

Water Conservation Order: Te Waikoropupū Springs and Associated Waterbodies

Submission Reference no: 845

Rebecca Reider

Submitter Type: Individual

Source: Web Form

Overall Notes:

Clause

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

Notes

I am in support of the Water Conservation Order to protect Te Waikoropupu Springs and the aquifer that feeds these springs. The springs are a truly special, sacred place. I have lived in Golden Bay for ten years, and the Springs are one of the few places that I show to all of my visitors. I have travelled all over the world, visiting natural wonders everywhere I go, and I have never encountered springs that are simultaneously so clear and so abundant in their flow. I have spent many special times quietly visiting the Springs and connecting with the magical phenomenon of this crystal-clear water emerging from the Earth. I also enjoy sitting by the springs and watching people from all over the world come to marvel at them. This place is truly a taonga. All people can connect to the majesty of these waters. After I listened to a recent scientific presentation by Andrew Yuill, which presented scientific data collected by the Friends of Golden Bay, I became extremely concerned about TDC/FLAG proposals to encourage more intensive farming by extracting more water from the aquifer. The water sampling data collected by Friends of Golden Bay clearly shows that the Springs are already at the safe upper limit of nitrate recommended by NIWA. What is more, because it takes water many years underground to emerge from the springs, the existing sampling data only reflect the nitrate levels that resulted from farming activities up to ten years ago. We don't actually know whether further nitrate increases are already in process due to current farming practices. The fact that nitrate increases have been recorded in recent years is extremely worrying. We don't know how much more nitrate increase is already in the pipeline, waiting underground. Utmost caution is required when dealing with waters of such national and international significance. We must protect the clarity and purity of the springs. We must protect the habitat of the stygofauna which purify these waters underground. This has to come before the desires of a few dairy farmers to increase their water takes. Farming must live within the natural limits set by the springs' requirements. There are ways to farm without intensive irrigation and high numbers of animals. Farmers can find ways to earn a livelihood without damaging the aquifer. What is more, increasing irrigation would only benefit a small number of farmers. It is unacceptable to risk the health of a public natural treasure in exchange for the economic benefit of a few. NIWA has made clear recommendations about scientific parameters to protect the Springs. We need a legal instrument to enforce these parameters. We also need to respect the voice of iwi as kaitiaki of this sacred site. Please grant the Water Conservation Order.

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 want to present my/our views at a public hearing

Notes

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