

Stock exclusion from waterways

JANUARY - JUNE 2019 SIX MONTHLY SNAPSHOT

Protecting the environment is the top priority

The work to protect and improve Canterbury's rural environment has several parts:

- Set the necessary nutrient limits across Canterbury via planning rules
- Promote Good Management Practices (GMP) for farmers (see back page)
- Require land-use consent to farm and an independent Farm Environment Plan audit (for higher risk activities)
- Ensure effective and targeted consent compliance monitoring, and
- Respond quickly to as many incident reports, including stock in waterways as possible (this report).

Why does stock exclusion from waterways matter?

Stock in waterways can have a direct impact on water quality or ecological values and is a priority for Environment Canterbury, as well as for the wider community.

If stock get into waterways it not only raises the risk of animal disease or parasites but can also cause damage to the banks and beds of waterways or harm important mahinga kai habitats.

Cattle, deer and pigs are particularly attracted to water and can have a serious impact on water quality and mahinga kai values.

While the number of incidents is not large, responding quickly and effectively is a priority for us to minimise any environmental damage, and make sure it doesn't happen again.

When an incident is reported we work with the landowner involved to encourage the protection of river banks through fencing and planting to restrict stock access.

- > See inside for our stock exclusion from waterways results.
- > See the back page for guidelines around on-farm Good Management Practices.

Stock exclusion from waterways

JANUARY - JUNE 2019

Our rules

- A consent is needed for intensively farmed stock to access the bed of a lake or river. This includes cattle or deer on irrigated land or contained for winter break-feeding, dairy cows or farmed pigs.
- > Cattle, deer or pigs are prohibited access to sensitive river sites such as a salmon spawning site or in a drinking water protection zone.
- Some non-intensive stock (e.g. sheep) may access rivers and lakes provided they do not damage the bed or banks, or affect water quality.
- > Stock exclusion also forms part of Farm Environment Plans and related measures are checked during FEP Audits to ascertain whether stock exclusion GMPs are met.

Our targets

- For intensive stock: we respond to 80% of incidents within two days.
- For non-intensive stock: we respond to 80% of incidents within five days.

How we respond to incidents

- > Intensive stock are removed as soon as practicable. We then work with the landowner on preventative measures such as fencing waterways.
- > For non-intensive stock we ensure no damage has occurred, and then educate land-owners.



We investigate each incident to determine whether enforcement action is needed, in addition to advice and education.



Formal written warnings notify of an offence and require action to be taken.



Infringement notices, which include a fine, are issued for more significant breaches.



Abatement notices are a formal written direction, requiring certain actions to be taken or to cease within a specified time.



Prosecution is reserved for offences so serious that they warrant proceedings through the courts.

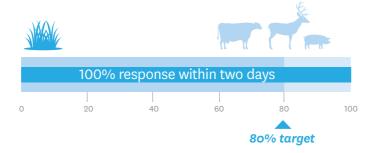
What we found and how we responded



69 Incidents

9 Intensive Incidents

Stock on **irrigated** land: Cattle, dairy cattle, deer or farmed pigs.



46 Non-Intensive Incidents

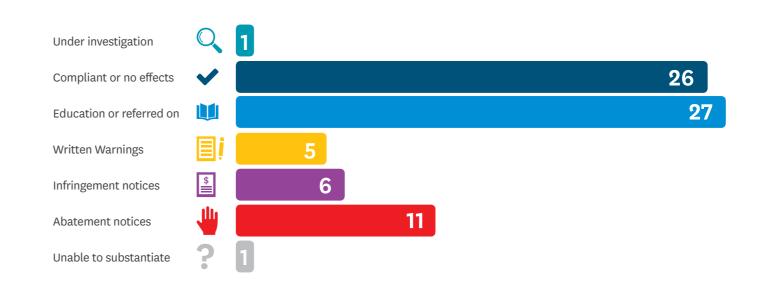
Stock on non-irrigated land: Cattle or sheep.



14 Permitted activity incidents

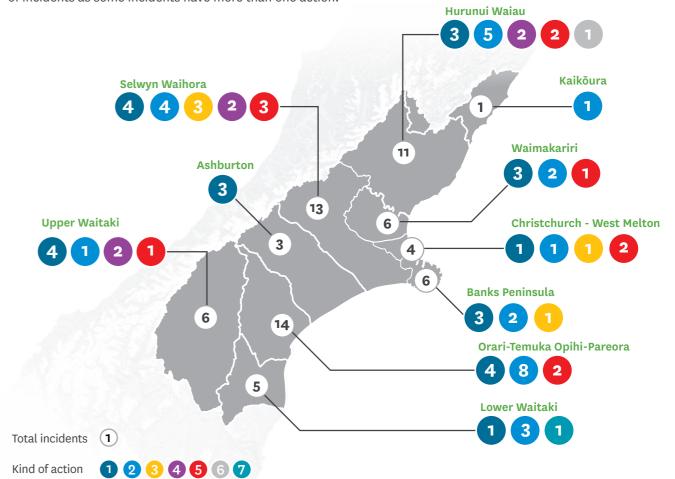
There were another 13 reported incidents which, after an initial desktop review, were found to be permitted activities and did not require site visits and one incident still under investigation. In such cases we educate the people involved to ensure they understand their responsibilities to protect the environment as a permitted activity.

77 Actions in response to incidents



Incidents and actions by zone

Note: there are more zone by zone actions than the total number of incidents as some incidents have more than one action.



Good Management Practices are good farming

All farming sector groups have agreed a code of Good Management Practices, including the following for stock exclusion:

To the extent that is compatible with land form, stock class and intensity, exclude stock from waterways.



Above: Fencing off waterways from stock helps protect water quality



Above: Pugging damage - not permitted

Tips and ideas on how to keep stock out of waterways



Plan and prioritise waterway areas (including wetlands) to fence, based on the vulnerability of the land, significance of the waterway and potential to impact on water quality off-farm.



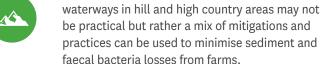
Provide alternative stock-water sources away from waterways, where possible.



Exclusion of extensively farmed stock from



Provide shade and shelter away from waterways and riparian planting.





Leave an appropriate buffer depending on slope, to filter runoff.



Actively manage stock, stock density and stock classes adjacent to waterways to reduce risks to water where fencing is not practical.



During high risk periods for erosion e.g. winter grazing, fawn weaning, actively manage stock to prevent slumping, pugging or erosion.



Locate and manage crossing of waterways so it will not result in degradation of those waterways.



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