Summary of rules in the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan that still apply to forestry activities

Introduction

The National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF) sets out nationally consistent regulations to manage the environmental effects of commercial forestry activities across the country.

A series of changes to the NES-CF were gazetted on 7 May and came into force on 4 June 2026. In summary, these changes:

- **Clarify and narrow the circumstances in which council rules can be more stringent than the NES-CF** including introducing a new severe erosion gateway for defined areas under Regulation 6(1A), and repealing Regulation 6(4A), which formerly enabled councils to control aspects of afforestation.
- **Replace the prescriptive slash regulations with a risk-based approach**, which requires a Slash Mobilisation Risk Assessment (SMRA) of the harvest area for higher-risk land.
- **Remove the duplication in afforestation/replanting planning requirements**, by removing the requirement for a replanting plan but retaining streamlined afforestation plans.
- **Fix minor wording issues**, such as removing the undefined term 'woody debris' and clarifying wilding conifer documentation requirements.
- **Update documents incorporated by reference.**

Gisborne District Council has reviewed the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) to identify rules that duplicate or conflict with the amendments made to Regulation 6 of the NES-CF. The review will inform consequential amendments to the TRMP without using the process in Schedule 1 of the RMA.

The review has found that most amendments are consequential. They are directed at accurately describing the relationship between the TRMP and the NES-CF by updating advice notes, correcting statutory references and clarifying the circumstances in which the TRMP or the NES-CF prevails.

The table below identifies the TRMP rules that Council has confirmed continue to apply to commercial forestry activities. These include rules that may be more stringent than the NES-CF under regulation 6, and rules that regulate matters not covered by the NES-CF. Some provisions remain unresolved and are not included in this summary. Their omission does not mean the NES-CF necessarily prevails; the relationship must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Summary of plan rules that still apply

Table 1 provides a summary of TRMP rules that Council has confirmed continue to apply to commercial forestry activities, and the basis on which they apply.

Note: if you are unsure about whether there are plan rules that apply to your activity, contact us via email regional.consents@gdc.govt.nz or phone 06 867 2049.

***Table 1**: TRMP rules that continue to apply to commercial forestry activities*

TRMP Section	TRMP Rule(s)	Rationale
C3: Coastal Management Rules relating to: • Coastal Environment Overlay	• **C3.14.3(8)** – except where harvesting is on LUC Class 8e, or on land that is undefined in the ESC. • **C3.14.3(10)** • **C3.14.3(13)**	• Regulation 6(1)
C6: Freshwater Rule relating to: • Point Source Discharges	• **C6.2.3(12)** – for commercial forestry activities, where the discharge is to a Regionally Significant Wetland identified in Schedule G17.	• Regulation 6(2)(b) – Schedule G17 wetlands are significant natural areas.
C6: Freshwater Rule relating to: • Structures in the Beds of Rivers and Lakes	• **C6.3.2(18)** – applies to a river crossing associated with a plantation forest only where the activity is not already provided for by the NES-CF river crossing regulations.	• No conflict – the rule only applies where the NES-CF river crossing regulations do not already provide for the activity.
C6: Freshwater Rule relating to: • Damming, Diversion and Drainage of Streams, Rivers and Lakes	• **C6.3.13(4)** – only applies to damming and drainage associated with commercial forestry activities, but not diversion.	• No conflict relating to damming and drainage. NES-CF prevails for diversion activities.
C6: Freshwater Rules relating to: • Wetlands	• **C6.4.2(7)** – only applies where the commercial forestry activity results in the modification of a Regionally Significant Wetland identified in Schedule G17. • **C6.4.2(8)** – only applies where the commercial forestry activity results in the modification of a Regionally Significant Wetland identified in Schedule G17.	• Regulation 6(2)(b) – Schedule G17 wetlands are significant natural areas.

TRMP Section	TRMP Rule(s)	Rationale
C9: Natural Heritage Rules relating to: • Outstanding Landscape Area Overlay	• **C9.1.6(4)** • **C9.1.6(8)** • **C9.1.6(10)** • **C9.1.6(11)** • **C9.1.6(12)**	• Regulation 6(2)(a)
C9: Natural Heritage Rules relating to: • Protection Management Area Overlay	• **C9.1.6(17)** • **C9.1.6(21)** • **C9.1.6(23)** • **C9.1.6(24)** • **C9.1.6(25)**	• Regulation 6(2)(b) – Protection Management Areas are treated as identified Significant Natural Areas for NES-CF purposes.