

# Stockwater Races - Maintenance and Biodiversity

***Maintenance of stockwater races on private property is the responsibility of the property owner. Good maintenance and design will keep stockwater flowing through a race, and can also help minimise impacts on indigenous biodiversity.***

## ***Your responsibilities***

The Council owns and manages the stockwater race network. However it is the responsibility of the property owner, or occupier of the land, through which the water race runs to keep it clear of silt, weeds, rubbish and obstructions. Property owners must also maintain the banks of the races, culverts and bridges.

Maintenance disputes between neighbouring properties should be addressed by property owners in the first instance.

Refer to the map on the Council website or call us to find out if the race on your property is part of the stockwater network, and if you are responsible for its maintenance.

## ***Race Cleaning***

Races can be cleaned by hand, or by mechanical means such as a weed rake or an excavator. A weed rake or a bucket with holes is preferred to a closed bucket, as it disturbs the bed less and provides escape for fish, such as eels. A wide and rounded bucket edge is best to not to disturb the bed.



## ***Restrict herbicide usage***

The Council recommends minimising spraying of banks, and does not recommend that landowners spray or directly into water, as this can cause banks to slump and collapse, as well as potentially contaminating the water. Destabilisation of banks is a breach of the Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019. Short-medium grass or low shrubs are preferable to a bare surface, which can erode easily.

Water is consumed by stock downstream and possibly also used for irrigation of plants that might be affected by the spray, therefore avoid any spray entering the water race.



**Herbicide spray causing unstable banks**



**A tidy stockwater race – clear of weeds, rubbish and obstructions**

## Planting for biodiversity and water quality

Planting along a water race is an opportunity to create riparian buffers; providing habitat and food supply for native insects, birds, skinks, and fish. However, any planting needs to carefully consider the effect on on-going race maintenance. No cuttings, clippings, twigs or branches should fall into a water race. Refer to the Council policy 'Planting of Trees and Shrubs Alongside Stockwater Races' for more details.

**Landowners must apply for permission to plant or erect a building and structures of any kind within 10m from either side of a water race using the Stockwater Application Form, available at [waimakariri.govt.nz](http://waimakariri.govt.nz).**

Refer to the planting table below for suggestions of suitable plants. Note that other plants may be permitted - the table is indicative only.

Unsuitable species that will not be permitted by the Council include cabbage trees (*Cordyline australis*)

and other species that shed large amounts of durable leaves, causing potential blockages. Council does not allow large trees such as gum, pine, willow, poplar or cypress within 10m either side of the water race. The Council also does not allow planting within 10m of a water race structure such as a culvert or weir.

### More information

This factsheet is a quick guide.

The Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019 details the rules to protect the water race network. This factsheet focuses on maintenance and biodiversity for the stockwater race network. Refer to the factsheet 'Stockwater Races' on our Council website for an overview of the Bylaw.

Find the 'Stockwater Race Bylaw 2019' with all of the rules designed to protect the water race network on our website [waimakariri.govt.nz](http://waimakariri.govt.nz)

Scientific name	Common name	Plant type	Min distance from edge	Heavy frost	Light frost	Boggy soils	Dry soils	Full sun	Recommended spacing between plants
On race maintenance side to be planted with Waimakariri District Council permission only. Plants less than 1.5m high, that do not obscure sides for the race cleaning operator.									
<i>Carex dipsacea</i>	Tussock sedge	Grass	0-0.5m	●	●	●		●	0.5-1m
<i>Carex secta</i>	Tussock sedge	Grass	0-0.5m	●	●	●		●	0.5-1m
<i>Carex virgata</i>	Tussock sedge	Grass	0-0.5m	●	●	●	●	●	0.5-1m
<i>Cyperus ustulatus</i>	Umbrella sedge, upoko tangata	Grass	0-0.5m		●	●		●	0.5-1m
<i>Libertia ixioides</i>	NZ iris	Grass	0.5-1m		●	●		●	0.5-1m
<i>Poa cita</i>	Silver tussock	Grass	0.5-1m		●	●		●	0.5-1m
<i>Anamanthele lessoniana</i>	Wind grass	Grass	0.5-1m		●			●	0.5-1m
In addition to the plants above, suggestions for the non- race maintenance side – to be planted with Council permission only. Plants over 1.5m high can only be permitted by Waimakariri District Council if kept trimmed and not obscuring the water race.									
<i>Veronica salicifolia</i> (formerly <i>Hebe salicifolia</i> )	Koromiko	Shrub	0.5-1m				●		1-1.5m
<i>Coprosma propinqua</i> and other small-leaved <i>Coprosma</i> species	Mikimiki	Shrub	0.5-1m		●	●	●	●	1-1.5m
<i>Lophomyrtus obcordata</i>	Rohutu, NZ myrtle	Tree	0.5-1m			●	●	●	1-1.5m
<i>Coprosma lucida</i>	Shining karamu	Tree	0.5-1m		●	●	●	●	1-1.5m
<i>Coprosma robusta</i>	Karamu	Tree	1-2.5m		●	●	●	●	1-1.5m
<i>Muehlenbeckia astonii</i>	Shrubby tororaro	Shrub	0.5-1m	●	●		●	●	1-1.5m
<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i> and <i>Kunzea ericoides</i>	Mānuka/ Kānuka	Tree	1-1.5m		●	●	●	●	1-1.5m

Find out more at [waimakariri.govt.nz](http://waimakariri.govt.nz), or contact Customer Services on 0800 965 468.