

# Stock exclusion from waterways

This Factsheet explains rule WQL21 in the operative Canterbury Natural Resources Regional Plan



Fencing to provide a buffer between stock and a waterway helps to protect water quality. Plants in the riparian zone – whether grasses or natives – create a filter to help absorb nutrient runoff.

***There are new rules excluding stock from natural waterways in Canterbury which are designed to safeguard and improve water quality.***

## **The rules from June 2011**

Livestock access to natural waterways is allowed only if there are no significant adverse effects, which include:

- Heavy pugging in rivers, lakes, or wetlands
- Visible discolouration of water
- An increase in bacteria levels
- Any obvious evidence of faecal matter in waterways.

## **Additional rules from June 2012**

All intensively farmed livestock will be completely prohibited from entering natural waterways. This applies to:

- Farmed pigs
- Dairy cattle
- Any stock grazed on irrigated land (including sheep, deer, horses, goats, lama, alpacas)
- Any stock break-feeding or strip-grazed on winter crops (such as kale) in or adjacent to a natural waterbody (including wetlands).

In addition any cattle, farmed deer or pigs will be prohibited from entering waterways defined in the relevant schedule or planning map, which are:

- Within 1km of a river bathing site
- Within 1km upstream from a community drinking water supply
- At a salmon or inanga (whitebait) spawning site
- In a permanently flowing reach of specified low land rivers.



Fencing, even if only temporary, is the simplest way to restrict stock access to natural waterways.



Riparian planting absorbs nutrient runoff helping to protect water quality



Bridges and culverts keep stock out of natural waterways.

### **Recommendations for stock management**

We recommend everyone who manages stock should take the time to understand these rules and put measures in place to ensure stock are kept out of natural waterways.

In places where stock are causing significant adverse effects urgent action is needed to reduce or avoid these effects.

Methods to reduce stock access to natural waterways include:

- New permanent fences
- The use of temporary fences
- New bridges or culverts for stock to cross waterways.
- Avoid planting winter feed crops in paddocks with natural waterways.

### **Additional recommendations from June 2012**

Dairy and pig farmers should be planning to exclude stock from natural waterways by June 2012.

New management tools may be required, including:

- Restricted stock access drinking points in natural waterways
- A reticulated stock water system

### **Regulatory consequences**

Failure to comply with the new rules for stock access to natural waterways is likely to result in enforcement action, such as an abatement or infringement notice, or could even result in prosecution.

### **Where to get information or advice**

If you would like to talk to someone about the new rules or get some on-farm advice call Customer Services on 0800 324-636.

**More information on the new rules is available on our website:**

[www.ecan.govt.nz/nrrp](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/nrrp)

Financial support for fencing may be available for extended riparian areas with high biodiversity value and in conjunction with a native planting programme. Call Customer Services and ask to speak to a Biodiversity Officer or visit: [www.ecan.govt.nz/biodiversity](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/biodiversity) for more information.

### **What is a natural waterway?**

**River or stream:** a continually or intermittently flowing body of fresh water. This includes a stream and modified watercourse. It does not include any artificial watercourse (such as an irrigation canal, a water supply race, a hydroelectric canal, or a farm drain).

**Lake:** a body of fresh water which is entirely or nearly surrounded by land.

**Wetland:** includes permanently or intermittently wet areas, shallow water, and land-water boundaries that support a natural ecosystem of plants and animals adapted to wet conditions.

**For more information: please visit our website for more detail on these rules: <http://ecan.govt.nz/nrrp>**