

Four Sisters Wetland

At a glance (last updated: December 2016)			
TRC reference:	BD/9485	National priorities:	1, 2, 3, 4
Other reference:	QEII 5/06/279	Ecological district:	Manawatu Plains
Land tenure:	Private	LENZ environment:	F5.2c
GPS:	1721919E – 5602712N		
Area:	1.7 ha	Protection status:	A, B, C

Location

The Four Sisters Wetland is located on privately owned land, 3.5 km south west of Kakaramea in South Taranaki. The wetland is located in the Manawatu Plains Ecological District in the Mangaroa Stream catchment.

General description

The wetland area is 1.7 hectares in size and is predominantly a coastal palustrine raupo dominated wetland with a small area of open water at the western end. The wetland is in close proximity to other coastal wetlands in the area including Regionally Significant wetland such as the Spence Road Pond and Lake Kaikura.

Ecological features

Vegetation

Vegetation within the wetland consists predominantly of raupo (*Typha orientalis*) with occasional harakeke/flax (*Phormium tenax*) and carex.

Fauna

The wetland provides an important habitat for a number of indigenous bird species including Australasian bittern (*Botaurus poeciloptilus*), which is identified as 'Threatened, Nationally Endangered' and spotless crane (*Porzana tabuensis plumbea*), which is identified as being 'At Risk, Relict'.

The wetland also contains the most significant known populations of the 'At Risk, Declining' brown mudfish (*Neochanna apoda*) in the Taranaki region.

Ecological values

Ecological values	Rank	Comment
Rarity and distinctiveness	High	Contains the 'Threatened' Australasian bittern and 'At Risk' spotless crane. Also contains a regionally significant population of the 'At Risk' brown mudfish.
Representativeness	High	Wetlands are acutely threatened ecosystems. Less than 10% of natural wetlands remain in the Taranaki region.
Ecological context	High	One of Taranaki's most significant habitats for brown mudfish. Provides good connectivity to other wetlands and KNE's in the area.
Sustainability	Positive	In relatively good vegetative condition and key ecological processes still influence the site. Under appropriate management, it can remain resilient to existing or potential threats.

Management threats and response

Potential and actual threats to the sustainability of the Four Sisters Wetland ecological values are as follows:

Threats to ecological values	Level of risk	Comment
Invasive animals	Medium	Possums, cats, hares, mustelids, hedgehogs and rats
Weeds	Medium	Gorse and willow in the wetland area.
Habitat modification	High	Drainage

Site protection measures addressing potential threats and actual threats are as follows:

Site protection		Yes/No	Description
A	Public ownership or formal agreement	Yes	QEII covenant
B	Regulatory protection by local government	Yes	General regional or district rules might apply for activities impacting on the site
C	Active protection	Yes	Fenced. A weir has been installed to maintain water levels.

