

Recording information on reintroduced aquatic habitat structures

Rehabilitating aquatic habitat is a common waterway management intervention. While new aquatic habitat can take numerous forms a typical approach is the reintroduction of Instream Woody Habitat (IWH; snags). The Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) has been conducting IWH mapping for several years using a set of criteria characterising each IWH mass identified in the field. This approach has facilitated a quantitative approach to assessing the effectiveness of habitat rehabilitation. To help maintain data suitable for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Frameworks and other potential research, it is important to record certain information on the new aquatic structures being installed and that there is a consistent approach to the information collected. To enable this to occur, Catchment Management Authorities are encouraged to collect the simple information on reintroduced IWH or structures listed below (in conjunction with information outlined in the DEPI Output Data Standard¹).

Key information to collect

1. **latitude and longitude** (GDA94) of the actual snag location or structure centre
2. **date** of reintroduction
3. **area** in square metres (see description below) or length for rock banks and groynes
4. **complexity** (see description below and examples on next page)
5. **brief description**: single trunk, root ball, rock bank, groyne, fish haven/hotel

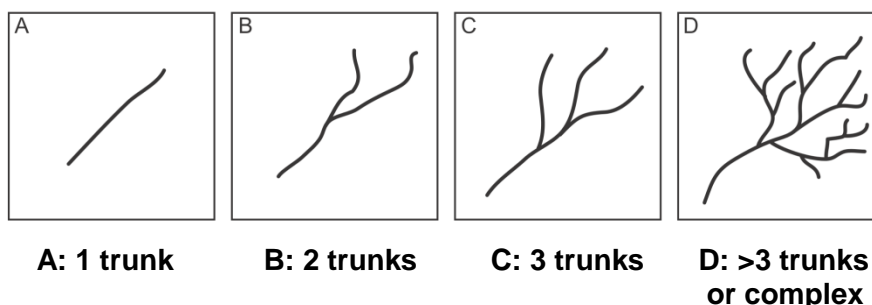
Area of snag mass or size of individual snag:

Area of the snag mass (which may be more than one structure) is preferable but if volume (measures of length and diameter) is more readily available then that should be recorded. If an estimation of area is preferred then assigning the snag mass to one of four area categories will maintain compatibility with previous snag mapping. The area categories are

1: < 5m² 2: < 10m² 3: < 20m² 4: >20m²

Snag complexity:

There are four categories of complexity which a snag can be assigned to:



It is important that a trunk/branch be a substantial part of the whole snag to be included in the multiple trunk categories. The complex category can also include root balls, snags with many hollows and whole trees.

¹ DEPI Output Data Standard. 2013. DEPI Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework

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Below are example photos of complexity categorised snags.



1 trunk



1 trunk



1 trunk



2 x 1 trunk or 2 trunks



1 trunk



2 x 1 trunk



2 trunks



3 trunks



3 trunks



3 trunks



complex



complex

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