

16 July 2015

Media Release

EDS will not appeal the Tukituki decisions



The Environmental Defence Society has announced that it won't be appealing the decisions on the Tukituki Plan Change and Ruataniwha Dam consents.

"We are satisfied that the limits set for water quality are acceptable and should protect aquatic life in the river system," said EDS Chairman Gary Taylor.

"The Board of Inquiry has done a good job in putting in place a robust system of objectives, policies, rules and consent conditions and is to be congratulated on the thoroughness of its endeavours.

"Notwithstanding the error of law with the so-called deeming provision that was corrected as a result of High Court appeals, overall the Board has been fair and we are satisfied that our concerns have been dealt with.

"If there are no appeals from other parties then we expect there will be a period of sober reflection on the part of the dam promoters as to whether intensifying land use in the catchment is a goer. Much of the area is already fully allocated and there is very little headroom for anything more.

"Our own opinion is that the commercial risks of such an investment are considerable and should be evaluated carefully and in the absence of any promotional spin.

"It's one thing for councillors to put ratepayer funds at risk and quite another for individual farmers to put their own capital into what at best is a marginal venture, especially given market volatility.

"But whether the dam proceeds or not, the people of Hawkes Bay can be satisfied that they have modern, lawful and environmentally acceptable water quality limits in their river system. That's a good outcome," Mr Taylor concluded.

The period in which appeals can be filed with the High Court expires this Friday.