



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.



LAND/RURAL ISSUES

Environment Southland 0800 768 845

Increasing intensive land use has been part of Southland's economic growth in the past 10 years.

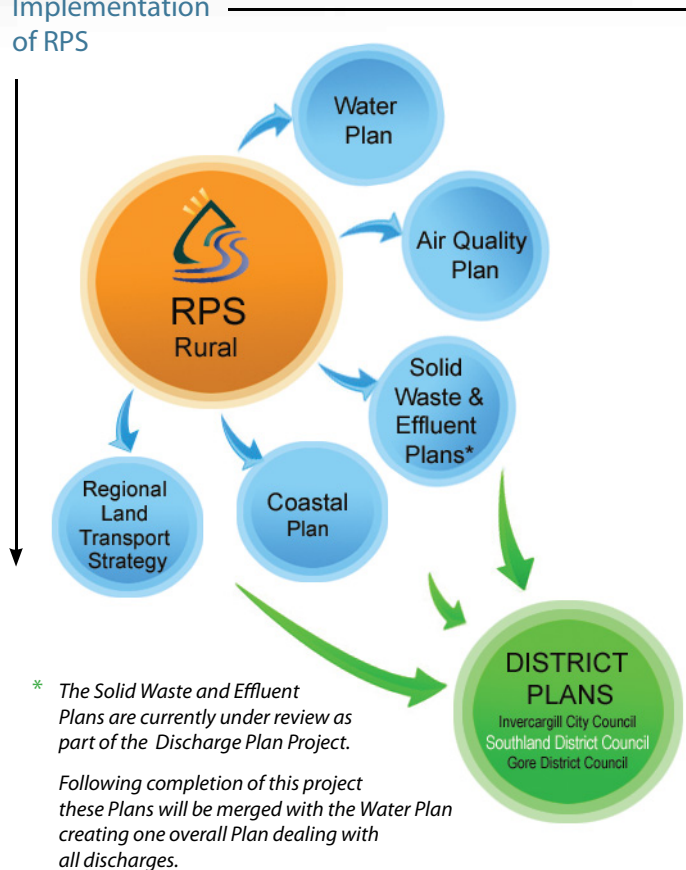
Maintaining and safeguarding the soil and water resources is vital to the wellbeing of the people and communities of Southland.

Issues

Some of the critical land/rural issues facing Southland are:

- Balancing economic development with sustainable management of resources.
- Discharge of liquid trade wastes, chemicals or sewage.
- Increasing pressures on soil and water.
- Landuse intensification – arable, drystock, dairy.
- Predation by pest animals and displacement by pest plants.
- Increase in forestry and wood processing.
- Exploitation of national park resources.
- Lack of native vegetation protection on private land.
- Increasing rural development.
- Expected rise in coal production.
- Public access across or adjacent to rural properties.
- Pressures from coastal subdivision/landuse.

Implementation of RPS



Options

The following are possible approaches to address Southland's land/rural issues:

- Develop stronger local regulations to ensure land use practices have minimal environmental impact.
- Introduce financial incentives and/or penalties.
- Research and monitor current practices and effects.
- Educate land users about best management practices.
- Encourage voluntary initiatives by industry and communities.

What do you think?

How can we better respond to the intensification of landuse and landuse changes?

What is an appropriate control on rural density -minimum separation requirement or lot sizes, zoning regulations, other suggestions?

Should Southland protect areas with indigenous vegetation? How?

In your view, what issues should local government prioritise? How?





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).

Southland District has the largest land area, 30,979km², of any local authority in New Zealand. The high quality soils of the Southland Plains and lower hills are well suited to intensive grazing, cropping, horticulture and forestry.



LAND/RURAL ISSUES

Southland District Council 0800 732 732

Issues

Rural/land issues that need to be considered as part of the District Plan review include:

- Increased subdivision in rural areas and the infrastructure issues that can arise from this development.
- Loss of high-value soils from productive use.
- Increase in gravel extraction, which can impact on the roading network and landscapes.
- The rural density control rule of the existing District Plan (the 150m separation distance rule) has been problematic.
- Landuse change.



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.*

Options

Options for addressing some of these issues include:

- The use of minimum lot sizes as a rural density control as an alternative to the existing 150m rule.
- Another option for rural density would be an approach whereby clustered developments would be provided for. This approach allows clusters of housing to be developed while a large portion of the subdivided property remains in productive use.
- Zoning regulations that set aside areas for intensive rural development and specifically exclude higher density residential development could also be adopted.
- The Council could examine the use of a rules based approach for the protection of versatile or high production soils. Alternatively existing soil mapping information could be used to identify which land uses are best suited to these soils as an education/information non-regulatory approach.

What do you think?

What options could be utilised to address these rural/land issues?

What is the most appropriate control for rural density?

Should the Southland District Council examine options for the protection of versatile or high production soils on the rural/urban fringe of growth towns?

Should more isolated rural areas of the district be protected from rural/residential lifestyle development?

How should the Southland District Council respond to the increased levels of gravel extraction that have taken place in recent years?

