

Tasmanian Threatened Native Vegetation Communities

WETLANDS

Conservation status

Threatened: Community 39 - Schedule 3A *Nature Conservation Act 2002*

What are wetlands?

Wetlands contain vascular macrophytic plants that grow in water for all or part of the year.

Wetlands can range from fresh to brackish (slightly salty) to saline (salty like sea water). The water may be still or it may flow from one part of the wetland to another. It may vary in depth from a few centimetres to several metres. In some cases, water movement may be tidal, like at the mouth of a river. Some wetlands may only be flooded for a few weeks per year.

Wetland plants may grow entirely under the water or partially above water. During dry periods, plants may persist as roots, tubers or seeds that sprout once water returns.

Threatened Wetlands occur from highland areas to the coast, including off-shore islands. Examples of threatened Wetlands include Colliers Swamp (King Island), Camerons Lagoon (Flinders Island), Diprose Lagoon, Township Lagoon and Lake Dulverton (Midlands), Apsley Marshes (East Coast) and Double Bar Lagoon (Central Highlands).



An example of the Freshwater aquatic herbland form of Wetlands at Northdown near Port Sorell. Micah Visoiu.

Not all wetlands are considered threatened, although most types of freshwater wetland and one category of saline wetland are listed as threatened. To help you decide if a Threatened Native Vegetation Community is on your site, a decision tree is provided further below. This is a guide only. Assessment by a qualified ecologist is needed to confirm the presence (or absence) of a listed threatened community.

Distribution, extent and reservation status



Indicative Wetlands distribution from TNVC 2014

The Threatened Native Vegetation Communities 2014 (TNVC 2014) distribution of Wetlands is derived from the [TASVEG 3.0](#) mapping of AHF, AHL, AHS, ASF and AWU. TASVEG mapping units provide only an indicative distribution of listed communities.

Wetlands have an approximate Tasmania-wide extent of 17,900 hectares. Of this, 50% is mapped within the secure National Reserve System increasing to 56% in the wider Tasmanian Reserve Estate, which also includes informal and fixed-term reserves.

A snapshot of the reservation status of Wetlands for Local Government is available on the Department of Primary Industry, Parks Water and Environment [website](#) and via the 'By Council Area' tab at this [link](#).

Why are Wetlands important and what are their management issues?

Wetlands are among the most productive of Tasmania's native ecosystems. They are stopover points for migratory birds and breeding grounds for fish, frogs, water birds and invertebrates. They also filter water and disperse heavy flow in times of flood.

Many threatened species of plants and animals occur in Tasmania's threatened Wetlands, including *Galaxiella pusilla* (dwarf galaxias), *Engaeus spinicaudatus* (scottsdale burrowing crayfish) and several sedge, rush and herb species.

Wetlands can be easily disturbed and damaged by livestock grazing and trampling, drainage works, vehicle use and fire. Surrounding land uses can pollute Wetlands and change their normal flooding and drying cycles.

How can the condition of the vegetation be assessed?

To help you to assess the condition of Wetlands, the following [TASVEG Vegetation Condition Assessment benchmarks](#) are recommended:

- ❖ AHF Freshwater aquatic hermland
- ❖ AHL Lacustrine hermland
- ❖ AHS Saline aquatic hermland
- ❖ ASF Fresh water aquatic sedgeland and rushland

What does it mean if you have a Threatened Native Vegetation Community?

If you are planning an activity that will potentially impact a Threatened Native Vegetation Community you should seek advice from the authority responsible for regulating this activity. The authority responsible will depend upon the nature of the planned activity (see *Further information*).

In the first instance you can check the [Information for landowners on the Forest Practices Authority \(FPA\)](#) website for comprehensive advice on when a Forest Practices Plan may be required.

Some vegetation communities can represent important habitat for threatened species. This may have implications when development applications are assessed or for land use.

Matters of National Environmental Significance as listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBCA) should also be considered to determine if the proposal will need to be assessed under that Act.

Further information

For further detail about the possible variation within Wetlands refer to the descriptions of the TASVEG mapping units AHF, AHL, AHS and ASF within the 'Saltmarsh and wetland' section of the online publication [From Forest to Fjaeldmark \(Edition 2\)](#).

Further information to assist developers and their representatives in assessing the impacts of proposed developments on natural values is provided in DPIPWE's [Guidelines for Natural Values Surveys – Terrestrial Development Proposals](#) and the [Threatened Species Link - Activity Advice](#).

Contact details

TVMMMP Coordinator
GPO Box 44
Hobart TAS 7001
Phone: (03) 6165 4320
Fax: (03) 6233 3477
Email: TVMMPSupport@dpipwe.tas.gov.au

Acknowledgement

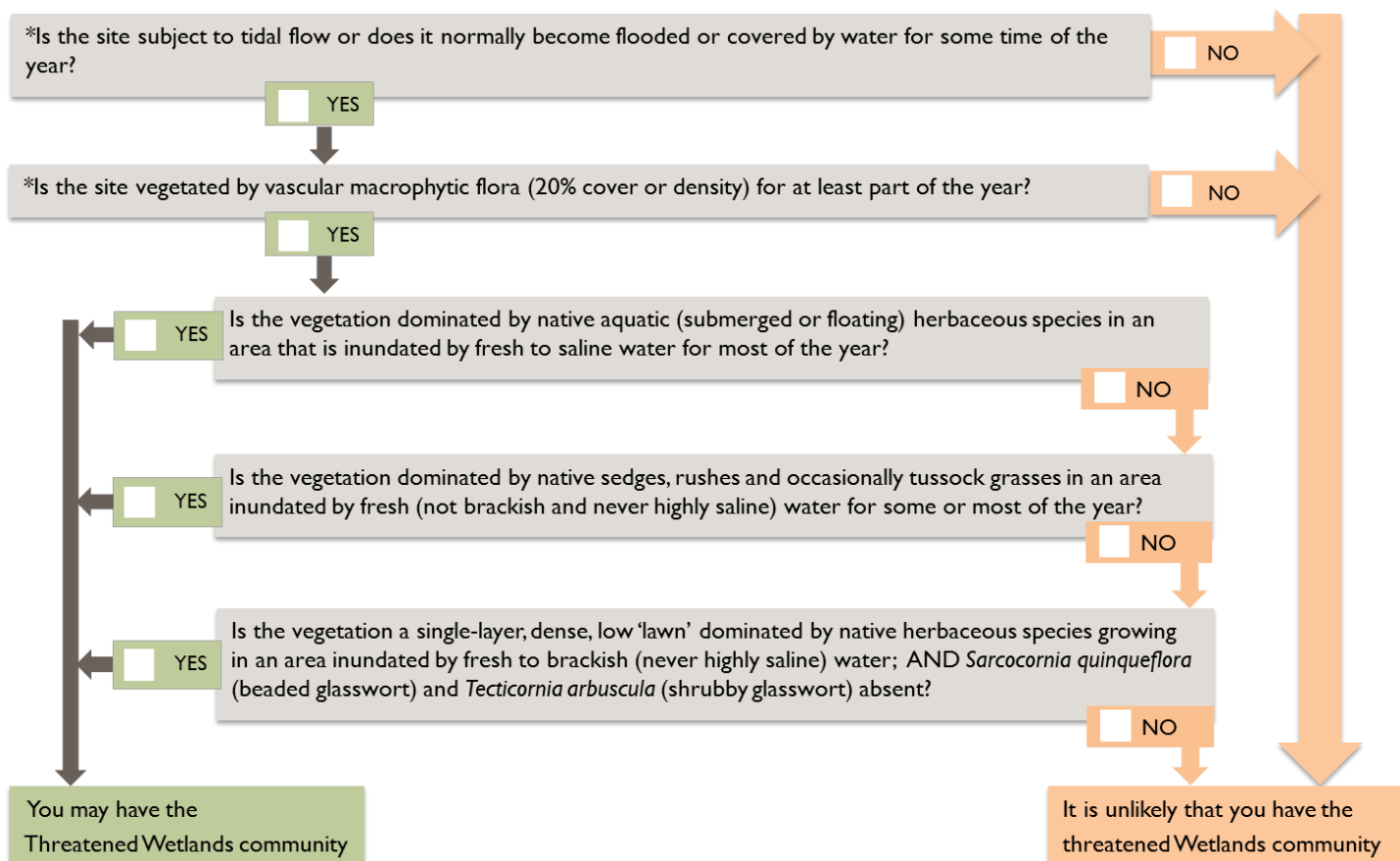
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Is Wetlands present at your site?



Is the vegetation at your site the threatened Wetlands community?



*You may need to take account of climatic conditions (seasonal variations and drought) or time since disturbance (e.g. grazing).

Note

- ❖ Where typically sparse vegetation dominated by sedges or herbs is growing on alkaline (pH 5.0 to 8.5) dolomite or limestone-derived gravels or sands in shallow pans, it may be advisable to refer to the information provided for **1** Alkaline pans.
- ❖ Where *Sphagnum* moss covers more than 30% of the ground, it may be advisable to refer to the information provided for **36** *Sphagnum* peatland.