

Tara Hills Station Ltd

Submission opposing Williamson Holdings/ Killermont Water Consent

CRC041787, CRC041788, CRC073112, CRC073113, CRC073114, CRC073115.

Statement of Evidence of **Gregory James Stuart.**

Introduction

My name is Gregory James Stuart and I am the farm manager for TARA HILLS STATION LTD,

Tara Hills Station is situated approximately 5km south of OMARAMA on Broken Hut Road and Killermont station is just across Broken Hut Rd to the West.

1. Tara Hills Station Ltd opposed the original consent notice by Williamson Holding / Killermont on the 4th August 2007 [consent numbers above] Applying 6.600 000 cubic metres per year for spray irrigation of up to 1100ha of pasture and crops, stock water and domestic purposes.
2. At that time it was on the grounds of downstream effects mainly Tara Hills irrigation intake and the water race across Killermont flat. Also that WHL would be in the same band for low flow trigger which 15cubic metres/sec. Now since the 12th October 2009 the farming activity to be carried out has change to 3 highly intensive dairy farms, on highly marginal land with any amount of water.
3. Tara Hills Stn & Omarama Stn consent was one of the last grants before the call up of projected aqua.
4. Since 2003 I as manager, have put in place all consent and requirement need for full compliance, eg flow monitoring, Fish pass etc.
5. I have watched the monitoring closely over the past 5years and Tara Hills irrigation has been put on full restriction on the Ahurri river due to low flow trigger below 15 cubic metres, 2005/06 from 28th Feb to 24th April, 2006/07 8th March to 3rd June, 2007/08 12th March to 30th April and there are times early in season before snow melts the river is below trigger point as well. Also at the same time the Omarama stream gets to its trigger point of 400lt/s and 2006/07 it was right down to 240lt/s at Tara Hills monitor. My point being the reliability of water at periods of the irrigation season is not there.
6. I would like to clear up a few mistake's Mr Peacock and Mr McIndoe made in their presentation on the 12th October 2009, Mr Peacock showed a photo of the Tara Hills water race across the Killermont flat and stated that the buildings in the foreground was Twin Peaks homestead when in fact it is what is known as the old Tara Hills office and there are 5 house's there as well fully tenanted.
7. Also all domestic house water, well and pumps. The Twin Peaks & Berwen homestead's are another 1km south on Broken Hut Rd.
8. Mr McIndoe was asked by one of you the panel what effects on downstream user's would Williamson Holding water take have, his reply was nil as Tara Hills & Omarama stn are band (1) which is not correct Omarama Stn consent is in band (1) with trigger's at (12) cubic metres an 10cubic metres at different times of the year

and Tara Hills Stn consent is in band (2) at a trigger of (15)cubic metres all year round, so would be same band as WHL consent if granted. Tara Hills Stn would like to see if new applicants are successful that their low flow trigger be higher than 15cubic metres.

9. In the opening legal submission on behalf of Southdown Holding, Five Rivers Ltd, & Killermont Station Ltd. Paragraph 5.18 on WHL Killermont [ii] Tara Hills water race does not flow continuously and because of this, has only minor aquatic values. This is not correct the water race does flow continuously with 50lt/s for stock water and because the Tara Hills fish screen is situated beside the Omarama stream fish have access to the water race between the Ahurri and the outlet into the Omarama stream.
10. I have stated that this land is marginal for any sort of dairy farming, with long hot summers even with irrigation, the growth is away lower than down land farms and the very cold winters of -15deg and sometimes only getting to -2deg in the afternoons would cause large scale problems with frozen water, burst pipes, frozen effluent, effluent ponds you would have 140m by 140m frozen ice rink [green colour].
11. Animal welfare, cows in sheds in summer months with temperatures getting over +35deg and -15deg winter months.
12. Mr Stephen Browns evidence on 15th October 2009, plans show an effluent pond and barn and milking shed right next to the Tara Hills water race which could cause a hazard through leakage or similar accident eg; overflow. As the soil and sub soil or gravel is every pores damage could take months or years to detect and with the general direction of the drainage it will all end up in the Omarama stream.
13. The storage of the effluent for several months at a time especially in the summer heat the south west wind will carry fine aroma right into my back door, The north west wind blow right across the 5 houses with tenants in as well as Berwen Stn and Twin Peaks stn homesteads.
14. I have no objection to this water consent being granted if, it is just volume and the farming activity that is proposed for this land, as stated earlier. This is very marginal land even with water the amount fertiliser needed to grow feed for 3800 cows will be huge and the effects may or not show up for years and the OMARAMA stream will be the first indicator, and Tara Hills wells. Omarama Stn, then downstream to the lower Ahurri river and finally lake Benmore.

Thank You for hearing my submission.

Greg Stuart,

Tara Hills Station Ltd,

Farm Manager.