

BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER of submissions and further submissions on Greater Wellington Regional Council Plan Change 1 to the Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region, Hearing Stream 3.

Submitter **GUILDFORD TIMBER COMPANY LTD (Submitter S210, Further Submitter FS25).**

**SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF Timothy Stephen Rillstone
ON BEHALF OF GUILDFORD TIMBER COMPANY LTD**

Dated: 28 May 2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 I provide the following summary of the key points in my evidence dated 5 May 2025:

1.1.1 If most of the monitoring for forest activities have not been undertaken within T AoP and TWT this demonstrates how low priority and risk GWRC has viewed the forestry harvesting to date. My business as well as my employer Guildford Timber Company undertakes harvesting in this area and proactively engages with GWRC and its consultants. No stakeholders intentionally go out to damage the environment and by working closer with stakeholder the results will be achieved to ensure harvesting, and earthworks are undertaken at optimum times which is not necessarily during summer months.

1.1.2 Making forest harvesting a restricted discretionary activity will make most woodlots in the Region uneconomic to harvest. This will result in mature trees being left until the failing naturally which will have a devastating effect on our environment as they collapse, and the ground is destabilised particularly in erosion prone areas. It also poses a safety risk in severe weather and a fire hazard.

1.1.3 The lack of skilled resources within GWRC seems to be more of an issue to ensure compliance than the need to introduce greater restrictions. There is already 20 working days work for GWRC to assess and provide guidance, direction or feedback which is not being utilised under the NES-CF with only an acknowledgement of receiving the notice then putting all responsibility back to the forest owner and contractor. Better assessment and engagement by GWRC would produce immediate results, reducing risk and potential noncompliance with the additional layer of regulation.

1.1.4 Further regulation around methods of harvest, earthworks and stabilisation could be consider in conjunction with industry which would

produce immediate results rather than adding a level of compliance and litigation.

- 1.1.5 Consideration of existing use and forests already operating should be able to continue harvesting and permitted activity status under the NES-CF with closer consideration to the harvest activities between the forest owner, contractor, harvest manager and GWRC.
- 1.1.6 Reference to maintaining canopy cover as a reason to retain trees is highly risky and will have adverse outcomes for the environment. Leaving trees forever is not a management practice that should be encouraged for exotic trees. They require harvesting in a managed regime as a crop rotation as has been proven across Wellington when the older Pine & Eucalyptus trees collapse and create unstable slopes and slips. To impede the management practice of regularly harvesting exotic woodlots/forests will result in trees on moderate and steeper steep slopes being left behind and will fail which will cause far more issues with sediment being realised and slope instability.



Timothy Stephen Rillstone

Dated 28 May 2025