

Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change one:
Waikato and Waipa River Catchments Hearing
Statement of Evidence from Campbell Clarke member of
Waipa Branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers Association

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Otorohanga

My name is Campbell Clarke.

Director of Te Mara Farms Limited, Trustee of C & H W Clarke Family Trust.

- I farm deer, drystock, dairy, and dairy replacements in the Waipa River Catchment, with my wife Helen.
- I have been farming for the past 44 years. I started milking cows full time when I was 16, then moved into sheep/beef/deer at the age of 21.
- I have been a fencing judge at the National Fieldays for approximately 20 years. I am a current member of Otorohanga Fish and Game. Member and past Chairman of New Zealand Deer Farmers Waipa Branch. Volunteer Boat Driver at Karapiro Rowing for the past 15 years.

Farm Details of the two farms

Home block

Brought in 1981. It is 400ha, 220ha Milking 600 Dairy cows and 180ha Dairy replacements and Velvet Stags

Hind block

Brought in 2015. It is 200ha, 300 Hinds, 280 fawns and 140yearlings hinds and 140 spikers plus 150 beef animals. Current stocking rate 14-15 stock units per hectare

The land is river flats, rolling to steep and the soil is Mairoa Ash. Situated in the Tauraroa Valley. We have rainfall of about 1800-2000mm and usually summer safe. Elevation is between 146 and 310 metres. The Dairy farm waterways are fenced off under Fonterra Environmental plan.

Cropping

- Home block: used for pasture replacement on a two year rotation
 - Maize - 14ha
 - Turnips - 5ha
 - Kale - 3ha
- Hind block: used for pasture replacement on a two year rotation
 - Maize - 9ha
 - Kale - 2ha
 - Chicory - 5ha

Fencing Waterways for Deer

My major concern is the cost and time frame. 10 years is too short to do the practicality of the proposed fencing. The need to fence the waterways and put in water supplies would mean major earthworks as it would be impractical to put in short fences from waterways to steeper land. This would mean we would have to re-fence whole areas. Putting fences in impractical places for fencing and stock movement would and could cause more erosion.



This image shows the contours in a paddock, with little flat land next to the stream and steep contour on each side



This image shows a short stretch of easy contour leading into steep gully. To fence would mean the animals would be running around the steep contour to graze the paddock

In some areas we have steep land on one side of waterway and easy land on other. The dairy farm falls under Fonterra and confirms to the old standard flowing water 1m wide 30 cm deep. More fencing is done each year



This image shows a paddock with flat land on one side and steep on the other. It would be impractical to fence one side because the other is 200 metres to the top

The deer farms have two stoney bottom water ways flowing through them. In some places they could be fenced but in a lot of places it would be impractical. Deer will drink from stone bottom streams but do not swim or wallow in them. To wallow they need mud. They will do that in a depression in a flat paddock if they feel like it. In places on the Home Deer farm which was deer fenced 37 years ago (1982) in most gullies we have sediment traps which on this type of contour are better and more practical than fencing.



Sediment trap that has been in for 37 years and has been cleaned on two occasions over that time



Sediment trap that is dry (no water flowing) because of drought



New fencing on new block of land, this is an example of the earth works we have to do to put up deer fencing in a manner that will last.

Summary of the impact of pressures

The impact that the pressures from farming have covers a range of areas. This includes:

Financial pressure – the inability to afford to be able to fence waterways, re-fence whole areas of the farm, and putting in whole new water systems as there is very little trough water on either deer farm

Production – the proposed nutrient capping is detrimental to the improvement of huge areas of this region that could be producing more in the future

Family – there is increased pressure being put on the next generation to be able to continue on with farming. My son has experienced mental health issues as a result of the current pressures that are now involved with farming. This appears to be an ongoing trend across the rural industry (e.g. New Zealand has some of the highest suicide rates in the world)

Urban vs Rural - There appears to be inconsistency between urban and rural. Urban can get a 30 year consent to carry on doing what they are doing. 10 years is far too short a time frame for us to do what would be needed financially and our ability physically to get the work done while also running a successful farming operation