



Submission to Waikato Regional Council

**On the Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 – Waikato and Waipa River
Catchments**

From the National Wetland Trust

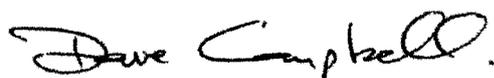
8 March 2017

**National Wetland Trust submission on the Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 –
Waikato and Waipa River Catchments**

Full name of submitter	National Wetland Trust
Authorised by	Tony Roxburgh Chairperson, National Wetland Trust
Contact person	David Campbell Trustee, National Wetland Trust
Postal address of contact person	45 Te Aroha St, Hamilton 3216
Phone number	027 420 0274
Email	davecanniep@gmail.com

- I confirm that I am authorised on behalf of the National Wetland Trust to make this submission.
- The National Wetland Trust wishes to be heard at the hearing in support of this submission.
- If others make a similar submission, National Wetland Trust would not consider presenting a joint case with those parties at the hearing.
- The National Wetland Trust could not gain a trade competition advantage through this submission.

Signed on behalf of the National Wetland Trust



David Campbell
Trustee, National Wetland Trust

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The National Wetland Trust welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 – Waikato and Waipa River Catchments (the Plan Change)
- 1.2. The National Wetland Trust is a non-profit organisation established in 1999 to increase the appreciation of wetlands and their values by all New Zealanders.
- 1.3. The National Wetland Trust aims to
 - Increase public knowledge and appreciation of wetland values.
 - Increase understanding of wetland functions and processes.
 - Ensure landowners and government agencies commit to wetland protection, enhancement and restoration.

The trust has twelve elected and three co-opted trustees representing landowners, tourism and farming industries, local government authorities, NGOs, Crown Research Institutes, and universities.

- 1.4. The National Wetland Trust contributed to the development of the Plan Change by providing one of the two Environmental/NGO representatives of the Collaborative Stakeholder Group (CSG), and one of the CSG delegates.

2. Submission summary

- 2.1. The National Wetland Trust supports the overall intent of the Plan Change as the first stage of achieving the *Vision and Strategy/Te Ture Whaimana* for the Waikato and Waipa River Catchments (the catchments) over an 80-year timeframe.
- 2.2. The National Wetland Trust supports the requirements to change the way land is managed with regard to reducing the impact of land use on water bodies including wetlands.
- 2.3. The National Wetland Trust believes that the CSG process was robust, with all representatives having the opportunity to have an equal voice, to listen to, understand and appreciate the views of the stakeholders involved and the CSG taking ownership of the process it was tasked with. There was ample opportunity for individuals and organisations potentially affected by the Plan Change to be consulted with and engage in the process during the time the CSG was operative.
- 2.4. The National Wetland Trust believes that, in order to achieve the *Vision and Strategy/Te Ture Whaimana*, the role of wetlands – both natural and constructed – must be fully recognised and accounted for in the Plan Change.
 - 2.4.1. Most of New Zealand's original wetlands have been lost to land development and landuse intensification, and this has been a contributor to loss of water quality and biodiversity. Naturally functioning wetlands can help to regulate water flows and improve water quality by trapping sediments and attenuating nutrient losses to downstream water bodies.
 - 2.4.2. Steps should be taken to ensure that remaining areas of wetlands within the Waikato and Waipa catchments, both large and small, are protected and restored. Where

natural wetlands no longer exist, land owners need to be encouraged, through incentives, to create wetlands for water treatment purposes. The contribution that constructed wetlands can make to treating contaminated water is well documented.

2.4.3. The diverse range of wetland types that exist within the catchments ranging from small hillside seeps to large and internationally significant peatlands, and the benefits they provide for water quality and healthy functioning ecosystems, needs to be recognised and accounted for in the way land is managed.

2.4.4. Naturally functioning wetlands, together with constructed wetlands, can contribute to improving the assimilative ability of land systems under future allocation schemes.

2.4.5. The success of this Plan Change relies on a multi-faceted approach, from regulating the spread of contaminants, to on-farm land use change, through to the preservation of natural wetland systems and the creation of artificial wetland systems to help manage catchment water discharges.

2.5. The National Wetland Trust acknowledges that Plan Change provisions recognising the importance of Whangamarino Wetland have been withdrawn (Objective 6, Policy 15, parts of Method 3.11.4.4), which is extremely disappointing. We seek to allow provisions within methods to support wetland protection, research and restoration efforts throughout the catchments.

Section of the Plan Change	Support/oppose	Submission	Decision sought
3.11.4.4	Support subject to making amendments	<p>Wetlands have significance throughout the catchments for their biodiversity and functional roles in water flows and water quality so are deserving of protection, research and restoration.</p> <p>Method 3.11.4.4 is relevant beyond the (withdrawn) Whangamarino Objective 6 and Policy 15, as provided for by Policy 17.</p>	<p>Changes to parts of method 3.11.4.4. (Underlined text is suggested addition.)</p> <p>3.11.4.4 Lakes <u>and wetlands</u></p> <p>e. Support research and testing of restoration tools and options to maintain and enhance the health of shallow lakes <u>and wetlands</u> (e.g. lake modelling, lake bed sediment treatments, <u>wetland restoration methods</u>, constructed wetlands, floating wetlands, silt traps, pest fish management, and farm system management tools).</p> <p>f. Support lake <u>and wetland</u> restoration programmes including, but not limited to, advice, funding, and project management. Restoration programmes may</p>

			have a wider scope than water quality, including hydrological restoration, revegetation and biodiversity restoration.
3.11.4.5	Support subject to making amendments	Ensure that existing wetlands are not put at risk by development of mitigation techniques including constructed (but artificial) wetlands, and that support is provided for restoration of natural wetlands.	<p>Insert new provision under <i>3.11.4.5 Sub-catchment scale planning</i>, following c), and renumbering of subsequent provisions.</p> <p>d) <u>Identify areas of existing wetland and ensure these are not negatively impacted by construction of artificial wetlands or other mitigations.</u></p> <p>e) Support research that addresses the <u>management and restoration</u> of wetlands, including development of techniques to monitor ecological change and forecasting evolution of wetland characteristics resulting from existing land use in the wetland catchments.</p>

Submission ends.