

D4. Natural Stream Management Areas Overlay

D4.1. Background

The Natural Stream Management Areas Overlay identifies river and stream reaches with high natural character and high ecological values. They generally have an unmodified river or stream bed with existing indigenous riparian vegetation on both sides. The presence of indigenous riparian vegetation indicates that the river or stream has high ecological values and water quality.

Natural stream management areas are particularly important for native fish and macroinvertebrates, providing them with habitat, food sources and breeding areas. Many of these areas are located in the upper reaches of a catchment or in reserve areas with generally high water quality. They have high in-stream values which are a combination of a suitable temperature, pH and water quality and the presence of native aquatic plants and aquatic fauna.

A natural stream management area may be determined from measurements taken from an aerial photograph or an accurately scaled plan. They are shown indicatively in the Natural Stream Management Areas Overlay on the planning maps. To avoid doubt, there is a definition which defines these areas.

The rules for this overlay are located in E3 Lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands, E7 Taking, using, damming and diversion of water and drilling, E12 Land disturbance – District and E15 Vegetation management and biodiversity.

D4.2. Objective [rp]

- (1) Rivers and streams identified as natural stream management areas with high natural character and high ecological values are protected.

D4.3. Policies [rp]

- (1) Protect the in-stream values and riparian margins of natural stream management areas.
- (2) Allow water takes and contaminant discharges only where they are of a scale and type that protects the in-stream values of these rivers and streams.
- (3) Maintain and where possible enhance fish passage between the coastal marine area and the upstream extent of natural stream management areas.
- (4) Avoid structures and activities in natural stream management areas that disturb, damage, remove or replace the natural bed and course of the river or stream and its associated indigenous riparian vegetation.
- (5) Provide for infrastructure in natural stream management areas where there is a functional or operational need to be in that location or traverse the area and there is no practicable alternative.