

Submission information

Any person may make a written or electronic submission on Variation 1. For the first time Environment Canterbury is using an online submission system for a regional plan in addition to printed submission forms.

Submissions must be lodged by 5pm, Friday 21 March 2014

How to make a submission using the online system

Visit the online portal at: <http://consult-ecan.objective.com>

You will need to register as a user with an email address and create a password. Once logged in, follow the instructions.

The benefits of lodging an online submission

- Submissions can be done online without printing any documents.
- Submissions can be drafted and checked online before being formally submitted.
- Where an organisation or group is making a submission the online system makes it easier for a team to draft, check and refine submissions.
- Submissions are linked directly to the section of the Plan being submitted on.
- When ready, submissions can be made without sending mail, fax or email documents.
- Submitters receive an email to confirm their submission has been received.

How to make a submission using a printed form

Submission forms are available from Environment Canterbury (office locations below), or can be downloaded from www.ecan.govt.nz.

Return completed submission forms to:

Email: mailroom@ecan.govt.nz

Post: Environment Canterbury
Freepost 1201
Variation 1 to the proposed Canterbury
Land and Water Regional Plan
Or
Environment Canterbury
PO Box 345
Christchurch 8140

Notification of Variation 1

Environment Canterbury is required to provide every person it considers directly affected with a copy of the Public Notice and any other information to help them understand how Variation 1 may affect them.

Relevant documents:

- The Selwyn–Waihora Zone Implementation Programme Addendum (October 2013) – this covers the issues in the catchment and outlines actions required to achieve the outcomes sought for the catchment.
- Variation 1 – this includes the proposed new provisions and maps in relation to the Selwyn–Waihora sub-region and West Melton Special Zone in the proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.
- Section 32 Evaluation Summary Report for Variation 1 – this summarises the evaluation undertaken in developing Variation 1 as required by section 32 of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Additional technical reports are listed in the Section 32 report.

All documents (including the technical reports) can be downloaded free of charge at www.ecan.govt.nz

For a free CD of Variation 1, contact our Customer Services team on 0800 324 636. Hard copies are also available for a charge through the Customer Services team.

Locations to view documents

Copies of Variation 1, the Section 32 Evaluation Report and the Selwyn–Waihora Zone Implementation Programme Addendum can be viewed at any open public library in Canterbury and at the Environment Canterbury offices:

- 17 Sir Gil Simpson Drive, Christchurch
- 75 Church Street, Timaru
- 73 Beach Road, Kaikoura.

Variation 1 – Proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan



Information Sheet

February 2014

What is Variation 1?

Variation 1 is the first change to the proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan related to a specific area (the catchment of Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere). It puts in place policies and rules to help achieve the community goals for freshwater that have been set under the collaborative Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

How will Variation 1 change the Plan?

It replaces most of Section 11 – the Selwyn Waihora sub-regional section. It makes specific changes to Section 9 – the Christchurch–West Melton sub-regional section (these changes span across sub-regional sections 9 and 11) – which include:

- The West Melton Special Zone where special conditions are used to manage groundwater abstraction
- The management of stormwater in the Halswell catchment.

The Selwyn–Waihora catchment

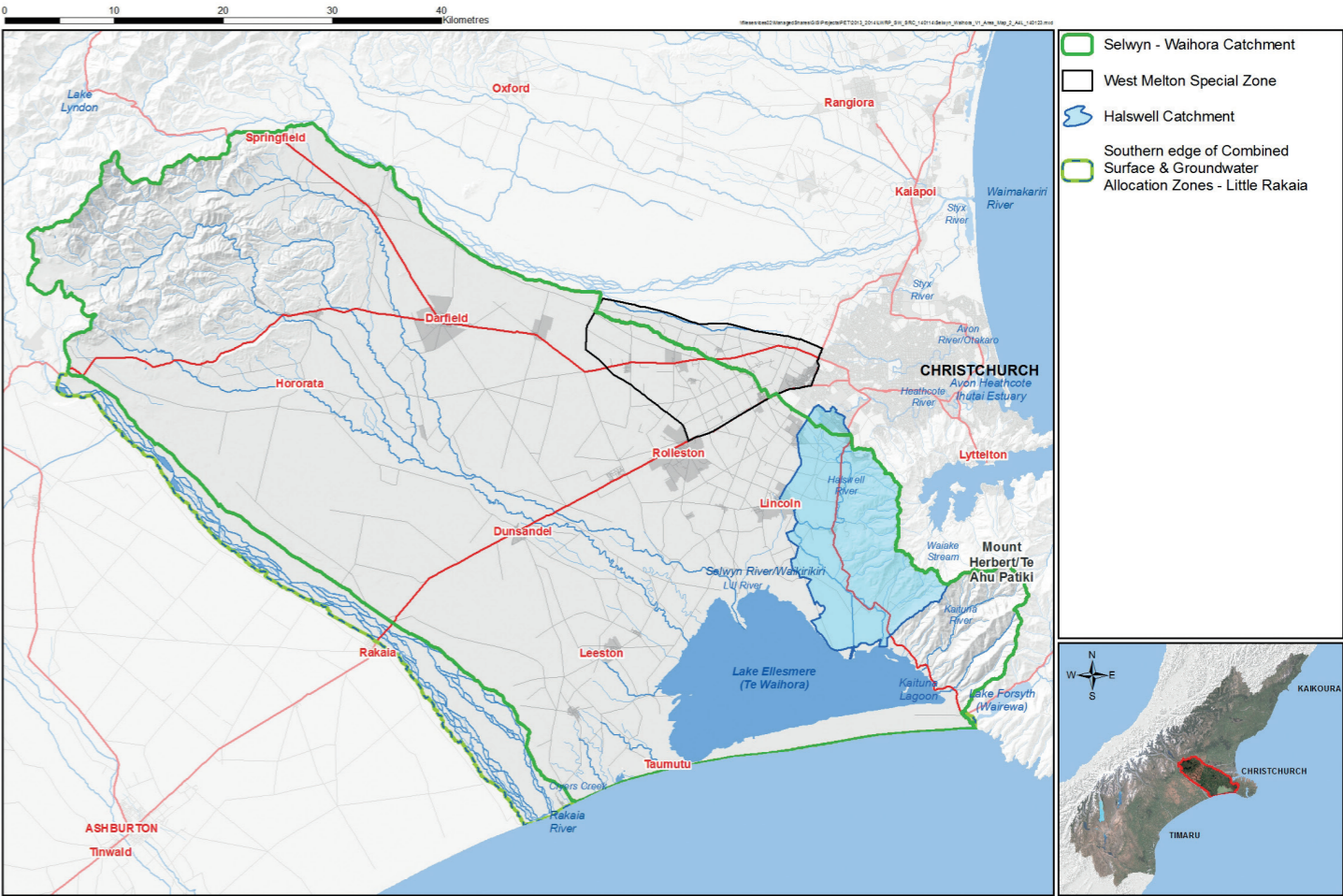
The Selwyn–Waihora catchment includes the foothills of the Waikirikiri/Selwyn River and its tributaries; the plains between the Waimakariri and Rakaia rivers (containing the Waikirikiri/Selwyn and Huritini/Halswell rivers). It also includes a number of Banks Peninsula lowland streams and waterways that flow into Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere.

The West Melton Special Zone

The West Melton Special Zone includes the West Melton, Yaldhurst and Weedons areas; and spans the boundary between the Selwyn–Waihora and Christchurch–West Melton sub-regional areas in the proposed Land and Water Regional Plan.

Halswell River/Huritini catchment

This includes land within the surface water catchment for the Halswell River.



Variation 1 area and the catchment of Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere



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Facilitating sustainable development
in the Canterbury region

www.ecan.govt.nz

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Key land and water issues in the Selwyn–Waihora catchment

Te Waihora, its margins and associated wetlands are of outstanding cultural significance for Ngāi Tahu. The lake is recognised as a tribal taonga, reflecting the importance of the lake to Ngāi Tahu culture, history and identity. The lake supports tuna (eel) and pātiki (flounder) fisheries and lies within a rich agricultural area which has been farmed for more than 150 years. Te Waihora is enriched with nitrogen and phosphorus, is subject to algal blooms, and the health of the lake has deteriorated. Farmers draw on the abundant supply of groundwater during the dry summers, but this has depleted stream flows to the Selwyn River and lowland streams. As a result, the water resource is over-allocated.

Water from alpine rivers via the consented Central Plains Water irrigation scheme would enable improved stream flows while meeting the demand for irrigation water. However, more irrigation will increase the nitrogen load to groundwater and to the lake.

The Canterbury Water Management Strategy and Variation 1

Variation 1 introduces a package of actions recommended by the Selwyn Waihora zone committee which, over the past two years, has tackled the issues in the catchment through collaboration with Ngāi Tahu, landowners, community members and numerous stakeholders. The committee’s vision for the catchment is to restore the mauri of Te Waihora while maintaining a viable land-based economy and prosperous communities.

Its package of recommended actions included water quality and quantity limits, mechanisms to address over-allocation of water resources and a range of complementary non-regulatory actions. The Selwyn–Waihora zone committee was set up as part of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy and operates as a joint committee of Environment Canterbury, the Selwyn District Council and the Christchurch City Council. Its recommendations were adopted by Environment Canterbury, the Selwyn District Council and the Christchurch City Council in October/November 2013.

Key features of Variation 1

Te Waihora as a Ngāi Tahu cultural landscape

An area encompassing the lake, its margins and tributaries, is recognised as a Cultural Landscape/Value Management Area. This reflects the significance and concentration of mahinga kai, wāhi tapu and wāhi taonga sites, and the values associated with the lake. Consenting of certain activities within the Cultural Landscape/Value Management Area will need to consider any adverse impact on mahinga kai, wāhi tapu and wāhi taonga sites. Farm Environment Plans will need to be completed by mid-2015 for all properties larger than 10 hectares within the Cultural Landscape/Value Management Area.

Reducing the nitrogen load

Agriculture needs to make a significant contribution to reducing the nitrogen load entering Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere. This starts with farmers operating at good management practice for all activities, additional rules will apply from 2017 depending on nitrogen leaching rates:

- For nitrogen loss >15 kg N/ha/year, farmers will need to achieve good management practice nitrogen loss rates for their existing (2009-13) land use.

- For nitrogen loss <15 kg N/ha/year, land use can change provided farmers operate at good management practice and loss rates do not increase above 15 kg N/ha/year.

From 2022: all farms with losses of more than 15 kg N/ha/year will need to further reduce nitrogen losses (ranging from 30% for dairy to 7% for arable). The Central Plains Water scheme is already consented, but will move to an overall nitrogen load limit that requires new irrigated land to operate at the 2022 nitrogen loss rates immediately. Community sewage and industrial processes are also required to meet a nitrogen load limit.

Farm Environment Plans: reducing phosphorus, sediment and microbial contaminants

Farm Environment Plans will over time be required for all farms of 20 hectares or more (10 hectares within the cultural landscape area). Farm Environment Plans cover: irrigation efficiency, nutrient use, soil management, wetland and riparian development, biodiversity, collected animal effluent, stock exclusion from waterways, as well as cultural management.

Farm Environment Plan key dates:

- By mid-2015: for properties within the lake area of the Cultural Landscape/Value Management Area.
- From 2017: for properties greater than 50ha or with nitrogen losses >15 kg/N/ha/year.
- From 2022: for properties greater than 20 hectares.

Water allocation, takes and transfers

Allocation zone boundaries are altered. Surface water and groundwater will be managed as one resource across most of the catchment. Revised allocation limits are set to sustain improved ecological flows in the Selwyn River/Waikirikirri and springfed streams in all but the very driest of years. New takes in excess of the allocation limits are prohibited. A significant reduction in existing allocation will be needed to meet the revised allocation limits within the Rakaia–Selwyn and Selwyn–Waimakariri allocation zones. Allocation will be reduced by using records of actual use and updating annual volumes as consents are renewed. It is vital that groundwater takes are reduced in the upper plains to allow stream flows to improve. For this reason, Central Plains Water shareholders are prohibited from transferring their (no longer required) consents to avoid the risk that groundwater is abstracted in another location. The transfer of groundwater from below SH1 to above SH1 is prohibited, and 50% of any transferred water must be surrendered in over-allocated zones (to stop allocated but unused water from being used). New minimum flows are introduced to protect ecological and cultural values in the rivers and streams once the water balance is restored and flows have improved. These will be applied to consents on renewal from 2025.

West Melton Special Zone

Within the West Melton Special Zone, restrictions will continue to be applied to resource consents to take groundwater when groundwater levels are low, to protect domestic supply, stockwater and community drinking water supplies.

Halswell River/Huritini Catchment

Within the Halswell catchment, resource consent is required for the discharge of stormwater where it has not been authorised by a consented stormwater management plan from 5 December 2013.

