

Green Party

1. Public Access to Rivers, Lakes and Wetlands

1. Will your party ensure public access to rivers and lakes is preserved and enhanced when land is subdivided, sold to an overseas owner, and conservation land is reclassified?

Yes. The Green Party is committed to protecting and enhancing public access to rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Our policy supports strong legal safeguards to protect public rights of access, including requiring the retention of esplanade reserves and marginal strips when land is subdivided or changes ownership. We oppose the sale or reclassification of conservation land that reduces public access and advocate for robust public interest tests and community engagement before any changes are made.

2. How will your party support the work of the Outdoor Access Commission, including getting new and restored public access for fishing and hunting?

The Green Party supports increasing funding for organisations that identify, restore, and expand public access points. Communities need access to the natural environment and public open space for a range of recreational opportunities, whilst ensuring sensitive ecological habitats are protected. The Green Party will support outdoor recreation and sport by supporting off-road tracks that enable a range of outdoor recreational activities, give access to parks, bush, and waterways, and connect communities.

2. Fishing and Game Bird Hunting Traditions

3. Does your party value our fishing and game bird hunting traditions and the benefits they bring to Kiwis - and what policies do you have to support people to go fishing and hunting?

The Green Party recognises that fishing and game bird hunting have important cultural and recreational benefits. We support policies that ensure equitable and safe access for all people, protect the health of freshwater habitats and threatened species, and provide for sustainable harvest.

4. Will your party ensure freshwater frameworks continue to recognise and protect valued introduced species like trout and salmon, as well as game birds?

Freshwater is a taonga and the foundation of many ecosystems, including the ecosystem humans rely on to survive. Trout and salmon fishing have recreational and economic benefits for New Zealand, and the protection of habitat for trout and salmon has been a key method to also protect habitats of native fish. However, introduced species can have negative effects on lakes, rivers, and streams, and the native species—including plants—within them. Therefore, the Green Party's freshwater policy acknowledges that healthy freshwater ecosystems, and healthy populations of indigenous freshwater species, may sometimes require the removal of pest fish and other species that are degrading the health of ecosystems.

5. Does your party think valued introduced species like trout and salmon should be provided for in legislation defining ecosystem health?

Many of the freshwater habitats that our native species rely on have been reduced or damaged. Sometimes entire ecosystems have been degraded, making some species particularly vulnerable to extinction. Protecting our valued and declining indigenous fish species will, in specific circumstances, involve controlling populations of introduced fish species. The habitat of trout and salmon should be protected, as far as this is consistent with overall ecosystem health.

6. What is your party's position on recognising the importance of trout and salmon habitats when setting environmental thresholds?

The Green Party supports setting strong water quality thresholds that recognise the habitat needs of sensitive indicator species, including trout and salmon, where their presence is appropriate and not a significant threat to native species, to maintain ecosystem health.

3. Wetland Protection and Restoration

7. What is your party going to do to support the protection, restoration and creation of wetlands?

The Green Party will increase investment in wetland protection and restoration, strengthen legal protections for remaining wetlands, and incentivise new wetland creation on public and private land. We back stronger national standards and local action to ensure wetlands are restored for biodiversity, water quality, and climate resilience.

8. What is your party's position on permitted activities for wetland maintenance, restoration, and creation?

The Green Party supports removing barriers and enabling permitted activities for wetland maintenance and restoration, provided they have demonstrated positive ecological outcomes. All other activities must be consistent with ambitious environmental bottom lines for wetlands.

9. What funding and/or support would your party provide for wetland restoration and creation programmes, including those delivered through Fish & Game and hunter-landowner partnerships?

The Green Party are committed to increasing dedicated funding for wetland restoration, including recognising restoration on privately owned land.

4. Sports Fish and Game Management Plans

10. What is your party's position on having regard to Sports Fish and Game Management Plans in plan-making and consenting decisions under resource management legislation?

The Green Party supports the statutory requirement for authorities to have regard to Sports Fish and Game Management Plans, as part of robust, inclusive decision-making on freshwater resources.

11. What is your party's position on consulting Fish & Game in the preparation of policy, standards and frameworks that may affect the habitat of trout, salmon and game birds?

The Green Party support consultation with Fish & Game in the development of policy that could impact sports fish and game birds or their habitats.

12. What is your party's position on Fish & Game New Zealand's status as an affected party in resource management plan-making and resource consent processes?

The Green Party supports Fish & Game being recognised as an affected party when the RMA determines a specific proposal has adverse effects on a fish and game resource that are more than 'minor'.

5. Water Conservation Orders

13. Will your party retain Water Conservation Orders and, if so, how will you ensure they are complied with?

Yes, the Green Party strongly supports the retention, enforcement, and active management of Water Conservation Orders. We are committed to a resource management system where local planning regimes are consistent with provisions and protections in WCOs, and that there is clarity over who has responsibility for monitoring and enforcing WCOs.

14. What is your party's position on the process for establishing new Water Conservation Orders?

We support a transparent, evidence-based, and participatory process for establishing new Water Conservation Orders, ensuring robust protection for outstanding rivers, lakes, and wetlands. The Green Party would also support requiring recommendations for WCOs to be processed in a timely manner.

6. Fish & Game's Statutory Role

16. What is your party's position on Fish & Game's statutory mandate to manage sports fish and game birds in the interests of anglers and game bird hunters?

The Green Party supports Fish & Game's statutory role, its democratic funding and governance model, and its independence in managing sports fish and game birds.

17. What is your party's position on Fish & Game's freshwater advocacy role?

The Green Party supports Fish & Game's strong advocacy role for healthy freshwater and wetland ecosystems, public access, and sustainable recreational opportunity.

Additional Comments

We wish to thank Fish and Game for their ongoing mahi and advocacy over so many years, particularly in working to protect and restore freshwater habitats to the benefit of all New Zealanders and the rivers, streams, lakes and ecosystems we treasure and rely on.