

# Essential Freshwater



## Intensive Winter Grazing

The proposed Marlborough Environment Plan is still undergoing appeals and changes are possible.

### Who do the Intensive Winter Grazing (IWG) regulations apply to?

Landowners who have livestock (including sheep) grazing on annual forage crops<sup>1</sup> between 1 May and 30 September, starting from the 2023 season on farms with:

- 5 hectares or more of horticulture land use, or
- 20 hectares or more of pastoral or arable land use, or
- 20 hectares or more of a combination of any of these land uses.

### Why are there IWG regulations?

They form part of the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater 2020, which aims to protect and improve the water quality of our rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries, and wetlands.

Intensive grazing of livestock on winter forage crops can increase the loss of sediment and nutrients into waterways which, if not properly managed, can reduce the quality of our freshwater. Managing IWG effectively can reduce nutrient and sediment run-off, increase soil productivity, and improve livestock welfare.

### What are the regulations?

Intensive winter grazing will not require a resource consent, if all the following conditions are met:

- the intensive winter grazing area is no larger than 50ha or 10% (whichever is greater) and the area grazed is no more than that grazed in the period between 1 July 2014 - 30 June 2019 (the reference period).
- the slope of the paddock is less than 10 degrees, measured over any 20m distance
- critical source areas (CSAs)<sup>2</sup> are excluded from grazing and vegetation is maintained
- livestock are kept at least 5m away from the bed of any river, lake, wetland or drain, regardless of whether there is any water flowing at the time

#### Additionally, standards must be met to ensure:

- the effects of pugging are minimised
- vegetation is established as soon as practicable after grazing has finished

If all standards cannot be met, then a consent is required. Please contact Council.

1: A crop other than pasture that is grazed in the place where it is grown. Examples include swedes, kale, and fodder beet. Annual ryegrass is excluded as it is considered pasture.

2: Small, low-lying areas of land where runoff accumulates in high concentrations and delivers sediment and contaminants to waterways.

## How does Intensive Winter Grazing fit in with Freshwater Farm Plans (FWFP)?

IWG activities are permitted, if a farmer obtains a certified FWFP that achieves an equivalent (or better) outcome than the conditions outlined above. The FWFP must demonstrate that any adverse effects in relation to the IWG are no greater than those allowed for by the default conditions. Note: This pathway will only be available once FWFPs are rolled out in the region. See Council website for more information.

### Are there any other useful resources available?

[MPI intensive winter grazing module](#)

[MPI intensive winter grazing module template](#)

[MFE Introduction to the intensive winter grazing package](#)

[MFE pugging: guidance for intensive winter grazing](#)

[MFE groundcovers: guidance for intensive winter grazing](#)

[MFE critical source areas: guidance for intensive winter grazing](#)

## Contact the MDC Environmental Protection Team

[monitoring@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:monitoring@marlborough.govt.nz)

### Need a resource consent?

Apply for one online at:

[www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/resource-consents/applying-for-a-resource-consent](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/resource-consents/applying-for-a-resource-consent)

Contact the duty planner via the form on our website:

[www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/resource-consents/duty-planner-service-information/dutyplanner-enquiry-form](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/resource-consents/duty-planner-service-information/dutyplanner-enquiry-form)

Phone customer services on 03 520 7400

Or visit the Marlborough District Council in person at:

15 Seymour Street, Blenheim

2 Dublin Street, Picton

[marlborough.govt.nz](http://marlborough.govt.nz)

For rural matters: [marlborough.govt.nz/environment/marlborough-rural-hub](http://marlborough.govt.nz/environment/marlborough-rural-hub)

To notify council of new structures in a riverbed, work in wetlands or for intensive winter grazing, please fill out the form found on our website by clicking the NES-F Forms link below:

[Go to the MDC NES-F Forms webpage](#)



# INTENSIVE WINTER GRAZING DECISION TREE

Was intensive winter grazing carried out on farm between 2014 and 2019?

YES NO

Will your winter crops extend beyond the maximum area used for intensive winter grazing in 2014 - 2019?

NO YES

**Discretionary activity – consent needed.**

A resource consent is required from May 1, 2021

You need to show that your intensive winter grazing doesn't increase the contaminant loads in the catchment.

**Do you meet these criteria from 1 November 2022?**

- Intensive winter grazing area is no larger than 50ha or 10% (whichever is greater) and no more area than in the past five-year period (2014 - 2019).
- The slope of the paddock is less than 10 degrees, measured over any 20 m distance.
- Livestock are kept at least 5m away from river, lake, wetland or drain.
- All critical source areas are excluded from grazing and vegetation maintained.

YES NO

**Restricted discretionary activity – consent needed**

Already wintering? Check with your council what you need to do to apply for a consent.

Consider adverse effects on:

- ecosystems and water bodies
- ability of people to safely come into contact with the water
- Maori cultural values
- susceptibility of land to erode / lose sediment
- mitigation proposed

**OR** Obtain a certified Freshwater Farm plan once available.

**Permitted activity – no consent needed.**

You may still require a consent under regional rules if they are more stringent (check with council).

You also need to minimise pugging and resow the paddock as soon as practicable after livestock have finished grazing the area. Your council might ask you for information to show that you meet these requirements.

**NOTE**

**FARM** = land holding whose activities include agriculture

**LAND HOLDING** = one or more parcels of land (may or may not be side-by-side) – managed as a single operation. i.e. platform + support block(s)

**INTENSIVE WINTER GRAZING** = grazing livestock on annual forage crop at any time between May 1 and September 30.

**ANNUAL FORAGE CROP** = crop grazed where it is grown, excluding pasture and arable or horticultural land use.