

**BEFORE THE SPECIAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE NGARURORO AND CLIVE RIVERS  
WATER CONSERVATION ORDER  
AT NAPIER**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991  
(the Act)

**IN THE MATTER** of a Special Tribunal appointed under  
s202 of the Act to consider an application  
for a Water Conservation Order made by  
New Zealand Fish and Game Council, the  
Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council,  
Ngāti Hori ki Kohupatiki, Whitewater New  
Zealand, Jet Boating New Zealand, and  
the Royal Forest and Bird Protection  
Society of New Zealand (the Applicants)  
in relation to the Water Conservation  
Order

**The Special Tribunal** Richard Fowler QC (Chair)  
Alec Neill  
Dr Roger Maaka  
Dr Ngaire Phillips  
John McCliskie

---

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF LESLEY WILSON  
FOR HORTICULTURE NEW ZEALAND**

25 January 2019

---



**ATKINS | HOLM | MAJUREY**

Helen Atkins/Nicole Buxeda  
PO Box 1585  
Shortland Street  
AUCKLAND 1140

---

Solicitor on the record	Helen Atkins	Helen.Atkins@ahmlaw.nz	(09) 304 0421
<b>Contact solicitor</b>	Nicole Buxeda	Nicole.Buxeda@ahmlaw.nz	(09) 304 0429

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. My name is Lesley Wilson. My husband Desmond and I are Pipfruit and wine growers located in the Dartmoor Valley.
2. We own and operate Wilson and Cotfield orchards. We have been owner-growers since 1987, when we purchased the Wilson home block from Desmond's parents. In 2005 we added Cotfield to our operation.
3. Last year our son Alex returned home to work on the two orchards. Alex is the sixth generation of the Wilson family to enter into the horticulture / agriculture industries in New Zealand and is currently undertaking an apprenticeship in fruit growing.
4. I was on the Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association Executive for 12 years, 4 years of which I was President. I am currently on the Board of the Horticulture Export Authority, a member of the Horticulture New Zealand Independent Director Selection Committee and the HortNZ Remuneration Committee, and I am a member of the Hastings District Council Rural Community Board.

## **CURRENT OPERATION**

5. We currently have a holding of just over 100 acres and have 3 full-time employees (including ourselves) plus a part-time accounts person. During the season we have 12 Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE) employees plus up to 30 other seasonal staff sourced from New Zealand and Working Holiday Scheme.
6. We are currently going through a growth phase, having just bought land and undertaking redevelopment of our orchards to utilise new intensive growing methods. This is a very exciting time for us. We have also invested heavily in a packhouse and marketing organisation.
7. Our family orcharding operation is vertically integrated. The growth and investment is built on access to adequate labour and water. Without water we would not be growing. All of our property is, or has the potential to be, irrigated.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

8. We are always looking for ways to improve production with regards to both sustainability and quality. We were among the

first growers in New Zealand to take up the world-class New Zealand Integrated Fruit Production system back in the late 1980s.

9. Today, we are fully GlobalG.A.P. accredited. GLOBALG.A.P. is an internationally recognised set of farm standards dedicated to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). Through certification, producers demonstrate their adherence to GLOBALG.A.P. standards. Every year we are audited on our several aspects of our business such as our growing methods, conservation and wildlife measures, and water management. This is a full one-day comprehensive audit. We pride ourselves on our results.
10. Additionally, as the orchards are being developed or reworked we are putting in place the latest and most efficient irrigation infrastructure.

#### **POSITION IN RESPECT TO THE PROPOSED ORDER**

11. I was involved with TANK from day one. It was a long process but very worthwhile. It is great to see the science from TANK already being used to best manage our resources. I fully support the TANK process.
12. The fact that a single special interest group has lodged a Water Conservation Order ("**WCO**"), independent of the collaborative, community-based TANK process and because, and I quote, 'we will not compromise', is arrogance at best. Plan changes work with the community. If a WCO was in place, the process to change it, as community and environmental needs change, would be prohibitive. I believe a WCO is an outdated mode of protection.

**Lesley Wilson**

25 January 2019