



## Ūawa Catchment Working Group

### National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-FW) – Implications for Ūawa Catchment Plan

11 December 2024

#### 1.0 Introduction

The NES – FW introduces a number of new regulations that apply nationally. Some of these are only temporary and are in place until they have been reviewed through the freshwater planning process. These regulations generally expire on 1 January 2025.

A key question for the Ūawa Catchment Plan is whether some of these regulations are sensible/useful to address/prevent issues in the catchment, and therefore should be brought across into the Ūawa Catchment Plan.

#### 2.0 Discussion

The specific temporary regulations that could be brought across are as follow:

- Regulation 16 Conversion of plantation forestry to pastoral use of land >10ha
- Regulation 18 Conversion of farmland to dairy farm land >10ha
- Regulation 20 Irrigation of dairy farm land >10ha
- Regulation 22 New use of land as dairy support land

**A key question for the group is whether they consider that these regulations should continue to apply beyond 1 January 2025 when they expire.**

The first regulation relates to plantation forestry and converting this back to pasture. I have assumed that both Overlay 3A and Overlay 3B requirements should over-ride any desire to convert plantation forestry to pasture. **A key question is whether this should apply more widely – ie that land in plantation forestry should be subject to a resource consent assessment if it is being converted to pastoral use.**

The other 3 regulations relate to dairy farming and the use of land for dairy support.

It seems unlikely that land in Ūawa would be converted to dairy due to the distance to the nearest milk processing facility at Whakatāne.

Dairy support is however common in parts of the Tairāwhiti Region. **A key question is whether it is common – or could become a significant land use in the Ūawa Catchment Plan area.**

**Additionally the question arises as to whether dairy support land is managed differently to other types of cattle grazing.**