
From: Ewen Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 18 May 2024 5:12 pm
To: haveyoursay
Subject: Increasing rates for forestry land

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

It is unfair to increase rates for forestry land.

Where is the evidence that the damage caused by logging trucks at the time of harvest is greater or even equivalent to 25 years of continuous road use, by other agricultural land uses? The maximum weight for a truck in New Zealand is 53 tonnes, surely it makes no difference what contributes that weight?

My point is that for 25 years (average growing time for harvesting pine trees) there would have been no road usage while a dry stock or dairy farm would have regular, usually daily traffic movements. The cumulative damage from heavily laden stock trucks & fertilizer over 25 years would cause more wear & tear on the roads, than logging.

The Council obviously needs to raise more rates but this increase should be shared by all land uses and no one group singled out.

Forestry gets 'bad press' in traditional sheep & beef farming areas therefore making it easy for the Waitomo Council to push this change.

All ratepayers and Council members should be cognizant of our collective responsibility to reduce/capture our carbon emissions.

One Billion Trees programme has been active in the Waitomo district encouraging the planting of exotics on Grade 6 & 7 land. With the wisdom of hindsight steep land that was originally cleared for pastoral farming is now recognized as a risk to our waterways and the environment. Planting steep areas makes sense and with good forestry management can protect waterways - another responsibility of Council. By rating forestry land at a higher rate than other land uses the Council would be sending all the wrong messages. Another issue that will affect some forestry blocks is the land management system of agroforestry where the trees are more sparsely planted and sheep graze underneath. Does the Council intend to rate these blocks as forestry?

regards
Ewen Smith