

## Summary of Evidence

1. My name is Kelly Heckler, and I am a wife, mother, farmer, and community leader.
2. Our family farm is Lauder Creek a high-country sheep and beef property in the Manuherehia catchment of Central Otago.
3. I am devastated about the position we are currently occupying in the Manuherehia regarding freshwater management.
4. As I have outlined in my evidence there has historically been tension, bitterness and hurt between parties which is stagnating the ability to move forward.
5. When there is no communication between parties, there is no opportunity for solution finding which then impacts on our communities, our farms, and the environment.
6. Our rural communities are the solution to achieving the significant changes in freshwater management but currently these people are hurting. The pressure these freshwater management changes are placing on our people is immense. The proposed RPS in its current form will impact our rural communities, businesses will no longer be viable, people will no longer be able to live where they live due to loss of jobs, schools will decline. Just because these changes happen over time they are often dismissed by those who don't live in these communities but the negative impact on well-being is immense.
7. People in our rural communities want the best for our environment as these are areas where our children grow and where the culture of our community resonates. Farmers want a thriving environment just as much as anyone else if not more.
8. The freshwater visions are significant, and we need more than limited opportunity to talk about the uncertainty they create. To deny this to the

communities when they have to make significant changes to their life as it's previously been known is untenable and creates a cycle of "them and us" moving on to complete shutdown. We need circling back and open communication channels.

9. Our growers and farmers don't leave the farm at 5pm to go home, the farm is our home. Its our livelihood and policies that threaten our farming business threaten our home and our families so understandably it puts people on edge.
10. Empathy goes along way to help ease the uncertainty and figuring out what future freshwater management is going to look like together is the only pathway forward.
11. We need to allow for balance in our policy setting and then give the rural communities the support to enable them to implement change that is specific to that rural community.
12. Commissioners I urge you to understand that real people, real families, real communities are going be significantly impacted by any decisions you make, please allow our people to grow, our communities to prosper and our environment to thrive as I truly believe we can have it all when we work together.