

Freshwater farm plans



February 2024 Update

Kia ora,
Welcome to the February issue of ORC's Freshwater farm plans (FWFP) newsletter.

North Otago is live

Farmers and growers in the North Otago [Freshwater Management Unit \(FMU\)](#), which includes East Otago, have had the regulations activated on the 1st of February 2024. The following land uses can have their freshwater farm plan developed, and these need to be completed and certified within 18 months:

- 20 hectares or more in arable or pastoral use
- 5 hectares or more in horticultural use
- 20 hectares or more of combined use

If you require any help or guidance, please reach out to us at Otago Regional Council by calling **0800 474 082** or emailing farmplans@orc.govt.nz

New resources

For those who have already begun to consider what they need to include in their freshwater farm plan, we have some new additions to our website that will help you:

North Otago Freshwater Management Unit (FMU) Catchment Context, Challenges and Values (CCCV)

First, thank you to everyone who submitted feedback between 22 December 2023 and 21 January 2024 on the Draft North Otago Freshwater (FMU) Catchment, Context, Challenges and Values. We have considered all feedback received and updated the North Otago [CCCV](#) as of 1 February 2024. There is also a [downloadable PDF of the CCCV](#) available should you wish to print it out.

Freshwater farm plan mapping tool

This new [mapping tool](#) will allow farmers and growers to draw their own boundary and identify the layers it intersects. It is interactive, similar to the maps available on the CCCV pages, and allows you to print them as PDF files.

Helpful resources

For those who want to learn more, or require more specific information, we have compiled a list of [helpful resources](#) including links to websites, fact sheets, guidance documents and government policies.

An update from the Government

The regulations remain in effect however the coalition Government has signaled their intention to improve freshwater farm plans to ensure they are cost effective and realistic for farmers.

In the meantime, Government has advised we continue with work as per the current system, until they make a further announcement. We expect to have more information by April.

Implementation of the freshwater farm plan roll out by regional and unitary councils has been going well. We are now working through what implementation looks like in our region and will be in touch as soon as we know more.

Even though we don't have all the answers yet, we expect a New Zealand farm environment planning system will continue in a form that aims to better meet the needs of farmers and growers.

We will continue to keep a close eye on any updates from central government, advocate for the needs of our region, work through what any changes mean for us locally, and keep you informed. Keep an eye on our freshwater farm plan webpage on our website for updates.

Getting started

Not sure where to start with your freshwater farm plan?

We have a [Getting Started](#) section with some simple steps to ensure you're on the right track to completing your freshwater farm plan and some handy resources if you'd like to learn more about what goes into one of these plans.



Just joined?

If you've just signed up since our last newsletter and want to check what you've missed on this journey so far, you can view past newsletters [here](#).

Contact us

If you have any questions about freshwater farm plans, the timeline or process, what support is available or can't find an answer in the [FAQ section](#) on our website, please don't hesitate to email us at farmplans@orc.govt.nz

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