

Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region

Building structures in river and stream beds



Building and installing structures such as small dams, weirs, fords, bridges, and culverts is permitted subject to a number of conditions including:

- Ensuring that fish passage is maintained at all times
- Not disturbing inanga spawning habitat during autumn
- Not disturbing recognised trout spawning areas during June, July and August
- Not altering the natural course of a river or stream
- Ensuring river or stream banks are not eroded
- Not exacerbating the risks of or from flooding
- Not allowing any released sediment to run through a waterway for more than 12 hours per day or 5 days at a time

Can I build a small dam?

The construction of small dams on rivers or stream beds is a permitted activity under Rule R116. Rule R116 also has a number of conditions including that the dam is not built in an outstanding waterbody identified in Schedule A or in a site of significance to mana whenua identified in Schedule C). Other conditions include that that dam holds less than 20,000m³ of water, is a maximum of less than 3m deep, and has a catchment area behind the dam of less than 20 hectares. The dam must also be designed to maintain minimum flows and cope with one-in-20 year floods.

What about culverts?

You can install a culvert in rivers and streams as a permitted activity under Rule R115 as long as a number of conditions are met including the culvert can be no longer than 20 metres in length and between 0.3 and 1.2 metres in diameter. Other conditions include that the culvert is not within a site of significance to mana whenua identified in Schedule C and all practicable steps are taken to minimise the release of sediment.



Can I construct a river crossing?

Yes, the construct of a river crossing (weirs, fords, and bridges) if it covers less than 20m² of the river or stream bed is permitted under Rule R114 subject to a number of other conditions.

What about other structures?

A number of other small structures (e.g. sediment retention weirs, pipes, ducts, cables, hydrological and water quality monitoring equipment, fences, and structures associated with vegetative bank edge protection) can be built as a permitted activity subject to a number of conditions.

What is the Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region?

The Proposed Natural Resources Plan (the proposed Plan) is a new regional plan designed to integrate the Wellington Region's five existing regional plans-- the [Regional Coastal Plan](#), [Regional Freshwater Plan](#), [Regional Soil Plan](#), [Regional Air Quality Management Plan](#) and [Regional Plan for Discharges to Land](#). Regional plans are developed under the Resource Management Act to set out the objectives, policies and methods for people and organisations that use a region's resources for a variety of purposes:

The proposed Plan was developed following a review of the five existing regional plans from 2011 to 2015. Until the GWRC decides to adopt the proposed Plan, resource users must comply with rules in the proposed Plan and rules in the five existing plans.

There is a lot of information in the proposed Plan and a lot to understand, so if you need help to figure out if your activity is permitted, or requires a resource consent, or if you have any questions at all, please contact us for more information 0800 496 734 or regionalplan@gw.govt.nz

Permitted: no resource consent is required provided you comply with the conditions in the rule.

Controlled, discretionary or non-complying: a resource consent from Wellington Regional Council is required. Conditions may need to be met.

Prohibited: cannot be undertaken at any time.