

REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2002 - 2022

**PEST PLANTS
and
PEST ANIMALS**

**OPERATIONAL PLAN
2002/03**

**Biosecurity Department
Wellington Regional Council**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Regional Pest Management Strategies (1996 – 2001) were prepared in accordance with the Biosecurity Act 1993 and were adopted by the Council in July 1996. A review of the Strategies commenced in mid-2000. This review culminated in the production of a Proposed RPMS for the period 2001 - 2021 in late 2001.

Following notification of the Council approved Proposed RPMS, an appeal to the Environment Court was received. Safari Club International had requested that all reference to feral deer be removed from the Strategy. Council, after considerable deliberation, assented to this request. The negotiation process caused considerable delay. Public notification of the Strategy was not possible until the agreement between the Council and Safari Club International had been ratified by the Environment Court. The consent order resolving the appeal was issued by the Environment Court on 17 July 2002.

The amended Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy was formally approved by the Council on 17 September 2002. The Strategy was given a new 20-year term of 2002-2022. It is anticipated that the new Strategy will be printed, notified and fully operative by November 2002.

This Operational Plan seeks to implement year one of the new Strategy. The proposed annual objectives aim to progress a number of pest management programmes initiated in the 1996 – 2001 Strategies.

1.2 Linkage to the Regional Pest Management Strategy

This Operational Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act 1993. The Plan identifies and outlines the nature and scope of activities the Council intends to undertake in the implementation of its Pest Management Strategy for the financial year 2002/03.

The Regional Pest Management Strategy contains objectives specific to individual pests and outlines the means by which the Council, as Management Agency, will achieve those objectives.

The Strategy has clearly defined rules to be met by all land occupiers. The Council has responsibility to ensure land occupiers are aware of, and meet, their obligations for pest management on their properties. The Council can also undertake pest control operations where there is recognised regional benefit.

1.3 Implementation

The purpose of the Operational Plan is to implement the Regional Pest Management Strategy for the Wellington Region. The principal objectives are to minimise the actual and potential adverse and unintended effects of pests on the environment and the community, and maximise the effectiveness of individual pest animal and pest plant management via a regionally co-ordinated response.

1.4 Review

The Operational Plan will be reviewed and reported on annually. The Plan may be amended to ensure that the objectives of the Strategy will be achieved within its term. The Strategy may be reviewed before the end of its term. The Biosecurity Amendment Act 1997 allows the Regional Council to make minor changes to the Strategy, provided that it is satisfied that the change will not have any significant effects on the rights and obligations of any persons. Changes may, therefore, be made to correct a factual error or clarify intent. In any event, the Strategy must be reviewed at least once every five years. Following a review, the Regional Council may leave the Strategy unchanged, or amend or revoke it.

1.5 Integration With Annual Plan

As far as practicable, the Operational Plan has been integrated with the Council's Annual Plan. The Annual Plan also provides an overview of related pest management activities for the 2002/03 year. Implementation costs are included in the Annual Plan.

1.6 Areas of Responsibility

This Plan and the Regional Pest Management Strategy are based on the following core areas of Council responsibility.

- **Regulation** (standards and enforcement) - standards, rules and restrictions are set and compliance enforced with penalties.
- **Inspection and Monitoring** - regular property inspections ensure that rules and regulations are being met and changes in pest densities are determined over time.
- **Direct Control** - Council funds and undertakes pest control in some circumstances as a service for regional benefit.
- **Advice and Education** - free advice is given to raise awareness of pest problems and to provide land occupiers with the information to control their own pests.
- **Community Initiatives** - guidance and support is provided for community driven initiatives to control pests.
- **Cost Recovery** - a full cost recovery operational service is available for pest control.
- **Biological Control** - if approved biological control agents become available, then Council may elect to utilise them.

1.7 Principle Legislation and Policy References

- Biosecurity Act 1993 and amendments
- Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002 - 2022.

1.8 Pest Management Categories

Pest management policies are dependent on the phase or degree of infestation. Therefore, all pests have been allocated into specific pest management categories.

Phase 1 – Recent Arrivals Limited in Distribution:

These species have been classified as ‘**Eradication**’ pests. They are of limited distribution and density and have the potential to have serious adverse effects. Every attempt will be made to eradicate these pests.

Phase 2 – Expanding in Range and Density:

These species have been classified as ‘**Containment**’ pests. They have established but still have a limited to moderate distribution. Clear areas will be kept clear.

Phase 3 – Established in Most or All Available Habitat:

These species have been classified as either ‘**Suppression**’ pests or ‘**Site-Led**’ pests.

Suppression pests are widespread and have the ability to spread rapidly over long distances. Eradication or restriction of range is not achievable and the policy is to suppress pest densities to minimise adverse impacts.

Site-Led pests are well established throughout the region and it is not cost effective to attempt control on a region wide scale. Therefore management is focused on specific sites where the pests have the most serious impact and benefits of control are greatest. The ‘**Site-Led**’ category has been divided into three management programmes:

- Manage environmental pests in important environmental places.
- Manage pests which affect human health when and where they do so.
- Manage agricultural pests in agricultural places.

2. Performance Targets and Measures for Pest Plants

2.1 Eradication Pest Plants

Aim: To eradicate specific pest plants from the Wellington region at a cost of \$40,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All sites of Perennial Nettle, African Feathergrass, Bathurst Bur, Eel Grass and Saffron Thistle will be inspected and controlled a minimum of two times to prevent any seeding or further spread. 2. All active sites of Manchurian Wild Rice in the Te Harakeke Wetland at Waikanae will be controlled by the 30 April 2003. 3. Other Eradication Plant sites notified or located will be controlled where it is practical to do so. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sites will be recorded in the Plants database. • Plants will be destroyed by service delivery. • Undertake all control work to specified performance standards.

2.2 Containment Plants

Aim: To reduce the adverse environmental impacts of specific pest plants within defined areas of the Wellington region at a cost of \$55,000.

Performance Targets	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide information to enhance public awareness of all Containment species. 2. Continue control programmes on recorded sites outside of the Containment zones. 3. Arrange Boneseed service delivery control contracts at Ngawi, Lake Ferry and Riversdale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the printing of information pamphlets for Containment species and distribute to the public at appropriate educational forums. • Record all sites in the Plants database. • Undertake all control works to specified performance standards.

2.3 Suppression Plants

Aim: To minimise the adverse impacts of specific pest plants throughout the Wellington region at a cost of \$189,000.

Performance Targets	Means of Achievement
1. Complete a public education programme on the identification and future control requirements for Banana Passionfruit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity material on the identification of Banana Passionfruit will be designed and printed.
2. Where practical require occupier control of located or notified sites of Wild Ginger, Old Man's Beard and Cathedral Bells.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All active sites will be recorded in the Plants database.
3. Ensure the completion of a range of contracts for the control of Old Man's Beard and Banana Passionfruit on River Reserves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River contracts to the value of \$64,000 will be completed for the 2002-2003 year.
4. Other Suppression Plant sites notified or located will be controlled where it is practical to do so.	

2.4 Site-Led Plants

Aim: To minimise the externality impacts of specific pest plants on land that is clear or being cleared of the pest plant and to protect indigenous biodiversity in a comprehensive selection of Key Native Ecosystems at a cost of \$150,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
1. Respond to boundary complaints involving Gorse, Ragwort and Variegated Thistle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All complaints will be recorded. All inspections will be recorded in the Plants database.
2. From established colonies distribute Ragwort Flea Beetle to five new areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All release locations will be recorded in the Plants database.
3. KNE pest plant control contracts covering work at the East Harbour Reserve, Otari/Wilton Reserve and Trelissick Park will be completed by the 30 June 2003.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All sites will be inspected to ensure the work is completed to contract specifications by the due date.
4. Complete initial control work at two other KNE areas within budget constraints, before 30 June 2003.	

2.5 Wellington City Programme

Aim: To minimise the spread and the adverse environmental impacts of Banana Passionfruit, Cathedral Bells, Climbing Asparagus, Old Man's Beard and Wild Ginger within Wellington City at a cost of \$190,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete follow-up inspections of all active sites in the suburbs of Karori and Wilton.2. Undertake a minimum of 400 random inspections through the surveyed area excluding Karori and Wilton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All inspections and infestation locations will be recorded in the Plants database.

3. Performance Targets and Measures for Pest Animals

3.1 Containment Pest – Rooks

Aim: To manage rooks as a Containment Category pest to levels that protect economic levels at a cost of \$35,000.

Objectives	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have no active breeding rookeries outside the Containment zone (see Appendix 1) by 2006. 2. Have no more than five breeding Rookeries within the Containment zone by 2006. 2. Annually report the location of known Rookeries and number of active nests. 3. Annually report the density of Rooks at known sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake direct control by service delivery where Rooks are known to exist. • Survey Rook populations annually in areas where they are known to exist, and where new infestations are reported. • Support appropriate research initiatives, including biological control should it become available. • Ensure compliance with the Strategy rules in order to achieve the Strategy objectives. • Encourage Horizons.mw to actively pursue management of Rooks within their region that compliments this Councils Rook Containment Programme. • Annually inspect pet shops and Rook keepers to prevent the sale of Rooks.

3.2 Suppression Pest – Rabbits

Aim: To minimise the adverse impacts of feral Rabbits throughout the Region at a cost of \$55,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that no area in the region exceeds Level 5 on the Modified McLean Scale at any one time. (See Appendix 2 for the Modified McLean Scale of rabbit infestation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake direct control by service delivery to control Rabbits on riverbeds, esplanades or similar public commons to ensure that Rabbits do not exceed Level 5 of the Modified McLean Scale. • Ensure compliance with the Strategy rules in order to achieve the Strategy objectives. • Survey land in high to extreme Rabbit prone areas to determine the extent of Rabbit infestation. • Make occupiers aware of their responsibilities for Rabbit control. • Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat Rabbits pose to the region. • Release biological control agents for the control of feral Rabbits when appropriate. • Support research initiatives including biological control. • Annually inspect pet shops to prevent the sale of Feral Rabbits.

3.3 Site-Led Pest – Magpies

Aim: To manage Magpies to minimise adverse environmental and human health impacts in the Wellington region at a cost of \$80,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon receiving complaint of Magpies attacking members of the public, dispose of those Magpies within 10 working days. 2. Identify conservation impacts of Magpies on native fauna by supporting research initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake direct control by service delivery of Magpies where there is known to be a threat of injury to members of the public, or complaint(s) are made to that effect within 10 working days. • Respond to landowners wanting to undertake Magpie control within 10 working days of receiving a request for information and/or assistance. • Provide advice, education and assistance to occupiers wanting to undertake Magpie control. • Support appropriate research initiatives into Magpie impact on conservation values. • Annually inspect pet shops to prevent the sale of Magpies.

3.4 Site-Led – Key Native Ecosystem Management

Aim: To protect indigenous biodiversity in a comprehensive selection of Key Native Ecosystems at a cost of \$252,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achieve a measurable improvement in the ecological health and diversity of Key Native Ecosystems using a range of suitable indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain holistic management in existing KNE areas. • Prioritise and select additional Key Native Ecosystems by July 2003. • Establish and implement integrated pest management plans for all Key Native Ecosystems. • Ensure Key Native Ecosystems are legally protected into perpetuity. • Undertake direct control by service delivery of pests identified in integrated pest management plans. • Monitor site recovery using a range of ecological indicators.

	Means of Achievement Continued
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the involvement of community groups where appropriate. • Where Key Native Ecosystems are identified on Territorial Local Authority land, seek funding from the relevant authority to form financial partnerships. • Co-ordinate site management with other biodiversity initiatives where possible. • Use biological control agents where appropriate, and support relevant biological control research initiatives. • Manage external pressures that are inconsistent with Key Native Ecosystem Management objectives. • Promote the presence of organisms that assist in control of pests in Key Native Ecosystems. • Liaise with the Department of Conservation to determine the distribution of, and appropriate control methods for Coarse Fish, Catfish and Mosquito Fish. • Provide public education and advice to foster biodiversity management outside formal KNE programme areas.

3.5 Site-Led – Mount Bruce/Pukeha Predator Buffer

Aim: Complement the native flora and fauna restoration program undertaken by the Department of Conservation, Rangitane O Wairarapa and the National Wildlife Trust at the Mount Bruce Scenic Reserve at a cost of \$68,000.

Objective	Means of Achievement
<p>1. To enhance the survival of native flora and fauna species in and around the Mount Bruce Scenic Reserve.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a predator control program over an area of approximately 1,800 hectares that is contiguous to the Mount Bruce Scenic Reserve

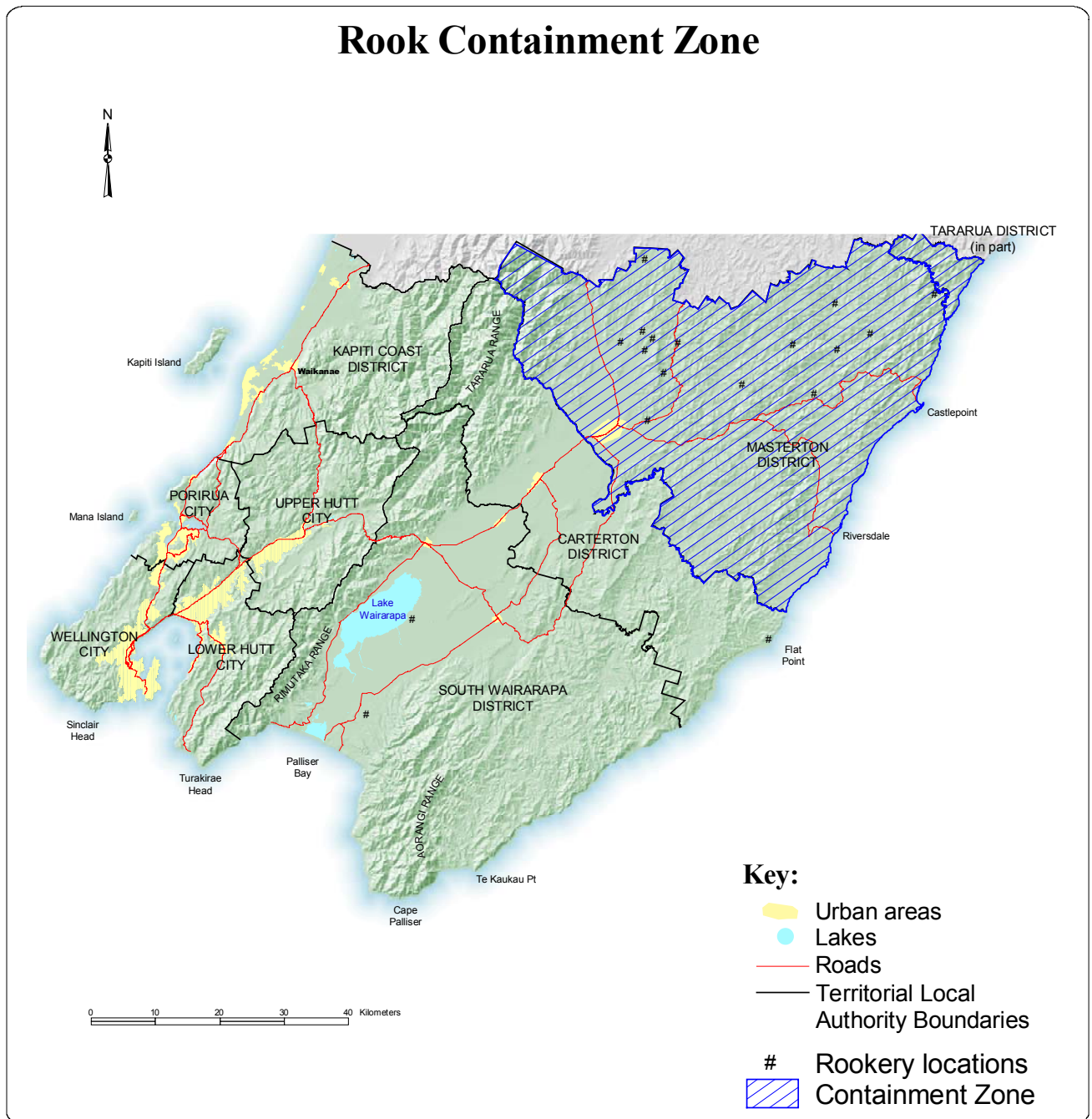
4. Indicative Costs and Funding Sources

The table below outlines indicative costs and funding sources.

Revenue Sources	Pest Plants \$	Pest Animals \$
General Rate	961,5300	888,302
External Income ¹	-	182,300
Sales ²	-	10,000
Total Revenue/Expenditure ³	961,300	1,080,602
¹ Cost recovery work. Joint ventures		
² Product sales. Self help encouragement		
³ Expenditure includes Council overhead allocation		

5. Report

A report on the Operational Plan and the success or otherwise of its implementation will be prepared no later than five months after conclusion of the financial year. Copies of the report will be available to the public.



Containment zone includes all land within the Masterton District and that part of the Tararua District within the Wellington Region.

Modified McLean Scale

Scale	Rabbit Infestation
1	No sign seen. No Rabbits seen.
2	Very infrequent sign seen. Unlikely to see Rabbits.
3	Sign infrequent with faecal heaps more than 10 metres apart. Odd Rabbit may be seen.
4	Sign frequent with some faecal heaps more than 5 metres apart, but less than 10 metres apart. Groups of Rabbits may be seen.
5	Sign very frequent with faecal heaps less than 5 metres apart in pockets. Rabbits spreading.
6	Sign very frequent with faecal heaps less than 5 metres apart over the whole area. Rabbits may be seen over whole area.
7	Sign very frequent with 2-3 faecal heaps often less than 5 metres apart over the whole area. Rabbits may be seen in large numbers over the whole area.
8	Sign very frequent with 3 or more faecal heaps less than 5 metres apart over the whole area. Rabbits likely to be seen in large numbers over the whole area.