

Riparian programme



greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Introduction

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) is working with private landowners to protect and manage riparian margins through the Riparian programme. Riparian margins are strips of land beside waterbodies which act as buffers between land and water.

Land development for uses like agriculture, urban and industrial areas has removed a lot of the original vegetation along our rivers and streams. This has led to an increase in sediment, nutrients and bacteria entering waterbodies via surface runoff.

Why bother with margins?

Riparian management is a stream treatment solution that works over the long term. The stream stays healthy and the stream margins don't need the high level of maintenance for bank protection that open streams can have. The condition of the stream is directly affected by the condition of its margin.



Providing a buffer strip between paddocks and waterways reduces the flow of nutrients and sediment into waterways

Purpose of Riparian programme

The Riparian programme supports landowners to achieve water quality and biodiversity outcomes and to be ready to comply with new rules around stock access to waterways which come into effect in 2018 and 2022. Through the programme a riparian plan will be developed, which includes advice on sustainable land practices as well as financial assistance to effectively manage the margins of waterways on your property.

It is about managing the effects our land use has on water quality in our region

Stock out of streams:

It is very important to protect small rural streams from stock. If small streams at the head of the catchment are polluted with stock effluent and sediments, the combined effect downstream is practically impossible to reverse.

Benefits to farm management:

- Reduced bank erosion and stream maintenance over the long term
- Shade and shelter for stock in the adjacent paddocks
- Stock are kept out of wet streamside areas
- Improved pasture management and easier stock mustering



Mature vegetation around waterways improves local biodiversity

What types of waterbody are covered by the Riparian programme?

The Riparian programme focusses on two categories of waterbodies.

Category 1 surface water bodies are listed in the proposed Natural Resources Plan. These sites are listed as significant for a range of values. Landowners with these sites should have been contacted already but for more information please contact Tash Styles (Riparian Programme Coordinator).

Category 2 waterways include (and are limited to):

- Estuaries that are not listed as Category 1, and
- Rivers that have an active bed width of 1m or wider, drains greater than 1m wide and water races that are mapped within the lowland areas shown on Map 29 of pNRP (lowland area of Ruamahanga Catchment) and
- Any river and stream not listed as a Category 1 but are also important to trout spawning (identified in Schedule 1 (trout habitat)) and
- Natural lakes

Part of this programme is to work with landowners to help identify these Category 2 waterways.



Excluding stock from waterways can improve water quality and habitat for aquatic plants and animals

What tools are available to help?

GWRC has teamed up with industry representatives (Dairy NZ and Landcare Research) to work together on an online Riparian Planner. This online tool is free to use and is available to any land use. The planner allows you to create your own plan and map out the waterways on your farm. You can edit the state of stocking crossings and exclusions, existing vegetation, presence of erosion and average width of riparian zone (spilt into grass margins, lower bank zone and upper bank zone).

The product is a summary of your mapped waterways, estimated costs for fencing and planting, and a breakdown by year of proposed works. It will also give you a list of recommended plants and where they should be planted.

Check it out the tool at

<https://riparian-planner.dairynz.co.nz>

More information about the tool at:

www.dairynz.co.nz/environment/waterways/riparian-planner

Contact Us

If you would like further information about the Riparian programme please contact your Land Management Advisor or Tash Styles (Riparian Programme Coordinator, tash.styles@gw.govt.nz, 021 566 201).

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