

From: [Jo eames](#)
To: [WaterReformPublicConsultation](#)
Subject: Proposed changes to National Policy for Freshwater Management
Date: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:00:59 a.m.

Dear Minister,

I write about our concerns for the proposed changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. In the face of serious declines in water quality in most NZ rivers, the government want us to accept rivers that are so polluted that we can only wade or boat in them but not immerse ourselves.

We must set a higher standard for water quality. We need to maintain our ability to use our beautiful rivers for swimming, fishing, boating and ideally, drinking. The proposed standards would set the core 'Compulsory Values' for fresh water at "secondary contact recreation".

Secondary contact recreation value is defined as water which "...will not present unacceptable risks to human health when used for wading or boating (except boating where there is a high likelihood of immersion)" and "...there would be no more than moderate risk of infection or illness to people when wading or boating...that do not involve immersion in the water." ¹

Well, mostly, it's that unnecessary amounts of urea fertiliser on dairies have happened over the last 30 years. I stress *unnecessary* because dairies can be profitable and even grow MORE grass of better quality when they cut back by as much as $\frac{3}{4}$ on their urea applications. Organic dairies prosper without any urea fertiliser. The water quality problem is not really about dairy effluent. It is the volume and manner in which dairy farmers apply urea as a source of nitrogen that is the cause of leachate and water pollution. It doesn't have to be this way. With changes in fertiliser regimes we can have profitable dairies that regenerate soils and do not pollute our rivers. It just takes political will to set the water quality bar higher.

We wish to state clearly that we want Section 4.3 Compulsory Value to be set a swimmable/ safe immersion level. ²

Jo and Jon Eames
[withheld]