

Shire of Mundaring

POLICY

WATERCOURSE PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Ref: PS-03

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PURPOSE

To provide direction on acceptable practices relating to the environmental protection of watercourses and foreshores within the Shire of Mundaring.

BACKGROUND

Streams, creeks and rivers contain a range of ecologically important species and provide habitat for native animals. These environments are a biologically and ecologically significant component of our natural heritage requiring protection and conservation.

Watercourse protection can be achieved through a range of mechanisms including being identified for reservation under the Shire's Public Open Space Strategy or through a range of alternatives including vesting, easements, or voluntary management agreements to enable a coordinated management approach.

Unprotected corridors may become degraded and subject to a range of impacts such as weed invasion, bank erosion, siltation of creeks, eutrophication, pollution and vegetation clearing. These impacts threaten the establishment of functional wildlife corridors and lead to long term management problems.

It is therefore important that watercourses are protected and managed to minimise environmental impacts and to conserve their ecological and social values. The Shire's Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) recognises this requirement and seeks to achieve watercourse protection through this policy.

POLICY

The objectives of the Policy include improving stream water quality by controlling erosion and nutrient runoff, eliminating the clearing of native vegetation near watercourses and to promote watercourses as wildlife corridors with special ecological values.

It is Council's policy that :

- adequate vegetated buffers are retained along all watercourses,
- a minimum of 20 metres of land either side of a watercourse be reserved and/or managed for conservation purposes,
- waterflow shall be maintained to ensure the protection of the biota and the aesthetic quality of the watercourse,
- no buildings or earthworks shall be permitted within 20 metres from the foreshore of any watercourse, or subject to environmental conditions,
- no landfill shall be undertaken within 20 metres of a foreshore or floodplain area, or subject to environmental conditions,
- no dam shall be constructed within a watercourse or the flow of water artificially retarded without the approval of the Shire or the Water and Rivers Commission; and
- all weeds occurring adjacent to or within 100 metres of a watercourse shall be controlled and/ or eradicated.