

Proposed Changes to Regional Plans for the Wellington Region

February 2002

Incorporating:

Proposed Plan Change 2 to the Transitional Regional Plan

Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan

Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Plan for Discharges to Land

Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Air Quality Management Plan

Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Soil Plan

Making a Submission

Any person may make a submission on the following Proposed Changes to the Regional Plans for the Wellington Region:

- Proposed Plan Change 2 to the Transitional Regional Plan;
- Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan;
- Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Plan for Discharges to Land;
- Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Air Quality Management Plan; and
- Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Soil Plan.

The closing date for submissions is **Friday, 15 March 2002, at 4:00pm.**

Submissions must be in writing and sent to:

The General Manager
Wellington Regional Council
PO Box 11 646
WELLINGTON

Submissions must include the following information:

- your full name, postal address, and contact phone or fax number;
- the **specific provision** of the Proposed Plan Changes to the Regional Plans for the Wellington Region to which the submission relates;
- the nature of the submission, that is whether you support or oppose the provision, and whether you wish to have amendments made, giving reasons;
- the decision you wish the Council to make;
- whether you wish to be heard in support of your submission; and
- whether, if others are making a similar submission you would, or would not, be prepared to consider presenting a joint case with them at any hearing.

Submissions must be signed and dated.

After the closing date for receiving submissions, the Wellington Regional Council will:

- publicly notify the availability of a summary of all decisions requested of the Council in the submissions received, stating where this summary of decisions and submissions can be inspected;
- call for further submissions in support of, or in opposition to, the submissions; and
- if required, hold a hearing into the submissions.

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is Being Changed?

Changes are proposed to the following Regional Plans for the Wellington Region:

- The Transitional Regional Plan;
- The Regional Plan for Discharges to Land;
- The Regional Air Quality Management Plan;
- The Regional Freshwater Plan; and
- The Regional Soil Plan.

No changes are proposed to the Regional Coastal Plan, which is the Council's other Regional Plan.

There are two principal reasons for the changes we want to make to the Regional Plans. Firstly, we intend to withdraw the Transitional Regional Plan now that all the other Regional Plans are operative. You can find this Proposed Change in Section 2 of this Report. Some changes are being made to the Regional Freshwater Plan as a result of withdrawing the Transitional Regional Plan. These changes to the Regional Freshwater Plan are in section 3.1 of this report.

Secondly, groundwater investigations on the Kapiti Coast have identified that we should change the bore construction rules in the Regional Freshwater Plan to promote sustainable management of groundwater resources. These changes to the Regional Freshwater Plan are in Section 3.2 of this report.

A number of other regional plan changes have also been compiled as a result of working with the plans over the last 2 years. We are adding some new permitted activity rules that are presently captured by rules requiring resource consents, although the activities have less than minor adverse effects. These changes are in Section 3.3 of this report. Changes are being made to some permitted activity rules that arise as a result of working with the plans. These changes are in sections 3.4, 4.1, and 5.1 of this report. We are also including some changes that add or update information obtained since the Regional Plans became operative. They are in sections 3.5 and 5.2. Some minor corrections, improvements and clarifications are also made in sections 3.6, 4.2, and 6.1.

1.2 Format of the Proposed Changes

The Proposed Changes to the Regional Plans are listed in the sections of this report which follow.

On the following pages, wording from the operative plans is in italics, new wording is underlined in italics, and deletions from the operative plans are crossed out in italics.

Reasons are provided for each of the Proposed Plan Changes. The reasons are not part of the Proposed Plan Changes.

If you want to look at the Operative Regional Plans for the Wellington Region, you can view them on our website at www.wrc.govt.nz. Alternatively, they are available at libraries or copies can be obtained from the librarian at the Wellington Regional Council free phone 0800 496 734. The Transitional Regional Plan is free of charge. The Regional Soil Plan Costs \$25 and the remaining plans that are being changed cost \$45 each.

2. **Proposed Plan Change 2 to the Transitional Regional Plan**

2.1 *Proposed Change*

Withdraw the Transitional Regional Plan in its entirety.

Reason

The Transitional Regional Plan is comprised of instruments that were in force prior to the commencement of the Resource Management Act 1991 (for example, a number of bylaws and general authorisations).

Provisions of the Transitional Regional Plan have been replaced by the "new" Regional Plans. The Transitional Regional Plan is no longer needed with the exception of a few provisions. Provisions that need to be retained are included in an appropriate form in the Regional Freshwater Plan. These provisions are identified in section 3.1 of the changes, which follow.

3. Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan

3.1 Proposed Changes to the Regional Freshwater Plan Associated with the Withdrawal of the Transitional Regional Plan

3.1.1 *Change*

Add the following definitions to Section 3.

Defence against water includes any dam, weir, bank, carriageway, or groyne, or reservoir, and any structure or appliance of whatsoever kind which has or may have the effect of stopping, diverting, controlling, restricting, or otherwise regulating the flow or spread or subsidence, in or out of a watercourse, of water including floodwater.

Floodway, in relation to the Lower Ruamahanga River, the Waiohine River and the Hutt River, means land that is not in the bed of a river, which:

- *is shown in figure 10.3 of Appendix 10 as the River Corridor for the Lower Ruamahanga River;*
- *is shown in figure 10.4 of Appendix 10 as the River Corridor for the Waiohine River; or*
- *is described in Appendix 10 as the River Corridor for the Hutt River.*

Stopbank means a structure constructed on a floodplain, or alongside a river, designed to contain flood flows and prevent high river flows flooding onto adjacent land. Stopbanks are included within the meaning of "defence against water".

Reason

The definitions are necessary to assist with interpretation of other provisions that follow in section 3.1 of these plan changes.

3.1.2 *Change*

Add the following new policy to section 7.2.

7.2.7A To provide people that have defences against water located on their land, which are controlled by the Wellington Regional Council, with:

- *information about the legal status of defences against water and peoples' obligations under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941; and*
- *land use guidelines for activities that have the potential to destroy or damage defences against water.*

Explanation

This policy identifies some non-regulatory actions that the Wellington Regional Council will take to help ensure that flood protection structures and works and other defences against water are protected. The approach of the Plan to the avoidance and mitigation of floods is outlined in section 12.1.4. It is largely non-regulatory, for the reasons that are outlined in 12.1.4.

The policy links the Wellington Regional Council's Resource Management Act 1991 responsibilities and its operational role for flood protection under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941. The Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941, not the Resource Management Act 1991, is the primary legislation by which the Wellington Regional Council carries out its operational responsibilities for flood protection.

Section 154 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941 enables the Wellington Regional Council to take legal action against people wilfully destroying or damaging any defence against water. It is this legislation that the Wellington Regional Council will rely on, in the first instance, in the event that people destroy or damage defences. The policy is to help ensure that such situations do not arise by providing advice on how to avoid them.

Section 154 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941 is given in Appendix 12 of the Plan, for information. The definition of "defence against water" is given in Section 3. It is the same as the definition in the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941.

Method 8.6.7 of the Plan will implement the first and second bullet points in the policy.

Reason

The Resource Management Act 1991 and the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941 are both relevant to the Wellington Regional Council's flood protection role. The Plan is concerned with the Wellington Regional Council's Resource Management Act role. However, it is helpful to include a policy that indicates how the Wellington Regional Council will ensure its operational responsibilities for looking after flood protection structures and works under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941 will be implemented.

3.1.3 **Change**

Add the following new rule to section 7.3.

Restricted Discretionary Activities

Rule 48A **Uses of land within the Waiohine River Floodway, the Lower Ruamahanga River Floodway, and the Hutt River Floodway**

The use of land in a floodway, other than a use that is consistent with the purpose of flood protection that the floodway was designed for, within:

(1) the Waiohine River Floodway and the Lower Ruamahanga River Floodway, which,

(a) Erects, places, or extends any structure that obstructs the flow of water, other than a wire fence not exceeding 1.2 metres in height;

(b) Deposits any substance that obstructs the flow of water; or

(c) Plants any trees or shrubs that, in combination with other plantings of trees or shrubs, are likely to obstruct the flow of water when the trees or shrubs grow to maturity;

(2) the Hutt River Floodway, which:

(a) Erects, places, or extends any structure that obstructs the flow of water;

(b) Deposits more than 20 cubic metres of any substance;

is a restricted discretionary activity.

Discretion

The matters over which the Wellington Regional Council shall exercise its discretion are:

(1) The effects of the proposed activity on the structural integrity of any defence against water;

(2) The effects on flood flows;

(3) The duration of the consent;

(4) The carrying out of measurements, samples, analysis, survey, and investigations;

(5) The provision of information to the Council at specified times.

Note: The definition of floodway is given in Section 3 of the Plan.

Reason

The Wellington Regional Council relies on the rules in district plans, in the first instance, to ensure that land uses do not compromise flood protection. This is the approach promoted by the Regional Policy Statement. The Wellington Regional Council also relies on section 154 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941 to ensure that defences against water are not damaged or destroyed.

It is important to minimise any gaps in the application of these two laws that will result in communities being put at risk of flooding from major rivers in the Region. Most flood protection structures and works can be addressed under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941. However, there is an element of uncertainty about whether some land uses in floodways would be captured by the provisions of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941. A rule in a regional or district plan is necessary to avoid any uncertainty. Withdrawal of the Transitional Regional Plan means that the floodways of Waiohine, Lower Ruamahanga, and Hutt Rivers are not adequately looked after at the time of notifying these changes. Therefore, the rule is necessary at the present time.

3.1.4 **Change**

Add the following new rule to section 7.3.

Rule 52 Vehicles on Stopbanks

The use of any stopbank for the passage of any motorised vehicle or machinery of greater than 9 tonnes along a stopbank is a **prohibited** activity, excluding one or both of the following:

- (1) The stopbank is an existing formed road that is part of a public roading network maintained and operated by a local authority or a network utility operator; or
- (2) The use is by a local authority or network utility operator for the purpose of maintaining, repairing, extending or adding to the stopbank, or any other flood management purpose, or for the purpose of maintaining or repairing existing network utility infrastructure.

Reason

Heavy vehicles can cause damage to a stopbank if the stopbank is not constructed for use as a road. Two exceptions are included in the Rule. One relates to public roads, which are built for heavy and frequent traffic. The other is when heavy machinery may be needed infrequently on a stopbank for repair and maintenance purposes.

3.1.5 **Change**

Add the following new Method to section 8.6.

8.6.7 Prepare and distribute information to landowners that will promote an understanding of how the Wellington Regional Council manages community flood protection assets and the part that landowners play in the management of those assets, including:

- information about where legal responsibilities lie; and
- guidelines for land uses that will help ensure defences against water, including structures such as stopbanks, and trees, shrubs or plants, are not damaged or destroyed.

Reason

A specific method is needed in the Plan that will implement Policy 7.2.7A.

3.1.6 Change

Add the following new paragraph to section 9.7.1 after the paragraph that ends “*use and development*”.

Policy 7.2.7A is included in the Plan to provide information on non-regulatory ways the Wellington Regional Council will carry out operational responsibilities for looking after defences against water under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941.

Reason

An explanation of the principal reason for Policy 7.2.7A is needed in the Plan.

3.1.7 Change

Add the following paragraph to section 9.7.2 after the paragraph that ends “*meet the specified conditions*”.

A restricted discretionary activity rule requiring consents for some land uses in the floodways of the Waiohine, Ruamahanga, and Hutt Rivers is included in the Plan. It was included at the time that the Transitional Regional Plan was withdrawn. The rule is to ensure that activities in these important floodways do not compromise their ability to contain floods. Section 12.1.4 of the plan identifies that territorial authorities have primary responsibility for land use activities relating to natural hazards. At the time the Transitional Regional Plan was withdrawn, the rule was needed because the rules in the relevant district plans, by themselves, would not necessarily achieve regional objectives and policies relating to flooding.

Reason

An explanation of the principle reason for Rule 48A is needed in the Plan.

3.1.8 Change

Add the following paragraph to section 12.1.4 after the paragraph that ends “*in their District Plans*”.

Controls on land uses relating to the adverse effects of flooding were contained in the Transitional Regional Plan. These controls were withdrawn after all of the Wellington Regional Council's regional plans became operative. At the time of withdrawal of the Transitional Regional Plan, the ability of rules in district plans to achieve regional objectives and policies relating to flooding was assessed together with other relevant legislation (for example, the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941). As a result, a rule for controlling land use for the avoidance or mitigation of flooding in specified river corridors

is included in the Plan. This rule is consistent with the approach of the Regional Policy Statement.

Reason

Consequential change

3.1.9 **Change**

Make the following change to Appendix 10.

Refer to Policy 7.2.5 and Rule 48A

Replace the description of the Hutt River in Appendix 10 of the Regional Freshwater Plan with the following text.

Hutt River:

At the time Plan Change 1 was made to the Regional Freshwater Plan, there were ongoing discussions between the Wellington Regional Council, and the Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils, about implementation of the recently completed "non statutory" Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan. The Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan includes a map of the Hutt River Corridor.

It is not appropriate to include this map of the Hutt River Corridor while discussions continue on how the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan might be taken up in district plans.

For the purposes of the Regional Freshwater Plan, the river corridor for the Hutt River is:

- (1) the river bed; and
- (2) the land area between any river bed and the stop bank adjacent to the river bed; and
- (3) in the following places, where there is no stopbank adjacent to the river bed;
 - (a) from Melling Bridge to Moonshine Bridge, the land area between the river bed and State Highway 2 (but not including State Highway 2), other than any residential activity area identified in the Proposed District Plan for Hutt City or the Operative District Plan for Hutt City; and
 - (b) from Pomare Bridge to the Silverstream Road Bridge, the land area between the river bed and the Eastern Hutt Road (but not including the Eastern Hutt Road); and
 - (c) from the Silverstream Road Bridge to the Stopbank at Trentham Memorial Park, a 200 metre wide area of land adjacent to the river.

Reason

At the time Plan Change 1 to the Regional Freshwater Plan was notified, some aspects of the management of the Hutt River Corridor were in transition for the following reasons:

- A “non-statutory” Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan, which identifies the Hutt River corridor, had been completed with the support of the Wellington Regional Council, and the Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils - implementation of this plan was just beginning;
- The Transitional Regional Plan was being withdrawn;
- The Proposed Hutt City District Plan and the Proposed Upper Hutt City District Plan were not yet operative.

There are ongoing discussions between the Wellington Regional Council and the Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils about implementation of the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan.

Implementation of the Regional Freshwater Plan relies on a clear definition of the River Corridor for the Hutt River. It is also appropriate that provisions of the Regional Freshwater Plan take account of the period of transition for managing the Hutt River Corridor. In recognition of this interim period, definition of the Hutt River Corridor in the Regional Freshwater Plan relies on a description of boundaries rather than using maps of the river corridor from the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan. The use of maps from the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan will not be included in the Regional Freshwater Plan until discussions are completed on how the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan will to be taken up in district plans.

3.1.10 *Change*

Add the following new Appendix.

Appendix 12

Section 154 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941

Damage to watercourses and works

- (1) Every person who, without the written approval of the Minister or Board concerned, wilfully destroys or damages any watercourse or defence against water which is in any district or is under the control of the Minister or of any Board, or is constructed, established, or maintained under this Act by the Minister or by any Board, or who, without the written approval of the Minister or Board concerned, wilfully destroys or damages any plantation or work under the control of the Minister or of any Board, commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.
- (2) Every person who, without the written approval of the Minister or Board concerned, destroys or damages any watercourse or defence against water which is in any district or is under the control of the Minister or of any

Board or is constructed, established, or maintained under this Act by the Minister or by any Board, or who, without the written approval of the Minister or Board concerned, destroys or damages any plantation or work under the control of the Minister or of any Board, or who allows any animal which he owns or has under his control to damage or destroy any tree, shrub, or plant forming part of a defence against water, being a defence that is under the control of the Minister, or Board whether or not he has been guilty of an offence against this section, shall be liable to pay to the Minister or to the Board, as the case may be, the whole cost of restoring or repairing the damage or injury; and the amount thereof shall be recoverable as a debt due to the Minister or to the Board, as the case may be.

Reason

Consequential change

3.2 Proposed Changes to the Regional Freshwater Plan Associated with Bore Construction

3.2.1 Change

Replace the definition of bore in section 3 with the following:

Bore means any hole regardless of the method of formation that has been constructed to provide access to groundwater, or which intercepts groundwater, excluding geotechnical investigations outside the groundwater zones shown in Appendix 9.

Reason

The Regional Freshwater Plan defines bores in terms of structures that are used to create them. The definition is more complex than it needs to be. It creates the need for a separate rule for the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone that includes holes as well as structures. A more straightforward definition is desirable. The new definition was adapted from NZS 4411:2001, New Zealand Standard for Drilling of Soil and Rock.

3.2.2 Change

Delete Rules 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

Replace Rule 15 with the following rule:

Rule 15 Bore construction

The construction of any bore is a **Discretionary Activity**.

Note: A land use consent to construct a bore does not confer any right to take water. In the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone a water permit is required to

take any water. In any other water body in the Region, a water permit is required pursuant to Rule 16 to take more than 20 cubic metres per day.

Reason

There are 6 rules for bore construction in the Regional Freshwater Plan. They are each identified below, together with a discussion of the changes. The bore construction rules are for land use. They should not be confused with rules for taking water that require separate resource consents unless the water take is less than 20 cubic metres per day, which is permitted in the Regional Freshwater Plan.

Although bore construction and taking water are regarded as separate activities by the Resource Management Act 1991, they are closely linked in practice. A bore must be constructed before groundwater can be taken.

Permitted Activities

There are currently 2 permitted activity rules for bore construction. The first permitted activity rule is for bores less than 5 metres deep that are outside groundwater zones identified in Appendix 9. There are no conditions on this permitted activity rule. The rule restates the position of the Act for land use. It is not really necessary because, if there were no rule, the activity would be permitted by the default of the Act.

The only known “bores” in the areas identified in the permitted activity rule are for geotechnical investigations. They are excluded from the new definition of bore. Hence, geotechnical investigations outside the areas identified in Appendix 9 are specifically excluded from the new rule. The permitted activity rule is no longer needed because the new definition and the new rule embrace all the situations that need to be addressed.

The second permitted activity rule is for bore construction less than 5 metres deep within identified groundwater zones on the Kapiti Coast and in the Hutt Valley. There is no demand for bores in the Hutt Valley less than 5 metres deep. On the Kapiti Coast this rule is proving to be ineffective for the reasons identified in the following three paragraphs.

Since the Regional Freshwater Plan was made operative, there has been a large increase in demand for groundwater bores on the Kapiti Coast, partly in response to increased restrictions on Kapiti's water supply take. Hundreds of bores have been drilled in the last two years. A large number of bores were also present prior to the recent increases.

Most of the bores are for domestic use. Their construction and use are permitted activities because they are usually less than 5 metres deep and take less than 20 cubic metres of water per day. The rule in the Regional Freshwater Plan allowing bore construction to a depth of 5 metres is subject to a condition requiring the driller to supply the Council with a location plan of the bore. Despite this requirement, very few drillers have advised the Council of the location of new bores. There is some uncertainty over whether the condition could be enforced

because a permitted activity should be able to be carried out without recourse to the Council.

Lack of knowledge about the location and number of bores has hampered monitoring of the groundwater resource. In response to the lack of knowledge, a targeted investigation of shallow groundwater bores on the Kapiti Coast has gathered information over the last year. The findings have enabled the Council to estimate groundwater use in parts of the Kapiti Coast. A summary of relevant findings is given on the next two pages under the heading "Shallow Groundwater Allocation Estimates on the Kapiti Coast". The results suggest it is likely that some aquifers are, at least, approaching their safe yields. In the future it will be critical that the Wellington Regional Council is able obtain ongoing information on bore locations and numbers so that it can promote the sustainable management of groundwater.

Shallow bore construction on the Kapiti Coast is the main reason why changes to the Regional Freshwater Plan are necessary and appropriate. The changes suggested will require resource consents to be obtained for the construction of all new groundwater bores. In practice this need not require every new bore to obtain a resource consent. The process will be more efficient if drillers obtain "global" consents that allow them to construct bores within identified areas, subject to providing the Council with information about the bores. There have already been discussions with drillers on this approach and there will be more consultation during the plan change process.

Controlled Activities

There is one controlled activity rule in the Regional Freshwater Plan for bores greater than 5 metres deep on the Kapiti Coast and in the Hutt Valley, excluding the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone. There has been a steady increase in the number of resource consents for bores on the Kapiti Coast. The deeper bores generally take more than the 20,000 litres per day limit on permitted activity takes. Because both the bores and takes are consented, there is less of a problem obtaining information. There is little demand for new bores in the Hutt Valley.

Discretionary Activities

There are three rules for discretionary activities in the Regional Freshwater Plan. One is for bores and holes greater than 5 metres deep in the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone. There is a rule for all bores in the Wairarapa. One rule is for bores on the Kapiti Coast and the Hutt Valley, other than the Lower Hutt Groundwater Zone, which do not meet the controlled activity standards or permitted activity conditions.

The Rules Are More Confusing Than They Need To Be

The plan changes suggested are consistent with the management of groundwater bores in other parts of the Region, such as in the Wairarapa. At present, people can find our rules for bore construction confusing because they differ from place to place and depend on bore depth. The changes are an opportunity to reduce the number of groundwater bore rules from six to one.

Shallow Groundwater Allocation Estimates on the Kapiti Coast

The register of bores held by the Wellington Regional Council/Kapiti Coast District Council estimates there are 810 shallow bores in the Waikanae Groundwater Zone and 122 in the Raumati/Paekakariki Zone. Surveys carried out by the Wellington Regional Council indicate the Register is about 50% complete. One driller consulted suggested that the estimate is 33% complete.

Drillers spoken to during the Wellington Regional Council surveys estimated that mean usage per bore ranged between 0.25 cubic metres of water per day to 5 cubic metres of water per day. The maximum permitted volume is 20 cubic metres of water per day.

The safe yield of the sand aquifer (0-45 metres deep) in the Waikanae Groundwater Zone specified in the Regional Freshwater Plan is 14450 cubic metres of water per day. Table 1, below, estimates bore numbers, groundwater use, and safe yield percentages

Table 1: Estimates of number of bores, groundwater use, and percentage of safe yield for the Waikanae Groundwater Zone

Number of bores		Estimated groundwater use m ³ per day	% of safe yield m ³ per day
Estimate	810	0.25	1.4
		5.0	28.0
		20.0	112.1
Estimate x2	1620	0.25	2.8
		5.0	56.1
		20.0	224.2
Estimate x3	2430	0.25	4.2
		5.0	84.1
		20.0	336.3

The safe yield of the Raumati/Paekakariki Groundwater Zone (0-6 metres deep) specified in the Regional Freshwater Plan is 5980 cubic metres of water per day. Table 2, below, estimates bore numbers, groundwater use, and safe yield percentages

Table 2: Estimates of number of bores, groundwater use, and percentage of safe yield for the Raumati/Paekakariki Groundwater Zone

Number of bores		Estimated groundwater use (m ³ per day)	% of safe yield (m ³ per day)
Estimate	122	0.25	0.5
		5.0	10.2
		20.0	40.8
Estimate x2	244	0.25	1.0
		5.0	20.4
		20.0	81.6
Estimate x3	366	0.25	1.5
		5.0	30.6
		20.0	122.4

The safe yield of both groundwater zones considered together is 20430 cubic metres of water per day. Table 3, below, estimates bore numbers, groundwater use, and safe yield percentages

Table 3: Estimates of number of bores, groundwater use, and percentage of safe yield for the Waikanae Groundwater Zone and the Raumati/Paekakariki Groundwater Zone together

Number of bores		Estimated groundwater use m ³ per day	% of safe yield m ³ per day
Estimate	932	0.25	1.1
		5.0	22.2
		20.0	91.2
Estimate x2	1864	0.25	2.3
		5.0	45.6
		20.0	182.5
Estimate x3	2796	0.25	3.4
		5.0	68.4
		20.0	273.7

Local Effects

The proliferation of groundwater bores in close proximity to each other in parts of the Kapiti Coast raises questions about cumulative adverse effects that may be occurring locally, such as interference with nearby bores, soil compaction and subsidence. At present there is little information to assist with assessing the significance of bores or groundwater takes because they are not controlled. Information about the location and number of bores would assist with assessing potential problems.

Controlled or Discretionary Activity Consents?

It is desirable that there should be one approach to groundwater bores in the Region because the present approach is confusing and the actual adverse effects of constructing groundwater bores do not differ much from place to place.

The construction of bores should not be a controlled activity because, from time to time, there may be good reasons why resource consents should not be granted, such as cultural reasons. Requiring bores to obtain discretionary activity consents would allow applications to be turned down if bores are inappropriately located. In practice, there would be little difference between making bore construction controlled or discretionary. Few applications are likely to be declined and few would need to be notified.

An Independent View

A Report by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in May 2001 "*Who's water is it?*" provides an independent assessment of the conclusions that the WRC has reached as a result of its reassessment of groundwater on the Kapiti Coast. It comments as follows.

A concern that came to light through consultation is the number of water bores that have been put in on the Kapiti Coast over the last few years and the cumulative impact they may be having on the groundwater of the Kapiti Coast. Many people in Waikanae, Paraparaumu and Raumati are putting in bores as a way of overcoming water restrictions during summer. This approach is, in fact, encouraged by KCDC.

Under the Regional Freshwater Plan, shallow bores of less than 5 metres in depth do not require resource consent. KCDC considers it has a reasonably accurate record of the number of bores because people are encouraged to register the bores with KCDC to avoid enforcement action when water restrictions are in place. This register indicates over 1000 bores have gone in either unconsented or as a permitted activity over that last few years. The WRC, however, does not appear to have an accurate record of how many bores now exist, even though Rule 10 of the Regional Freshwater Plan requires that the WRC is advised of the bores as a condition of being a permitted activity.

From a sustainable water management perspective, the lack of information held by the WRC about the number of shallow bores, the quantity of water take from those bores and whether or not there is potential for adverse cumulative effects on the shallow groundwater resource are significant concerns. WRC acknowledges that it does not have adequate knowledge of the groundwater resource or of the numbers of bores that exist. The proposals for more in depth investigations in 2001/02 are noted and should be given priority.

3.3 Proposed New Permitted Activity Rules in the Regional Freshwater Plan

3.3.1 *Change*

Change the definition of artificial watercourse in section 3, as follows:

Artificial watercourse does not include a river but has the same meaning as in the interpretation of "river" in the Act. For the purpose of Rules 9A and 9B, artificial watercourse includes an irrigation canal, water race, and farm drainage canal.

Reason

The Plan already has a definition of artificial watercourse that is consistent with the Act. The inclusion of a new rule relating to artificial watercourses in 3.3.2 of these changes will be assisted by some further clarification of the definition.

3.3.2 *Change*

Add the following new permitted activity Rule to section 6.3:

Rule 9A Diversion of water from an artificial watercourse or drain

The diversion of water from an artificial watercourse or drain is a permitted activity, provided that it complies with the conditions specified below:

- (1) No contaminants (including but not limited to oil, petrol, diesel, paint, or solvent) shall be released to water from equipment being used for the construction of the diversion and no refuelling of equipment shall take place on any area of stream bed.*
- (2) All material used to construct the diversion but which is not part of any diversion structure shall be removed from the artificial watercourse or drain and disposed of in an appropriate manner.*
- (3) All reasonable steps shall be taken to minimise the release of sediment to water during construction.*
- (4) The diversion shall be maintained so that there is no accumulation of debris.*
- (5) There shall be no adverse effects on the availability of water supply for upstream or downstream water users.*
- (6) There shall be no flooding of land, including neighbouring land, on properties upstream or downstream of the diversion.*
- (7) The ability of the artificial watercourse or drain to convey flood flows shall not be reduced.*
- (8) There shall be no adverse effects on any river, lake, or wetland.*
- (9) There shall be no adverse effects on the passage of fish.*

Note: For the purpose of this rule, “drain” means a highly modified watercourse or river that is channelled to such an extent that it has the characteristics of a farm drainage canal (see section 3 of the Plan).

Note: For the purpose of this rule, artificial watercourse includes an irrigation canal, water race, and farm drainage canal. (see section 3 of the Plan).

Reason

The diversion of water from artificial watercourses and farm drains are activities that are common in the Region. They currently require resource consents but usually have very little adverse effects, provided they do not interfere with neighbouring properties or water bodies such as rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Adverse effects can be addressed in the conditions on a permitted activity rule.

3.3.3 Change

Add the following new permitted activity Rule to section 6.3:

Rule 9B The diversion of groundwater

The diversion of groundwater is a permitted activity, provided that it complies with the conditions specified below:

- (1) No contaminants (including but not limited to oil, petrol, diesel, paint, or solvent) shall be released to water from equipment being used during the construction of the diversion.*
- (2) There shall be no adverse effects on water supply.*
- (3) There shall be no flooding of land on any neighbouring property.*
- (4) There shall be no lowering of surface water levels in any river, lake, or wetland.*
- (5) There shall be no lowering of groundwater levels on any neighbouring property.*
- (6) There shall be no adverse effects on any river, lake, or wetland.*

Reason

The diversion of groundwater usually occurs in association with other activities such as land uses, groundwater takes, or diverting surface water. Diversions currently require consents but usually have very little adverse effects, provided they do not interfere with neighbouring properties or water bodies such as rivers, lakes, and wetlands. These effects can be addressed in the conditions on a permitted activity rule.

3.4 **Proposed Changes to Permitted Activity Rules in the Regional Freshwater Plan**

3.4.1 **Change**

Change Rule 1 in section 5.3:

*The discharge of contaminants, or water, into surface water, other than the discharge of stormwater, is a **Permitted Activity** provided the discharge complies with the conditions specified below.*

Add the following conditions to Rule 2 in section 5.3:

The discharge does not originate from an area of bulk earthworks greater than 0.3 ha;

Concentrations of acid-soluble aluminium in the discharge shall be no more than 0.15g/m³

Add the following definition to section 3 of the Regional Freshwater Plan.

Stormwater means the water and contaminants from land or the external surface of any structure as a result of rainfall.

Add the following definition to section 3 and include it as a note in Rule 2:

Bulk earthworks means the cut to fill, excavation, and blading required to regrade an area.

Reason

The change to Rule 1 is needed to clarify that the rule does not include stormwater discharges.

The new condition relating to bulk earthworks is necessary because bulk discharges from earthworks over an area greater than 0.3ha will breach minimum water quality standards in the RMA. In particular, the discharges will result in conspicuous changes to the colour and visual clarity of receiving waters and they will have significant adverse effects on aquatic life. The new condition will provide greater certainty about when resource consents are needed and when the activity is permitted.

The new condition that relates to acid soluble aluminium is necessary because alum floc is now used in settling ponds that treat water discharged from earthworks. The standard is to protect aquatic life.

The definitions of stormwater and bulk earthworks are needed to clarify Rule 2.

3.4.2 *Change*

Change Rule 8 in section 6.3 as follows:

Rule 8 Damming and diversion of water by existing structures

*The damming and diversion of water by a structure that was existing and lawful on 25 January 1997 (the date the Proposed Plan was publicly notified), excluding the Lake Wairarapa Barrage Gates, is a **Permitted Activity**.*

Reason

The Barrage Gates currently have a resource consent to dam and divert water that expires in 2019. The operation of the Gates has effects on Lake Wairarapa that are more than minor. Hence, it is appropriate that resource consents have been obtained and be required in the future when the current consents expire.

3.4.3 *Change*

Add the following condition to Rule 33 in section 7.3:

(4) Will not result in the diversion of water from any wetland.

Reason

The removal or demolition of structures (eg. weirs) that affects the water tables of wetlands should be subject to resource consents.

3.5 **Proposed Changes to the Regional Freshwater Plan that Include or Update Information**

3.5.1 *Change*

Include minimum flows, core allocations supplementary allocations, and flows at which stepdown allocations take affect for the Waipoua and Upper Ruamahanga Rivers in Table 6.1, as shown in the table on the next page.

Replace minimum flows, core allocations supplementary allocations, and flows at which stepdown allocations the stepdown allocations for the Kopuaranga River in Table 6.1, as shown in the table on the next page.

Reason

The change is promoted by Method 8.5.5 of the Regional Freshwater Plan. Water allocation plans for these rivers have recently been completed. It is appropriate to update the Regional Freshwater Plan.

Table 6.1 Minimum Flows and Water Allocation for Some Rivers in the Wellington Region

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3 Policy 6.2.1(1)	Column 4 Policy 6.2.1(2)	Column 5 Policy 6.2.1(3)	Column 6 Policy 6.2.1(4)		Column 7 Policy 6.2.1(4)	
Part of the river/ stream within which allocations in columns 4, 5 6 & 7 apply	The location of recorders where flows in columns 3, 5, 6 & 7 are measured	Minimum Flow (litres/second)	Core Allocation (litres/second)	Flow required for supplementary allocation (litres/second)	Flow below which first stepdown allocation takes effect (litres/second)	First stepdown allocation (litres/second)	Flow below which second stepdown allocation takes effect (litres/second)	Second stepdown allocation (litres/second)
Kopuaranga River from the headwaters to the confluence with the Ruamahanga River	At Palmers Bridge	<u>270</u> <u>250</u>	125	600	<u>270</u> <u>300</u>	0 70	<u>250</u>	<u>0</u>
Waipoua River from the headwaters to the confluence with the Ruamahanga River	At Mikimiki Bridge	<u>250</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>1000</u>	<u>300</u>	*		
Ruamahanga River from the headwaters to the confluence with the Waiohine River	At Wardells Bridge	<u>2400</u>	<u>800</u>	<u>5000</u>	<u>2700</u>	*		

* stepdown allocations for the Waipoua River and the Ruamahanga River from the headwaters to the confluence with the Waiohine River will be decided at the time resource consent applications are made. Guidance on stepdown allocation for different water uses is given in the internal technical publications prepared for each watercourse.

3.5.2 **Change**

Make the following changes to clause (1) of the explanation to Policy 6.2.1:

For some larger rivers in the eastern (Wairarapa) part of the Region (Tauherenikau, Waiohine, Waingawa, ~~Kopuaranga~~) the minimum flow is based on water allocation plans prepared prior to the Act being passed into law by Parliament. Minimum flows for ~~the first three of these rivers~~ are based around historical methods using the one in five year low flow. ~~The minimum for the Kopuaranga River is based on achieving a 150mm depth in the river at its confluence with the Ruamahanga River, for the migration of trout.~~ The minimum flow for the Ruamahanga at Waihenga, is based on water quality requirements. The flows for all these rivers in the Wairarapa are greater than habitat methods would provide because significant losses to groundwater can occur in the beds of these rivers.

The minimum flows for the Kopuaranga, Waipoua and Upper Ruamahanga Rivers have been arrived at as part of water allocation plans for these rivers that were prepared between 1996 and 2001. The minimum flows, core allocations, and stepdown allocations specified in these water allocation plans and Table 6.1 were derived using a variety of methods including:

- *Evaluating instream assessment methods including WAIORA and IFIM.*
- *Assessing current water allocations.*
- *Evaluating baseline water quantity and water quality data.*

The water allocation plans also give guidance in relation to a variety of water resource issues, hence they are matters that should be referred to when applicants are applying for resource consents, or Council staff are assessing resource consent applications.

Reason

The explanation needs to include reference to the rivers added to Table 6.1.

3.6 **Minor Corrections, Improvements and Clarification of the Regional Freshwater Plan**

3.6.1 **Change**

Add definitions of "bed recontouring" and "beach recontouring" to section 3, as follows:

Bed recontouring means disturbance of any river bed by the mechanical movement of sand, shingle, rock, gravel or other natural material, to realign that part of the bed that is covered by water at the time of the disturbance for the purpose of remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of flooding or erosion.

Beach recontouring means disturbance of any river bed by the mechanical

movement of sand, shingle, rock, gravel or other natural material, to realign that part of the bed that is **not** covered by water at the time of the disturbance for the purpose of remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of flooding or erosion.

Reason

Definitions of these terms are desirable to ensure they are properly understood.

3.6.2 **Change**

Delete the definition of core allocation from section 3.

Reason

The definition of core allocation is not entirely consistent with clause (2) of the explanation of policy 6.2.1. The explanation of the policy provides a lot more relevant information than the definition. It is consistent to include the meaning in the explanation to the policy because the meanings of "stepdown allocations" and "supplementary allocations" are provided in the explanation.

3.6.3 **Change**

Delete the definition of "surface water" from section 3.

Reason

"Surface water" has been defined as "water in rivers lakes and wetlands". Rules 1, 2, and 3 permit some minor discharges to "surface water". Rule 5 requires resource consents for the same discharges to artificial watercourses. Deleting the definition of surface water will include discharges to artificial watercourses in Rules 1, 2 and 3, which is appropriate.

3.6.4 **Change**

Include the following definition in section 3.

Intermittently flowing means a river or stream that, in its natural state during an average year, stops flowing on at least one occasion during the year.

Reason

Legal advice suggests a problem with using intermittently flowing stream without any time being placed on how often the stream stops flowing.

3.6.5 **Change**

Change Rule 2 in section 5.3 to read ... *the discharge does not contain drainage from an area where hazardous substances are stored or used unless:*

Reason

This is the same wording as in the wording in the proposed plan. It was changed inadvertently during the process for preparing the Plan.

3.6.6 Change

Change rules 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 38, 40 and 41 in section 7.3 by including the following after "stream" or "river or lake bed" in the Rules:

including any associated:

- disturbance of any lake or river bed; or
- deposition on the river or lake bed;
- temporary diversion;

Reason

The additional wording will clarify that disturbance, deposition, and temporary diversion associated with the permitted activities is permitted.

3.6.7 Change

Add the following note to Rule 35 in section 7.3:

Note: Entry or passage across the bed of any river or lake is permitted by Rule 35 but the rule does not permit other uses of river or lake beds that are identified in Section 13 of the Act. Other uses of river and lake beds such as disturbance, deposition, and reclamation require resource consents unless they are permitted by a rule in the Plan.

Reason

The addition is to provide clarity that while entry or passage is permitted other uses of river beds must be considered separately.

3.6.8 Change

Add the following definition of "river crossing" to section 3 and make the following changes to Rule 25 and 47 in section 7.3:

River crossing means any structure for the purpose of crossing a river or stream such as a culvert, weir, ford, or bridge.

Rule 25 ~~Culverts, weirs, fords, and small bridges~~ River crossings in intermittently flowing streams

The placement and use of any river crossing of a width necessary for the crossing, excluding any river crossing that dams a river, that is fixed in, on, under, or over the bed of any intermittently flowing river or stream which; ...

Rule 47 ~~Culverts, weirs, fords, and bridges in rivers and streams~~ River crossings

The placement and use of any river crossing of a width necessary for the crossing, excluding any river crossing that dams a river, which is a culvert, weir, ford, or bridge across any river or stream, which is not a permitted activity, including any associated:

Reason

People have misinterpreted Rule 25 to allow the piping of length of streams that are not necessarily river crossings. A similar change is made to Rule 47 to ensure consistency.

3.6.9 Change

Add the following matter for control in Rules 43, 45, 46, and 48 in section 7.3:

The maintenance of structures

Reason

The ability to ensure structures are maintained is important to for flood hazard mitigation.

3.6.10 Change

In Appendix 4, correct the Map number for the Mangaterere (paragraph 25) from S27 to S26.

Reason

There is an error in the Plan.

3.6.11 Change

Add the following to Appendix 6 together with a corresponding new figure 6.12:

the Waiohine River and its tributaries upstream of the Moroa Water Race at S26: 2711421 6014318, as generally shown in figure 6.12.

Reason

The Waiohine River supplies Greytown and Featherston with water for human consumption. Therefore, it should be included in Appendix 6.

4. **Proposed Plan Change 1 To the Regional Plan for Discharges to Land**

4.1 **Proposed Changes to Permitted Activity Rules in the Regional Plan for Discharges to Land**

4.1.1 *Change*

Add the following condition to Rule 3.

(ca) The discharge does not contain drainage from an area where hazardous substances are stored or used unless:

(i) hazardous substances cannot enter the stormwater system; or

(ii) there is an interceptor system in place to collect hazardous contaminants or divert contaminated stormwater to a trade waste system.

Reason

Rule 3 of the Discharges to Land Plan does not provide any control of stormwater discharged to land from sites where hazardous substances are stored or used. The change will make it consistent with the approach used in the Regional Freshwater Plan.

4.2 **Minor Corrections, Improvements and Clarification of the Regional Plan for Discharges to Land**

4.2.1 *Change*

In Rule 7, replace the reference to *Technical Publication 58* with a Wellington Regional Council technical publication *Guidelines for on-site sewage in the Region WRC/RP-G-00/47*

Reason

Technical Publication 58 has been superseded by Guidelines for on-site sewage in the Region WRC/RP-G-00/47

5. Proposed Plan Change 1 To the Regional Air Quality Management Plan

5.1 Proposed Changes to Permitted Activity Rules in the Regional Air Quality Management Plan

5.1.1 *Change*

Delete exclusion (a) from Rule 4.

Add a new clause (2) to Rule 4 as follows:

(2) buildings used to house farm animals or feedlots which are part of factory farms.

Change clause (2) of Rule 4 to clause (3).

Reasons

The effect of the change will be to permit the activities in (a), subject to the conditions in the rule. Activities that currently require consents under exclusion (a) cause very little odour, and/or have no affected neighbours. For these activities, the only consent condition that would normally be set is the same as the permitted activity condition in Rule 4. Any more onerous conditions are not necessary. There is no reason for a resource consent for these activities.

5.1.2 *Change*

Delete exclusion (a) from Rule 10.

Amend clause (2) of Rule 10 as follows:

the extraction, quarrying and mining of minerals, and the size reduction, and screening of wood products and minerals.

Reason

Many activities that currently require consents under exclusion (a) cause very little dust, and/or have no affected neighbours. Normally, the only consent condition that would be set for these activities is the same as the permitted activity condition in Rule 4. Any more onerous conditions are not necessary. For these activities there is no reason to require resource consents.

5.2 **Proposed Changes to the Regional Air Quality Management Plan that Include or Update Information**

5.2.1 *Change*

In Issue 2.3.4, the definition of “re-entry period”, Policy 4.2.21, and the explanation to Rules 19, replace the reference to "NZS 8409:1995" with "NZS 8409:1999".

Reason

The standard has been updated.

5.2.2 *Change*

Replace the air quality guidelines in Appendix 2 with updated Air Quality Guidelines taken from MfE's *Revised and New Ambient Air Quality Guidelines*.

Reason

The guidelines that were used for Appendix 2 in the Plan have now been updated.

5.3 **Minor Corrections, Improvements and Clarification of the Regional Air Quality Management Plan**

5.3.1 *Change*

In condition (ix) of Rule 1, replace the reference to *Registered Chemical Applicators Certificate* with *Advanced Growsafe Certificate*.

Reason

The change is a correction to the Plan.

5.3.2 *Change*

Change condition (g) of Rule: 19

which emits any of the hazardous contaminants

Reason

The change will clarify the rule.

6. **Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Soil Plan**

6.1 **Minor Corrections, Improvements and Clarification of the Regional Soil Plan**

6.1.1 ***Change***

Change the definition of soil in section 3, as follows.

***Soil** means a layer of organic and inorganic materials that overlies inorganic materials (either consolidated or unconsolidated), including alluvium and rock fragments weathered from the bedrock.*

Reason

The change will clarify that alluvium and material weathered from the bedrock are included in the definition of soil.