

RUSSELL PROTECTION SOCIETY (INC)

P O Box 154

Russell, Bay of Islands

**SUBMISSIONS ON 2006/20016
NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL
DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN**

REPRESENTING 63 INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

WE DO NOT WISH TO BE HEARD IN SUPPORT OF THIS SUBMISSION.

Pages: 3

Date: 4 May 2006

SUBMISSION

New Regional Recreational Facilities Rate [Summery Page 3]

ISSUE

Ratepayers on the Russell Peninsular are already facing rate bills more than twice as high as in other parts of Northland and many of our residents are struggling to pay their rates as they are.

The Russell Protection Society therefore objects to yet another permanent charge being added to residents' rates accounts for facilities they are very unlikely to use due to distance and ferry schedules.

Economic or social benefits of the Okara Park proposal to any regions other than Whangarei would be limited and do not justify a permanent charge for all Northland ratepayers.

Far North ratepayers pay already a permanent extra charge for the Awanui River Flood Management.

While at first glance \$11.25 doesn't seem to be very high, we are of the opinion that construction and running costs as well as potential future losses for projects like Okara Park are impossible to forecast and usually rise. These increases, once the fee is implemented, will be passed on to the ratepayers of Northland and never be removed.

Potential risks and losses have to be carefully assessed and must not be carried by Northland ratepayers.

The proposal at Okara Park is for a Rugby Stadium. It appears to be mainly designed to meet IRB requirements for hosting the Rugby World Cup in 2011 rather than a “Regional Events Centre”. This proposal should not be financed by increases in rates or the introduction of new rates. It should rather be financed by rugby stakeholders and perhaps Central Government in light of the additional GST taking during the Rugby World Cup.

We support in principal a study to be undertaken to identify potential recreational and leisure facilities that could be developed in Northland for the benefit to of both current and future generations of Northlanders. Such initiatives however should not be linked to the Okara Park Whangarei Rugby Stadium development and not be funded by introducing additional rates.

REQUIRED CHANGE TO GIVE EFFECT TO OUR SUBMISSION

Amend Draft Statement of Proposal to exclude funding of the Regional Events Centre from additional rates by removing item “Fixed Regional Recreational Facilities Rate” from all rates calculation tables and statements.

SUBMISSION

Monitoring of Russell Sewerage Scheme and groundwater resources

ISSUE

The Far North District Council has failed to meet the monitoring conditions of its resource consents for the Russell Sewerage Scheme and catchment management plans for the area.

REQUIRED CHANGE TO GIVE EFFECT TO OUR SUBMISSION

Actively require FNDC to meet its monitoring obligations

SUBMISSION

Creation or expansion of Aquaculture Management Area’s [Summery Page 5]

ISSUE

AMA’s - The NRC has assigned more areas and expanded existing areas to oyster farming in the Bay of Islands. However, the NRC has taken no steps to ensure that land development in these areas is compatible with the continuing operations of marine farming. Orongo Bay is a classic example of this because NRC chose not to object to residential development in the small catchment of this bay. In a similar fashion, the NRC has not been active enough in protecting the water quality of the Bay of Islands from sewage spills and other forms of pollution. Waikare Inlet is a case in point. Therefore it does not make sense to zone for further marine farming development if the necessary environmental safeguards are not enforced by NRC.

REQUIRED CHANGE TO GIVE EFFECT TO OUR SUBMISSION

That NRC actively protect water quality in the Bay of Islands before zoning more areas for marine farm development.

SUBMISSION

Public safety issues

ISSUE

The Society generally supports Public Safety initiatives, including addressing the effects of climate change in any future planning – especially storm water and flooding issues. The potentially disastrous effects of releasing Genetically Modified Organisms in any future planning should also be addressed (please refer to “GE Free Northland” submission).

REQUIRED CHANGE TO GIVE EFFECT TO OUR SUBMISSION

Broaden public safety initiatives to cover GE issues.

Signed

Acting Chairperson
Russell Protection Society