

Rural Women New Zealand Land Use Policy

Rural Women New Zealand notes that: (what is the problem)

- Some local and national policies and legislation have lead to a variety of social, economic, and, environmental problems on the land
- Lack of high speed quality telecommunication services (and their cost) creates an inequity which hinders rural community and business growth
- Under developed or poorly maintained infrastructure such as power distribution can create negative economic and environmental impact on land use
- Land access policies can weaken the security and bio-security status of farmers, landowners and rural residents, and the legal status of their properties
- The increasing lack of knowledge and understanding of rural land based industries by the wider NZ community is impacting on the resources needed to sustain and develop these industries.

Rural Women New Zealand affirms the following: (what RWNZ stands for)

- Relevant and effective management and legislation to maintain and protect the structure and quality of the assets on which rural livelihoods depend
- The unalienable right of a land owner or lessee of such property to provide or deny access to the public over the land where property rights are those as defined by the Public Works Act 1981
- The continuing development of negotiated and agreed initiatives to diversify land use and rural economies
- The integration of economic and environmental objectives for sustainable land use in partnership with land owners/lessees and the rural community
- It is the landowner who should determine who benefits from the resource and whether its use is effected by other users
- A commitment to maintaining New Zealand's clean, healthy reputation which impacts on export sales of primary produce, and to ensuring that this reputation is maintained through continued responsible land use.

Rural Women New Zealand Inc believes that: (solutions)

- Public funds should be adjusted to bring land based industries' research and development and agricultural scientific research up to a level reflective of the contribution made to the NZ economy by these industries
- Strategies and investment in minimum waste policies should be actively pursued and supported by government/regional councils.
- Support should be made available (funding or other) from regional councils and central government to reduce social and economic consequences associated with extreme weather events
- Negotiated and agreed economic and environmental objectives for sustainable land use should be encouraged through workable legislation and policy structures in partnership with farmers/land owners
- Government has a responsibility to ensure that all rural communities have access to high speed telecommunication services at an equitable cost
- The continuing focus on the development/availability of diverse, efficient and maintained energy technologies for rural communities
- Integration of economic and environmental objectives for sustainable land use must be in partnership with land owners/lessees and the rural community
- A national grid corridor is created and landowners compensated for any loss of land and until such a corridor is created that landowners are fairly compensated for loss of use of land or paid an annual lease for use of land and for access to servicing the grid
- Continued support for the work of the NZ Landcare Trust, the Sustainable Farming Fund and their sponsors will allow for independent and locally based environmental projects to be initiated and developed
- Land Access legislation should protect the rights of the landowner/lessee including economic, biosecurity, animal welfare and personal/legal protection rights
- Legislation and policy decisions are developed using the Rural Impact Assessment Tool.

Attachments

1. Companion Papers
2. References

Companion Paper One

Resource Management Act

RMA requirements stifle economic and diverse land use opportunities through rigorous requirements. These lost opportunities impact on the overall well being and vigor of rural communities

Quantifiable benefits must be deliverable by getting councils and the government to realise that the RMA is a huge cost on rural New Zealand. The RMA needs to be implemented in a way that delivers on its original intent and allows farmers to get on with the business of sustainable management of their land.

- The RMA must be amended so that landowners can seek compensation for costs imposed on them to protect significant natural areas, heritage sites, and landscapes in the wider public interest. The Public Works Act recognises the need for compensation, so should the RMA.
- The Department of Conservation should not have the dual role of advisor and advocate for conservation values on private land.
- District Plan objectives, policies, methods and rules must be practical, based on sound science and subject to robust cost-benefit analysis.
- National policy standards that impose a 'one size fits all' approach fail to recognise the value of local knowledge and community agreed objectives.
- Councils are not meeting statutory deadlines when processing consents.
- Regional and district plans continue to try and manage activities and not effects. This leads to an overly prescriptive approach where councils seek to micro manage farming activities by rules that are poorly written or based on little or no knowledge of the effects caused by the farming activities they seek to manage.
- There is growing concern about the implications of giving public access over private land where it impacts on resource consent applications, because then private land is then deemed a public place.

The RMA planning is expensive for example, the cost of getting a resource consent to build a dam for stock watering can exceed the cost of actually building the dam. There are real costs associated with land use restrictions on common farming activities such as planting shelter belts, developing farm tracks and fencelines, laying culverts and new farm buildings.

From Press Statement from Federated Farmers

Telecommunication services are limited in many rural areas and where there is the opportunity to have a full service the cost is often much greater than urban communities. Most rural businesses, including farms, rely on access to services through the internet blah blah blah

Threat of line companies imposing infrastructure costs on private individuals in remote locations refer Marlborough Lines

Pylons threat of loss or reduced use of land

Landscape issues restricting land base activities