

# Changing how we manage Otago's water

**Otago Regional Council is responsible for managing Otago's land, coast, air and water resources on behalf of the community, for our future.**

There's a lot going on with Otago's freshwater so here's an update, including how you can be involved. A review by the Minister for the Environment found issues with our current water planning documents so we're making some short-term fixes by plan changes while we develop a new fit-for-purpose Regional Policy Statement and Land and Water Regional Plan (LWRP).

### What is Plan Change 6AA?

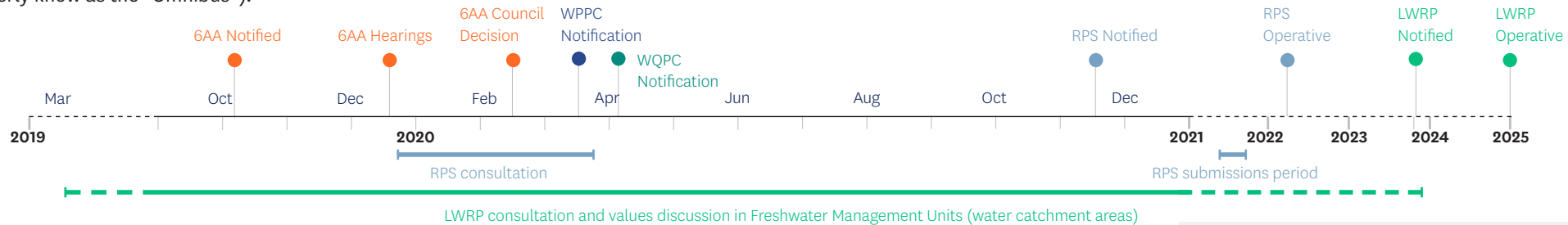
This plan change has extended the date for complying with rural water quality discharge thresholds for nitrogen, phosphorus and *E. coli* from 1 April 2020 to 1 April 2026. This allows time to prepare the ground for further, more robust changes. In the meantime ORC will bring in new rules through the Water Quality Plan Change (formerly know as the "Omnibus").

### What is the Water Permits Plan Change (WPPC)?

This plan change creates a simplified resource consent process to manage water permits and deemed permits (historic water permits), while a new planning framework is developed for how freshwater is taken and used. This simplified process will allow for short-term water permits to be granted until the LWRP is operative.

### What is the Water Quality Plan Change (WQPC) (formerly "Omnibus")

Our water and waste regional plans need to be strengthened to protect our environment. We're proposing several changes to these plans to provide clear environmental management requirements until the new LWRP is in place.



### What is the Regional Policy Statement (RPS)?

The RPS sets the direction for future management of Otago's natural and physical resources. It provides the foundation for the development of all regional plans (which ORC develops) and district plans (which district and city councils develop). A new RPS is required to meet National Planning Standards and to support our plan development.

### What is the Land and Water Regional Plan (LWRP)?

This will promote the sustainable management of Otago's water and land resources. It will include objectives, policies and methods (including rules) to address issues of use, development and protection of freshwater and land resources, including the beds and margins of water bodies. It will be the result of the current review of the *Regional Plan: Water*, the *Regional Plan: Waste* and ORC's work with communities in each Freshwater Management Unit (FMU) area. Read more about FMUs at [orc.govt.nz/FMUs](http://orc.govt.nz/FMUs)

### Jargon decoder!

**"Consultation"** is an active process where councils communicate formally and informally with stakeholders.

**"Notified"** is when a council informs the public about a plan change by placing a public notice in relevant newspapers. In Otago, this is the Otago Daily Times.

A **"submission"** is a written statement supporting or opposing a plan change or new plan.

A **"hearing"** is a formal meeting that gives people the chance to have their say about what a council is proposing.

We know there's a lot going on and we hope this helps you understand what is happening when. For regular updates, sign up to our monthly newsletter at [www.orc.govt.nz/OnStream](http://www.orc.govt.nz/OnStream) or by emailing [water@orc.govt.nz](mailto:water@orc.govt.nz)

### Have your say

The best way to influence what goes into plans and regional policy statements is to make a submission once a Regional Policy Statement plan change or new plan is publicly notified. Anyone can make a submission, either as an individual or a group. There are some minimum requirements and your submission must be in the prescribed form. For more info, head to [www.orc.govt.nz/submission](http://www.orc.govt.nz/submission)