

Proposed Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region

Earthworks and vegetation clearance



What are earthworks?

Earthworks are the disturbance of soil and sub-soil for land development, and commonly include building roads, tracks and major highways, and the preparation of land for building sites. The use of heavy machinery for earthworks can have adverse effects on water ways as after heavy rain there is the potential for run-off to enter streams affecting water quality and stream life.

Who controls earthworks in the region?

Earthworks are controlled by city and district councils and Greater Wellington Regional Council. In the Proposed Natural Resources Plan earthworks is managed by Rule R99. This rule requires that good management practices are employed by earthworks contractors to ensure there are no major discharges to waterways affecting water quality. For many earthworks situations, the city and district council rules control earthworks for building sites, and smaller area roads and subdivisions.

How does the new earthwork rule work?

Rule R99 permits earthworks up to 0.3ha (about half a rugby field) if the conditions of the rule are met. This includes making sure soil is not placed where it could enter a waterway, that the land is left stable after earthworks, and land surface is stabilised within six months after earthworks are complete. Sediment control practices are to be employed to reduce any discharge of stormwater into water from the earthworks site.

What's vegetation clearance and how does the rule work?

Vegetation clearance in the proposed plan is the removal either by mechanical or chemical means of woody vegetation on erosion prone land. Rule R100 controls vegetation clearance on erosion prone land (steep land). The rule permits vegetation clearance on erosion prone land up to 2ha if the conditions of the rule are met. This includes making sure soil or vegetation debris is not placed where it can enter a stream, and there is no major discharge of stormwater to water. Sediment control practices are to be used to reduce any discharge of stormwater to a waterway.



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.