

**INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION
ON PROPOSED NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT
FOR INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY**

TO: MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
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Submitter's Name and Contact Details

Name	Phone Number	Address
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] <i>Waikanae 5391.</i>

Introduction

Hi, my name is [REDACTED]. I farm a block of land, [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED] of Waikanae.

My family moved to this property in 1901 and have been engaged in flax milling and livestock farming since then. The flax milling ceased in the 1930's. I and my family have farmed the property since 1977 and are now semi retired with the bulk of the farm leased out.

This property is one of a very limited number of properties of this size in this area that have not been subdivided and converted into lifestyle blocks.

Biodiversity on my farm

Our farm contains a portion of the Outstanding Significant Te Hare Keke wetlands which traverses our land from side to side. There is also a portion of another smaller wetland adjacent to Pekapeka Road on our property. These areas had been fenced off and grazing has ceased in the last 10 years. The wetter areas of our farm are essential grazing areas in drought conditions. The Te Hare Keke area was grazed intermittently before being required to be fenced. Controlling blackberry is an important part of managing the wetland areas as it grows out of control unless regularly sprayed.

The local Kapiti Coast District Council gives little support to land owners in the management of Wetlands or SNA's. The Greater Wellington Regional Council gives some support for fence construction and mustelid pest control. These matters take time and resources that is not adequately recompensed to land owners in any way. As such continuing to protect these areas are a challenge to me.

The only benefit to having wetlands on your property is for stock feed in drought conditions, but this is now prohibited by regulation.

How the NPS will impact my farm

The draft NPS introduces another layer of Bureaucracy and compliance to the management of farm land. In our case the Te Hare Keke area was managed under rotational grazing yet still managed to produce new growth of flax, cabbage tree, toi toi, manuka, etc so much so that it was classed as 'oustanding'. This happened with out any regulation or outside administration. Having to now report to and be accountable to outside agencies does not make life simpler. It removes any flexibility we once had and creates uncertainty as to future uses and activities.

The definition of an SNA is not defined, so any area with some native plants may now be considered for control under the DNPSIB. For instance we have fenced off the drains that have been dug through our farm for drainage purpose, and planted a row of trees along one side of the drain. Typically this has been a row of willow and/or poplar trees. Interspersed with the trees we have planted native flax plants indigenous to our farm, it was a flax farm once. All this has been done with no financial input from outside sources. Under this NPS some well meaning bureaucrat might decide that these areas are now a SNA and need protecting. My quandry is would the removal of the flax plants remove this possibility? Another difficulty I have is the maintenance of the drainage network through our farm and adjoining properties. These drain are essential for the passage of storm water from the land and also the State Highway roading network and the NIMT railway. Some people would argue that damming the drains to elevate the water table is beneficial to Indigenous vegetation. This has already happened in the case of the Te Hare Keke wetland where a substantial area of wetland forest on our property has been drowned because the drain cleaning that used to be done has been stopped to 'enhance' the wetland area. Such actions as these turn surrounding pasture land into swampy areas that do not produce as much food for farm animals.

Conclusion

The draft NPS creates uncertainty as it relies on Local Authorities to define SNA's. There is no definition of an SNA, so it comes down to what a bureaucrat looking at a colour aerial photo will decide. Any appeal process will be weighed against a land owner as the appeal panel will be further bureaucrats bound to follow the intent of the NPS.

Such top down administration creates inflexibility for land owners. Floods happen often without forewarning, and decisions need to be made in a hurry. Having to consult with outside agencies creates complexities. Normal farm activities can be controversial to non farm based mind sets. The NPS could well be used to impinge on the management practices of farm land.

I thank the Ministry for considering my views .

