
Submission on an application for an amendment to the Kawarau River Water Conservation Order

To : Special Tribunal – Kawarau River Water Conservation Order
c/- Alex Miller, Ministry for the Environment,
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Name of submitter: David Anthony Haynes

This is a submission on an application from New Zealand and Otago Fish and Game Councils for an amendment to the water conservation order for the Kawarau River which relates to its tributary, the Nevis River. The application seeks to recognise the Nevis River's outstanding values – wild and scenic characteristics; back country trout fishery; natural characteristics, in particular outstanding natural landforms; trout spawning habitat; adult trout habitat (trophy trout); native fishery habitat; scientific – biogeographic river capture; historic and cultural values.

The application seeks to protect those outstanding values by adding a prohibition on damming and diversion of the river and adding a condition on water takes so as not to breach a minimum river flow.

I support the whole application

My submission is that I support the proposed amendments to the order both to recognise those outstanding values mentioned above and to add a prohibition on damming and diversion of the river and conditions on minimum river flow.

The reasons for my submission:

The Nevis is a unique angling experience, I have fished it for four years now, each occasion marking the highlight of my annual South Island fishing holiday. God willing, I hope to continue my annual pilgrimage to this sacred valley until my heart stops beating.

It is not the river alone which captures the soul but the combination of tussock, a valley improbably nestled so high in the mountains, spectacular gorges, massive rock formations looming out of gentle rolling pasture and a diversity of flora and fauna. I've seen tadpoles, been kept awake at night by a cacophony of frogs, watched tiny galaxid like fish, sat on Spaniard Grass, smelled the mosses and lichens and dozed to the sound of skylarks overhead. This place is redolent of the western highlands of Scotland where I did a lot of fishing in my youth, a hidden jewel of a valley that affords peace, a sense of beautiful isolation and a river one can get truly lost in. Whilst many Otago rivers are being encroached upon and dessicated by massive dairy farms, the Nevis provides the opportunity for us all, as New Zealanders, to preserve our diminishing fishing waters from unbridled development and economic exploitation.

The fishing in the Nevis is also superb, wild, challenging, undoubtedly hard work but heart-stoppingly amazing when sighting some very large brown trout, possibly some of the largest fish I have seen in my thirty years of fishing throughout the world. This is the pinnacle of classic New Zealand fly fishing - stalking large, very wary trout in clear water and I am convinced dams, hydro systems and abstraction will destroy the fishery by virtue of altering flows, increasing sediment, destroying invertebrate habitat, changing the river chemistry and impairing free passage of fish. To see the Nevis disfigured into a Waikato like brown stagnant nightmare would turn Maui in his grave

We are unbelievably lucky to have fishing of this quality in these surroundings – why else would anglers spend a small fortune travelling half way round the world to fish rivers such as the Nevis. It absolutely beggars belief and smacks of contempt to even consider destroying a natural resource of such aesthetic value.

The Nevis is not about economics, asset utilisation, development, progress, etc. That is not the language of the valley. It is about the soul, the way a place can touch your heart, humble you with beauty and the joy of being a guest of nature, leaving it unsullied for future generations.

For me two quotes crystallise the Nevis experience for me; the first from Thessalonians 4:11 "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business", the second care of Isaak Walton "Piscator non solum piscatur – there is more to fishing than catching fish".

I seek the following decision from the special tribunal:

To recognise those outstanding values of the Nevis River identified by Fish and Game in the Application.

To add a prohibition on damming and diversion of the river and to add minimum river flow conditions to protect the river.

I do not wish to be heard in support of my submission.

If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing.

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Signature of submitter
(or person authorised to sign
on behalf of submitter)

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Date

Address for service of submitter: 15 Cochran Road, Oratia, Waitakere City, 0604
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Contact person: David Haynes

Note to submitter

You must serve a copy of your submission on the applicant as soon as reasonably practicable after you have served your submission on the special tribunal.

(The applicants' address for service is:

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