

# Waterbodies (WB)

## Issues

Inappropriate [subdivision](#), use and development on, or adjoining, [water bodies](#) can adversely affect the natural character of these areas and their margins.

The potential for [land](#) use activities on, or adjoining, [water bodies](#) to diminish the amenity, ecological, cultural and natural values, including the quantity and quality of [water](#).

The actual and potential adverse [effects](#) generated by activities on the surface of [water bodies](#).

[Rivers](#) and [lakes](#) are a valuable landscape and ecological resource, and are valued for recreation activities. Some activities on the surface of [water bodies](#), or [land](#) adjoining [water bodies](#), have few adverse [effects](#). Other activities have the potential to compromise important [water](#) values by generating [effects](#) on amenity, cultural and ecological values, and on [water](#) quality and quantity. Past extractions from, and modifications to, these [water bodies](#), have already significantly altered their natural character. [Water bodies](#) include springs and groundwater, both of which can become polluted from various [land](#) use activities. Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of [water](#) is an important part of [sustainable management](#) and is of cultural importance to [tangata whenua](#).

Both the District and Regional Councils have responsibilities under the Resource Management [Act](#) 1991 relating to [water bodies](#) and the need to achieve integrated management (refer also to Chapter 27: Local Authority Cross-Boundary Issues).

The District Council has primary responsibility for the control of any actual or potential [effects](#) of the use, development, or protection of [land](#) and associated [natural and physical resources](#) (which includes [water](#)), the control of [subdivision](#) of [land](#) and the control of any actual or potential [effects](#) of activities in relation to the surface of [water](#) in [rivers](#) and [lakes](#).

The Northland Regional Council has primary responsibility for controlling the use of [water](#), and [water](#) quantity, and the control of [land](#) for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing [water](#) quality. The Regional Water and Soil Plan for Northland controls discharges into [water](#) and onto [land](#), the taking, damming and diverting of [water](#), and the use of [land](#) that has actual and potential [effects](#) on soil conservation and [water](#) quality.

## Objectives

WB-O1 – Preservation and Protection

The preservation of the natural character of [water bodies](#) and their margins, and the protection of them from the adverse [effects](#) of inappropriate [subdivision](#), use and development.

WB-O2 – Effects of Activities

Activities on the surface of [water bodies](#) do not result in adverse environmental [effects](#).

*Explanation and Reasons: [Water bodies](#) have many environmental values and are sensitive to the [effects](#) of activities. The Council will minimise possible adverse [effects](#) upon [water bodies](#) by controlling public [access](#), the location and scale of [land](#) use activities, and activities on the surface of the [water](#).*

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Policies	
WB-P1 – Adverse Effects	<p>To ensure that the adverse <b>effects</b> of <b>subdivision</b>, use and development adjoining <b>water bodies</b> or the <b>coastal marine area</b>, or activities on the surface of <b>water bodies</b> or the <b>coastal marine area</b>, on <b>water</b> quality and quantity (including ground water), natural character, and cultural and ecological values of <b>water bodies</b> and the <b>coastal marine area</b>, are avoided, remedied or mitigated.</p> <p><i>Explanation and Reasons: The quality of <b>water bodies</b> can be affected by adjoining <b>land</b> use activities and activities on the surface of <b>water</b>. Contamination and changes to flow regimes can result from runoff from the surface of <b>roads</b>, storage areas, disposal of <b>stormwater</b> and from industrial processes. Such activities must be assessed in terms of measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse <b>effects</b> on the <b>water</b> resource.</i></p>
WB-P2 – Effects on Water Quality	<p>To ensure that <b>land</b> use activities avoid, remedy or mitigate more than minor adverse <b>effects</b> on <b>water</b> quality, by means which may include separating <b>land</b> use activities from <b>water bodies</b> and <b>coastal waters</b> and by encouraging the retention and enhancement of riparian vegetation as buffer areas.</p> <p><i>Explanation and Reasons: <b>Land</b> use activities such as filling and excavation, roading, buildings and <b>major structures</b> close to <b>water bodies</b> can affect the amenity, cultural, ecological and natural character values of the <b>water body</b>. This policy is intended to ensure that the margins of <b>water bodies</b> are managed in a manner that retains these values, both adjacent to and within the <b>water body</b>. Separating <b>land</b> use activities from the margins of <b>water bodies</b> enables planting, possible public <b>access</b> and retention of an unmodified <b>environment</b>. In suitable locations, however, the provision of <b>structures</b> necessary for water-based recreation pursuits, or conservation purposes, and bridges is recognised. The management of <b>water bodies</b> is closely related to the functions of the Northland Regional Council.</i></p>
WB-P3 – Surface of Water	<p>To ensure that activities on the surface of <b>water</b> do not result in adverse <b>effects</b> on the natural character, ecological and <b>amenity values</b> of the surrounding <b>environment</b>, or on other users.</p> <p><i>Explanation and Reasons: Given the important values that <b>rivers</b> have as publicly available resources, it is important that activities on the surface of <b>water bodies</b> are carefully managed. Activities which use the surface of <b>water bodies</b>, and promote public <b>access</b> to <b>rivers</b>, should be encouraged, provided they do not compromise the <b>amenity values</b> of adjacent <b>land</b> uses, Māori cultural values, or create conflict between users.</i></p>

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## Methods

### Regulatory Methods

- [Water bodies](#) are assessed within the same Zone rules as the [land](#) that surrounds them (WB-P3).
- Zone rules relating to [setbacks](#) from the banks of [rivers](#), and performance conditions to control adverse [effects](#) of activities, including activities on the surface of [water bodies](#) (WB-P3).
- [Subdivision](#) rules relating to the taking of [esplanade reserves](#) (WB-P1).

### Other Plans and Legislation

- The Regional Policy Statement for Northland (WB-P1 – WB-P3).
- The Northland Regional Water and Soil Plan (WB-P1 – WB-P3).
- Iwi/Hapū Environmental Management Plans (WB-P1 – WB-P3).

### Information, Education and Advocacy

- Liaison with the Northland Regional Council (WB-P2).
- Liaison with the Department of Conservation (WB-P1).
- Liaison with non-statutory organisations that have an active involvement in the management of [water bodies](#) and their margins (WB-P1).
- Liaison with iwi authorities and [tangata whenua](#) (WB-P1).

### Anticipated Environmental Results

The following results are expected to be achieved by the foregoing Objectives, Policies and Methods. The means of monitoring whether the Plan achieves the expected outcomes are set out in the Whangārei District Council Monitoring Strategy.

- The preservation and/or enhancement of the natural character (including [water](#) quality) of [lakes](#), [rivers](#), [indigenous wetlands](#) and groundwater and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate [subdivision](#), use and development.
- Adverse [effects](#) of activities on the surface of [water bodies](#) are avoided, mitigated or remedied. These include [effects](#) on natural character (including [water](#) quality), ecological values, cultural and historic heritage, recreational and [amenity values](#).
- The functions of [water bodies](#) in transporting and dispersing flood waters is maintained and/or enhanced.
- The cultural and spiritual values [tangata whenua](#) attach to [water bodies](#) is recognised and provided for.

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## Revision and Sign-off Sheet

Editor	Paragraph	Change Reference	Operative Date	Council Decision Date	Approved By
AKM	Whole Chapter	National Planning Standards 2019	8 June 2022	19 May 2022	DK

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