

WAT-SG-86: REGISTRATION RULES FOR EXPOSED SEDIMENT REMOVAL

THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT THE REGISTRATION OF EXPOSED SEDIMENT REMOVAL FROM INDIVIDUAL AND DISCRETE AREAS SUCH AS GRAVEL BARS WITHIN A LENGTH OF RIVER OR BURN NOT EXCEEDING 1KM.

Date	Jun 2016	Version	3
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1 PURPOSE

This guidance provides an explanation of the rules applicable to the registration **for the removal of sediment from individual and discrete areas of exposed sediment deposits within a length of river or burn not exceeding 1 km.**

2 REGISTRATION RULES

The registration rules are listed below and are explained using key points and a diagram but the rules should be referred to in cases of doubt. Please contact your local SEPA office if clarification is required.

Registration Activity: Removal of sediment from individual and discrete areas of exposed sediment deposits within a length of river or burn not exceeding 1 kilometre.

K.1 Sediment shall only be removed:

- K.1.1. outwith periods of unusually dry weather;
- K.1.2. when flowing water in the channel is sufficiently deep to fully submerge at least part of the bed for the entire 1 kilometre length of the river or burn; and
- K.1.3. from a maximum length of 30 metres (when measured along the bank) within any individual sediment deposit.

Key points

- Removal should only be from **dry** gravels.
- Removal should only be from gravels that are dry during normal low flow – NOT during very low flow, when large areas of sensitive and normally wet habitat could be exposed.

K.2 Sediment shall not be removed:

- K.2.1. from more than one third of the total number of individual and discrete areas of exposed sediment deposits that are present within the 1 kilometre length of river or burn;
- K.2.2. from more than 50 % of the surface area of any individual sediment deposit;
- K.2.3. from the same individual sediment deposit more frequently than once every three years.

Key points

- These rules should ensure that the volume removed is significantly less than the available supply. This means that the river is not 'starved' of sediment and that dependent habitats are protected.

K.3. Sediment shall not be removed from any part of the deposit that is:

- K.3.1. within 1 metre of the wetted edge of the deposit, for sediment deposits that are less than 10 metres wide at their widest points; or
- K.3.2. within 2 metres of the wetted edge of the deposit, for sediment deposits that are 10 metres wide or more at their widest points.

Key points

- The width of the sediment deposit is measured at its widest part, perpendicular to its length, outwith periods of unusually dry weather.
- The edge of the bar must be left in place. This has to be at least 1 metre or 2 metres wide depending on the width of the bar. This will maintain the flows past the bar so that sediment is not deposited at the site during medium and low flows.
- Sediment should ideally be removed from the finer deposits at the downstream end of the bar rather than closer to the head of the bar while still leaving the 1 or 2 metre wide edge intact.

K.4. The activity shall not result in the creation of hollows or pits on the bed of the affected surface water that fish could enter at higher flow and then become isolated from the rest of the affected surface water as flows decrease.

Key points

- Don't remove sediment from below the water level within the bar.

K.5. Where possible, the sediment removed shall be returned to the affected inland surface water:

K.5.1. as closely as possible downstream of the location of its removal;

K.5.2. by placing it on areas of exposed sediment the edge of which lies more than 1 metre from any part of the bed of the affected surface water that is under water at the time of return; and

K.5.3. outwith periods of unusually dry weather; and

K.5.4. when flowing water in the channel is sufficiently deep to fully submerge at least part of the bed for the entire 1 kilometre length of the inland surface water.

Key points

- It is good practice to put the sediment back into the natural system where possible.
- Returned sediment should be placed onto existing dry sediment deposits, but it should not be piled very high (i.e. above the existing bank height).
- It should not be dumped into the wet part of the channel because it could damage species and habitats.
- Return is not required if it's not practical to do so.

K.6. The activity shall not result in the heightening of either bank.

Key points

- Removed sediment should not be used to create embankments, or to increase the height of any existing embankments. This may require separate authorisation from SEPA.
- The removal area should not go right up to the toe of the bank because this may cause bank collapse.

K.7 The activity shall not be undertaken during periods in which fish are likely to be spawning in the affected surface water nor in the period between any such spawning and the subsequent emergence of the juvenile fish.

3 DIAGRAM OF RULES

