Dear Madam/Sir,

We are a rural timber yard, farm supplies store and contracting business with farming customers throughout Taranaki. The majority of our clients in South Taranaki are dairy farmers and we also have a number of drystock farmers based in the Taranaki hill country.

For the past 20 years our farming customers have forged and maintained strong partnerships with the Taranaki Regional Council, Fonterra Cooperative Group Limited and Beef and Lamb New Zealand. Together these groups have spent thousands of dollars on fencing off waterways, extensive riparian planting and in some areas of the eastern hill country the retirement of land from agricultural use for the overall benefit of the environment. These groups and the Taranaki Regional Council in particular have provided strong assistance to the farmers in the area and most farm budgets have included expenditure on an annual basis to be put toward these activities that care for the environment.

We along with our customers support the overall objective of healthy fresh waterways and believe that there have been great steps taken toward this by farmers and farming groups.

We cannot support the proposed frameworks, rules and standards outlined in the Government’s Action for Healthy Waterways as these proposals are a ‘one-size-fits-all’ targets for the whole of the country. The farming activities of our customers and New Zealand farmers in general vary greatly from province to province and climatic conditions also vary greatly from province to province. Farming standards and practices in Taranaki are very different to those in Canterbury and Southland for example. The proposals would be easier to accept if they took into account the varied landscapes, climates and practices of each region on a case–by–case basis.

Good legislation involves targeted action based on real-time activities and hence sustainability is specific to particular areas. A ‘one - size -fits -all ‘ approach does not reflect this, in their current form these proposals severely penalise all farming and rural communities activities and the focus must be redirected to develop proposals on a regional basis rather than a blanket approach. We believe there is already an effective programme undertaken in our region and we support the Taranaki Regional Council in achieving this.

Your faithfully

Eltham Timber & Supplies Limited

Pp

CEO