



6th October 2010
File Ref: 2.3.7

Mike Avery
Planning & Regulatory Manager
Stratford District Council
PO Box 320
STRATFORD 4352

Dear Mike

STRATFORD DISTRICT PLAN - INDIGENOUS FOREST/BIODIVERSITY REVIEW

The following is a submission by Fish and Game NZ (Taranaki Region).

Rules

Rural Zone Permitted, Discretionary, Non-Complying Activities and Protected Area Zone

The accumulation of sediment and vegetation in wetlands inevitably means that, over time, they are on a progression towards becoming dry land and extinction. In order to maintain and enhance wetland habitat diversity, Fish & Game and the NZ Gamebird Habitat Trust have been involved in a number of wetland creation and enhancement projects in the District in recent years including:

- Mark & Leigh Caskey, 254A Waiwiri Road Toko (QEII);
- Rodney & Jacqueline Harrison 368A Skeet Road (QEII);
- Darryl & Karyn Johnson 415B Waihapa Road (QEII);
- David Morrison 149 Sole Road (QEII)
- Duncan & Sandra Blue 47 Favier Road (QEII).

All these wetland projects (now protected with QEII Covenants) have involved varying amounts of indigenous vegetation disturbance, excavation and dam construction that would not comply with the proposed permitted activity Rule B1.2.1.1 (particularly if the wetland is listed in the Plan schedule and the vegetation is native vegetation, such as raupo or *carex*). Any maintenance of the wetland area currently provided for in the QEII Covenants would also probably not comply and would likely be a discretionary or non-complying activity. Obtaining consent under Rule B1.2.1.4 (bullet point 1 & 2) or Rule B1.2.1.5 (bullet point 3) and having an ecological assessment undertaken under Method A2.4.2 would add significant costs to such projects, which have the goal of creating and enhancing habitat for indigenous species as well as gamebirds (noting that gamebirds such as paradise shelduck, grey duck, shoveler duck and pukeko are also native). In some cases, the project might not proceed because of these additional costs, which should be going into dam construction, excavation, fencing and planting. Most, but not all, of the existing projects have been undertaken on farms that have farm conservation or farm riparian management plans prepared by the TRC. Generally, any indigenous vegetation that is disturbed will be less than 3m in height, but indigenous vegetation, such as raupo or *carex* rushes will often be present. We therefore respectfully request that the Plan be amended to clarify that wetland creation and enhancement projects in the District, such as those undertaken by Fish & Game, and the maintenance of such projects (which may have QEII Covenants) can be carried out as a permitted activity.

Statutory managers of freshwater sports fish, game birds and their habitats

Taranaki Region