

HEARING STATEMENT

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To: West Coast Regional Council

Hearing Statement on: Land & Water Plan, Plan Change 1

Overall we support the proposed plan change as it provides clarity to the Land and Water Plan.

Rule 28 Flood Protection Works

28d ideally all work should be completed within 5 consecutive days, however things can happen outside a landowners control, weather forecasts are not always correct and equipment failure does happen despite maintenance and good handling procedures.

We seek that landowners are not unduly infringed should a job take longer than 5 days for a situation that is completely beyond their control eg machinery breaks down on day two and the part takes three working days to arrive.

28k we support the changes in the staff recommendation report to combine 28k sub-conditions i and iii, and the inclusion of the note regarding photographic evidence. These changes bring clarity and certainty to all involved in the process.

Part 2: Changes to wetland boundaries

We appreciate that Council is in its current position as the Environment Court ordered the addition of 215 Schedule 2 wetlands. We are not seeking that all areas of farmland be removed, but that a transparent and robust process is followed and should there be clear evidence showing there are no wetland values then it is not designated as such.

At the time of the Environment Court ruling there was no consultation with private landowners. Having Council and DoC work together and evaluate the imposed boundaries has resulted in much needed ground truthing. This work must keep the key purpose in mind; does the removal of specific areas affect the hydrological flow of water that maintains wetland values.

From the Section 32 evaluation report for this plan change, the main reasons for removal of areas were:

- a) The area was developed prior to notification of the plan and is not a functioning wetland;
- b) The area has a combination of exotic vegetation and development occurred prior to notification of the plan, and so it is not a functioning wetland;
- c) The area has been subject to resource consent.

Where scheduled wetlands are on productive land, correcting the boundaries to exclude areas that are not ecologically significant will allow landowners to utilise this land and add to the productivity of their farm without needing to obtain a resource consent.

Finally, we would like to thank Council for clarifying in the s42a Staff Recommending Report that the mapped wetlands already include a margin area and additional buffers are not required.