

Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region

Farm water use



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Farms require water for household and farming related activities. Historically, some of these activities have been permitted while others have needed resource consents from the Greater Wellington Regional Council or its predecessor(s). Under the proposed Natural Resources Plan (the Plan) there are small changes from the current Regional Freshwater Plan.

How are household, stock drinking and other small water uses on a farm regarded in the proposed Plan?

Under the Resource Management Act land owners are permitted to take water from water ways for their household use and for their stock. The proposed Plan also allows properties larger than 20 hectares to take 20 cubic metres of water per day and smaller properties to take up to 10 cubic metres as a permitted activity provided certain conditions are met (see permitted activity Rule R136).

Do farm dairies need resource consents?

Taking reasonable volumes of water (70 litres per stock unit per day) for existing dairy shed wash down and cooling water is permitted subject to conditions (permitted activity Rule R137). A new dairy operation requires resource consent to take water for dairy shed wash down and cooling water.

Can water for farm use be taken from water races?

Taking water from water races is permitted provided the activity is authorised by the relevant district council controlling the water race (permitted activity Rule R138).

How is water allocated for other farm uses?

Taking water not permitted in the proposed Plan requires resource consent. The Wellington region now has an integrated surface/ground water consenting system based on the 'core allocation' or amount of water available in each catchment (or sub-catchment).

Some catchments are fully allocated and no further consents to take water will be granted. In other catchments, consents will be issued depending upon the availability of water and the efficiency of the proposed water use. Core allocations in each catchment are described in the Whaitua chapters of the proposed Plan. Existing consent holders may take and use water up to the amounts specified in their current resource consents. In fully allocated catchments, taking water above core allocation amounts or beyond existing consented amounts is a prohibited activity.

What is the Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region?

The Proposed Natural Resources Plan (the proposed Plan) is a new regional plan designed to integrate the Wellington Region's five existing regional plans-- the [Regional Coastal Plan](#), [Regional Freshwater Plan](#), [Regional Soil Plan](#), [Regional Air Quality Management Plan](#) and [Regional Plan for Discharges to Land](#). Regional plans are developed under the Resource Management Act to set out the objectives, policies and methods for people and organisations that use a region's resources for a variety of purposes:

The proposed Plan was developed following a review of the five existing regional plans from 2011 to 2015. Until the GWRC decides to adopt the proposed Plan, resource users must comply with rules in the proposed Plan and rules in the five existing plans.

There is a lot of information in the proposed Plan and a lot to understand, so if you need help to figure out if your activity is permitted, or requires a resource consent, or if you have any questions at all, please contact us for more information 0800 496 734 or regionalplan@gw.govt.nz



Permitted: no resource consent is required provided you comply with the conditions in the rule.

Controlled, discretionary or non-complying: a resource consent from Wellington Regional Council is required. Conditions may need to be met.

Prohibited: cannot be undertaken at any time.

When do I need a water meter?

Metering for permitted activities is not required although you need to know how much water you are taking to stay within the permitted rule limits. A water meter must be fitted and records supplied to Greater Wellington Regional Council at least annually, and in many cases more frequently, for consented water takes of more than five litres per second. A consented water take of less than five litres per second may require metering where individual or cumulative effects need to be managed due to allocation pressures or localised effects on other ground or surface water bodies.

Do I need consent for drilling a bore or well?

If you want to construct a bore or well to take water from an aquifer, resource consent is required (Rule R 147).