



REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT (RPS)

The RPS sets the environmental, cultural and economic priorities for Southland's future.

City, district and regional plans must "give effect to", or implement, the vision in the RPS.

As Councils, working together in an integrated manner is essential to strengthen the region's communities, economy and environment for now and for the future.



WATER QUANTITY

Environment Southland 0800 768 845

Southland has always been seen as a region with an abundance of clean water, enough for people, animals on land and plants and fish instream.

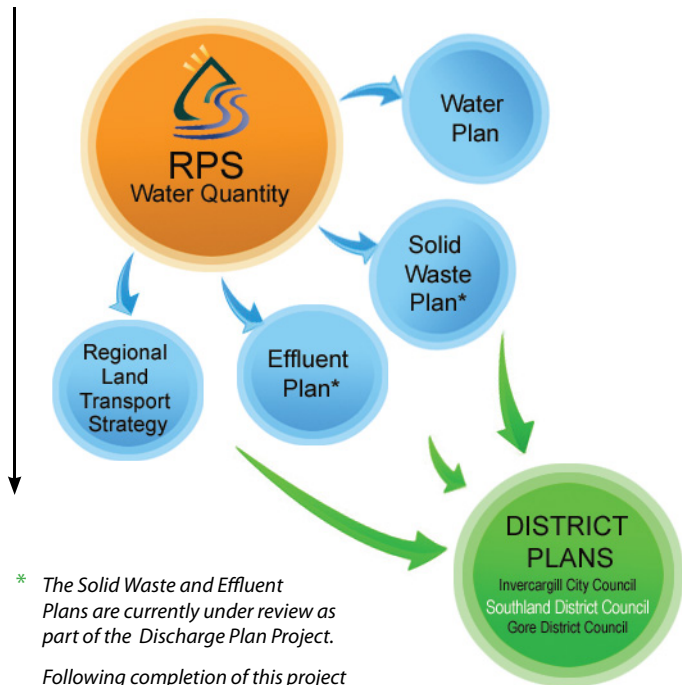
However, there are increasing pressures on water allocation and quantity and its management.

Issues

Some of the critical issues facing Southland's water quantity are:

- Land use intensification.
- Forestry conversions.
- Cumulative effects on water from permitted and consented activities.
- Water use efficiency.
- Lack of sufficient information about aquifers and availability of groundwater.
- Inefficient and decentralised water management.

Implementation of RPS



* The Solid Waste and Effluent Plans are currently under review as part of the Discharge Plan Project.

Following completion of this project these Plans will be merged with the Water Plan creating one overall Plan dealing with all discharges.

Options

The following are possible approaches to address Southland's water quantity issues:

- Apply national policy to Southland's water management
- Review existing regional water management by:
 - Reassessing water volume that can be taken as a permitted activities
 - Establishing minimum flow cut-offs for consents
 - Setting priorities for water uses
 - Determining how much water is available for public use
 - Investigating region-wide or catchment issues, and developing policy responses
 - Managing water on a catchment, rather than regional, basis
 - Forming partnerships with major water-using industries
 - Collaborating with territorial authorities on reticulated community water supplies

What do you think?

How should the Regional Policy Statement deal with water quantity and allocation issues—should it deliberately set out a management framework, or leave that to the Water Plan?

What are the priority areas for action? Efficient water use? Reticulated water supplies?

Would a catchment-wide approach to water management be more effective than Environment Southland's current region-wide approach?

Who should manage the effects of land use change on water quantity Environment Southland or the District Council and other territorial authorities?





DISTRICT PLAN

The Southland District Plan is the primary document that manages land use and development within the Southland District. The Plan is required to give effect to the Regional Policy Statement (RPS).

Groundwater and surface water usage in Southland has increased significantly in recent years. The water supplies of many Southland communities are obtained from these water sources.



▶▶▶ WATER QUANTITY

Southland District Council 0800 732 732

Issues

The issues relevant to water quantity and allocation for the District Plan review are:

- Traditionally water quantity has not been seen as a key resource management issue for the district.
- Importance of reticulated community water supplies and issues associated with increasing water demand from a number of competing users.
- Variations in water flows and groundwater levels and the effect this can have on community water supplies.
- Increasing pressure on water sources through intensification of land use.
- Construction of new reticulated water supplies to meet new drinking water standards will place additional pressure on water resources.



Options

Options being considered to address these issues are:

- Recognition in the District Plan of the importance of water quantity. The existing Plan currently has a focus on water quality, with less emphasis on quantity.
- Adoption of policies and objectives focussed on water quantity issues.
- A rules-based approach to specified land uses could be adopted so that the effects of these uses on water quantity can be assessed through resource consent processes.
- Education programmes and economic incentives are non-regulatory tools that can be utilised to shape peoples behaviour in regard to water use.

What do you think?

What are the priority areas for action?

Should the importance of reticulated community water supplies over other extractive uses be stated and emphasised in the District Plan?



Comments & Feedback

Please send your comments and feedback via email by 31 July 2009 to service@es.govt.nz or in hard copy to:

*Environment Southland
Private Bag 90116, Invercargill 9840.*

*Further information: www.es.govt.nz
and www.southlanddc.govt.nz or by
phoning either council.*