



QEII National Trust
Open Space New Zealand
Ngā Kairauhi Papa

Wetlands protection on private land

Wetlands are permanently or intermittently wet areas, shallow water, and land water margins that support a wealth of biological diversity. Many of New Zealand's plants and animals have adapted specially to living in wet places and depend totally on wetlands for their survival.

Development pressures and land management trends have had a huge impact on our wetlands. In the past 200 years New Zealand has lost about 90% of its original wetlands due to draining for urban and rural development. Of those remaining many are degraded because of loss of surrounding vegetation, sediment and nutrient run-off, pollution, grazing damage and invasive weeds.

Benefits of wetlands

- Wetlands help reduce flooding by absorbing rain water and releasing it slowly.
- Wetland plants help keep water clean and healthy through filtration, the absorption of solids and by adding oxygen to the water.
- Almost a quarter of all New Zealand's birds live in wetlands.
- Remnant wetlands play a crucial role in the survival of many threatened native and migrating bird species, plants, fish and other aquatic species.
- Eels and over 30 other native fish species (including five whitebait-producing species) depend on wetland habitats for their survival.
- Wetlands provide opportunities for recreation and are interesting and beautiful places to visit.



Wetlands covenants

Not so long ago landowners were encouraged to drain wetlands as part of their land management regimen. Now the value of wetlands is better understood and their protection is actively promoted, with funding incentives often available to aid in their protection and restoration.

Many landowners have opted to permanently protect and restore wetland areas on their land with QEII open space covenants.

“ More than 5,000 ha of wetland areas are protected in perpetuity with open space covenants ”

What is a QEII open space covenant?

A QEII open space covenant is a legal agreement between a landowner and the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust. The agreement is entered into voluntarily and binds current and all subsequent landowners in perpetuity. The covenant is registered on the title to the land. With an open space covenant, the landowner continues to own and manage the land, and control access.

Open space covenants can cover a wide range of special features on private land such as: landscapes | forest and bush remnants | wildlife habitats | streams | wetlands | tussocklands | coastlines | cultural sites | archaeological sites and geological features.

Helping you protect the special nature of your land

Southland



Few peat bogs are protected in the Hokonui Ecological District. This red tussock peatland is protected with a QEII covenant on a sheep and beef farm near Gore.

South Auckland



A QEII covenant protects this primary rushland wetland on Awhitu Peninsula. The fence excludes stock, allowing the native vegetation to regenerate and wildlife to flourish.

Kapiti Coast



Joy Anderton and Jill Abigail's 4 ha wetlands covenant wasn't in the best of shape when they first moved onto their property. It had suffered some grazing damage, there was considerable weed infestation, and nutrients were seeping in from animal waste on adjacent properties. They immediately set out to restore the wetland. With funding and support from QEII, their regional and district councils, DOC's Biodiversity Condition Fund and the help of many friends they were able to fence off the covenant and do extensive plantings of flax, toetoe, native grasses and a wide variety of native trees. The vigorous regrowth is successfully filtering the nutrient run-off and with ongoing predator control the wetland is now bursting with life.

Canterbury



A 100 ha freshwater wetland habitat is protected in a covenant bordering Wainono Lagoon near Waimate. The wetlands area surrounding the lagoon is significant because it represents approximately a quarter of all saline/estuarine wetland areas remaining in South Canterbury. It is an important habitat for some 57 different bird species, many resident, others migratory. Funding support from QEII, DOC and Environment Canterbury has gone towards fencing and tackling a willow infestation which threatens to smother the wetland if left uncontrolled.

Tasman District



At Mapua Wetland the local community is helping to turn a boggy paddock back to swamp forest. The area was once part of the 320 ha Korepo Swamp that was cleared by settlers in the late 19th century. The "Friends of Mapua" started restoring the wetland in 2004. With a fertile site and intensive weed control and watering, the growth rate of the pioneer species has been spectacular. They will provide shelter for frost-sensitive plants such as karaka and titoki. A primary objective of the Friends restoration plan was to protect the wetland with QEII. A covenant was put in place in 2009 to make sure the wetland is retained forever.

Upper Waitaki



On Benmore Station, mountain sedgeland and tarns are protected with a QEII covenant; an ideal habitat for wading birds including the threatened kaki (black stilt).



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