

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED ON BEHALF
OF THE OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Under The Resource Management Act 1991
(**Act/RMA**)

In the Matter of a submissions on the Proposed
Otago Regional Policy Statement
2021 (non-freshwater parts) (**PRPS**)

On behalf of **OTAGO WATER RESOURCE USER
GROUP (OWRUG)**

Submitter OS00235 and FS00235

**FEDERATED FARMERS OF NEW
ZEALAND**

Submitter OS00239 and FS00239

DAIRYNZ LIMITED

Submitter FS00601

SPEAKING NOTES OF EMMA CRUTCHLEY

DATED 1 MAY 2023



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Introduction

1. My name is Emma Crutchley.
2. I am a sheep, beef and arable farmer at Puketoi Station, Maniototo. I grew up on Puketoi Station and have farmed there since 2009. My experience and expertise is set out at paragraphs 2 – 12 of my Brief of Evidence dated 23 November 2022. Puketoi Station is a ~3000 ha property consisting of hill country and flat. We run 6500 crossbred ewes and 180 stud Angus cows. All lambs born on the property are finished. We buy in and finish a further 1000 – 2000 lambs each year.

‘The hearts and minds of rural communities have a big role to play in managing our environment’

3. This evidence draws on my experiences as a farmer, my involvement and research around catchment groups and my involvement with the primary sector on farm. Any understanding of our farm management relies on an appreciation of the region’s extremely complex climate, and diverse primary production systems.
4. In my evidence, I have discussed the pest and weed pressures on farm how we manage these challenges and our work around sustainability on farm. Farmers making no money can make very poor environmentalists and are less resilient in a fast-changing world. Regulatory changes require cost input which comes on top of high interest rates and input costs.
5. Efficiency and effectiveness in this space is a balance of outputs against the inputs we have, such as costs and land class, and this should be based on environmental, social and economic dividends. As cost is added, the lower value land uses are impacted first, but this doesn’t necessarily correlate with poor resource management or land use decisions. Yearly investments in our environment can be the first to drop off as the lens shifts from long term vision to short term survival.

6. The community is often willing to go further than the minimum requirements and head towards a much higher level of compliance with environmental standards. However, these limits and targets need to be clear and achievable. Pressures including pest control and water shortages are continuously changing and evolving. Increases in regulatory requirement need to consider this.
7. Transition over time around conversion of borderdyke to spray at Puketoi required security of supply to invest in upgrades. This adaptation has built resilience to all areas of the farm but also demonstrates the time and willpower required for adapting irrigation storage and systems. Freshwater is most valuable when it is in short supply, this is resilience for the whole community including the environment.
8. A combination of extensive regulation and incorrect perceptions of the sector has led to an increasingly unrewarded and burnt-out rural leadership and division across our sector. The regulation has missed the fact that environmental challenges require leadership in rural communities and enable people to work together for collective solutions.
9. Multiple solutions can be used to solve a single environmental challenge, and one solution can solve multiple challenges around freshwater, biodiversity and climate change adaption. This looks different across catchments and land uses; good farmers are experts in the field of innovation, but they need room to adapt and lead this change.
10. Changes on farm cannot be immediate. They require time, progression, and adaptation. The best results are achieved when communities can respond rather than react, reactions can have unintended consequences. Enable people time to process, plan and implement it at their pace. Otherwise, you will lose people along the way and miss the opportunity for better outcomes.
11. I would be happy to answer any questions the panel have. I would also be happy to host the panel members on Puketoi station.