

# **Conservation Covenants: Protecting and Restoring Waterways and Wetlands**

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Many of Christchurch's urban and rural waterways and wetlands are on private land, and the majority of them have no legal form of protection. An increasing number of projects aim to protect and restore the natural and cultural heritage values of waterways and wetlands in these areas. Conservation covenants are one of the methods of protecting restored areas in the long-term, therefore maximising the investment of time and resources.

Conservation covenants (Section 77 of the Reserves Act,1977) are a partnership agreement between a landowner or lessee of Crown land, and the Crown or local authority. The Christchurch City Council has developed a conservation covenant template to streamline the process of establishing covenants. The template and the process for establishing conservation covenants are presented in a recently published booklet. The booklet discusses a range of legal protection options, the advantages and disadvantages of covenanting, costs, legal aspects, setting objectives, management, monitoring and useful resources. Two case-studies are presented to illustrate how covenants can be used - the first is a wetland adjacent to an urban school, and the other is a semi-rural property undergoing subdivision.