

INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY SUBMISSION

INTRODUCTION

I am [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] which is a high country station consisting of [REDACTED] ha located between lakes Wanaka and Hawea. The [REDACTED] family have farmed sheep, cattle and deer on this property for the last 90 years. The property has developed large areas into improved pasture for livestock farming over this time. There has been a long history of vegetation clearance of unwanted bracken-fern and other woody weeds on our hill country. It has been controlled mostly by burning in the past and now by spraying to control these aggressive weeds. It is important to continue controlling any regrowth and redevelop areas that have been burnt in the past with spraying which is more effective and eliminates further control to preserve our grazing. The property is situated within the QLDC region and council has identified SNAS with landowners knowledge and included these areas in the district plan in 2015 for protection. These areas have meet very high criteria which are 'Nationally Significant', are smaller in size and are unfenced which allows grazing because they are naturally protected from soil and vegetation clearance.

My concern is what might happen to the other areas of indigenous vegetation which isn't nationally significant. These areas need to be controlled to avoid having damaging summer-fires occurring, threatening the very vegetation/habitat that has been identified for protection. Policy makers need to understand and recognize that farms are working landscapes not conservation areas which are shut up for protection.

SUBMISSION

1: PART 3.7 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC & CULTURAL WELLBEING

I support these polices. It recognizes the people who are making a difference on the land which effects biodiversity. It recognizes existing use of the land. Collaboration not regulation will achieve a better outcome for biodiversity.

2: PART 3.8 IDENTIFYING SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS (SNAS)

I would support the approach of consistency and verification of criteria used across the regions. The SNA criteria in Appendix 1 must only identify the nationally significant, they have very high values of indigenous biodiversity which are threatened. Do not just include all areas of biodiversity. Using the QLDC example, council went through a substantial SNA identification process which involved landowners and included these areas in the district plan for protection in the last 5 years. It would be expensive and impractical for council, ratepayers and landowners to repeat this process which has already been done.

3: PART 3.9 MANAGING ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SNAS

1. States that in relation to any new subdivision, use or development that takes place in or affects an SNA. There is a conflict when you compare existing use (farming activities) in part 3.12 to this policy. Farming activities are an existing use and grazing within SNAs is an accepted activity in QLDC region, also to maintain tracks from regenerating vegetation, provides shelter/shade for livestock at lambing, summer and wintertime. It is impractical and unnecessary to exclude stock that rely on these areas. Farmers need assurances to continue to use this land to maintain flexibility for the future. Any areas that are to fenced need to be specific and have farmers consent.

3 NEW ACTIVITIES

To be clear should only apply to change of land use. It should not include re-consenting or situations that are currently permitted but under other plans/ rules would now require consent.

4: PART 3.12 EXISTING ACTIVITIES IN SNAs

4c) ii-Refers to there is inadequate information to demonstrate a proposed clearance of regenerating indigenous vegetation is part of a regular cycle of clearances to maintain improved pastures.

iii-Refers to a proposal clearance in an area that supports any threatened or at risk species.

iv-Refers to a proposed clearance in an area that supports alluvial landforms that have not been cultivated.

There are situations of existing use from farming activities that conflict with these three situations. The answer to these conflicts is to have specific management conditions connected to the specific SNA to provide sensible outcomes for both protection and continued use of these areas to achieve both activities.

5: PART 3.15 HIGHLY MOBILE FAUNA

- 1) Refers to record and survey areas outside SNAs where highly mobile fauna have been, or are likely to be, sometimes present, by regional and district councils.

This will cause unnecessary extra cost and uncertainty for councils and landowners. The SNA assessments will identify the important areas of biodiversity. I oppose this and it needs to be deleted.