

STAFF REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Committee

FROM: Lindsay Vaughan, Biosecurity Co-Ordinator

REFERENCE: B103

SUBJECT: **REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - REVIEW OF 2008-2009 OPERATIONAL PLAN - REPORT EP09/11/07** - Report prepared for meeting of 19 November 2009

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarise the achievements of the Review of the 2008-2009 Pest Management Operational Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

The Biosecurity Act 1993 requires councils to undertake a review of the Operational Plan for the previous financial year.

3. REVIEW OF 2008-2009 OPERATIONAL PLAN

- This has been the second year of the implementation of the 2007-2012 Tasman-Nelson Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS).
- The performance indicators set in the 2008-2009 Operational Plan were met.
- **Trend Monitoring.** A new method of Trend Monitoring is being introduced as this will provide a better indication of long-term trends than recording the total number of plants destroyed each year. It is based on the number of New sites (first found in that year), Active sites (live material present), Monitoring sites (live material recorded within the last three years) or Historic sites (live material not seen for more than three years).
- **Total Control Pests.** There are thirteen high-risk pest plants where the long-term goal of eradication is considered to be feasible. All known Active and Monitoring sites of the Total Control Pests were inspected and all live material was destroyed. Historic sites are inspected annually or biennially, depending on the period of time since live material was last seen and the seed viability of each species.

- **Progressive Control Pests.** There are seventeen pests in this category, eleven plants, five fish and one bird. Eradication is not considered feasible because of their distribution and persistence, but good progress has been made in reducing the density and distribution of many of these pests. There are major challenges in Golden Bay with controlling Old Man's Beard and Banana Passion Vine, despite the good work being undertaken by community groups and by a Weedbuster's group. The Department of Conservation is responsible for controlling pest fish.
- **Containment Pests.** There are eleven plant and animal pests in this category and the aim is to prevent their spread. A significant effort has gone into preventing their spread but many of the existing tools are inadequate for the task. Invasive ants are continuing to spread, as is Purple Pampas and Gorse and Broom in the Howard-St Arnaud area. It is unclear how effective the present methods of control are for other animal pests such as magpies, feral cats, feral rabbits and mustelids.
- **Boundary Control Pests.** There are ten pest plants and plant diseases in this category and the aim is to stop their spread onto adjoining clean sites. The most common pests are gorse, blackberry and broom and the Council becomes involved only if neighbours are unable to resolve issues. Numerous enquiries were received on the boundary specifications for the different Boundary Control pests, but there were only [four](#) requests for intervention.
- **Regional Surveillance Pests.** There are four plant pests in this category and the aim is to monitor their distribution and impact during the term of the Strategy. New sites have been mapped for [two](#) of the four pests.
- **Pest control in high-value sites.** There are six high value public sites within Tasman District where the Council is involved in controlling pest plants and animals. Most of the effort has gone into Torrent Bay in a programme led by the Council with co-funding by the Department of Conservation and some local landowners. This programme has been extended to pest animal control on adjoining areas which is being funded by the Birdsong Trust, using contributions from tourists collected by local tour operators in the Park.
- **Biological control.** Biological control is an important tool for long term control and the Council contributes to funding of the Landcare Research programme through the Biocontrol Research Collective involving regional councils and the Department of Conservation. A total of 21 biocontrol agents are present in Tasman on 10 pest plants. The most successful results have been achieved on ragwort with the ragwort flea beetle and the cinnabar moth; some progress is being made with agents for gorse and broom.
- **National Plant Pest Accord.** This Accord has been developed to prevent the sale, propagation and distribution through wholesale and retail outlets of introduced plants likely to establish and spread. A substantial number of new plants have been added recently and identification of cultivars continues to pose challenges for identification.

- **Education and advice.** While much of the work of the staff involves providing information and advice to landowners, this category primarily covers the development of displays for events such as Ecofest, the production of brochures, and the Pest of the Month articles in Newline.
- **Other pests.** Council biosecurity officers have worked with Biosecurity NZ and other stakeholders in programmes involving Didymo and Didemnum.

4. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

Accept the attached Review of the Operational Plan for 2008-2009.

Lindsay Vaughan
Biosecurity Co-Ordinator