Your submission to Action for healthy waterways – consultation

Janice Anderson, Riverton Community Charitable Trust

Reference no: 1170

Submitter Type: Business / Industry

Clause
Proposals as a whole - please refer to questions 1-3 on page 19 of the discussion document

Notes
We agree changes need to be made to the current management of freshwater by changing legislation and regulations.

Clause
Impacts and implementation - please refer to questions 4-6 on page 19 of the discussion document

Notes
I am writing on behalf of the Riverton Community Charitable Trust we are based in Western Southland we have an office in Riverton. We provide assistance, support and information to individuals and families. We have a social worker who offers a home-based service for youth and families. We deal with all those needing help, offering counselling, referrals to other agencies, food bank, help with CVs, emergency funding for medical and pharmacy costs, transport for the elderly to medical appointments etc. We work closely with others in our area - schools, police, churches, service groups, Plunket, Age concern, Family works offering a wraparound service. Our concern is the cost to communities financially and the social implications. The Science and Technical Advisory Group commented “We recognise that recommendations in our report could, depending on the way they are incorporated into policy, have very significant economic and social implications for individuals and communities” Our Social worker is seeing families and children with high needs and complex issues that she deals with daily - mental health, drug and alcohol, neglect, trauma, violence physical/emotional, isolation and financial issues. Our community has seen an increase in rent prices and a limited amount of rental properties being available. We have no public transport so have people feeling isolated and lonely many elderly have no family members nearby leading to anxiety and depression. All small towns are suffering with the loss of services to the larger urban cities recently our only bank closed adding to the feeling of isolation for some people. Our concern is the cost to our Community with inevitable rate increases and the compliant costs to the farming community. Many families will struggle with cost increases, the social issues that our social worker deals with stems from low incomes. Our farming community has been under extra pressure the timing of the Freshwater proposal and the short timeframe to make submissions has added extra stress to a very wet and hectic calving and lambing season. We see many farming families in our community stressed and feeling undervalued. With high rates of our farming men committing suicide and the government admitting that mental health should be a priority it is difficult to understand the timing of this proposal. The comments by the Regional Sector Water Subgroups “strongly support the Governments intent to improve water quality and wants to ensure that the likely impacts of the new proposals on communities are well understood and factored into the pace of change. We need to take landowners and communities with us.” We don’t think the social impacts have been considered and the timing certainly didn’t allow the farming community time to access and give feedback.