

**From:** [Joel Hughes](#)  
**To:** [WaterReformPublicConsultation](#)  
**Subject:** Submission 02075 - Joel Hughes - National Policy Statement for Freshwater Use  
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To whom it may concern,

I am a born and raised New Zealander who has grown up enjoying the fantastic outdoors that we have here. I have lived across the country, Whakatane, Hamilton, Palmerston North, and now Gore, and have enjoyed the environment surrounding all of these places.

As the son of a farmer, holder of a Bachelor of Science majoring in biological and earth sciences, former worker of the regional council, and now a veterinarian I have had a huge role in both agriculture and the environment. I feel I have a very good perspective of what demands there are agriculturally on fresh water resources, as well as the state of their current decline in the face of increased pressure to drive production into the future.

I still continue to enjoy the country we have here and would not consider living anywhere else in the world - as why should I when the freedom, beauty and accessibility of our environmental resource here is second to none.

As a keen fly fisherman and hunter, family hobbies passed down over the generations, it would be a shame to see our environment continue to decline - especially our freshwater resources. It is a privilege we have here to freely fish and hunt on public (and some private) land. A fantastic opportunity that we should hold precious to us as a country for the generations to come. What a shame it would be if we would continue to decline to the state of those in our larger "idolised countries" such as the USA or Great Britain.

Protecting our natural resources, especially freshwater, should be our number one priority. The Clean Streams Accord and other similar initiatives have been a good starting point, helping the public and landowners to buy in to what they can do on their own patches of land to help the environment.

It is not a big deal for Dairy Farmers to fence all waterways - in fact I think we have been too lenient on them in terms of giving them too much time to accomplish 100 % fencing, and monitoring has been poor. Effluent treatment and use would also be in this category. The money is there, the line needs to be drawn and councils need to stand by those decisions.

Sheep and Beef farmers are under continual squeeze financially so open a more difficult argument but perhaps under better subsidies or incentive more could be accomplished.

We need to set safe levels of nutrients, nitrogen, E.coli etc for our waterways at the mark where these streams are clean, pure, safe, and healthy - healthy in terms of their ecology, ecology which provides much of our country with their entertainment and hobbies - fisherman, boaties, swimmers, kayakers, tourism and others.

Please be the first to take a stand, set levels of nutrients into our waterways that provide the best possible water quality for the public to enjoy. There are ways to increase agricultural productivity without sacrificing water quality. It will take good government leadership, and good Kiwi ingenuity to achieve it. It will be possible, but it all starts here and now.

Be sensible. Dont make decisions based on what will get the most votes, or what will make the most money. Be smart, please.

I want with all my heart to live my entire life in small town New Zealand in the heart of the agricultural industry but enjoying fly fishing on our local streams and rivers - whether I stay in Gore or move somewhere else in the country. What we could have in this country in 10 - 30 years could be fantastic to behold.

Regards,

Joel Hughes  
Veterinarian