

PEST MANAGEMENT

WHAKAKORE KĪREAREA

Pest invasions are one of the biggest threats to our region. Livelihoods and ecosystems can be destroyed by pest animals, plants and diseases. In recent years, we have seen an increasing number of new pests that require our attention: left unchecked, alligator weed will strangle waterways and paddocks, velvetleaf will render crops unusable, and native trees will die due to kauri dieback and myrtle rust.

We fund our biosecurity response through a targeted rate and are supported by an increasingly engaged community who share our concern and work closely with us. However, the rates revenue to fund our response to this increasingly challenging situation has not increased for three years, and we don't have enough money to keep on top of the work we are doing let alone all the additional demands.

We think it is important to put more funding towards our biosecurity response. Without more funding, we will have to do less.

The table on the following page outlines the high risk pests we believe need to be addressed, and how much extra it would cost to run an effective programme to control these pests. Before deciding on your preferred option, have a read.

 We considered funding a programme to address Canada geese. However, council felt this wasn't an issue that should be dealt with regionally, as this pest is a problem across the entire country. Instead, we'll advocate for a national programme to be developed by talking to agencies like the Department of Conservation, Fish & Game and Federated Farmers, who have a national focus and interest in pests that impact on primary production and biodiversity.

PREFERRED OPTION

OPTION 1

Address high risk pests and maintain our current work programme

This will ensure we deliver our current work programme and have the money to properly address the high risk pests outlined in the table.

Impact on rates: The total impact of implementing all programmes over the first three years of the LTP is \$1.88 per \$100,000 capital value.

OPTION 2

Address high risk pests and reduce some of our current work programme

We would reprioritise money to properly address our high risk pests outlined in the table. We would also continue the work we are doing on:

- eradicating pests listed in the regional pest management plan like Japanese knot weed, mile a minute, velvetleaf and alligator weed
- regional rook control across a range of areas
- regional goat control in high value sites e.g. Coromandel, Whareorino and Pureora.

We would, however, have to make changes to the following programmes to fund the management of our highest risk pests:

- reduce the number of areas where we control possums, focusing only on those areas with the highest priority
- stop funding marine biosecurity, including our advocacy programme and surveillance work
- stop controlling a range of established pests like woolly nightshade, wild ginger, tutsan and ragwort and use this money for controlling alligator weed
- put less money into progressing collaborative Predator Free 2050 projects
- decrease our support for the Kaimai Mamuku Catchments Forum
- stop all inspection and enforcement work on sustained control pests like ragwort, gorse, privet and thistles.

Impact on rates: This option would see a rate increase of 5 per cent (\$0.88 per \$100,000 capital value).

PROPOSED LEVEL OF SERVICE	TOTAL INCREASE OVER 3 YEARS
WALLABY MANAGEMENT	
<p>We've worked with the Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Department of Conservation to develop a containment plan for wallabies in the Mamaku Plateau and require funding to do our part. Wallabies currently have a limited distribution in the Waikato, but without urgent action they will be beyond our ability to manage and impact heavily on our native and exotic vegetation.</p> <p>This will cost an additional \$650,000 over three years.</p>	\$0.52 per \$100,000 capital value
PRIORITY PEST CONTROL AREA (PPCA) EXPANSION DUE TO CHANGE IN TB MANAGEMENT	
<p>OSPRI has been undertaking possum control to eradicate bovine tuberculosis (TB) in some areas of the Waikato. This work has resulted in significant ecological gains. Where land is now free of bovine TB, OSPRI has ceased its control operations. We want to continue control works to maintain the gains already made.</p> <p>This will cost an additional \$500,000 over three years.</p>	\$0.40 per \$100,000 capital value
KAURI DIEBACK	
<p>With current technologies and control tools the best way of managing kauri dieback is preventing its spread into disease free areas. We need to manage the disease pathways by providing support to landowners, communities and iwi to protect areas free of kauri dieback.</p> <p>This will cost an additional \$300,000 over three years.</p>	\$0.24 per \$100,000 capital value
ALLIGATOR WEED AND YELLOW FLAG IRIS	
<p>Alligator weed is a fast-growing weed that is now in several parts of the Waikato region, including Hamilton subdivisions. To prevent the spread of this pest, which will destroy the habitat of native wildlife, we require funding to go towards direct control.</p> <p>This will cost an additional \$600,000 over three years.</p>	\$0.48 per \$100,000 capital value
VELVETLEAF	
<p>Velvetleaf is one of the world's worst cropping weeds, damaging arable crops by competing with them for nutrients, space and water. We are the lead agency for managing this pest in the region and we require additional resources to implement the region's long term management plan to contain this pest.</p> <p>We have budgeted an additional \$50,000 per year from year three (2021/22).</p>	\$0.04 per \$100,000 capital value
OLD MAN'S BEARD AND CLIMBING SPINDLEBERRY	
<p>We are the lead agency to manage old man's beard and climbing spindleberry in the region. These pests spread quickly and can devastate natural ecosystems. We want to focus control on priority sites in the Taupō and Upper Waikato catchments at a cost of \$60,000 per year.</p>	\$0.14 per \$100,000 capital value
WILDING PINES	
<p>Wilding pines compete with native trees and plants for space and don't provide the advantages that native trees do, such as food for native birds and insects. Our priority is to manage this pest in the central North Island plateau, and we require an additional \$20,000 per year to participate in a collaborative project with the New Zealand Defence Force, Department of Conservation, iwi, Horizons Regional Council and the Ministry for Primary Industries.</p>	\$0.05 per \$100,000 capital value
Total impact of implementing all programmes over the first three years of the LTP	\$1.88 per \$100,000 capital value

Note: These increases will have no impact on debt.