



Energy, Mines and Resources
Forest Management Branch

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FOREST RESOURCES REGULATION

Wetlands Riparian Management Standards and Guidelines

Under Section 23 of the Forest Resources Regulation, the Forest Management Branch has established management guidelines and standards identifying operating procedures for forest resource harvesting and related activities as described in timber harvest plans, woodlot plans or site plans.

The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to ensure that the management of forest resources occurs in a sustainable manner and with consideration to other values on the land base.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE

- To conserve the integrity of wetlands, water quality and quantity, hydrology and associated fish, wildlife and wetland habitat.

STANDARDS TO BE MET DURING HARVESTING OPERATIONS

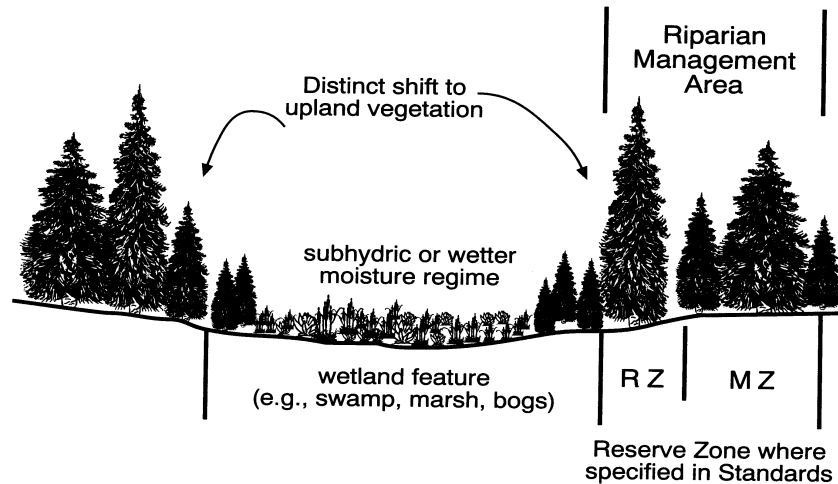
- When developing forest plans, wetlands will be identified according to one of five wetland classes – bog, fen, swamp, marsh and shallow water - in accordance with the Canadian Wetland Classification System (CWCS).
- For shallow open water and marsh wetlands, the following riparian management areas will apply.

Table 1: Riparian Management Area (RMA) Slope Distances for Shallow Open Water and Marsh Wetlands.

WETLAND CLASS	SIZE (ha)	RESERVE ZONE (RZ) WIDTH (m)	MANAGEMENT ZONE (MZ) WIDTH (m)	RMA WIDTH (m)
W1	< 1	5	60	65
W2	1 – 5	60	40	100
W3*	> 5	60	140	200

* includes wetland complexes (Class W3 for mapping)

- When the width of zones are below those described in Table 1 a rationale must be developed based on site-specific assessment and will be described in the Timber Harvest Plan or site plan.
- Operations conducted in the Management Zone must be conducted in a manner that maintains the integrity of the Reserve Zone.
- Bogs, Fens and Swamps shall be identified on all site plan maps.



- Operations in the Management Zone must be conducted in a manner that maintains the integrity of the Reserve Zone; for example, adapted to local aquatic conditions, maintain the riparian function, consider the wetland in context to water bodies on the landscape or to enhance both stand stability and wetland stability.

FURTHER GUIDELINES

- For bog, fen and swamp wetlands, forest management activities may be considered. Site specific sensitivities will be considered when developing a timber harvest plan.
- For all types of wetlands, seasonal, winter use to access adjacent upland timber may be considered. Site specific conditions will be considered when developing timber harvest and site plans.
- Roads should be located to avoid Shallow Open Water and Marsh Wetland riparian management areas except when no reasonable alternative exists for required access.
- Those wetlands less than 1 hectare should be identified in timber harvest plan maps and site plan maps.
- Where wetlands are identified as having specific importance in a Forest Resource Management Plan (FRMP), the Riparian Management Area can be adjusted to accommodate these values.
- When possible wetlands should include a 3m high visual buffer along the perimeter of the wetland.
- Wetlands inventory and the list of important wetlands as prepared by the Yukon Wetlands Technical Committee should be considered during forest planning.

DEFINITIONS

Hydrology is a science dealing with the properties, distribution, and circulation of water on and below the earth's surface and in the atmosphere.

Management Zone (MZ) is measured from the outer edge of the reserve zone.

Reserve Zone is the slope distance measured from the edge of the wetland.

Riparian Management Area is the Reserve Zone plus the Management Zone.

Wetlands are land where the water table is at, near or above the surface or which is saturated for a long enough period to promote such features as wet-altered soils and water tolerant vegetation. Wetlands include organic wetlands or "peatlands", and mineral wetlands or mineral soil areas that are influenced by excess water but produce little or no peat (Canadian Wetland Classification System).

Wetland Complexes are wetland areas larger than 5 hectares that consist of two or more individual wetlands with overlapping riparian management areas.