

Keeping stock out of waterways

Stock can damage the bed and banks of our waterways. Their manure, urine and sediment from stock trampling can also seriously impact water quality, potentially smothering stream life, and affecting the mahinga kai values of our waterways.

Prohibited waterways

Farmed cattle, deer, and pigs must be kept out of waterways in the following areas, all of which are mapped in Canterbury Maps:

- Salmon spawning sites, inanga (whitebait) spawning habitats, or critical habitats
- Within 1000m upstream of a bathing site in a river, or 500m from a bathing site in a lake
- Spring-fed plains rivers
- Community drinking-water protection zones
- Ashley/Waimakariri Plains area (Waimakariri Zone)
- Cultural Landscape/ Values Management Area (Selwyn Zone)
- Mātaitai and Waipuna protection zone (Orari-Temuka-Opihi-Pareora Zone)
- Wetlands (with some limited exceptions; see ecan.govt.nz/managing-wetlands).

Three-metre separation requirement

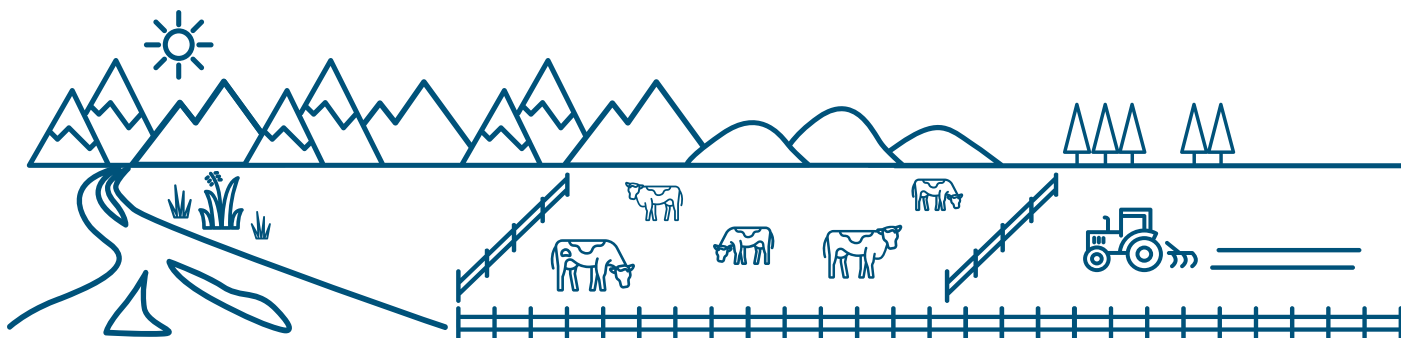
Dairy cows, dairy support cattle, pigs and intensively grazing deer and beef cattle on any terrain must be kept 3m away from all lakes, and rivers with a bed wider than 1m.

If a permanent* fence or riparian vegetation that effectively excludes stock from the bed of a lake or wide river was already in place on 5 October 2023, the 3m minimum setback doesn't apply.

The 3m separation requirement applies only from 1 July 2025 for beef cattle and deer on low slope land that are not intensively grazing; and for dairy support cattle on existing systems. Until then, the permitted rules (other side of this page) will apply to these farming systems.

Additional stock exclusion rules apply within the Waimakariri, Banks Peninsula, Selwyn, Hinds/Hekeao, Orari-Temuka-Opihi-Pareora and South Coastal Canterbury zones. Please visit the Farmers' Hub for further guidance.

* Permanent can be either a post and batten fence with driven or dug fence posts; or an electric fence with at least two electrified wires and driven or dug fence posts; or a deer fence.



Areas where stock are permitted

In all lakes, or in rivers and streams less than 1m wide, or for stock, terrain and grazing practices not covered by the above rules, stock is permitted only if all of the following criteria can be met:

- The use or disturbance of the bed and banks of the waterway does not result in pugging or de-vegetation that exposes bare earth in the bed and banks of a lake or river
- There is no conspicuous change in colour or clarity of the water
- Cattle are not permitted to stand in any lake located in a lake zone, classified as a high naturalness waterbody, or any lake outside of the hill and high-country area (other than any farm pond specifically constructed to provide stock water and that has no outlet to a lake, river, artificial watercourse or wetland)
- They are not in a Cultural Land Values Management Area.

The above criteria also applies to the Hinds/Hekeao drains; drains in the South Coastal Canterbury area; surface drains in the Selwyn region; or springs and artificial waterways in the Waimakariri and Orari-Temuka-Opihi-Pareora regions, when water is present, present, as well as the valley floor area of Te Roto ō Wairewa/Lake Forsyth zone.

Stock crossings

Exceptions to the 3-metre setback rule apply for stock crossing waterways, if stock need to access the area in order to enter or exit a dedicated bridge or culvert; or if stock are supervised and actively driven across a lake or wide river, and do not cross it more than twice in any month.

These crossings must be less than 20 metres wide, perpendicular to the direction of water flow (where practicable) and align with a constructed track on either side of the crossing.



Where to get help

Check the website

For more information about keeping stock out of waterways, visit ecan.govt.nz/stock-exclusion

Industry support

Beef + Lamb New Zealand, Dairy NZ and Deer NZ can all help you with guidance on fencing and ensuring stock are kept out of waterways.

Talk to your Zone team

Your local land management advisor can help you with advice on where and how to keep stock away from waterways. For support in your local area, give us a call on **0800 324 636** or email ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz. We can arrange for a land management advisor to contact you by email, phone, or face to face.