



Help protect our coast

Keep stock out of the tide

How the Council can help

Education

Council staff will send a letter to the owner of uncontrolled stock wandering in the CMA and highlight the issues involved and discuss with them how Northland Regional Council staff may assist. This will be followed up by a phone call to further discuss the situation and to offer a site visit where appropriate.

Advice

We can offer technical advice to all landowners. If a fence is needed, the type of fencing required will depend on factors such as terrain, stock type, permanence of fence and building and material costs.

Funding

The Council's Environment Fund has targeted funding to assist landowners in high priority ecologically sensitive locations or where coastal water quality is a high priority. Details on how to apply to the Environment Fund are available on the Northland Regional Council website - www.nrc.govt.nz.

Help with landcare/coastcare group work

Regional Council staff can help your local farming and/or coastal care group apply for funding and help identify relevant issues in your area.

Further information

You are welcome to contact members of the Regional Council's Land Management Team, toll-free, on 0800 002 004.



A well-fenced coastal area.



36 Water Street, Private Bag 9021, Whangarei.
Freephone: 0800 002 004
Environmental Hotline: 0800 504 639
Website: www.nrc.govt.nz

CARING FOR NORTHLAND AND ITS ENVIRONMENT



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The issue

Time is running out for Northland farmers to meet a deadline to fence grazing stock out of the region's Coastal Marine Area by mid-2009.

The Coastal Marine Area (CMA) is the area below spring tides and can often be recognised by the highest line of seaweed and driftwood on the beach. It also includes certain areas of tidal streams and rivers. Current Council policy requires you to restrict stock access to the CMA.

From July 2009, unauthorised access to and use of the Coastal Marine Area by stock will become a prohibited activity under the Regional Coastal Plan for Northland.

This stock exclusion rule is designed to protect the CMA's ecological health and water quality from the adverse effects of browsing, pugging and animal effluent.

The problem

Stock browsing and pugging

- Damages native plants, saltmarsh and other estuarine and harbour edge vegetation.
- Crushes crabs and shellfish and disturbs whitebait breeding grounds.
- Damages eel grass beds, which are habitat and breeding grounds for native fish.

Animal waste (dung and urine)

- Contains viruses and bacteria which build-up in filter-feeding shellfish and can endanger local food gatherers and recreational users.
- Can impact on the aquaculture industry, which relies on clean water. (Northland is one of the country's main marine farming regions, producing nearly half of the country's oyster exports and three-quarters of its mussel spat).
- Can help spread weed seeds.



Which are the highest priority areas?

The Regional Council's initial focus will be on areas of ecological and/or cultural significance, or which involve economic activities requiring clean and reliable water quality. We will also be concentrating on areas of high recreational value.

Options for excluding stock

In many areas stock are prevented from entering the Coastal Marine Area due to natural obstacles. Where access is possible it will be necessary to put into place some form of fencing or other barrier. Keeping stock out of these areas will not only produce environmental benefits but can also make stock management easier for the landowner.

The best form of fencing will be dependent upon the site and the stock involved. In many situations a simple hot wire, which is put in place when the stock are in the affected paddocks, will be a cost effective and efficient system. Other alternatives include electric fences consisting of one or more wires or post and batten fences. Northland Regional Council staff are available to discuss fencing options with individual land owners.

