

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

To : Special Tribunal – Kawarau River Water Conservation Order
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Name of submitter: My full name is *Robert William Stenbridge*
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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 Nevis River and conditions on minimum river flow.

The reasons for my submission:

I travel to New Zealand three times every year and have done so for some 4 years. I am a keen trout fisherman as well as a travelling tourist that enjoys the wildness of New Zealand's country and river system in the north island and the south island and the nature of the unspoilt country.

I have just returned from a two months tour of Ireland and Europe and I have seen first hand just what can happen to waterways if they are not protected and waterways that remain in their wild state as in Ireland. I have also toured the United States and seen first hand the destruction of the river system of that country. There are some 176.000 dams in the United States. Some are now being opened to bring the dying rivers back to life. That can take up to three years.

Every country, every state, every city in the world wants tourism. Its money for old rope. Private enterprise provides the facilities and much of the tourist infrastructure. The Government of the day needs to display the courage to ensure that it creates and maintains the environment that will ensure that the tourist industry benefits so to its country and the people employed in the industry are self sufficient. Few governments provide support or tax incentives to the tourist industry like they do to rural industry. But the tourist industry can be a generation of benefits without the disadvantage of massive infrastructure.

Much of New Zealand's income and employment is directly and indirectly supported by international tourism. New Zealand has a worldwide reputation as one of the four best trout sport fishing destinations in the world. But I can tell you, that reputation is on the line.

Many trout fisherman I know have stopped going to New Zealand for the very reason that the Hydroelectric dams reduce the water flow to the rivers by 80%. I met many fly and lure fisherman on my last two visits in October 2007 and February March 2008 who are not going to waste their time again going to New Zealand to fish in barren and polluted streams. Try fishing in the Matura River early morning while the untreated sewerage is being discharged from the Gore/Mature Sewerage Plant. But that's another issue that needs to be addressed.

More and more dams are being built and new applications are being made while I was in New Zealand in the South island as well as the North Island. The development of further dams will eliminate the trout sports fishing in New Zealand.

Fishing in and around dams is quite different to fishing wild rivers. You need a boat and different fishing gear. But the real problem is the fish are far too deep for sports fishing. I am not a trolling fisherman. That's not trout sports fishing. No true sports fisherman wants to sit in a boat and troll for trout all day in 200 meters of water.

I have fished the Nevis River and most of the rivers in the Otago, Southland, Canterbury & Westland regions and the Nelson area, plus most of the rivers in the North Island. I usually spend six to ten weeks fishing in New Zealand every year. That cost me around Aus\$1,000 per week plus the services tax. Contributing to New Zealand's economy. Now if the New Zealand Government Departments feels that is not a reasonable contribution to your tourist industry, please let me know so I can make other arrangements.

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 wish to be heard in support of my submission.

This may be difficult but I will possibly be in New Zealand during November/December 2008 and in the North Island, and in the South Island in February March 2009.

Robert W Stemberidge

Signature of submitter

Date 25/9/2008

(A signature is not required if you make your submission by electronic means.)

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