

My name is Bernard Potts and I live in a small farming area called Harema which is adjacent to the MAKARORO RIVER valley.  
I am here today representing the MAKARORO RIVER Society as DOC has declared to do that.

You will see from my written submission on the Change of Status proposal that I have listed three reasons for opposing the proposal

- (a) The first is that it is not legal - you will hear plenty on this subject from other submitters on this subject
- (b) Likewise, the second reason that it would set a bad precedent for other conservation land
- (c) It is the third reason where I would like to put most of my energy to

(i) On P2 of Kessel's original "Proposed Integrated Mitigation & Offset Approach" Report it stated that "104 ha of ecologically significant vegetation would be lost" (if the massed industrial reservoir is built on the Makaroro River)  
- that figure climbed to 168 ha in the expert conference agreement presented to the Board of Inquiry

(ii) Further down P2 it stated that "the area of loss of threatened fauna & flora species ... would be over 183 ha"

(iii) On P4, it quotes DOC as saying that "an area of significant conservation value is included within the reservoir footprint"

(iv) Further down P4 it also stated that the portion of riverbed that will be lost is a "nationally original rare" ecosystem type  
(On P7 of the Final Report, the area of riverbed that would be lost is quantified at almost 74 ha)

(v) In Dr Kessel's Concise Summary of Evidence (Para 1.5(d)) to the Board of Inquiry, he stated that "an important seasonal bird feeding habitat will be lost"

(vi) Back on P2 of the original Kessel's Report, it also stated (amongst other things) that:  
(a) access to a number of DOC walking tracks will be lost  
(b) the remnants of the historic Yeoman's Mill Site will be inundated

(2)

(c)(v) Continued

(c) Fish passage to the upper bounds of the Mahanoro River & Dutch Creek will be lost [CP4 in the Final Report]

(vii) On P79 of the original Kessel's "Terrestrial Biology Study" it stated that "the long-tailed bat is considered nationally vulnerable to extinction ... and therefore all populations are important for the persistence of the species"

Further down, it said "the results of 3 surveys conducted to date suggest they appear to have their core area of activity within the proposed inundation zone"

and that "the proposed reservoir and dam could have a significant negative effect"

and "the most serious effect on the bats will be the loss of mature native forest suitable for roosting sites critical for reproduction"

These quotes are just a sample

(viii) At the time of application for a monorail in Fossilfield, the then Minister of Conservation, Dr Nick Smith, indicated how important it was that the long-tailed bat population was not adversely affected.

(ix) During the Board of Inquiry process, Alice Neale asked Dr Kessel's what he worried about at 3 am - he answered "long-tailed bats"!!

So what on the gods' & goddesses' green earth is DOC doing rolling over and being complicit in the proposed vandalism of the 22 ha that we are here talking about today!

Why hasn't DOC been out there doing its job in protecting this area and the other areas of native bush, wildlife habitat, and braided river bed within the proposed industrial reservoir footprint.

Shame on you, DOC, for not doing your job.

Shame on the former Minister of Conservation for so emasculating DOC that it cannot do its job.

And shame on you again DOC for not standing up to him.

(3)

and for making the lamp-worst submission to the Board of Inquiry that you did rather than the one that might have actually saved the Mahurangi river and its environs, fauna & flora, etc.

So my plea to you members of this Hearing Panel is to give DOC back its spine by rejecting this proposed change of status and directing DOC to protect the 22 hectares in question (and the other areas & habitats mentioned above) from ~~re-~~ inundation by a massive industrial reservoir.

Also if HBRIC is to be given "a right of reply to clarify points that they consider have been misunderstood or misrepresented or to propose solutions to matters raised", then I would request that I and any other submitter who wants to, should likewise be given that same right.

Why <sup>should</sup> HBRIC be considered to be any more important than me before you?