

## **Submission on One Plan,**

**Evidence from Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society**

**16<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

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Forest & Bird would like to thank the staff for all the work which has gone into the rewording of these chapters. They have taken on board many positive suggestions and put them into context. We are very supportive of the actions outlined here, and commend them to the Commissioners.

We have one main request that in view of the declining state of our environment the aim of this plan should include to end up in 10 years time with an **improvement** in the environment in all quarters not just maintaining the present state which is not good.

### **Chapter 1 – Setting the Scene**

#### **1,4 Our Region's 4 Big Challenges**

##### **Issue 1 – Surface Water Degradation**

###### **Proposed Approach**

We note that it is not recommended to accept “underpinned by enforcement”, and this is dealt with in another chapter. Apart from that we support and agree with this issue.

##### **Issue 2: Increasing Water Demand**

###### **The Problem:**

We note that our suggested wording is rejected, and yet remain concerned that the damage done to the natural character of our ecosystems by increasing demand.

###### **Proposed approach:**

We support the approach that the Regional Council is taking to manage and allocate water and minimum flows, and will have to trust that these have been set to protect the ecosystems which are involved.

##### **Issue 3: Unsustainable Hillcountry Land Use.**

We think the problem is accurately defined and support the proposed approach, including the reworded sentence.

##### **Issue 4: Threatened native Habitats**

**The Problem:** We support the problem as defined

**Proposed Approach:** We support this approach, especially to have the top 100 wetlands under active management within 10 years. However, our concern is that these fragments will be isolated and not managed within the ecological and physical landscape in which they occur.

#### **1.4 Planning for Climate Change**

##### **The Problem and Proposed Approach**

We do support the inclusion of this issue and support the proposed approach. It is important that this issue is recognised and planned for.

## **1.5 & 1.6 Working Towards a Better Future and Codes of Practice**

We support these two statements, and are very pleased to see that plan changes are included as a possibility if any rules or statements in this Plan are proving to be unsatisfactory and not achieving the purpose intended before the plan review in 10 years time.

## **Chapter 10A - Administration**

### **10A.1 Cross-Boundary Issues**

We are pleased to see Forest & Bird's name added to the list of organisations that the Regional Council acknowledges it needs to work with, as well as other NGO's. We hope to be able to contribute in any way we can to the various issues which arise

### **10A.2 Plan Monitoring.**

We strongly support the plan to monitor the effectiveness of the policies and methods every three years, and expect that if some aspect is not achieving the expected results a Plan Change will be introduced straightaway.

## **Chapter 11A – General Objectives and Policies**

We note the inclusion of this new chapter and support it's inclusion and content. We seek a firm decisive Plan with no ambiguities.

## **Chapter 7 – Living Heritage**

### **7.1 Scope**

(2) We do support the addition of Natural Features to the description. Although we consider that the inclusion of ecological values would be an improvement. None of the areas exist in isolation and are often dependent upon each other for existence.

### **7.1.3 Landscapes and Natural Character**

We support the additions to this description, but in the description of the approach of the One Plan we would like to see that it would be to "maintain and **enhance** the current degree of natural character where appropriate".

The aim to proactively manage the top 100 wetlands is excellent. Could the aim here be to complete this within the life of the current One Plan, i.e. within 10 years?  
All the time the wetlands are continuing to decline.

## **7.2 Significant Resource Management Issues**

### **Issue 7-1 Indigenous Biological Diversity**

We agree and support this list of declining diversity

### **Issue 7-2 Natural features, landscapes and natural character**

We strongly support the issues as listed, and the recommended additional wording. The description of Natural character is good and we support this.

These two issues (7-1 & 2) clearly outline the issues which are the cause of such decline in our landscapes and natural features and natural character. Everything else relates to how these issues are going to be tackled, to reverse the decline and ensure the natural character of central New Zealand still exists for future generations.

**Objective 7-2 Natural features landscapes and natural character.**

We support this objective, and appreciate that the definition of natural character is listed in the issues paragraph

### **7.3 Policies**

**Policy 7-1A Activities affecting Indigenous biological diversity**

We strongly support this Policy and the new wording. It is clear and precise. We like the “maintenance and enhancement” in section (b) and the clear instructions to Territorial Authorities.

**Policy 7-4 Proactive management of at habitats**

We see that the Council is firm in its aim to maintain and enhance indigenous biodiversity, and this is very important and we firmly support the matters listed in sections (b) and (c)

**Policy 7-5 Fostering an ethic of stewardship**

Once again firm leadership with land owners is very important to halt the decline and help them understand what can be done.

**Policy 7-6 Pest plants and animals**

We support this clause, as pests are a large cause for the destruction of natural habitats for native birds and animals.

**Policy 7-7(a) (b) and (c) Regionally outstanding natural features and landscapes**

We consider the additions and alterations to this policy are good and hope they will be retained as set out in the yellow paper.

**The list in Table 7.2** is a necessary addition to clearly identify the scope, range of values and natural character which can be affected by subdivision, use or development.

**Schedule F**

These maps seem clear in the way they identify the landscape features which are part of everyone’s lives in this central area.

**Policy 7-8 Natural character**

We support the reassessment of subsections a-g, and support the rewording as (a-e)

**Policy 7-9 Public access**

Again we support the rewording of these two clauses.

### **7.4 Methods**

Forest & Bird fully supports all these initiatives Methods 7-1 to 7-9. These are very good and an important part of bringing this One Plan into action. Public education is essential if there is going to be a change to understanding the need to respect and protect our natural ecosystems.

If funding and co-operation of other agencies is forthcoming these projects will go a long way towards a better landscape and ensuring biodiversity increases instead of declining.

### **7.5 Anticipated Environmental Results**

We appreciate the scope of these results which are anticipated here, but we would really like to see the words “**or better**” included in all instances of the recommendation.