

Proposed Natural Resources Plan:

Submitter:

**South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group
Incorporated**

Submitter Number:

S78

SUBMISSION – PROPOSED NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN WGTON REGION
NAME: *South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group Incorporated*

SPECIFIC PROVISION/SECTION(S) NUMBERS:

Mountains to the Sea: Objectives 01 to 05

Maori relationships: Objectives 014 to 016

Natural character, form and function: Objectives 017 to 022

Water Quality: Objectives 023 to 024.

We support the aforementioned Objectives.

We wish to have the related provisions amended in terms on monitoring and coverage of some natural features for greater certainty.

REASONS FOR SUBMISSION:

To monitor and regulate land use activities, water takes and use, and discharges in the Ruamahanga River catchment, to manage through objectives, policies and methods in the NR Plan so that the water quality in Upper Wairarapa Moana & Lower Wairarapa Moana (Lake Onoke¹) is of suitable quality to provide for contact recreation, support healthy indigenous ecosystems, and avoid accelerated sedimentation. To determine whether these outcomes are met, the regional council must establish and maintain a comprehensive water quality and ecosystem health monitoring programme for the lakes and streams – in consultation with territorial government, Ruamahanga Whaitua and Wairarapa Moana Coordinating Committees.

It appears Lake Onoke does not fall within the ambit of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (NPS-FM), but it will come within the NZ Coastal Policy Statement 2010. Hence, or otherwise, Lake Onoke will definitely **not** be excluded from the Ruamahanga Whaitua Committee's scope (which extends some 12 nautical miles out to sea)².

Our Society's 2014 submission concerning a local authority's waste water resource consent stated that:

Lake Wairarapa, the Ruamahanga River, Tauherinikau River, and coastal lakes, coastal marine area, groundwater system and wetlands - are all influenced by the cumulative contribution of nutrients and other contaminants that are discharged into the catchment. This includes the Greytown, Martinborough and Featherston Waste Water Treatment plants discharges as well as a number of other point and non-point source discharges.

The healthy functioning of the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems linked to the water bodies in the Wairarapa catchment must be protected as a priority. This is necessary to achieve sustainable management as defined on Section 5 of the RM Act. The cumulative contribution of contaminants from within the catchment, in combination with other anthropogenic modifications to the hydrology of the lower catchment, has caused and is continuing to cause significant adverse effects on the health of ecosystems in the lower catchment and the immediate

¹ The community is supporting an NZGB application for official historic name recognition for the adjoining settlement of Lake Ferry. Ideally 'Lake Onoke' will also be officially recognised in due course.

² The Draft NR Plan implies that when Lake Onoke is open to the sea it will be treated as an estuary but when it is closed it will be treated as a lake. This needs to be clarified, for best purposes.

coastal environment. This is to the point where life-supporting capacity in this area has not been safeguarded.

Following a previous resource consent hearing relating to Masterton's waste water treatment application, both Carterton & South Wairarapa district councils confirmed that they had not made submissions on the matter, notwithstanding their districts vulnerable downstream locations.³ At the December 2014 Ramsar Convention (a status application we support) reference was made to published advice that untreated wastewater overflow from the "sometimes failed Masterton system would flow into Onoke within 12 hours." (This was verbally confirmed from the floor.) Local and central government needs to address such issues to protect Onoke shorelines, wetlands, and wildlife migrating through the whole Wairarapa valley.

WE SEEK THE FOLLOWING DECISION FROM WRC:

Amend the Proposed Plan to give effect to the objectives and policies of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement as they relate to Wairarapa Moana, including in relation to natural character and indigenous biodiversity.

Amend the Proposed Plan to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, in particular in relation to Wairarapa Moana.

Give appropriate recognition, monitoring, and protection of Lake Onoke as a wetland and a site with significant indigenous biodiversity values, including the plantings undertaken by the Society and the community on the riparian strip, and around the restored Okorewa coastal lagoon; monitoring and protection of the Ruamahanga catchment generally.

To manage through objectives, policies and methods in the Plan so that the water quality in Upper Wairarapa Moana & Lower Wairarapa Moana (Lake Onoke) is of suitable quality to provide for contact recreation, support healthy indigenous ecosystems and avoid accelerated sedimentation.

To monitor and regulate land use activities, water takes and use, and discharges in the Ruamahanga River catchment.

To establish and maintain a comprehensive water quality and ecosystem health monitoring programme for the lakes and streams – in consultation with territorial government, Ruamahanga Whaitua, Wairarapa Moana Coordinating Committees and other relevant parties (including the South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group).

WE DO WISH TO BE HEARD IN SUPPORT OF OUR SUBMISSION AT HEARINGS.

SIGNED:



DATE: 24 September 2015

As Secretary and for *South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group Incorporated*.

³ Nor did GW make submissions on the downstream implications for the protection of natural resources.