



Stock access to water

Some farm animals can physically damage the beds and banks of streams, lakes and wetlands, which has negative effects on fish habitats and general stream health. Contaminants in faecal matter pose health risks to people in contact with water, and nutrients from faecal matter promote weed growth.

Setting up stock drinking water systems, fences and other ways to exclude stock from waterways can be costly, which is why these proposed new rules would be in place from 2022. We want to give landowners time to plan for the proposed changes.

From 2022, the Water Plan would require all dairy cattle and pigs to be excluded from:

- Lakes
- Continually flowing rivers wider than one metre
- Regionally Significant Wetlands

Dairy cattle and pigs tend to be farmed more intensively than other types of stock, which is why these rules apply to them. There is a greater risk of damage to river or stream banks and beds, and an increased chance of water contamination from these types of stock accessing water.

When excluding stock, an average setback of five metres from the beds of the waterways listed above must be applied.

If you can't meet these standards, you will need a resource consent.

As part of your resource consent application, we'll need to know:

- Where the lakes, rivers wider than one metre and Regionally Significant Wetlands are located on your property
- Where stock will access those waterways and where they will be excluded
- How stock access to water will be minimised
- The environmental effects of stock accessing water

More information about our resource consent process is available at www.orc.govt.nz/consents or call 0800 474 082 or email customerservices@orc.govt.nz



Common questions and answers

What happens before 2022?

Until 2022, the current rules would continue to apply, which make stock access a permitted activity as long as:

- Stock do not cause slumping, pugging or erosion
- Stock do not create a visual change in the colour or clarity of the water
- Stock do no damage to native plants or animals in a Regionally Significant Wetland, and
- There is no feeding out to stock on the bed of the waterway or wetland

Why the delay?

Excluding stock from water requires practical action on the ground, which takes time to complete.

We are also aware that the Government will issue national regulations on stock exclusion in 2020 that would replace the Water Plan's provisions. Setting the implementation date at 2022 gives us time to respond to the Government regulations that will be issued.

Why not other stock categories, such as beef cattle and deer?

The new rules for dairy cattle and pigs are the first step towards more comprehensive stock exclusion from our waterways. New national regulations that will be issued later this year, will gradually restrict access to water for other stock categories.

From 1 July 2023: all cattle and deer are to be kept out of:

- wetlands already identified in a regional or district plan;
- waterways more than a metre wide where land is used for fodder-cropping, break-feeding or grazing on irrigated pasture.

From 1 July 2025 beef cattle and deer are to be kept out of waterways more than a metre wide on land less than 10-degrees slope by 1 July 2025.

From 1 July 2025 all cattle, pigs and deer are to be kept out of wetlands identified in line with the new *National Policy Statement for Freshwater*. Generally, these wetlands will be 500m² or more in size, or smaller in case they have particular value, for example a habitat for an endangered species.

Definitions and explanation:

Dairy cattle: Cattle farmed for milk production. This includes dairy cows, weaned and unweaned calves of dairy cows, and non-milking dairy cattle such as youngstock and bulls.

A continually flowing river: This is a river that has flow in the bed all year round during years of normal rainfall.

A Regionally Significant Wetland is any wetland that is:

- Listed in Schedule 9 and shown on maps F1-F63 of Otago's Water Plan, or
- Within a wetland management area listed in Schedule 9 and mapped in maps F1-F63 of Otago's Water Plan, or
- Higher than 800 metres above sea level.

Where are setbacks measured from?

Setbacks are measured from the edge of the wetted bed of a lake, river wider than 1m or Regionally Significant Wetland and are averaged across the landholding.

Where is 1m measured from? A

continually flowing river is considered to be wider than 1 metre if the river is wider than 1 metre at any point within the boundary of a landholding at its annual fullest flow without overtopping its banks.

