

## **PLAN CHANGE 48**

### **Appendix A**

#### **Proposed Changes to Objectives and Policies**

## 3.1.2 Natural environment and heritage

## 2. Natural environment

O1	To protect and enhance the natural resources within the District that <b>are</b> is-valued for their intrinsic, scientific, educational and recreational values.	P1	Recreational use of wetlands and bush and the surface of rivers and streams will be allowed where such use is consistent with the conservation objectives of that area. Council may exclude access to some areas of high ecological quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Provisions, Section 1</li> <li>• Activity Table Section 2</li> <li>• Development Controls, Section 3</li> <li>• Activity Related Standards, Section 4</li> <li>• Performance Standards, Section 5</li> <li>• Subdivision , Section 6</li> <li>• Development Contributions, Section 7</li> <li>• Natural Environment and Heritage, Section 10</li> <li>• Other Methods, Section 13</li> </ul>	<p><i>Little of the natural environment remains unchanged by human occupation. Areas of the natural environment that exist require protection because of their scarcity or their value as representative examples of particular ecosystems and landscapes. Preservation of the natural character of the wetlands, rivers and their margins is a matter of national importance. The Kopuatai Peat Dome is the largest peat dome in the country and contains at least six threatened plants, the locally threatened North Island fernbird, a number of important fish species and has international significance as a waterfowl habitat wetland.</i></p> <p><i>Council acknowledges the Dome is part of our vanishing natural heritage. The Peat Dome is very vulnerable to change and parts of this wetland remain unprotected. The margins of the Dome are affected by land drainage practices, grazing, maize cropping and peat mining.</i></p> <p><i>Council considers it important that this wetland be protected and managed in a sustainable manner. Other smaller wetlands exist through the District and Council wishes to retain as many examples of the District's wetlands, for environmental and botanical reasons.</i></p> <p><i>RMA requires Council to have particular regard to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and the quality of the environment and the finite characteristics of natural and physical resources. Policies recognise that the natural environment is vulnerable to insensitive uses and development which may generate adverse effects. These policies give a higher level of protection to certain areas of the District in recognition of their regional, national</i></p>
<u>O2</u>	<u>To protect trees that have significant value to the community in terms of amenity, ecological and historical values.</u>	P2	To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of activities that have the potential to compromise, damage or destroy significant areas of indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna.		
		P3	Outstanding natural features, areas of indigenous vegetation or habitats of indigenous fauna are to be permanently protected at the time of subdivision, use and development.		
		P4	To maintain and enhance ecosystems with their essential values and qualities.		
		<u>P5</u>	<u>Providing an effective set of rules to protect significant trees while also limiting the financial impact on landowners who have a scheduled tree on their property.</u>		
		<del>SP1</del>	<del>Council will encourage landowners to permanently protect natural features, trees and vegetation provisions.</del>		
		SP2	<del>To encourage a "conservation" education programme in conjunction with other agencies for targeted groups such as farmers, schools, tangata whenua. This programme may be</del>		

		<p>SP3 <del>developed in consultation with these groups. Council may, where it considers necessary acquire land to protect threatened outstanding natural features.</del></p> <p>SP4 <del>Council will advocate and promote the voluntary protection of individual trees or stands of trees.</del></p> <p>SP51 Council will advocate that the Regional Council investigate the hydrological dynamics of the Kopuatai Peat Dome with a view to reviewing catchment policies on drainage, water quality and erosion control where necessary.</p> <p>SP62 Council will actively support the preparation of a management plan for the Kopuatai Peat Dome and land uses in the vicinity.</p>	<p><del>and international significance and their vulnerability. Council recognises conflicting demands on the environment may result in natural features being damaged or destroyed. A regulatory approach is adopted to control activities as one method of ensuring their long term protection.</del></p> <p><del>Policies SP1 and SP2 will, through the Strategic Plan, enable Council to use voluntary incentives and educational programmes to encourage public support and "ownership" of the need for protection. Information empowers landowners to make informed decisions and results in a greater understanding of the need for protection of particular natural features or resources by the Community.</del></p> <p><del>Policy SP3 provides Council with the option, where the cost can be justified, of using public ownership it ensures permanent protection for outstanding natural features. Inappropriate subdivision, use or development can then be prohibited and the development of more sympathetic activities permitted, if these were sensitive to the character and intrinsic values of the District's outstanding natural features.</del></p> <p><del>A "partnership" in the wider community in protecting the tree resources of the District is sought by Council to encourage community acceptance and support for tree protection.</del></p> <p><del>A regulatory approach is considered essential to provide certain protection from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use or development.</del></p> <p><del>Through Policies SP15 and SP26 Council advocates further investigations into the natural functioning of wetland ecosystems. This approach will enable Council to make more informed decisions on activities near wetlands while enabling to consider the effectiveness of present policies and methods relating to wetlands.</del></p> <p><del>Under Policy SP6 the preparation of a management plan for the Kopuatai Peat Dome is strongly</del></p>
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			<p>recommended by Council to ensure the long term sustainability of the wetland. Issues such as recreational use of the wetlands, drainage for agricultural purposes is a need to be debated in more detail in a forum such as a management plan process</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Council will protect trees that reach or exceed a standard tree evaluation method (STEM) value of 140. Trees that attain or exceed a STEM value of 140 are considered to be of a very high standard.</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>The provisions have been developed to ensure landowners are able to carry out routine maintenance on trees on their properties that are protected by the District Plan through Schedule 3. There are a range of permitted activities that aim to provide a balance between protecting significant trees and reducing the impact on landowners with Protected Trees. Council aims to minimise Council resource consent requirements through the permitted activity criteria.</u></a></p>
<p><b>Anticipated environmental results</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protection in perpetuity of outstanding natural features and resources.</li> <li>2. Greater public awareness and support for protection of the natural environment.</li> <li>3. To permanently protect significant examples of specimen trees and stands of native bush or trees (Typical performance measure: reduction in number of trees destroyed in the District).</li> <li>4. Reduction in the risk of serious or irreparable damage being done to trees through lack of knowledge or undue haste.</li> <li>5. To achieve permanent protection and sustainability of the Kopuatai Peat Dome and other important wetland areas.</li> </ol>			