



Whitewater NZ

Mo ngā awa te aroha, he waiaroha For the love of rivers

Date: 04 August 2021.

To:
Committee Secretariat
Environment Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Whitewater Nz Incorporated would like to offer the following submission in respect of the Natural and Built Environments Bill: Parliamentary Paper

Whitewater NZ (WWNZ) is the advocacy body for recreational whitewater river sports in Aotearoa. Our membership of approximately 1,000 is made up of kayakers, canoeists, pack-rafters, rafters and many other whitewater river enthusiasts. We also represent a group of over 4000 (non-paid) supporters who are also active whitewater river users. Our mission is to protect and restore Aotearoa's whitewater rivers and enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. Whitewater enthusiasts' passion represents a shared voice for river conservation in Aotearoa. The concept of kaitiakitanga is strongly embraced and celebrated by our community and manifests in many ways. To best represent the views and interests of our membership and the wider whitewater river community of Aotearoa, we ask that you consider the following:

Whitewater New Zealand submits in support of the Natural and Built Environments Bill subject to the following 2 amendments and additions.

FIRST REQUESTED CHANGE

Under Section 8 (e), should be changed to read as follows:

- (e) in respect of the coast, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and their margins,—
 - (i) public access to and along them is protected or enhanced; and
 - (ii) *their natural flow, level and character is preserved:*

Additionally, Section 13 (1) should include:

- i. ***section 8 (e) (waterways)***

This addition is required to give effect to the purposes and of the proposed Bill. Effectively what we are asking is that the natural state of waterways rivers be protected, by including this clause in



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section 13 it is our intention that minimal quantitative limits for rivers are set under the new national planning framework thus explicitly requiring regulators to ensure the health, mana and biodiversity are protected.

- a. Naturally flowing rivers are essential to reduce effects of flooding, reduce the impacts of erosion, protect the sediment flow to coastal areas, protects food source for native, endangered species.
- b. Naturally flowing rivers also provide opportunity for thousands of New Zealanders to recreate, travel via and visit New Zealand's rivers and lakes which is closely linked with physical, spiritual, and mental health of those people.

Section 5 explains the purpose of upholding **Te Oranga o te Taiao**, this at subsection (3)(c), incorporates the interconnectedness of all parts of the natural environment. As already discussed, protection of the natural flow of rivers will improve environmental outcomes for erosion, sediment flows, and native biodiversity which all rely on waterways as a food source and for migration.

Also, as our proposed change would require environmental limits be set for river and lake levels and flows, section 7(1) (the purpose of the environmental limits) would be better fulfilled. Whilst quality of freshwater is essential for environmental and human health, as discussed at our points 2(a) and (b) the quantity of freshwater is also independently essential for the health of the environment and the people visiting.

SECOND REQUESTED CHANGE

Section 8 should include:

(r) the amenity values of the natural environment are protected or enhanced.

1. This addition is required as New Zealand has a rich heritage in outdoor exploration, very high participation rate in outdoor recreation, and outdoor recreation has a close link with improved health outcomes. Whitewater New Zealand asks that New Zealand's longstanding relationship with outdoor recreation is respected and preserved by this Bill for the benefit of today's outdoor enthusiasts, and tomorrow's.



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Thank you for taking the time to read this submission and for listening to our suggestions and requests.

Yours sincerely,

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