

Water Conservation Order: Te Waikoropupū Springs and Associated Waterbodies

Submission Reference no: 312

Andrew McLellan, **Rameka Forest Restoration Charitable Trust**

Submitter Type: Organisation

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

We support the application. We are a private trust that manages 91 hectares of land in Eastern Takaka within the catchment of the Takaka Unconfined Gravel Aquifer. We primarily manage this land for carbon sequestration as well as for public recreational and more general ecological restoration purposes. The physical health and wairua of the Te Waikoropupu Springs and Associated Waterways is important to us for several reasons: Direct amenity values - Our property is bounded by the Rameka Creek waterbody typical of those in the aquifer area, with large sections running underground during normal flows that turns into an impressive wild churning mountain stream during rain events. For visitors to the Trust's property the clear waters of the stream provide a fresh and invigorating setting for a walk, bike ride or dip in the cool waters on a hot day. The Trust's property also draws water through a community domestic water scheme from a high tributary of Rameka Creek. Having a potable water source is an essential resource for our conservation volunteers who visit the Trust's land. Intrinsic values - Te Waikoropupu Springs have an intangible value that strikes any visitor. Its water clarity and tranquility provides a peaceful setting for reflection. It's national and international significance are deserved. There are few places in NZ with these characteristics that are so accessible. Its waters tell a story of millennium - mysterious underground waterways moving a pristine resource connecting geology and communities throughout its catchment. If the Springs become unhealthy it is a "canary in the coalmine" for the health of the whole region. Currently the aquifer and associated waterbodies are under threat by deforestation in Upper Takaka caused by agricultural intensification (eg. pivot irrigation leading to removal of native vegetation in pasture; increased nutrient run off; pine harvesting leading to increased sediment loads). In the lower catchment extractive industries such as gold dredging in river beds and bottled water extraction pose threats to the health and integrity of the Springs. Climate change also poses challenges for the management of freshwater. Salination of lowlying water tables, increased water temperatures leading to algal blooms, increased storm events and damage all pose challenges. A Water Conservation Order will provide added incentives for government, regulatory bodies and landowners to more carefully consider the impacts of land use on an increasingly scarce resource - pristine fresh water. A holistic and more strategic approach is needed to protect the aquifer. That is why we support this application in its totality.

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