

Waikato Regional Council Healthy Rivers Wai Ora - proposed Plan Change 1

KEY ISSUES FOR SHEEP AND BEEF FARMERS

Waikato Regional Council are currently consulting on their Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipa River Catchments. This brief has been created to help you understand what is being proposed, how it may affect you, and how to get involved.

THE KEY ISSUES IN THE PLAN ARE:

- **Conversion from farming to forestry could be required to achieve long term aspirations;** The Plan establishes an 80 year timeframe to achieve its water quality objectives, recognising that this will be intergenerational and will require a considerable amount of land to be converted from agriculture back into forestry.
- **Nitrogen management adopts a grandparenting approach;** This part of the plan restricts Nitrogen losses from the farm as modelled through OVERSEER to the losses from that property for the 2014/15 years. Farms with the highest 25% of Nitrogen loss will be required to reduce their Nitrogen leaching.
- **Stock Exclusion;** Cattle, horses, deer and pigs will need to be excluded from all rivers, streams, drains, wetlands, and lakes as a priority action, within 3 years of developing a Farm Environment Plan, and no later than 1 July 2026.
- **Restricting Land Use Change;** Any change in land use is a non-complying activity. This means a resource consent will be required and it will be difficult to get approval from the Council. For example land use change from forestry to pastoral or pastoral to horticulture. Provision has been made for some flexibility of Maori owned land that has not yet been able to be developed.

- **Reducing contaminant losses from farms;** all farmers will be required to identify and implement management practices which reduce sediment, phosphorus, and pathogen losses from their properties. Nitrogen loss reductions may also be required.
- **Farm Management Plans;** most sheep and beef farmers are required to have a Farm Environment Plan by certain dates, and to operate in accordance with that plan, either through a resource consent or through a certified industry scheme.

GET INVOLVED

It is critical that you get involved in the process directly. The plan will impact on your farm so it is important you have your say.

- The draft plan can be reviewed at <http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Council/Policy-and-plans/Plans-under-development/Healthy-Rivers---Plan-for-Change/>
- Review the full brief of the plan on the B+LNZ website
- Attend a B+LNZ farmer information and submission training workshop near you
- Download a B+LNZ submission template; and
- Make a submission on the plan and be heard

Share your thoughts or get help with your submission by contacting Environment Policy Manager Corina Jordan: corina.jordan@beeflambnz.com, phone 027 202 7337.