

Upper Clutha Angling Club – Summary and Overview

1. The Upper Clutha Angling Club's submission is straightforward. The simple message is "give the fish a chance". To give them a chance requires they have access to a reliable ongoing flow of good quality water that provides them with space to live and the ability to move up or downstream in times of stress.
2. Anglers are no longer prepared to accept levels of water abstraction that dry up the river and degrade the aquatic environment below an acceptable standard. The Club is not arguing that all of the water should be set aside for fish – but it is arguing that sufficient water is now left in the river to provide adequate and continuous flows for trout, especially in the key summer period when the various environmental stressors have their greatest impact on trout mortality.
3. The Club sees that it is ORC's statutory responsibility as the manager of the water resource to ensure that the minimum flow established through proposed Plan Change 5A does indeed reliably protect the health of the Lindis River ecosystem with a reasonable degree of certainty.
4. So what is adequate for the fish? While there may be different views on this the Club does not accept that the proposed 750 litres per second in the summer period as set out in proposed Plan Change 5A is anywhere near adequate. The scientific evidence clearly indicates that 1000 litres per second is the bare minimum required to ensure the maintenance of the Lindis River's aquatic ecosystem, a healthy trout population, and the recreational values of the wider community.
5. In summary, The Club's submission is that there should be a minimum flow of 1000 litres per second in the summer period. However, I also need to make it clear that the Club would most certainly support a higher minimum flow than that. There is sufficient research to show that much better environmental outcomes for the trout populations that are dependent on the river would come from a minimum flow of around 1500 litres per second.

Corrections and clarifications

There is one correction I would like to make to the Club's original submission. This is-a correction to point 3 on page 2 of the Club's submission. While the Club supports those provisions of proposed Plan Change 5A that are identified in the bullet points, the Club submits the summer period should be defined as the months from October to April inclusive (not October to May) and the winter period should be May to September inclusive (not June to September).