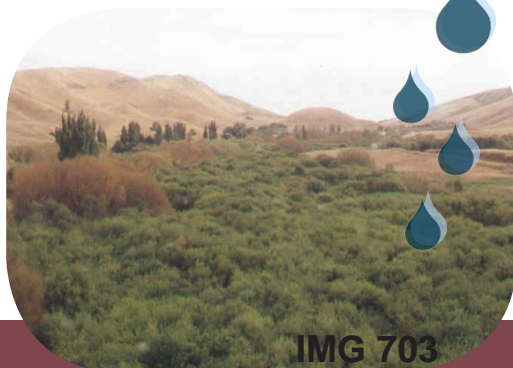


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There are several water testing sites at Pekapeka that are used to measure the water levels, flow rate and water quality. To ensure the wetland 'works' it needs to be at a certain water level. This ensures that water always moves slowly throughout the wetland and does not dry out.

Over many years the water level at Pekapeka has been reduced due to a number of factors including:

- Farms taking water from Lake Poukawa for irrigation purposes.
- Willow trees (before they were removed) absorbing a large amount of water to live and grow.
- Native vegetation (which absorbs water during floods and slowly releases it during droughts) was cleared for animal grazing.

This meant that Pekapeka had highly fluctuating water levels and the wetland could not 'work' properly. Due to the lack of native vegetation, biodiversity was lost and the water quality was also reduced.

To control the water level at Pekapeka a number of things were done including:

- Willow removal.
- Building weirs that control the input and output of water.
- Re-vegetating the wetland and protecting it from grazing.



With no water level control  
Pekapeka would  
dry up every 3-5  
years