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Te Rūnanga Whakauka o Kahurangi ki Kaikōura
NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION BOARD

Herea kia Kōtahi - Working Together

Submission on proposed national policy statement for freshwater management

To: The Chairperson
Board of Inquiry

1 The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board is an advisory board appointed by the Minister of Conservation under Section 6 (P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Its area of jurisdiction covers from Farewell Spit in the north to just below Kaikoura in the south. Included in that area are several national parks, nature reserves, wetlands, iconic animal species, many major rivers, streams and springs including Te Waikoropupu Springs. The quality of the environment in our region requires considerable balancing of the needs of recreation and tourism and primary production against those for conserving and protecting the natural quality of the environment.

2 Board members have expertise drawn from their varied backgrounds in recreation, ecology, land and water management, tourism, viticulture, and community and iwi involvement.

3 In principle we endorse the submission of the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA). We consider that the statement of principles appended to NZCA's submission on governance, protection, sustainability and management of freshwater provides a very sound basis for the further development and assessment of a national policy on freshwater management.

4 The specific provisions of the proposal that our submission relates to are as follows

4.1 Purpose of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management: Recent work by our board identified that freshwater issues of particular concern to our region were the degradation of wetland habitats, threats to water quality, pests and weeds.

It is clear that eradicating and/or managing these issues must take into account conflicting interests and pressures. It is also clear that the regulatory and other means for managing the issues are currently fragmented. For these reasons national guidance is particularly important and we support the development of national-level guidelines.

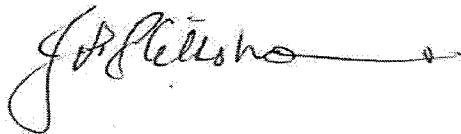
4.2 Objectives

The Board supports the objectives set forward in the Proposed Statement. However there appears to be no reference to meeting New Zealand's international obligations. New Zealand is a signatory to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands which, among other things, requires planning of wetlands both to promote the conservation of wetlands designated as Wetlands of International Significance (such as Farewell Spit) and also to promote the wise use of other wetlands in the nation (Article 3.1). Board members have seen recent cases where landowners have drained wetlands without a thought to the value of the wetland and its role in the ecosystem. The need to manage wetlands appropriately could be added to Objective 6 and also to Policy 4: on the preparation of policy statements and plans

5 We seek the following changes to the proposal:

5.1 Recognition in the national policy statement of the need to recognise New Zealand's international obligations to protect listed wetlands and to promote the wise use of all other wetlands.

We do not wish to be heard in support of our submission.



Judy Hellstrom
Chair

Date: 22 January 2009

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