

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposed Plan Change 7 : Outstanding Water Bodies

Proposed Plan Change 7

1. What is the purpose of Proposed Plan Change 7? 1
2. What makes a water body “outstanding”? 1
3. Are “outstanding” values and “significant” values the same? 2
4. Which water bodies are listed as ‘outstanding water bodies’ in Proposed Plan Change 7? 2
5. Are water bodies that do not gain an outstanding status important? 3
6. Can a past or potential value be classed as outstanding? 3
7. What happens if my water body is not identified as outstanding? 4
8. What will happen to my existing resource consent? 4
9. How does Proposed Plan Change 7 relate to the TANK Plan Change and any other future catchment based plan changes? 4

General plan change information

10. What is a ‘Proposed Plan Change’? 5
11. Why should I take part in a plan change process? 5
12. What is the plan change process? 5

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 7?

Proposed Plan Change 7, otherwise known as the Outstanding Water Bodies Plan Change, identifies the water bodies in our region that have outstanding values that will be protected and provided for well into the future.

Each of the outstanding water bodies in Proposed Plan Change 7 has at least one cultural, spiritual, recreation, landscape, geology, natural character or ecology value(s) which is exceptional when compared to other water bodies in Hawke’s Bay. For example, the water body may have exceptionally high numbers of rare native birds or fish, a spectacular kayaking run, special spiritual value, or another outstanding feature. Plan Change 7 ensures that future catchment based plans include rules which specifically protect these features.

The identification of outstanding water bodies in Hawke’s Bay is one of a series of work programmes which are currently being undertaken by the Regional Council to implement the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM).

2. WHAT MAKES A WATER BODY “OUTSTANDING”?

Being outstanding is a high test. The term ‘outstanding’ distinguishes something from others based on its exceptional qualities and is typically used to describe the ‘best of the best’.

In order for a water body to be classed as ‘outstanding’ in Proposed Plan Change 7, it must contain at least one cultural, spiritual, recreation, landscape, geology, natural character or ecology value which is conspicuous, eminent, and/or remarkable in the context of the Hawke’s Bay Region.

Schedule 25, of Proposed Plan Change 7, contains a description of the outstanding value(s) associated with each of the proposed outstanding water bodies.

3. ARE “OUTSTANDING” VALUES AND “SIGNIFICANT” VALUES THE SAME?

No. An outstanding value has a higher threshold than a significant value. An outstanding value is one that is truly exceptional or stands out from the rest.

Proposed Plan Change 7 does not identify significant values. Significant values of each outstanding water body will be identified during the development of catchment based plan changes with tangata whenua, key stakeholders and the local community.

4. WHICH WATER BODIES ARE LISTED AS ‘OUTSTANDING WATER BODIES’ IN PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 7?

The following water bodies are identified as ‘outstanding water bodies’ in Proposed Plan Change 7. More information about the outstanding values associated with each of these water bodies can be found in Schedule 25 of the Proposed Plan Change.

ID	Name of outstanding water body	Outstanding value(s)
1	Hautapu River	Cultural, spiritual
2	Heretaunga Aquifer	Cultural, spiritual, geology
3	Karamu River	Cultural, spiritual
4	Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges wetlands	Cultural, spiritual
5	Lake Rotoroa and Lake Rototuna (Kaweka Lakes)	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, natural character
6	Lake Poukawa and Pekapeka Swamp	Cultural, spiritual
7	Lake Tūtira (including Aropaoanui River + Papakiri Stream)	Cultural, spiritual
8	Lake Waikareiti	Cultural, spiritual
9	Lake Waikaremoana	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, natural character, landscape & geology, recreation
10	Whakakī Lake - Te Paeroa Lagoon - Wairau Lagoon and wetlands	Cultural, spiritual, ecology
11	Lake Whatumā	Cultural, spiritual, ecology
12	Makirikiri River	Cultural, spiritual
13	Mangahouanga Stream	Cultural, spiritual, geology
14	Maungawhio Lagoon, lower Kopuawhara River, Pukenui Dune Wetlands	Cultural, spiritual, ecology
15	Mohaka River	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, natural character, landscape & geology, recreation
16	Morere Springs	Cultural, spiritual
17	Ngamatea East Swamp	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, natural character
18	Ngaruroro River and Estuary	Cultural, spiritual, recreation, ecology, natural character, landscape, geology
19	Nuhaka River	Cultural, spiritual
20	Opoutama Swamp	Cultural, spiritual

ID	Name of outstanding water body	Outstanding value(s)
21	Porangahau River and Estuary	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, landscape & geology
22	Putere Lakes	Cultural, spiritual
23	Ripia River	Cultural, spiritual
24	Ruakituri River	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, natural character, landscape & geology, recreation
25	Ruataniwha Aquifer	Cultural, spiritual, geology
26	Tarawera Hot Springs	Cultural, spiritual
27	Taruarau River	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, natural character, landscape & geology, recreation
28	Te Hoe River	Cultural, spiritual, ecology
29	Te Paerahi River	Cultural, spiritual
30	Te Whanganui a Orotū (Ahuriri Estuary)	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, landscape & geology
31	Tukituki River and Estuary	Cultural, spiritual, ecology, landscape & geology
32	Tūtaekurī River	Cultural, spiritual, geology
33	Waiau River	Cultural, spiritual, ecology
34	Waihua River	Cultural, spiritual
35	Waikaretaheke River	Cultural, spiritual
36	Waipawa River	Cultural, spiritual
37	Waipunga River	Cultural, spiritual, ecology
38	Wairoa River	Cultural, spiritual

5. ARE WATER BODIES THAT DO NOT GAIN AN OUTSTANDING STATUS IMPORTANT?

Just because a waterbody is not recognised as 'outstanding' does not mean it is not important. There are many rivers, lakes and coastal areas within Hawke's Bay which are of high (but not necessarily 'outstanding') value to the people who live in this region and tāngata whenua who have special cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional associations with all water bodies.

The Regional Council is committed to maintaining and improving all water bodies in the region and different parts of our work programme focus on different ways to do this. Visit www.hbrc.govt.nz for more information on the Regional Council's broader work programme.

6. CAN A PAST OR POTENTIAL VALUE BE CLASSED AS OUTSTANDING?

No. A water body can only be reviewed in the context of its present condition, it cannot be assessed on its past condition or its potential.

The NPSFM definition of OWB is clear in that it refers to those outstanding water bodies which have an outstanding value, not those water bodies which potentially have an outstanding value, nor had an outstanding value. The purpose of the NPSFM OWB provisions is to identify water bodies that currently have outstanding qualities¹.

¹ For clarification, degraded water bodies may still be identified as containing outstanding cultural and spiritual values. These are current values which exist regardless of the condition of the waterbody. Cultural and spiritual values are not historic.

7. WHAT HAPPENS IF MY WATER BODY IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS OUTSTANDING?

See FAQ 9.

Just because a waterbody is not recognised as ‘outstanding’ does not mean it is not important. The NPSFM and councils overall work programme will continue to recognise, and provide for, waterbodies within Hawke’s Bay which are of high value, together with tāngata whenua’s special cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional associations with all waterbodies.

The catchment-based work programmes will focus on the management of freshwater to protect the life supporting capacity of our rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands and aquifers while providing for social, economic and cultural well-being. These programmes will identify values, set objectives and develop policies and methods (including rules) for managing all water bodies – regardless of ‘outstandingness’ to ensure overall water quality is maintained or improved. Degraded water bodies will be addressed during those catchment based processes.

8. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY EXISTING RESOURCE CONSENT?

You can continue operating under your existing resource consent until it expires. On expiry, you will need to reapply for resource consent for your activity, which will be assessed against the relevant provisions in the Hawke’s Bay Regional Resource Management Plan, or Hawke’s Bay Regional Coastal Environment Plan, at that time.

When you apply to renew your resource consent, your activity may also be assessed against Policies LW3A and C2 of Proposed Plan Change 7 or the relevant catchment-based plan change. These policies apply to certain activities, in and around outstanding water bodies that require resource consent, after 31 December 2025, or once the relevant catchment based regional plan change is operative, whichever is sooner.

Policies LW3A and C2 of Proposed Plan Change 7 set out the type of factors that can be considered by the Consent Authority when assessing resource consent applications for activities occurring in and around OWB.

9. HOW DOES PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 7 RELATE TO THE TANK PLAN CHANGE AND ANY OTHER FUTURE CATCHMENT BASED PLAN CHANGES?

Proposed Plan Change 7 identifies a number of outstanding water bodies in the TANK catchments.

They include:

- Heretaunga Aquifer
- Karamu River
- Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges wetlands
- Lake Rotoroa and Lake Rototuna (Kaweka Lakes)
- Lake Poukawa and Pekapeka Swamp
- Ngamatea East Swamp
- Ngaruroro River and Estuary
- Tūtaekurī River
- Te Whanganui-a-Orotū (Ahuriri Estuary)
- Taruarau River.

The TANK Plan Change (Draft Plan Change 9) is required to protect the outstanding and significant values of OWB located in the TANK catchment. Some of the new policies and rules in the TANK Plan aim to not only maintain but improve ecosystem health and other instream values of the outstanding waterbodies in the TANK catchment.

The TANK plan change is not yet notified.

For more information on the TANK Plan Change, visit the [#TANK](#) page on our website.

10. WHAT IS A 'PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE'?

A 'Proposed Plan Change' is a document that has been issued by the Council and 'proposed' as the official position of the Council before submissions are received. To be legally proposed, a document must be 'publicly notified' so people can make submissions.

A Proposed Plan Change may be a change to the Hawke's Bay Regional Resource Management Plan (RRMP), and/or Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP). It can amend, remove or insert objectives, policies or rules that relate to the management of the region's natural resources. The Regional Council may initiate a plan change to ensure the RRPM or RCEP is up-to-date and consistent with central government direction, legislation or other policies and plans.

The Regional Council must follow the Plan Change process set out in Schedule One of the Resource Management Act 1991.

11. WHY SHOULD I TAKE PART IN A PLAN CHANGE PROCESS?

Making a submission on a plan change is one of the main ways that you can influence the future of the region's resource management. A plan change may affect what you can do on your property or how you run your business.

Making a submission ensures your views are taken into consideration when decisions on the plan change are being made.

12. WHAT IS THE PLAN CHANGE PROCESS?

The Plan Change process is set out in Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), as illustrated in the diagram below. <MFE infographic <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/fresh-water/everyday-guide-making-submission-about-proposed-plan-or-plan-change>>

