

STREAM ORDERS & SETBACKS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



NORTHERN TERRITORY PLANNING SCHEME CLEARING OF NATIVE VEGETATION 2004

Stream Order or Strahler's Order is a commonly used system of ordering watercourses to describe their size and significance. The Land Clearing Guidelines use stream orders to determine the recommended setbacks for clearing and the retention of native vegetation buffers.

Buffers reduce any adverse impacts from changed land uses. Buffers adjacent to waterways ensure that water quality is not degraded from runoff, soil erosion, sedimentation and chemical spray drift. Buffers also serve as habitat for a rich array of species and facilitate movement within landscapes for native animals.

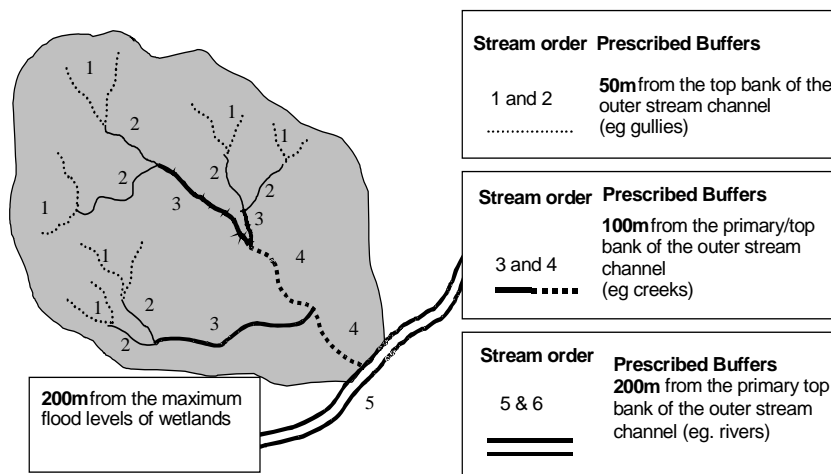
Native vegetation buffers help-

- maintain bank stability and reduce soil erosion;
- maintain water quality and the health of aquatic plants and animals;
- filter sediment and restrict the spread of chemical pollutants and fertilisers; and
- provide habitat for wildlife and corridors for their movement throughout the country.



STREAM ORDERS

Stream order describes the relative size and frequency of well defined watercourses. Stream order can be determined from a topographic map. Vegetation buffers have been prescribed depending on the order of a stream.



Waterway	Stream order	Buffer width	Measured from
Drainage floors	Not applicable	20 m	The outer edge of the seepage zone
Intermittent streams	First & second	25-50 m	The primary bank of the outer stream channel where there is more than one channel or the stream is braided.
Creeks	Third & fourth	100 m	As above.
Rivers	Fifth and sixth	250 m	As above.
Wetlands	Not applicable	200 m	The maximum flood level OR the edge of the active floodplain (whichever is the wider).

For more information

Contact your regional Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment office at the following locations:

3rd floor, Goyder Centre
Palmerston
Phone: 8999 3631

Randazzo Centre
16 Katherine Terrace
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Phone: 8973 8111

Or visit the DIPE web-site at: www.ipe.nt.gov.au