

Water Conservation Order: Te Waikoropupū Springs and Associated Waterbodies

Submission Reference no: 730

Lesley McQue, **Nelson Regional Development Agency (Mark Rawson)**

Submitter Type: Organisation

Source: Web Form

Overall Notes:

Clause

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

Notes

This submission has been prepared by the Nelson Regional Development Agency (NRDA). The NRDA is a Council Controlled Organisation, owned by the Nelson City Council (NCC). Tasman District Council (TDC) also contributes funding to the NRDA. The organisation has a combined Nelson Tasman regional focus in the delivery of its activities. The mission of NRDA is to partner with the public and private sectors in the attraction and retention of investment, visitors and talent who want to add to the special character of the region. In this submission the Nelson Regional Development Agency (NRDA) addresses the explicit and implicit economic aspects of the Application. We do not make any comment on specific cultural matters.

Clause

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

Position

Support

Notes

The New Zealand Tourism Sustainability Commitment states “the tourism industry must take a leading role in protecting and enhancing the environment on which it depends for the benefit of future generations.” Protecting our unique environmental features today, will enable the tourism industry to continue to be economically successful in the long term. NRDA aims to support and promote economic, social and environmental sustainability not only within the visitor industry in particular but as a factor for all regional development initiatives, and as such the protection of an existing asset is in harmony with our strategy. Te Waikoropupu Springs is widely acknowledged to be a jewel in Nelson Tasman’s crown. It is an extremely popular destination for international and domestic visitors as well as locals, and forms a significant part of the “visitor trail” in the Golden Bay area. Local tourism operators report that “almost all” their clients visit the Springs during their stay in Golden Bay – with about 90,000 visitors per annum, they are definitely a significant drawcard. The Springs feature prominently in multiple visitor guides to NZ including Trip Advisor, Lonely Planet, Rough Guides, AA Traveller and the NZ Backpackers Guide, as well as in Tourism New Zealand promotions. In addition, the special waters support a salmon farming business that contributes heavily to employment, GDP and exports for our region. Whilst the majority of visitors appreciate the beauty and tranquillity of the Springs, NRDA also recognises the significance of the entire ecosystem as an outstanding natural asset that adds to the special quality of our region. The existence of endemic and unique life forms, outstanding biodiversity, and water clarity that is second in the world only to another water body in our region (the Blue Lake), and the Weddell Sea in Antarctica, are as much a part of the value represented by the Springs as is the beauty. We support the approach taken in the Application to use a “whole of catchment” method to protect the waters that flow into the Springs. Assets such as the Springs are not just for the benefit of visitors. They enhance the attractiveness of our region as a place to live and work. The attraction of skilled and talented workers will increasingly be an important factor in the continued development of our region for the prosperity of all, and our region needs to compete on many platforms to attract talent and thus provide a skilled workforce that will attract investment.

Clause

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

Position

Grant the order

Notes

Given that the Application aims to provide for reasonable use by primary and secondary industry, and sufficient certainty for the continued use of the waters and land resource by existing consent holders, whilst also providing for future low impact use and enjoyment of the waters by secondary industry such as tourism operations, NRDA submits that the application should be approved.

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

This application is submitted on behalf of the Nelson Regional Development Agency by Mark Rawson, Chief Executive.