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**MWWUG – REQ 581172 – Groundwater Takes for Horticultural Irrigation at Houhora, Motutangi and Waiharara**

Written Evidence to support my Submission

First I wish to apologise for not being at the Hearing. Whanau matters which have been planned for, before, during and after Easter Weekend at Taupo exclude me from attending.

1. Introduction

This evidence is based on a lifetime of learning and implementing environmental practices both in my employment and privately. It supports my Submission points for both our property at Hukatere Road and that of the Woodcock Whanau property at Northwood Avenue. I do not profess to be an expert with regards to scientific impacts from resource use but have a practical view based on my life experiences of seventy years and specifically during a period of huge human influences on the environment. I accept that questions may be asked of some of my summary points but I am steadfast in my belief that sensible and sustainable resource use is good for the planet and helps develop and maintain good neighbourly relations.

2. General

I have many concerns for the Application and not least the combined scale of the operation. Also, while submissions should only be addressed to this application it is felt that an approval is likely to open the door for further large scale water take applications.

- What safeguards are there for all current home and commercial users including existing horticultural uses should unsustainable take impact on water volumes?

I also have real concerns for future human health and wellbeing in relation to ongoing disregard to our uses on this planet Earth.

Scientific research is strong that links our uses with global warming. A walk along any beach will show tidal lines of plastic – large to micro particles. So small that new evidence shows the ingestion by krill. Plastic does not biodegrade. It all eventually breaks down into smaller and smaller particles.

- What safeguards are there for nil pollution and/or spread of plastic from the kilometres of plastic cloth erected at the Waiharara and Motutangi developments?

What is not so evident are the early stages of our long and continued use of chemicals. Generally we become aware only when water becomes unsafe to swim in, cannot support biodiversity and worst of all is unsafe to drink. Yet we continue uses and practices that we know are causing the degradation. The degradation spreads from land use operations namely, use of chemical sprays and fertilizers, through water ways and finally into our harbours and oceans. Again I raise the issue about pan breaking. Previously when this was done – mostly for public services such as roading and farming for drainage there was very little chemical use. It cannot be compared to the scale occurring and amount of sustained chemical use now.

- So, does pan breaking speed up the process of chemical leaching into the aquifer?

Monitoring use and impacts is a responsible method of assessing volumes used and the current health of the water resource.

All natural resources are finite but we continue on bigger scales to exploit these resources.

- Instead why not look at/for alternatives or diversification?
- Will heavy mulching reduce the use of water?

The importance tends to be placed on development and quick returns which no doubt is required to offset the huge development costs. Little regard is shown for the natural landscapes and past and historic human uses. My personal feelings are strong when I see the major disturbance and destruction of long recognized landmarks and contours. It is recognized that such changes impact on human wellbeing.

- Is this a concern for our own wellbeing in the north?
- Should such large scale earthworks be controlled through land use conditions in Strategic Land Management Plans?
- Why has this operation got so far to the point of planting seedlings when Water Take Consent is still in abeyance?

The boundaries of the “affected” area seems to be a misnomer to me when the aquifer is a continuous water reservoir covering most of the Aupouri Peninsular.

- Who decides where the boundary within is and why?

Surely the impact of the application is more widespread than to those within the “affected” area.

- Shouldn't all who take from the aquifer have a right to make their thoughts heard?

### 3. Summary

While on a global scale we are small and our environmental impacts may be minor nevertheless we have a responsibility to do our part for the future.

Our children and children's children deserve better than this.

For all the above reasons and what I see as unmonitored and unsustainable use I ask that the application declined.

Yours Sincerely

Donald Woodcock