

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1  
Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

Submission on a publically notified proposed Regional Plan prepared under the Resource management Act 1991

On: The Waikato Regional Council's proposed Regional Plan Change 1  
Waikato and Waipa River Catchments

To: Waikato Regional Council  
401 Grey Street  
Hamilton East  
Private Bag 3038  
Waikato Mail Centre  
Hamilton 3240

Full Name: Judith Muriel McGrath

Phone: 07-3786491

Postal Address: 1281 Mapara Road RD5 TAUPO 3385

Email: [mcg.whitiora@kinect.co.nz](mailto:mcg.whitiora@kinect.co.nz)

I wish to be heard in support of this submission

Waikato Regional Council Proposed Waikato regional Plan Change 1  
Waikato and Waipa River Catchments.

*Judith M. McGrath* ..... 7-3-17  
Signature Date

My late husband, Joseph James McGrath and I, Judith Muriel McGrath obtained our 176.7 Ha farm at 1281 Mapara Road Taupo, from the Lands and Survey ballot of December 1965. We moved onto it on the 3/3/1966 with a leasehold title until we bought the freehold about 3 years later. It is two thirds in the Ohaaki sub catchment, and one third in the Lake Taupo Catchment. We farmed it as a sheep and cattle breeding and fattening farm until after the 1970 drought, when we started to phase out the breeding cows and replaced them with trading cattle. In 1996 we began converting some of the farm for deer. In December 1988 our eldest son, Colin James McGrath, and daughter, Jenene Karen McGrath, bought 27 ha in Tuhingamata Road for farming deer. In January 2008 this partnership was dissolved when Jenene bought 23.5ha in Oruanui Road again for farming deer with her late husband. Since 1996 the deer have been farmed in a three way partnership and on my farm gradually phasing in the deer as fencing allowed and phasing out the beef cattle. We now have no cattle, but do have a few thoroughbred and riding horses. Since my husband's death in 2010 my farm has been owned 50% by me and 25 % each by my four children: Colin James McGrath, a Civil Engineering Consultant, Jenene Karen McGrath a chartered accountant running her own business from her home, Gavin Basil McGrath, a mechanical engineer and a partner in a large engineering firm in Taupo, specialising in geothermal energy. They all live nearby. My other son, Bryce David McGrath is based in Perth, Australia. Jenene is the overall manager of the farm, which has always been farmed sustainably. My two Taupo based sons are also actively involved, as was my late son in law, until his unexpected death 16/2/16. Outside labour/contractors are employed as needed.

I am unhappy with this proposal as I believe it will be unworkable and cause massive economic problems to the entire district. According to a Waikato University analysis the crippling costs to individual farmers will put smaller farmers out of business. Smaller farmers are more efficient than corporate farmers. It is expected that there will be 5,000 job losses and a loss of \$500,000 - \$600,000m a year to the entire district, and more than \$200,000 a year for for an average sheep, beef or deer farm in lost income, plus all the bureaucratic costs and consultants fees, which are considerable. Who pays these additional costs? These measures are unfair and in-equable – grand parenting by another name. I accept that farmers need to improve their image, but there needs to be a balance and the process must not destroy small farmers. It is essential to keep costs down and everything simple. Most farmers are very well educated and do not need a farm advisor. This should be a farmer's individual decision. This plan should be with drawn and a new more moderate plan is submitted, taking this into account as required by the government's new plan.

I am unhappy that a moratorium on converting a dry stock farm to dairying was not put in place in 2011 when the Lake Taupo rules were implemented. In the meantime thousands of hectares have been converted, including 300ha opposite me and 199 ha on my northern boundary. The NDA of the average dairy farm is more than double that of an average dry stock farm. Now you are proposing draconian measures for dry stock farmers. It needs to be accepted that nitrogen is not the problem for dry stock farmers, and concentrate on phosphate and run off into streams.

I am unhappy with the use of overseer to regulate NDA on a dry stock farm. This is a tool for the use of fertilizer, and would be ineffective. Phosphate and run off is the problem. 61 % of N and 45% of P loading is from farms. The rest is from other sources. What is being done about these 39% N and 55%P from other sources eg, major cities and towns and roads through out the country. This WRC Plan is marginalizing people. The Lake Taupo Catchment is not a blueprint for other areas. These measures are unfair and in-equable – grand parenting by another name. Dry stock farmers who have been farming sustainably, in my case for more than 50 years are not the problem. More research is needed and different rules for different types of farming. I understand different rules are being applied to vegetable growers. This is only natural justice.

I am unhappy that not enough is known yet about the geology of the region, and the boundaries are just lines on a map, and bare no relationship to physical boundaries where a farm spans two

boundaries as mine does. The current proposals for this situation are unworkable and too restrictive, and too much guess work, with no science to back it up. I believe more research needs to be done to understand the geology of each sub catchment and the unique situation in each area.

I am unhappy about the on farm management changes. According to Doug Edmeades Jan 23/17 these would be crippling. The Technical Leader's Group expects that over 10 years the changes in quality of the water will be small/insignificant! This plan with its emphasis on overseer could be ineffective. This WRC plan is marginalising people. Lake Taupo Catchment is not a blue print for other areas. There were only about 100 farmers in this catchment, where as there are thousands in the Waikato/Waipā catchments. The government requires this to be taken into consideration.

I am unhappy that the major problems below the confluence of the Waikato and Waipā rivers, although historical, are not being addressed and these problems are not accepted on their own. The hydro lakes are another problem. People regularly swim in the river at Hamilton and above. Alternative measures to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous are needed in these areas. Land environment plans to deal with the problem are working in Raglan, Rerewhākaiti and elsewhere in the world. I would like these addressed separately and Overseer used only for modelling fertilizer use and NOT as a regulating tool.

I am unhappy that the pollution downstream of Hamilton by industrial discharges is greater than upstream and is continuing. According to OECD data, Waikato has the fourth lowest level of nitrates of the 95 rivers it monitors. [NZ Farmers Weekly 14/11/16] Also phosphorous and E coli are lower, and that WRC accepts that the Waikato is in better heart now than in 1950. I would like this research taken into consideration.

I am unhappy about the rules for steeper land. It has fewer problems than flat land as emissions are more dispersed. The cost of fencing gullies of high country farms is prohibitive and will cause more problems than it solves. It would result in gorse, broom and lupin infestation which are more polluting than dairying. Forestry is not the answer. Just look at the margins of the forests around Taupo! Also along the verges of country roads. Sheep should not be excluded from these areas in the winter months. This is the most vulnerable time and sheep are not the problem and will keep the pasture clean. These rules need to be revised.

I am unhappy about having either 14/15 or 15/16 as a base year. This is very unfair as we had extensive autumn droughts in both years. Farming is very weather dependent, especially in the Taupo District with regular dry/drought periods making farming very challenging. Having one of these two years as a base year is very unfair. Also on one of our smaller blocks we changed our stock policy and so had much lower numbers than usual. Others entered into sale/lease agreements, or, unexpectedly, had very large stock losses, with the same problems. These changes would give a very low DNA, which is not the problem, and would affect every one's ability to be profitable. Some, like us who did not have an autumn drought in 2016 would be unable to capitalise on a good spring lambing/calving/fawning which would affect their ability to be profitable and make up for the poor years. In the spring of 2016 on my farm we had about twice as many lambs born than in the 2 preceding years, also more fawns. Extra stock during the summer months is not a problem, but may need to be carried through later than usual. The policy adopted needs to reflect that. Overseer is not suitable. As farmers need to make the most of a decent year, a roll over system of several years, as has been given to vegetable growers, is needed as well. Requirements for a farm need to be flexible. New deep rooted pasture cultivars are being developed which will improve pasture quality. Weather patterns change, as do people's physical abilities over time. On my farm we expect that we will need to bring in some cattle in the near future to reduce worm burden and pasture management as we improve the pasture. This should not be impossible.

I am unhappy with the failure to get Maori on board in the northern Hauraki area. Until their agreement is obtained any proposal should be put on hold. It needs to be the whole of the district NOT just a part of it.

I am unhappy with the amount of consultation that was held by the previous council. This plan has been rushed through and ill thought out. It has not been democratic and needs to go back to the drawing board and be completely rewritten with more input from the farming community who are the people who will be extremely affected by these measures.

I am happy that there is no mention of Nitrogen trading. In the Taupo Catchment this has been abused, but was needed to give some flexibility with the draconian NDA rules that were implemented.

I am unhappy about the bad press dairy farmers have had and which has affected dry stock farmers by association. I believe dairy farmers have been trying hard to clean up their act, but this takes time and has not been taken into consideration. This plan is also very unfair, with its 'one size suits all' attitude. Separate rules/management/best practice plan for each type of farming operation reflecting the pollution caused on a sub catchment basis and a roll-over period of at least 5 years is needed.

I am happy with the Hon Nick Smith's statement on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February. In general his policy represents a more moderate pathway, which is essential if farmers are going to continue to farm their land profitably. This plan needs to be abandoned and WRC needs to start again from scratch with more consultation with practising farmers, and taking into account the government's latest requirements. This plan is unreasonable, too restrictive and unfair. Waikato dry stock farmers need a more moderate path to improve environmental quality than the proposed Healthy Rivers Plan 1.

WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN CHANGE 1 -  
WAIKATO AND WAIPA RIVER CATCHMENTS

Yours sincerely,

Judith McGrath

*Judith McGrath* 7-3-17.....  
Signature Date

**From:** Judith McGrath  
**To:** [Healthy Rivers](#)  
**Subject:** (MERGE with 10078101 do not need to print) Re: Healthy Rivers Proposed Plan Change 1 Submission  
**Date:** Sunday, 2 April 2017 6:00:11 p.m.

---

- Could you gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission?No

If others make a similar submission, would you consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing?Yes

**From:** [Healthy Rivers](#)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 28, 2017 12:17 PM  
**To:** [mcg.whitiora@kinect.co.nz](mailto:mcg.whitiora@kinect.co.nz)  
**Subject:** Healthy Rivers Proposed Plan Change 1 Submission

Hi Judith,

Thank you for your submission. I just require answers to a few questions in order for your submission to be considered complete, this is a requirement under the Resource Management Act.

- Could you gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission?
- If others make a similar submission, would you consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing?

Once this information has been received your submission will be processed.

After all submissions have been collated, you will then be sent a formal letter acknowledging receipt of your submissions. This letter will contain further information about the next steps in the submission process including information about hearings dates.

Kind regards,  
Danica

**Danica de Lisle** | Submissions Co-ordinator | Science and Strategy  
**Waikato Regional Council**  
DDI: 07 859 0835  
Private Bag 3038, Waikato Mail Centre, Hamilton 3240  
[Please consider the environment before printing this email](#)

\*\*\*\*\*  
This email message and any attached files may contain confidential information, and may be subject to legal professional privilege. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately and destroy the original message. Any views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender and may not necessarily reflect the views of Waikato Regional Council. Waikato Regional Council makes reasonable efforts to ensure that its email has been scanned and is free of viruses, however can make no warranty that this email or any attachments to it are free from viruses.  
Visit our website at <http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz>  
\*\*\*\*\*