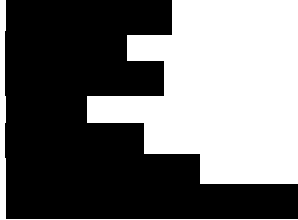


# Water Conservation Order: Te Waikoropupū Springs and Associated Waterbodies

Submission Reference no: 1443

Judith Humbert



**Submitter Type:** Individual

**Source:** Web Form

**Overall Notes:**

**Clause**

The specific parts of the application that my/our submission relates to are:

**Notes**

Please kindly refer to the attached document.

**Clause**

What is/are your view/s on the application?

**Position**

Support

**Notes**

Please refer to submission document

**Clause**

I/we seek the following recommendation from the Special Tribunal to the Minister for the Environment

**Position**

Grant the order

**Notes**

**Clause**

Would you like to present your views on this submission to the Special Tribunal at a public hearing?

**Position**

I/we do want to present my/our views at a public hearing

**Notes**

**The submitter have elected to withhold their personal details from publication.**

Judith Humbert



13 March, 2018

To the Environmental Protection Authority and the Special Tribunal:

In respect of the Water Conservation Order application by Ngati Tama Ki Te Waipounamu Trust and Andrew Yuill (including the aquifers, Takaka River, and tributaries) I note the following;

1. I have read the Water Conservation Order application.
2. All due respect to iwi and hapu as tangata whenua who hold generations of ecological and traditional knowledge that is critical for the wellbeing of these waters.
3. To fully acknowledge the validity of indigenous knowledge systems and the status of Te Waikoropupu springs as wahi tapu.
4. The absolute necessity to view water flows in their entirety -- springs + surface + underground + rivers + streams + all the ecologies that also contribute to water, not as separate parts, but as comprising a holistic living system upon which all life depends.
5. To bear witness to the outstanding and exceptional intrinsic, physical, cultural, spiritual, scientific, recreational and scenic values of Te Waikoropupu springs as evidenced in their clarity, mauri, spiritual and healing qualities, and the biodiversity of its total ecologies and habitats.
6. To suggest the principles of water management ethics relating to human rights and social and environmental justice including “equal respect for human dignity...the common good...right relationship and responsible stewardship...and inclusive and deliberative participation” are to be considered as well.  
[[https://www.humansandnature.org/filebin/pdf/minding\\_nature/August\\_2009\\_Principles\\_of\\_Water\\_Ethics.pdf](https://www.humansandnature.org/filebin/pdf/minding_nature/August_2009_Principles_of_Water_Ethics.pdf), Accessed 13 March, 2018]
7. It is my understanding that resource consents under consideration by the Tasman District Council for water takes will benefit a very small group of local farmers, yet may potentially put the springs and related water systems at risk.

Furthermore, “The human interests served by water and by the biodiversity water makes possible are often not well served by behavioral strategies of individual interest maximization such as those fostered by libertarian property rights.”

[<https://www.humansandnature.org/principles-of-water-ethics>, Accessed 13 March, 2018]

In this light:

- (a) What is the value of water to a few for water takes or other commercial uses when known scientific studies included in the Water Conservation Order application do not sufficiently answer critical questions about the short and long term impacts on the whole water system and we will have to answer to our grandchildren and generations beyond as to why and how we cared for their access to pure water?
  - (b) There is potential value in pursuing regenerative agricultural practices that offer sustainable alternatives to current ‘traditional’ farming methods and can help support ongoing outstanding water quality.
8. The value of water goes well beyond that of a commodity to be bought and sold.
  - (a) As a major draw for tourists the springs bring added value to the community, helping to support local businesses through tourist dollars. There is greater value in protecting the springs for the benefit of the larger community, as well as safeguarding the waters for the greater good.
9. Personal experience:
  - (a) I was born and raised in the United States and became a New Zealand citizen after visiting and living here for over 20 years.
  - (b) As part of my professional cross cultural research work in nature and culture I have explored and photodocumented springs, streams and rivers at sacred sites in the United States, Canada, Britain, Peru, India, Egypt and New Zealand. Nowhere else in the world have I seen the depth and diversity of water that Te Waikoropupu springs so freely and abundantly provides.
  - (c) I have visited Te Waikoropupu springs 3 times, most recently during an extended stay in the area after Cyclone Gita closed the Takaka Hill road in February, 2018. Each time I am inspired and uplifted by the potency of the springs, the natural clarity, the intense colors, the gentleness of the ecological island that holds the springs DOC walkway, and

the intrinsic spirit of place. Such places are now very rare in the world and are to be valued and cherished, protected and well looked after.

(d) Through experiential education, field work and direct experience with water, as well as mentoring by indigenous elders from New Zealand my perspective of water has shifted from thinking of water as a resource or commodity to knowing water as a living being and taonga to be treasured and cared for responsibly and with deep respect. For this I am deeply grateful.

(1) As shared by one elder: Who are we to challenge the authority and voice of water?

10. Responsible stewardship: As a vital source of wellbeing, cultural and spiritual health, I strongly believe we have a responsibility alongside tangata whenua to responsibly hold and nurture these waters for current and future generations.

New Zealand holds some of the last remaining pure water on Earth. It is high time we looked after our waters properly before the fact and not attempt to remediate any potential effects should these waters incur any negative impact that affect their overall wellbeing or anyone associated with them.

I pray the privilege of experiencing and coming to know the outstanding clarity and preciousness of Te Waikoropupu springs is available to future generations as well.

As a New Zealand citizen I affirm my support for this WCO application and kindly ask for the Special Tribunal to recommend to the Minister for the Environment to grant the order.

Thank you for reviewing this submission.

Kind regards,

Judith Humbert  
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University of Hawai'i at Manoa