

Submission Reference no: 149

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Submitter Type: Individual

Source: Web Form

Overall Notes:

Clause

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

Notes

All parts.

Clause

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

Position

Support

Notes

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 not want to present my/our views at a public hearing

Notes

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

TE WAIKOROPUPU SPRINGS WATER CONSERVATION ORDER SUBMISSION

We wish to register full support for the Water Conservation Order (WCO) relating to the Te Waikoropupu Springs and associated water bodies. Our opinion is based on the following:-

1. The DOC website summarises 3 primary reasons why “Pupu” Springs must be given the highest level of protection - *“Te Waikoropupū Springs are the largest freshwater springs in New Zealand, the largest cold water springs in the Southern Hemisphere and contain some of the clearest water ever measured.”*

The latter is however an understatement. As scientifically proven in numerous publications there is almost no water anywhere on Planet Earth that is clearer and of higher purity. The Springs are therefore outstanding on a global scale, not just locally or within New Zealand.

Awareness of this means it would be recklessly stupid to potentially sacrifice such an outstanding national treasure to risks associated with any tampering of the aquifers and streams for commercial gain.

2. Imagine the consequences to New Zealand’s international reputation if one or more commercial ventures were to be allowed and (increased) pollution of the water was to result. The country would never live it down. It would be a clear statement to all that we simply don’t care about our environment and are happy to allow its degradation purely for the financial benefit of a few.

If such usage is allowed then the country would be signalling to all that any water anywhere can simply be “bought” for any purpose.

3. Groundwater springs of such size are extremely rare globally and because of this they should be preserved as nature generates and maintains them.

There is more than enough pastoral land and groundwater available elsewhere in New Zealand that can be utilised to sustain farming and water-bottling operations without causing a detrimental effect on the general environment. Sites such as Pupu Springs must therefore be preserved to ensure they do not suffer from human interference. The Springs also provide a wonderful example to younger generations about the importance of respect for different cultures and for the environment.

4. We live 2 hours from Pupu Springs and always take overseas visitors (including those from the North Island!) to visit them. We feel it’s even more important they experience this place than our nearby National Parks. The simple reason is that DOC and Ngati Tama Ki Te Waipounamu have provided scientific, historical and cultural information in an easily understood format. It clearly demonstrates the importance of Man’s symbiotic relationship with water and precisely why we must treat such natural resources with the utmost respect.

The information details science, human history related to the Springs, and most tellingly, what is important to Maori culture in particular about water being the sustenance to general life. The information also prompts us to educate our visitors about the many wonderful aspects of Maori culture regarding the environment. Such considerations are frequently lost today when we simply turn on a tap when we want water. The Springs, and the explanatory information provided, emphasise what we must not lose sight of: that without clean water we will all become sick or worse. Preserving the aquifer and its Springs will demonstrate to all that we have not completely lost sight of the importance of pure water to all life.

The DOC/Ngati Tama partnership also sets a wonderful example to all about how important water is to both Maori and Pakeha and why such a place should not be subject to potential desecration and lost to younger generations.

We have always experienced a profound sense that these Springs are “special” and the information displayed at the entrance heightens our awareness. We also notice that our visitors are affected in similar manner and this leads to even more respect for Maori culture and the New Zealand environment.

5. There is growing evidence from water testing that intensive farming practices are already having a negative effect by increasing nitrate levels. The nature of the aquifer is that the very slow movement of water has delayed impact, but this is likely to increase in the next few years. Studies throughout New Zealand have clearly demonstrated that much harm has already been done to watercourses as a result of intensive farming using frequent irrigation and manufactured fertilisers. Allowing additional intensive farming methods within the aquifer area would almost certainly have a (profoundly?) negative impact on water quality.
6. In the absence of any scientifically proven plans that can better support the health of the aquifer and Springs we believe the Tribunal should support the 5 key points for safeguarding the health of the water as proposed by NIWA and contained in the WCO.

Please send an unequivocal message to all of New Zealand that most of us do care about the environment’s special places, the quality of our water and what we will pass on to following generations.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our views within this submission.

Richard Clement and Vivien Peters

12 February 2018

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