Guidelines for Wetland Buffer Requirements, Perth, Australia

Background

The guidelines are prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Infrastructure, Western Australia to assist landowners, developers, planners and architects to identify an appropriate buffer between wetlands and land uses that will enhance or maintain the significant attributes of a wetland. These guidelines are relevant in cases where development is proposed in the vicinity of a wetland. However, these guidelines do not apply to cases where landowners continue existing activities.

Determination of buffer area

Buffer area guidelines can be prepared based on standard attributes identified for categorization of each wetland. These standard attributes can be derived from various anthropogenic threats to the existence of wetlands in reference to the given conditions in a particular location or region, including alteration to water regime, habitat modification—e. g. grazing in wetlands, invasion of exotic species, clearing, etc.—inappropriate recreational use, diminished water quality (nutrients, organic compounds, suspended solids, toxic compounds and salinity).

1. Wetland water body—which has a water body permanently or seasonally inundated
2. Wetland function area—which normally includes the wetland, its vegetation, and any directly associated dependent terrestrial habitat.
3. Separation requirement—the input factors for the estimation which are values or attributes of the wetland and the threats associated with the surrounding land use.

Source: Guideline for Determination of Wetland Buffer Requirement, 2005
### Attributes for categorization of wetlands

The following attributes are used for categorisation of wetlands into Conservation Wetlands, Resource Wetland and Multiple Use Wetland. The recommended buffer area requirements for each of the are mentioned below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threats ↓</th>
<th>Separation requirement</th>
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<td>Alteration to water regime</td>
<td>Regulation of groundwater abstraction as catchment management resource</td>
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</table>
| Habitat modification | • 100 m weed infestation  
• Upto 100 m for bird habitat dependent on extent of use  
• 6-50 m firebreak  
• Fence for controlling exotic fauna access  
• ≥ 100 m to minimize edge effects | • 50 m weed infestation  
• 50 m avifauna habitat  
• 6 m firebreak | • 50 m weed infestation  
• 50 m avifauna habitat  
• 6 m firebreak |
| Inappropriate recreational use | • ≥ 50 m to improve aesthetics  
• ≥ 50 m for barrier  
• Fence, paths for controlling access | • 10 to 50 m for improving aesthetics  
• 10 to 50 m for barrier  
• Fence, paths for controlling access | • 10 to 50 m for improving aesthetics  
• 10 to 50 m for barrier |
| Diminished water quality | Drainage inflows eliminated or managed | |

Note: C: Conservation wetland; R: Resource enhancement wetland; M: Multiple use wetland
Source: Guideline for Determination of Wetland Buffer Requirement, 2005

### Additional/ Further information:

- Public Comment: Guideline for the Determination of Wetland Buffer Requirements:  
  [https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/getmedia/a1b0e96f-af7e-40a6-9f7c-053a188bb522/DRAFT_GD_determination_wetland_buffer_requirements](https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/getmedia/a1b0e96f-af7e-40a6-9f7c-053a188bb522/DRAFT_GD_determination_wetland_buffer_requirements)