

December 2011



5a. Sign project with Federated Farmers New Zealand Fact Sheet



All New Zealanders value access to the great outdoors.

Farmers in New Zealand, as stewards of the environment, have a tradition of granting access to those who ask.

Federated Farmers New Zealand (FFNZ) has proposed a scheme to formalise this tradition. FFNZ has worked with the New Zealand Walking Access Commission (the Commission), to sponsor the development of a sign for landholders to use showing where they are happy for walking access to happen across their property.

This is a voluntary arrangement.

The New Zealand Walking Access Commission is sponsoring this project as part of its goal of increasing access to the outdoors. The Commission recognises the importance of property rights to New Zealand society and economy, and works to ensure property rights to both private land and public land are respected. This approach is supported by FFNZ.

The Commission is also working on other access projects that involve landholders, including an Outdoor Access Code and an online mapping system.

The Code identifies responsible behaviour expected of people using the outdoors. The Code is included on the Commission's website and will be distributed widely, especially through recreation groups. FFNZ, along with other stakeholders, has contributed to the Code's development and considers it an agreed part of access use.

The Commission will list the location of farmer-approved access points as a layer of information on its online mapping system. A form to place information on the data

base is included with every sign for landholders to fill in as part of this process.

In some locations, farmers have combined to indicate paths through their properties that they are happy for people to use, rather than have people using impractical routes along legal access-ways. This project will help farmers to identify those alternative routes.

The online mapping system has as its base document the cadastral database – the official record of all land titles in New Zealand, as held and administered by Land Information New Zealand. It will show the location of public and private land.

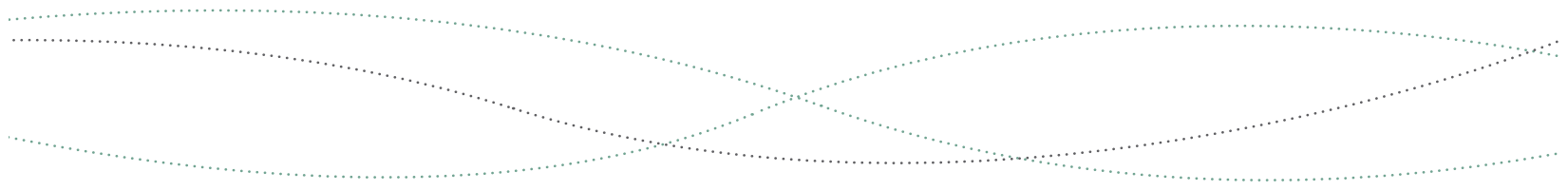
The signs must be used only to indicate approved routes across private land, not to show the location of public land to which the public have the right to access.

However, it is important for all using the system to remember that just because there is legal access, it does not mean that there is necessarily safe or practical access. In addition, people must take care to clearly identify access – for example, tracks shown on topographic maps are not always legal access ways.

Benefits

There are benefits for farmers in using the signs developed by FFNZ and the Commission.

Access to privately-owned land is a privilege, not a right. Landholders can exclude anyone from their land for whatever reason at any time. The sign demonstrates the willingness of farmers as landholders to make their land available to the public.



By showing an approved route, the signs could also help reduce possible conflict over public access to private land, with participating landholders making contact details more readily available for walkers, hunters and anglers thereby enabling them to more easily to ask landholders for access when permission is required.

The sign

The signs are A4 in size and designed to hang upon a fence (or similar structure) to show an access entry point and/or route. Provision is made for the landholder to include contact details for permission for anything other than walking access (for example: accompanying dogs or guns).

The signs are in colour, and carry both NZWAC and FFNZ logos. The signs are printed in colour fast inks on aluminium composite material and are designed to be durable for 4 – 5 years.

The signs are available at no cost to interested landholders. To arrange for signs, or for further information, contact your Walking Access Commission Regional Field Advisor (for contact details see www.walkingaccess.govt.nz) or the Commission in Wellington on (04) 815 850 or contact@walkingaccess.co.nz

The project

The NZWAC has led this project. This includes funding the preliminary development work, developing a design brief, preparing specifications for the manufacture, covering the cost of the initial manufacturing run (about 350 signs), and developing guidelines for use in consultation with FFNZ.

For further information, please contact Ric Cullinane, NZWAC Operations Manager, Ph 04 815-8509. email: ric.cullinane@walkingaccess.govt.nz

Guidelines for use

» The signs are to mark access across

private land. They are not to be used to identify public land, such as unformed legal road or marginal strips.

» There are two options for landholders:

1. To mark routes where they are happy for the public to access their land without having to explicitly ask for permission. Contact details may be listed so that people can ask for permission, for example, to take dogs on the route or guns or to hunt.

2. To mark a route where a landholder is happy for people to access after they successfully ask for and are granted permission. Contact details must be listed on this sign.

» The signs come with pre-drilled holes in them, so they can be either screwed to a wall or gate or hung on a fence with electrical cable ties or stainless steel/ aluminium wire.

» Accompanying the sign is a set of stickers that can be used to indicate any conditions farmers wish to impose on the access to their land. Please contact NZWAC for extra sets of symbols if you run out.

» Should there be any unusual hazards on the farm (for example, logging of trees or use of explosives), these should be noted on the access sign.

» Signs need to be legible. Should there be weathering or vandalism, the farmer will need to replace the signs with new ones. These are available from NZWAC.

» In the event of any dispute, the farmer must remove the signs from display at their property until the dispute is resolved between FFNZ Wellington staff and the Commission. The Commission will also remove the route from its online mapping system.

» The access points will be noted on the Commission's online mapping system, www.wams.org.nz. Refer to the attached form.