertebrate community health".

3) That The Friends are included as members of the Kapiti Coast Whaitua Committee.

4) **Riparian protection** and setbacks.

Strict controls for all activities such as subdivision, earthworks, earth disturbance, vegetation clearance, flood works should be discretionary. Furthermore, we want meaningful consultation with the Friends and local community.

5) Encourage landowners to restore margins with stable indigenous vegetation wherever possible.

We support

Objectives: 1, 3, 4, 5, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 35, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 58,

Policies: 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 48, 52, 60, 63, 65, 67, 68, 70, 73, 84, 85, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 106, 107, 108, 150, 151,

Rules: 41, 111

Methods: 12, 14, 15, 20, 21, 28,

Object to rule 36. Spraying of agrichemicals should not be a permitted activity where it can enter water. Change to discretionary.

Rule 37 Change to discretionary

Rules 39 & 40 Change discretionary

Rule 50 Change to discretionary

Rule 82 Change to discretionary

Rule 97 Change to discretionary

Rule 99 Change to discretionary

Rule 100 Change to discretionary

Rule 102 Change to discretionary

Rule 121 Change to discretionary

We object to rules that give permitted activities status for sediment and stormwater discharge to the Wainui Catchment Streams. This should be discretionary.

Something is amiss when just in the last 18 months, so many permitted, consented and illegal discharges and activities have affected the stream life and the community who care about the stream. We have heard at every turn that due to a lack of legal obligation, damaging practices will continue, and no exceptions will be made to support us rehabilitating this significantly valuable stream ecosystem. We need robust regulations that mean landowners, responsible parties, and other contractors are compelled to act responsibly and with respect to our natural resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on this Plan, we wish to speak at the submissions hearing.

Flo McNeill

On behalf of The Friends of the Paekākāriki Streams

Florence McNeill

137 Tilley Road, Paekākāriki 5034

M: 021 139 3581 E: florencemcneill@gmail.com



Illegal dredging May 2015. Carried out in the name of "drain clearing".



New fence placed so close to the stream it's nearly falling into it. July 2015



Stock in Wainui Stream mid 2015.



Sedimentation in Te Puka Stream (Wainui Stream tributary) from Transmission Gully. August 2015



Pictures 1 & 2 showing results of the district council's stormwater upgrade Toxic spill July 2015

