

The Proponent or the TRCA Planner shall screen all inquiries regarding permit requirements for *Debris Removal for Culvert Maintenance* to determine if an Ontario Regulation 166/06 Permit is required. Please consult with TRCA staff for clarification, as required.

These activities are described under the *Fisheries Act Self-Assessment Process*. It is the opinion of TRCA that by following the criteria and best management practices defined on Page 2, risk of causing “*Serious Harm*” to fish is minimal. Considerations for debris removal under the *Endangered Species Act* have been provided by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and are also provided on Page 2.

It should be noted that review under the TRCA permitting process does not relieve the proponent from seeking approvals from other agencies, such as MNR or the Ministry of the Environment, as required.

Criteria for TRCA Permit Exemptions		Yes	No
1	The debris accumulation poses a risk to culvert infrastructure or may cause flooding of the roadway, private property or other public infrastructure		
2	The debris accumulation is within 10m of an existing crossing structure		
3	The debris accumulation is a result of recent flooding or storm events OR there is no accumulation of sediment behind the debris		
4	Flow diversion is not required		
5	Vehicular or construction equipment access and operation will be restricted to existing roadways, or formal trails of sufficient width to accommodate access		
6	Access to the bed and banks will be on foot only to facilitate cutting and collection as necessary		
7	No access to the bed or banks of the watercourse is required by vehicles or construction equipment		
8	Debris will be removed from the site (not repositioned on the floodplain) and properly disposed of or reused/mulched.		
9	Woody blockages by trees or shrubs still rooted in the bank will be cut to ensure that the root structure remains in the bank. No grubbing of the bank will occur.		
Your project must meet <u>all</u> of the above criteria to be exempt from permit review and approval by TRCA. Best management practices should be followed as provided on Page 2 of this screening checklist.			
If your project does not fit within the criteria described above, a TRCA permit may be required. The <i>TRCA Debris Jam Clearance Protocol</i> TRCA Debris Jam Clearance Protocol <u>http://trca.on.ca/dotAsset/40059.pdf</u> should be followed when submitting the permit application so that any additional requirements for the protection of the terrestrial and aquatic systems (such as access, bank erosion, restoration if necessary, etc.) can be determined. The permit application can be found at http://trca.on.ca/dotAsset/166903.pdf . TRCA recognizes that there may be risks to flooding and erosion related to the debris jam and in these circumstances, will expedite review.			

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Objective

This guideline has been prepared to identify when and where the removal of woody debris from within a TRCA regulated area DOES NOT require project review or approval as outlined in the *Debris Jam Clearance Protocol*. This guideline is prepared to facilitate routine maintenance of culverts and bridges at road, driveway or formal trail crossings of watercourses, where recent woody debris accumulations are impeding flow conveyance and affecting flooding or impacting the integrity of the structure through flow deflection.

TRCA does not support removal of woody debris within watercourses, floodplains or other natural areas where there is no imminent risk to existing infrastructure, life or property. Woody debris in streams, on the forest floor or standing in a woodland area is an integral part of the ecology of natural systems, supporting nutrient cycling, soil formation, succession, habitat, and biodiversity. However, where woody debris accumulations occur, and threats to urban infrastructure may result, regular inspection and removal as necessary is supported.

Best Management Practices

The following should be followed for all debris removal projects to minimize impacts to natural features:

1. Be advised that these sites are hazardous; as such access to these areas must be planned and executed according to established Occupational Health and Safety practices regarding working around water.
2. Removals should occur during dry weather and low flow conditions whenever possible.
3. Debris should be removed as soon as possible, once noted, to avoid large accumulations.
4. Winter accumulations should be removed prior to March 31 when possible, to minimize disturbance to aquatic spring migrations and spawning, and
5. Spring/summer accumulations should be removed after July 1 (in-stream removals) or after August 1 (for cutting of live growth) when possible.

** Please note that the transportation, disposal or reuse of the woody material should follow the regulations set out by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for Emerald Ash Borer or Asian Long Horned Beetle as applicable.

NOTES FROM MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES - ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT:

Review under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* (ESA), is the responsibility of the proponent and is provided here for information only. All consultation must be directly between the proponent and MNR. Under the ESA, many aquatic species receive species protection and habitat protection (Section 9 and 10 of the ESA, respectively). Redside Dace is a species found within a number of watersheds draining into Lake Ontario within the Greater Toronto Area. Any in or near-water activities that may impact Redside Dace, or other species protected under the ESA, require review by the MNR to ensure that the activities will not be in contravention of Section 9 or 10 of the ESA.

It is important to note that woody debris is a critical habitat component for Redside Dace and many other aquatic species, and is integral to aquatic ecosystems. Woody debris removal activities should be limited to those sites that are a threat to infrastructure or pose a risk to public safety (e.g. flooding).

Given the urgency associated with the removal of woody debris that may be impacting infrastructure and / or public safety following recent severe weather events, MNR will work with municipalities to ensure timely review of debris removal activities under the ESA. To expedite review, municipalities are urged to contact MNR Aurora District with the following information:

- Municipal contact information (name, position, contact details)
- A map of debris-removal locations and UTM coordinates in locations identified to be the habitat of Redside Dace and upstream of these areas (see regional Redside Dace screening maps)
- Timelines associated with debris removal activities
- Information pertaining to how debris removal activities meet the criteria outlined above by TRCA
- Information should be sent directly to Emily Funnell, Species at Risk Biologist, MNR Aurora District at emily.funnell@ontario.ca (subject line to read ***Municipal Debris Removal for Culvert Maintenance***).