



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 QUALITY

Environment Southland 0800 768 845

Fresh and clean water is vital to life in the Southland region, but the quality of water in rivers and stream is reducing and hotspots of groundwater contamination are also around.

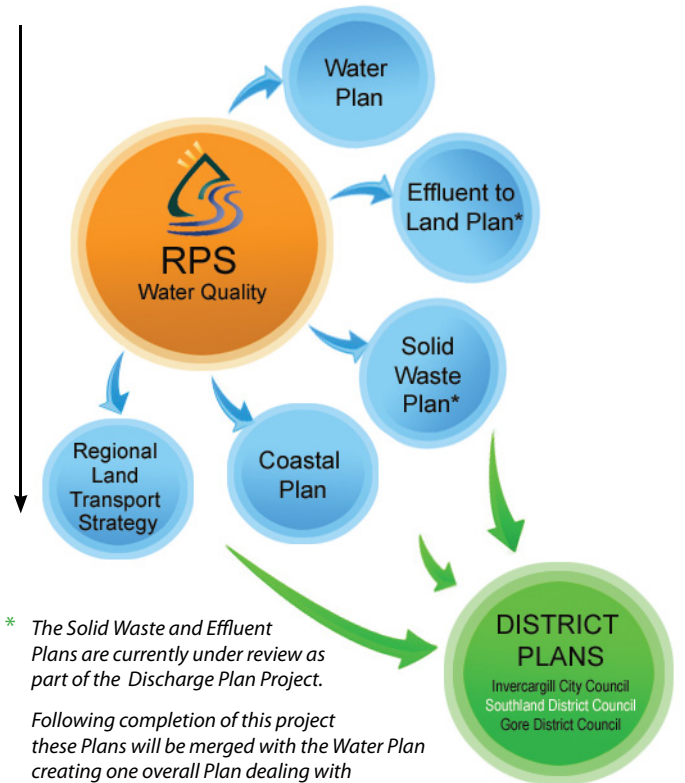
Arresting the decline of water quality will present a challenge in the next few years.

Issues

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

- Land use intensification.
- Cumulative effects from land use.
- Land use activities that don't require resource consents.
- Increasing levels of nutrients in rivers and streams.
- Increasing levels of contaminants in groundwater.
- Sewage, stormwater and industrial wastewater.
- Lack of water quality data.
- Inefficient and decentralised water management.

Implementation of RPS



Options

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

- Raise awareness about the effects of land use activity on water quality.
- Determine when land use changes require land use consents.
- Local government collaboration to develop new rules controlling land uses that may harm water quality.
- Gather scientific evidence to substantiate new rules.

What do you think?

Are there other significant issues affecting water quality that need to be considered?

To deal with these issues, should the Regional Policy Statement set out a management framework, or leave that to the Water Plan?

Are land use practices polluting Southland's waterways and, if so, which land use practices are most detrimental?

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 quality - 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).

Although known for having abundant water sources, Southland has experienced declining water quality in parts of the district.



▶▶▶ WATER QUALITY

Southland District Council 0800 732 732

Issues

Issues surrounding water quality in Southland District are:

- Avoiding deterioration of water quality.
- Land use affecting water quality in some areas.
- Viability of community water schemes is under threat by landuse intensification and change.
- Potential development of coal, lignite and gas deposits.
- The reliance of some older housing stock on aging septic tank systems.
- Enhancing water quality to benefit aquatic plant and animal life.
- Drainage and loss of wetlands.



Options

Options that could be considered in the review of the District Plan are:

- Controls on vegetation clearance, grazing of riparian margins, harvesting of trees, draining of wetlands and landuse.
- Focus on specific catchments or areas experiencing water quality issues.
- Encouraging fencing of waterways and planting of riparian margins.
- Rates relief and funding of fencing and other economic incentives.
- Education and information on potential effects of landuse and water quality issues in general.

What do you think?

What are the key pressures on water quality in Southland?

How should the District Plan look to protect water quality in Southland?

What are the priority locations for action?



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.*