

Environment Southland

- 1 NOV 2016



**FEDERATED
FARMERS**
OF NEW ZEALAND



Federated Farmers of New Zealand

**Submission on Notified Resource Consent
Application to Discharge Stormwater in
Invercargill (APP-20168843)**



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**SUBMISSION TO ENVIRONMENT SOUTHLAND ON NOTIFIED
RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATION TO DISCHARGE
STORMWATER IN INVERCARGILL (APP-20168843)**

To: The Chief Executive
Environment Southland
service@es.govt.nz

Submission on: Application for Discharge Permits for Invercargill Stormwater Network
(APP-20168843)

Date: 1 November 2016

From: **Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Southland Province)**

Contact: **TANITH ROBB**
SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR

Federated Farmers of New Zealand
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I am not a trade competitor of the applicant

I wish to be heard in support of my submission

I wish to be involved in any pre-hearing meeting that may be held for this application

I have served a copy of my submission on the Applicant

SUBMISSION TO ENVIRONMENT SOUTHLAND ON THE NOTIFIED RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATION TO DISCHARGE STORMWATER IN INVERCARGILL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On behalf of our members in the Oreti catchment, Federated Farmers Southland submits in partial opposition to the resource consent application from Invercargill City Council discharge stormwater and contaminants to surface water.
- 1.2 We acknowledge that Invercargill City must discharge stormwater. However, the proposed Water and Land Plan process is not yet complete and Southland is on the brink of commencing limit-setting. As such, we consider it inappropriate for Environment Southland to approve a discharge consent with a 35 year term, prior to final decisions being reached on these significant processes.
- 1.3 The community conversations around water quality and quantity needed to inform the Freshwater Management Unit processes outlined in the Water and Land Plan have yet to take place. Freshwater values, objectives, and potential limits have not been considered, and it is unknown whether the catchment is over or under-allocated.
- 1.4 This is crucial information needed to inform and provide context to an application for a 35 year consent to discharge water and contaminants to surface water from Invercargill's stormwater system.
- 1.5 Federated Farmers considers the application should be deferred until the limit-setting process for the Oreti catchment has been completed. Until that time, we support the ongoing discharge of stormwater in Invercargill under expired consent conditions.

Decision Sought

- 1.6 **Defer consideration of the application to discharge stormwater and contaminants to surface water in Invercargill (APP-20168843) until limit-setting in the Oreti catchment is completed, and give approval to the Invercargill City Council to continue to discharge stormwater in accordance with the conditions of their current consent.**

2. REASONS FOR OPPOSITION

Limit-setting

- 1.7 The *National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management* (NPS-FM) requires values, objectives and limits to be set for each freshwater management unit in Southland. Limit-setting in the Oreti catchment is scheduled to begin in 2018.
- 1.8 Currently, the total nutrient loads in Southland surface water bodies are not known, therefore we do not know whether Southland water resources are over or under-allocated.

- 1.9 Environment Southland's 'Water Quality in Southland' booklet published in October 2015 shows that there are issues with Invercargill's water quality. The LAWA website shows that the Otepunu Stream at Nith Street is below the national bottom line for e.coli, and is in the worst 25% of like sites for nitrogen. Stormwater discharges from Invercargill City contribute to the water quality in the lower part of the Oreti catchment.
- 1.10 Federated Farmers is concerned that the Oreti catchment may be found to be over-allocated, and therefore limits established in the catchment will require dischargers to either reduce contaminant levels within their discharges or employ mitigation options to reduce the adverse effects of discharges.
- 1.11 Even if the Oreti catchment is not over-allocated, water quality in the catchment must be maintained under the NPS-FM. Limits will still need to be established to achieve maintenance, and ICC's stormwater discharges will affect where the limits are set, especially if raw sewage cannot be eliminated from the discharges.
- 1.12 A 35 year consent granted before limits have been set effectively gives Invercargill City Council a 35 year exemption from being part of the limit-setting conversation, and from meeting any limits set.
- 1.13 Ultimately, this could require other dischargers in the catchment to reduce nutrient discharges even more, to cover Invercargill City's exemption. We consider this potential outcome to be unacceptable and unfair.
- 1.14 In addition, depending on the values, objectives and limits set within the catchment, ICC's 50-60 year programme to replace the city's aged stormwater earthenware infrastructure may prove insufficient to meet those values, objectives, and limits. If the consent is granted, any discussion around stormwater infrastructure upgrades is unlikely to be raised until 2050.
- 1.15 Given the potential infrastructure investments other dischargers are likely to have to make over much shorter periods, this is inequitable. We consider that affordability and a staged infrastructure upgrade approach should be applied to all dischargers, not just urban townships.
- 1.16 Federated Farmers supports a collaborative limit-setting process, with communities at its heart. All contributors to water quality outcomes must be part of this process to achieve a fair and balanced position. A 35 year consent has the potential to undermine this process and create friction between interested parties.
- 1.17 We note that the new Water and Land Plan enables consideration to be given to the term of resource consents given the upcoming Freshwater Management Unit processes. We appreciate Invercargill City Council's desire for certainty in its operations and therefore the preference for a 35 year term. As such, we recommend deferral of the application and continuing the expired consent conditions for stormwater discharge until limit-setting is completed.

3. ABOUT FEDERATED FARMERS

3.1 Federated Farmers of New Zealand is a voluntary, member-based organisation that represents farming and other rural businesses. Federated Farmers has a long and proud history of representing the needs and interests of New Zealand farmers.

3.2 The Federation aims to add value to its members' farming businesses. Our key strategic outcomes include the need for New Zealand to provide an economic and social environment within which:

- Our members may operate their business in a fair and flexible commercial environment;
- Our members' families and their staff have access to services essential to the needs of the rural community; and
- Our members adopt responsible management and environmental practices.

Bronwyn Auckram

From: Courtney Keen on behalf of Facility Manager
Sent: Tuesday, 1 November 2016 10:30 a.m.
To: Bronwyn Auckram
Subject: FW: SUBMISSION ON NOTIFIED RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATION TO DISCHARGE STORMWATER IN INVERCARGILL (APP-20168843)
Attachments: Submission on ICC Stormwater Discharge Consent Application final.pdf

From: Tanith Robb [<mailto:TRobb@fedfarm.org.nz>]
Sent: Tuesday, 1 November 2016 10:18 a.m.
To: Facility Manager
Subject: SUBMISSION ON NOTIFIED RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATION TO DISCHARGE STORMWATER IN INVERCARGILL (APP-20168843)

Good morning,

Please find attached Federated Farmers' submission on ICC's resource consent application to discharge stormwater.

Regards,
Tanith.

TANITH ROBB
SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR

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