

**MANAWATU-WANGANUI REGIONAL
COUNCIL**

**MANAWATU CATCHMENT
WATER QUALITY REGIONAL PLAN**

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This Manawatu Catchment Water Quality Regional Plan was prepared by the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council under Section 65 and the First Schedule to the Resource Management Act 1991.

The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council approved the Manawatu Catchment Water Quality Regional Plan on this **15th** day of **September** 1998.

Signed by the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council by the affixing of its Common Seal in the presence of



ER Dempsey
GENERAL MANAGER



DM Linklater
CHAIRMAN

The Manawatu Catchment Water Quality Regional Plan became operative on **6 October 1998**.



Issue 2: Protection of uses and values

Degraded water quality reduces the life-supporting capacity of the water body, and its actual or potential uses and instream values. The recreational values and aquatic habitats of many of the rivers in the Manawatu catchment have been adversely affected by poor water quality, in particular, the lower Oroua River and the lower Manawatu River.

Discharges of human sewage, particularly when poorly treated, is very offensive to many people, including the tangata whenua. It is also an activity which seriously affects the "mauri" of the water.

14. Objective for the Manawatu Catchment

Objective

To enhance surface water quality in the Manawatu catchment by the year 2009 to a level which meets the needs of all people and communities while safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of the water.

15. Policies for the Manawatu Catchment

Policy 1

To establish a water quality management regime for the Manawatu catchment that provides for the classification and management of waters as follows:

- a. all sections of rivers that have sources in, and flow in, the Ruahine and Tararua State Forest Park as Class NS - being water managed in its natural state; (with the exception of those sections of the Mangahao River, Tokomaru River and Mangaore Stream which are downstream of the Mangahao dams); and
- b. all rivers in the Manawatu catchment as Class CR - being water managed for contact recreation purposes (with the exception of those sections of rivers referred to in Policy 1a above and those sections of rivers listed in Annex 6, section 33.3); and in addition
- c. all sections of rivers described in Annex 6, Section 33.5 as Class F (fisheries); and
- d. all sections of rivers described in Annex 6, Section 33.6 as Class FS (fish spawning); and



- e. all sections of rivers described in Annex 6, Section 33.7 as Class WS (water supply).

Policy 1a

To provide for the adoption and application of water quality standards in rivers classified as Class CR when flows in rivers are at less than half the median flow.

Policy 2

- 2.1 To grant consents for discharges which breach water quality standards in this Plan only where the Council is satisfied:
 - a. that exceptional circumstances justify the granting of the consent; or
 - b. that the discharge is of a temporary nature; or
 - c. that the discharge is associated with necessary maintenance work -

and in any case that it is consistent with the purpose of the Act to do so, and practical alternatives that avoid such discharges to water are not available.

- 2.2 To ensure that where a consent is granted under clause 2.1 of this Policy, conditions are imposed where appropriate, including conditions requiring the holder of the consent to undertake such works in such stages throughout the term of the consent as will ensure that, after specified times, the discharge will not contravene specified water quality standards in this Plan.
- 2.3 Without limiting Policy 2.1, for the purpose of paragraphs a and b, exceptional circumstances and discharges of a temporary nature may include discharges into a river where the flow in that river is less than the flow exceeded 98% of the time. In that situation, and where no practical alternative disposal option or further treatment capacity is available, a permit may include a low flow condition so that effluent quality would not have to be further improved.



Policy 2a

To ensure that where any consent is reviewed, or replaced by a new consent for the same or similar activity, discharges to water classified as Class CR comply with water quality standards in the following priority order:

- a. The standard requiring that the water is not rendered unsuitable for bathing by the presence of contaminants, with the exception of enterococci bacteria, shall be complied with when this Plan becomes operative.¹²
- b. The standards concerning
 - i. bacterial and/or fungal slime growths; and
 - ii. horizontal visibilityshall be complied with by 1 June, 1999.
- c. The standards concerning
 - i. enterococci bacteria; and
 - ii. particulate organic mattershall be complied with by 1 June, 2004.
- d. The standard concerning dissolved reactive phosphorus shall be complied with by 1 June, 2009.

Policy 3

To avoid, remedy or mitigate any actual or potential adverse environmental effects arising from the direct or indirect discharge of contaminants to surface water in the Manawatu catchment by:

- a. Limiting quantities and concentrations of contaminants which enter water, in particular, contaminants which can reduce the life-supporting capacity of aquatic ecosystems.
- b. Where appropriate, promoting discharges of contaminants to land rather than water in areas of the Manawatu catchment where
 - i. groundwater will not be adversely affected; and
 - ii. adverse effects from runoff to surface water can be minimised or avoided; and/or
 - iii. particular concerns have been expressed by the tangata whenua.

¹² The Regional Council will approve a plan once it has made amendments under clause 16 of the First Schedule to the Act. The Plan then becomes operative at a date notified by the Council.

- c. Reducing adverse effects from non-point source discharges of contaminants to rivers in the Manawatu catchment by:
 - i. supporting and promoting riparian management and other appropriate practices, while giving due consideration to flood hazard management; and
 - ii. providing information to agricultural organisations and farmers about actual and potential effects of non-point discharges and land treatment of agricultural waste, and involving them in the development of solutions.

Policy 4

To require that discharges to water comply with numerical standards, defined in MCWQ Rule 1 in the Plan, as the primary criteria for the purposes of interpreting and applying the narrative standards in Section 107 (1)(d) and (g) of the Resource Management Act, 1991.

Policy 5

To require, in general, that reasonable mixing in the receiving waters of any point-source discharge should be achieved within a distance downstream from the discharge to whichever is the least of:

- a. the distance which equals seven times the width of the river when the flow is at half the median flow; or
- b. 200 metres from the point of discharge, or, for discharges to artificial watercourses including farm drainage canals, 200 metres from the point of discharge or the property boundary, whichever distance is the greater;
- c. the point at which mixing of the particular contaminant concerned has occurred across the full width of the body of water in the river.

Policy 6

To allow for conditions attached to discharge permits to be flow-related in respect of compliance with water quality standards.

Policy 7

To ensure that particular regard is had to the following matters in considering applications and applying conditions on discharge permits for existing discharges where there is more than one discharge in a particular reach of river:

- a. the volume and constituents of the individual discharges before treatment; and



- b. an assessment of how difficult the effluent is to treat, in terms of current treatment achieved and further treatment achievable; and
- c. the combined effect of the discharges on the river, and in particular, the relative contribution of each discharge in terms of overall compliance or otherwise with any relevant standards; and
- d. the principles of equity

so that the combined effect of the discharges does not breach the standards anywhere in that reach, or downstream of that reach, except within the zone allowed on the discharge permit for reasonable mixing.

Policy 8

To recognise that the catchment's remaining lakes and natural wetlands are particularly sensitive receiving environments when considering resource consent applications to discharge into them.

Policy 9

Where appropriate to promote the protection and enhancement of the mauri of water and waterways within the Manawatu catchment.