

FACTSHEET

EXCLUDING STOCK FROM WATERBODIES

Excluding stock from our rivers and streams prevents contaminants from dung and urine entering the water. It also stops stock releasing sediment into the water by damaging stream banks, beds, riparian margins and riverine habitats.

Under the umbrella of stock exclusion, there are several activities that are managed by the Southland Water and Land Plan. These are:

- the disturbance of the bed of regionally significant wetlands, sensitive waterbodies, and habitats of specific birds
- moving stock across rivers
- stock access to wetlands
- stock access to rivers and open drains

Any planning and decisions around stock exclusion will need to be a part of a Farm Environmental Management Plan (FEMP), if a plan is required for your property. The FEMP will need to identify all waterbodies, all existing and proposed riparian vegetation, fencing and other stock exclusion methods, and the places where stock access or cross waterbodies. The FEMP will also need to describe, in relation to stock access, how losses of contaminants to waterbodies do not increase and are minimised with any change in farming activity.

Rule 70 of the Southland Water and Land Plan manages stock exclusion, and some activities are prohibited, or require consent.

- It is prohibited for any stock to disturb:
 - ▶ the bed of a Regionally Significant Wetland or Sensitive Water Body (Appendix A); and
 - ▶ roosting and nesting areas of the black fronted tern, black billed gull, banded dotterel or black fronted dotterel.
- Moving stock (excluding dairy cattle) across rivers or modified watercourses is permitted, provided livestock are supervised and actively driven in one continuous movement. Otherwise, a consent is required.
- All stock (including sheep) are required to be excluded from wetlands, unless a consent is obtained. Cattle, pigs and deer must be excluded from waterways, according to the timeframes in the following table. If stock are not excluded by these timeframes, a consent is required.

All dairy support, pigs and dairy cattle on a dairy platform must already be excluded from waterbodies less than one metre wide.

Definitions:

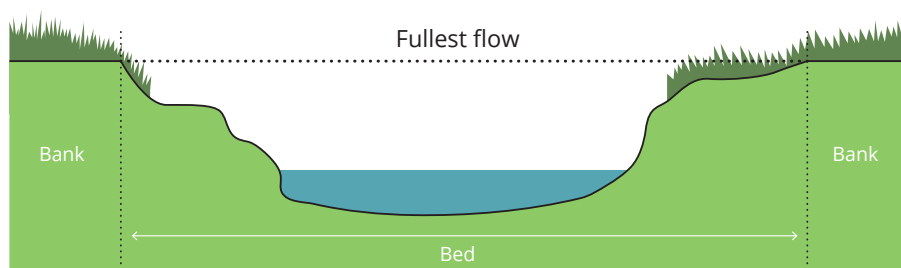
Wetland – means permanently or intermittently wet areas, shallow water, and land-water margins that support a natural ecosystem of plants and animals that are adapted to wet conditions.

Natural wetland – has the same meaning as a ‘wetland’, but specifically excludes wet pastures, damp gully heads, ponding of rainwater, pastures with rushes, and constructed waterbodies such as effluent ponds, artificial storage facilities and artificial watercourses.

Regionally Significant Wetlands – are special wetlands listed in Appendix A of the plan, and mapped in Part B.

Please read the plan for full definitions.

For more information on black-fronted terns, black-billed gulls, banded-dotterels or black-fronted dotterels please refer to New Zealand Birds Online (www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz).



Timeframe for stock exclusion from waterbodies (other than wetlands)

Land slope	Pigs and Dairy cattle (on dairy platforms)	Dairy support	Beef cattle and deer		Sheep (and other stock not included in this table)
Plains (0-3°)	Now All waterbodies and open drains	Now All waterbodies and open drains	Now All waterbodies and open drains where break feeding or supplementary feeding occurs	1 July 2025 All waterbodies and open drains	Not required to be excluded from waterbodies. However Policy 18 requires sheep to be managed in critical source areas and in those catchments with high <i>E.Coli</i> levels.
Undulating/rolling land (3-15°)	Now All waterbodies and open drains	Now All waterbodies and open drains over one metre wide		1 July 2030 All waterbodies and open drains over one metre wide unless stocking rate adjacent to the waterbody is less than 6 units per hectare	
Steeper land (>15°)	Now All waterbodies and open drains over 1 metre	Now All waterbodies and open drains where break feeding occurs			

Common questions and answers

We've listed the answers to some commonly asked questions here. If you're still not sure about what you need to do or have another question you want help with, give our consents team a call on 0800 76 88 45.

► Why are deer and beef cattle not required to be excluded from waterways if the stocking rate is less than six stock units per hectare?

Low stocking rates means fewer adverse effects on water quality. On extensive hill and high-country farms with low stocking rates it is often not practical or cost-effective to exclude deer and beef cattle from waterways.

► Why are sheep not required to be excluded from waterways?

Sheep do less damage to stream banks and beds than other stock and do not have the same affinity for water. Therefore, they pose less risk to the environment. Consent is required for sheep to access wetlands.

► Why do stock need to be supervised and actively driven across waterways?

To minimise the time stock spends in the water and to reduce disturbance of the bed of the waterway.

► What kind of fencing can I use to exclude my stock? Can it be single wire, temporary fencing?

You can use any kind of fencing so long as it is sufficient to exclude stock.

► If I need to exclude stock, how far do I need to setback my fences from waterbodies?

Regulation 8 in the national Stock Exclusion regulations require waterbodies over 1m wide to have a 3m setback. For waterbodies less than 1m wide there are no setbacks specified, however there are buffer/setback requirements for cultivation, intensive winter grazing and pasture-based wintering of cattle in the Southland Water and Land Plan. Refer to Rule 25,

20A and 20B for specific information on buffer/setback requirements for these activities. Wider buffer zones should be left where there is a higher likelihood of runoff which could be through a critical source area, spring, swale, depression or steeper slope for example.

► I am a sheep farmer, what do I need to do?

Sheep do not need to be excluded from waterbodies, but you may need to have a Farm Environmental Management Plan that identified how you will manage sheep access to water. Talk to one of our consent team for more information on 0800 76 88 45.

► Can I graze my sheep and beef cattle in wetlands?

A consent is required under the Southland Water and Land Plan if you want to graze any stock, including sheep or beef cattle in a wetland.