

**EVIDENCE OF WALTER KOLFF IN OPPOSITION TO THE
RESOURCE CONSENTS SOUGHT BY CENTRAL PLAINS
WATER TRUST.**

2060/1896514

SUBJECT: THE EC - CATCH	
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ACTION	INFO

Phase D

INTRODUCTION

My name is Walter Kolff. I emigrated to New Zealand with my parents brothers and sisters in 1950 when I was 14 years old.

As a young man I worked on dairy farms and later became a mechanic. Before retiring I owned a central city garage.

From my farming days I have retained an interest in the land, and in land and water management based on sound principles of environmental management. As an example washing the cow effluent from the dairy into the local stream was no go as far as I was concerned. At my suggestion we established a soak pit to improve the situation. I have kept my interest in the environmental impacts of farming since then.

INTERESTS

My interest in these matters lead me to being a founding member of the Values Party in Timaru and later an active member of the Alliance Party and more recently the Green party. I stood as an Alliance Party Candidate for Canterbury Regional Council in the 1990's.

My wife and I are keen campers and trampers and enjoy the recreational opportunities available in rural Canterbury. The current charter of the foothills, plains and rivers are important to us.

My concerns for the Central Plains proposal therefore arise from my interest in the environment both as someone who has worked in farming and also who enjoys the countryside for recreation.

ADVERSE EFFECT ON GROUND WATER QUALITY

As a city dweller I appreciate the high quality of the groundwater that provides a clean untreated domestic supply to Christchurch residents. It is a great asset for the city and any proposal that places this at risk should not be given approval.

Even if the risk of contamination is difficult to assess or is considered to be relatively minimal or unlikely, I believe it is a risk not worth taking from a community viewpoint.

I have read of the concerns about this risk expressed by the Medical Officer of Health and I believe his professional views should be given full weight.

EFFECT ON THE RIVERS

I am unhappy about the adverse effect the proposal will have on the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers. The proposal is not truly one that takes from the rivers at times of high flows storing it and irrigating from the stored water during summer flows. Rather it is apparent that irrigation will be directly from the rivers as much as possible extracting water down to the minimum flows that currently are set for the rivers. Stored water being used only when the rivers drop below these flows. This huge scheme therefore is likely to result in these rivers being held to these minimum flows for long periods with detriment to the instream values of the rivers. (refer to intake structures, diversion and machines also mentioned by Teage family) Independent witnesses have brought to this hearing evidence of the adverse impacts that would result from the practises proposed. These impacts are not acceptable to me as a person concerned about the river as a healthy ecosystem, and the natural appearance and state of the river.

ADVERSE EFFECT ON NATIVE VEGETATION

I was present at this hearing when Dr Colin Meurk gave his evidence in which he highlighted the likely loss of very rare remnants of native vegetation and rare habitats (e.g. Mudfish habitat) that would result from this proposal. This loss could either arise from the physical works proposed or from the ongoing effect of irrigation affecting the dryland vegetation remnants. Dr Meurk pointed out that any loss of these remnant habitats could not be adequately replaced by re-vegetation plantings as part of "mitigation" that is offered by the applicant or that might be imposed.

ADVERSE EFFECT ON RECREATION

I am a keen tramper, camper and canoeist. I am concerned about the effect low river levels might have on the enjoyment of the river for canoeing and ask you to take note of the experts who have expressed their concerns to you.

CONCLUSION

As a concerned citizen I ask this panel to give weight to the professional views of the experts that are not aligned to the applicant.

Many in the community including myself who have interests and concerns about the wider implications and adverse effects of the proposal should be able to rely on these more independent experts..

Wally Kolff