***Important note:*** *MHV Water is in the process of renewing our nitrogen discharge resource consent application, which will likely need to give effect to the new requirements under the national Essential Freshwater Package. As more details of these requirements become known, MHV Water may choose to update this policy and it’s implementation at any time. If these policies change after a completed application has been received, we will assess your application according to the policies in place at the time of the application.*

***Background***

There is a growing body of evidence indicating land use and irrigation change by our shareholders over the past 20 years has significantly impacted water quality in our district. We need to ensure further changes in farm activities are effectively managed to promote improvements in water quality and ecosystem health.

MHV Water Ltd (MHV Water) hold a resource consent to manage nitrogen loss discharges on behalf of all shareholders, which has expired and is currently with Environment Canterbury for renewal. The consent specifies a total nitrogen loss limit for our catchment in order to improve surface and groundwater quality.

MHV Water shareholders who wish to vary their farming activities in a way which may impact water quality need to first seek approval from the MHV Board. Applicants with a demonstrated history of excellent environmental performance and continuous improvement will have more flexibility.

The following document specifies the information that must be provided for any proposed land use change to be approved.

***Definition of a Farm Activity Variation***

A farm activity variation is defined as a permanent increase in any of the following parameters compared to what was permitted[[1]](#footnote-1) by MHV Water between 2014-2019:

* Change in land use (e.g. sheep and beef grazing to dairy support)
* Any new or increased area of winter grazing of cattle
* Any increase in irrigated area
* Any increase in stocking rate
* Any intensification of current system (e.g. system 3 dairy to system 4)

Prior to making any of the above changes, you must first seek approval from MHV Water as the scheme needs to know how your change will affect the scheme N load limit.

***FAVA Application Due Dates***

Minor changes can be approved by The Chief Executive and require at least 10 working days for processing.

Moderate or major changes will require MHV Board Approval. To have a FAVA approved by the board in 2020-2021 season, applications must be received by the following dates:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **FAVA Application Due Date** | **Board Meeting** |
| 14 December 2020 | 26 January 2021 |
| 4 February 2021 | 2 March 2021 |
| 17 March 2021 | 13 April 2021 |
| 28 April 2021 | 24 May 2021 |
| 10 June 2021 | 6 July 2021 |
| 22 July 2021 | 17 August 2021 |
| 16 September 2021 | 12 October 2021 |
| 28 October 2021 | 23 November 2021 |

Failure to meet these timeframes may mean a decision is deferred until the next Board meeting.

***Application Checklist***

* Complete this application form
* Maps of the proposed activity (where irrigation or land use area changes)
* Evidence to support the proposals alignment with scheme values (where applicable)
* Provide sufficient details to Irrigo Environmental team to allow OverseerFM nutrient budgets to be prepared to ensure the following is demonstrated:
  + Authorised nitrogen losses at Good Management Practice[[2]](#footnote-2)
  + Your proposed nitrogen losses
* An active OverseerFM account with annual subscription paid and
* Access to the applicable OverseerFM nutrient budgets

*Where an applicant is not currently a shareholder please also include the following:*

* 2009-13 nitrogen baseline (including irrigation and land use maps of the farm during the baseline)
* Farm Environment Plan for the property (including farm maps)
* Most recent FEP Audit report
* Demonstrate the property proposed to join the scheme complies with regulatory requirements

**Note:** Irrigo Centre Limited will invoice the applicant at a rate of $140/hour for the time spent processing this application.

***Please note MHV Water will only approve changes which are scheduled to occur within 12 months of the application being approved.***

***Once the FAVA is approved an FEP Audit will likely need to be carried out within 12 months by an Irrigo Approved Auditor.***

**Criteria to Apply for a FAVA**

Certain activities will result in an automatic decline of your FAVA application. Before an application is submitted, please check:

1. Is the application to enterprise nutrients on a property with N losses less than 21 kg N/ha? (i.e. irrigate or intensify a property by spreading nutrients from your existing MHV irrigated property)

*No FAVA or new water applications will be approved unless the property can operate within the properties 2009-13 baseline (no enterprising of nutrients with another scheme property will be considered).*

1. Is the application to intensify land within or near:
   1. A Community Drinking Water Protection Zone?
   2. A culturally significant area?
   3. A surface water body?

*Any proposal which can impact a sensitive area are automatically declined. Please include further information in your application to demonstrate how your proposed activity will not impact on any sensitive area within or adjacent to your property.*

1. Does your application rely on intensification on another property occurring?

*Your application will be automatically declined unless you can demonstrate the transfer of nutrients to another property is authorised. For instance, increasing cow numbers on a dairy platform will potentially result in an increase in winter grazing area and/or RSU on the winter grazing block. You will need to demonstrate the winter grazing block either complies with the scheme policies and/or national or regional rules before a FAVA will be considered.*

1. Are you familiar with the farm system and mitigations modelled by your consultant to meet your nitrogen discharge allowance?

*All mitigations modelled to maintain or reduce your N loss need to be listed in the application form. Failure to document the proposed mitigations may result in your application being declined.*

1. Are all outstanding environmental issues addressed?

*Properties not currently operating at an “A” audit grade standard are unlikely to score sufficient points for a moderate or major farm activity variation to achieve an approval. We recommend you address the outstanding issues, are re-audited and apply at a later date.*

**Existing and Proposed Farm System Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Application |  |
| FEP # |  |
| Property name / ID |  |
| Property Owner |  |
| Property Owner Contact info |  |
| Contact number/s |  |
| Postal address |  |
| Email |  |
| Person responsible *(if different from Property Owner)* |  |
| Role of person responsible |  |
| Person responsible Contact info |  |
| Contact number/s |  |
| Postal address |  |
| Email |  |

**Proposed Land Use Descriptions:**

Describe the changes you are proposing to make

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
| **Season Proposed Changes will Occur: ­­** |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Authorised Land Use[[3]](#footnote-3)** | **Proposed Land Use** |
| **Total Area** | **Ha** |  |  |
| **Total Irrigated Area** | **Ha** |  |  |
| **MHV Irrigated Area** | **Ha** |  |  |
| **Irrigation System Designed Water Use** | **mm/day** |  |  |
| **Land Use(s)**  **e.g. Arable/Sheep/Beef, Dairy etc** |  |  |  |
| **Area Winter Grazing**  **cattle only** | **ha** |  |  |
| **Average Stocking rate** | **R.S.U/ha[[4]](#footnote-4)** |  |  |
| **Cows/ha** |  |  |
| **Effluent Area if applicable** | **Ha** |  |  |
| **Other Relevant Changes (please describe)** |  |  |  |

**Nutrient losses:**

*All OverseerFM nutrient budgets used support your FAVA application are prepared by a Certified Nutrient Management Advisor (CNMA), meets the Best Practice Data Input Standards and the Irrigo Nutrient Budget Consistency Protocols.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed Nutrient Budget Information** | |
| OverseerFM Account Name |  |
| Proposed Scenario Nutrient Budgets Name |  |
| N loss Rate (kg N/ha/year) |  |
| Total N loss (kg N/year) |  |
| Area (ha) |  |

**Farm Maps:**

*Please provide a farm map of your current and proposed farm system, including:*

* *Property boundary*
* *Irrigated area and type*
* *Winter grazing area(s)*
* *Effluent area*
* *Any other relevant change*

**Scheme Objectives**

MHV Water will assess your application to ensure it aligns with the overall values and objectives of the scheme.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Objective** | **Discussion** | **Evidence** | **Mitigation** |
| Continuous Improvement | How does your proposal promote continuous improvement both individually and as a catchment?  Can you demonstrate a history of continuous improvement? |  |  |  |
| Catchment Consistency | How is this application consistent with what you could do outside of the scheme? |  |  |  |
| Catchment outcomes will be improved | How will your proposal improve water quality, cultural values and biodiversity in the catchment? |  |  |  |
| Economic Sustainability | How does this proposal promote economic sustainability for yourself and the catchment? |  |  |  |

**Proposed Mitigations**

*You are likely required to review or update your management practices to remain in your current nutrient footprint. Please list what these actions are below to ensure you operate the proposed activity as modelled for this approval.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed Mitigation** | **Proposed Date of Implementation** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

***FAVA Applications may be declined where mitigation management practices to reduce N loss have been modelled in your supporting OveseerFM nutrient budgets, but not listed above.***

**Environmental Compliance History**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Last FEP Audit |  |
| Auditor Name |  |
| FEP Audit Grade |  |
| Required Actions from FEP Audit |  |
| Other Action Taken  *e.g. Registered environmental incidents, Formal warnings, cease water notices, significant non-compliance issues with resource consents etc* |  |

**Declaration**

*I declare the information I have provided is true and correct. If this application for a variation and farm activity is approved, I will ensure:*

1. *The farm activity variation will not exceed the nitrogen losses (or equivalent based on later versions of OverseerFM) proposed and approved by this application*
2. *I maintain or implement Good Management Practices as described in this application*
3. *The farm management mitigations proposed and modelled as part of this application are understood, realistic and achievable.*
4. *The farm activity variation will be implemented within 12 months of this approval being granted*
5. *My property will be audited by MHV Water within 12 months of this approval being granted for the purpose of ensuring all conditions of approval are met*

*I understand that failing to meet the above two conditions of this approval may result in a breach of the Water User Agreement and be subject to the Mayfield Hinds Valetta Water Limited internal compliance procedures*.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Signed*** | ***Date*** |
|  |  |
| ***Name(s)*** |  |
|  |  |

**MHV Water Board Approval**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Signed*** | ***Date*** |
|  |  |
| ***Name(s)*** |  |
|  |  |

# **Appendix 1: Good Management Practices**

Good Management Practice has been defined in the Industry Agreed Good Management Practice relating to Water Quality Guide:

<http://files.ecan.govt.nz/public/pc5/MGM_Technical_Reports/Industry_Agreed_Good_Management_Practices_MGM_2015.pdf>

# **Appendix 2: Decision Process**

***Change Categorsation***

Minor = within 5% of Irrigation, RSU, supplements, fertiliser or winter grazing FAVA triggers

Moderate = between 5-15% of Irrigation, RSU, supplements, fertiliser or winter grazing FAVA triggers

Major = either greater than 15% increase above of Irrigation, RSU, supplements, fertiliser or winter grazing FAVA triggers or change in land use category

1. Note: *permitted excludes unauthorised changes in land use or exceptional seasonal circumstances, e.g. M.bovis* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. We may have Overseer nutrient budget information available for existing MHV Water shareholders [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Authorised Land Use established the permitted land use activities for the property based on information provided to MHV Water between 2014-2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. R.S.U. /ha = Revised Stocking Units per hectare as calculated in the OverseerFM animal reports [↑](#footnote-ref-4)