



## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Environment & Planning Subcommittee

**FROM:** Lindsay Vaughan, Policy Planner

**REFERENCE:** B102

**SUBJECT:** **REVIEW OF ANNUAL OPERATIONS PLAN FOR 2004 / 2005 –  
REPORT EP05/11/12 –** Report prepared for 16 November 2005 Meeting

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to introduce the review of 2004/2005 Pest Management Operational Plan and to summarise its highlights.

### 2. BACKGROUND

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

### 3. REVIEW OF 2003-2004

- The operational budget was overspent by \$34,225. This was the fourth year of the new Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS). The increase was due to a number of factors; one factor was the substantial amount of additional time involved in the management of Argentine ants and Darwin's ants. Another factor was the time that was spent by Biosecurity team members on the Riwaka Hawthorn Removal Programme; this was a grower-funded programme and \$6,000 was paid to Council for this work. A further factor was the pest control work at Torrent Bay, a joint programme funded by landowners, Department of Conservation, Tasman District Council, and the Biodiversity Fund. A contribution of \$19,000 was made to Council for this work.
- The performance indicators set in the 2004 / 2005 Operational Plan were met.
- The staff are using hand-held IPAQs and running GIS software that allows pest locations to be recorded, along with information on the extent and treatment. This is producing a very good pest data base. It also allows staff to access orthophotos in the field and identify landowners.

- Hornwort, one of New Zealand's worse aquatic weeds, was identified in the Moutere Stream in January 2002 and subsequently found in a small number of ponds around the Moutere District. Council Biosecurity Officers have worked closely with DoC and LINZ to carry out surveillance, to apply herbicide and to assist in trial work. Spraying over three years (2002 – 2004) in the Moutere Stream has been remarkably successful and no sign of hornwort has been since been detected. A large pond in rural Mapua has been re-sprayed. Other ponds have been treated by backfilling or by flooding with salt water.
- All known sites of the ten Total Control Pests were inspected; these are African Feathergrass, Bathurst Bur, Cathedral Bells, Climbing Spindleberry, Egeria, Entire Marshwort, Phragmites, Saffron Thistle and Senegal Tea. Any live plants were destroyed and/or control programmes continued.
- Good progress is being made in controlling some of the Progressive Control Pests such as boneseed, Madeira vine, Spartina and wild ginger. Old Man's Beard is a major challenge in Golden Bay; new sites continue to be found and old sites are re-emerging.
- Boundary control involves controlling the spread of pest plants on to adjoining land; the key pests are gorse, broom, blackberry, nodding thistle and horticultural pests and diseases (black spot, codling moth, powdery mildew, and fireblight). The Council becomes involved only if neighbours are unable to resolve issues. Fourteen complaints were received and resolved, and two landowners were served with Notices of Direction. One Biosecurity Officer oversaw the programme to remove hawthorn in the Riwaka area; this was part of an industry initiative to reduce the incidence of fireblight.
- There are a small number of high value public sites where TDC becomes involved in controlling designated pest plants and animals. These sites include the Upper Baton, the Dart/Wangapeka Confluence, Marahau and the Lee Valley Reserve where the principal pest is Old Man's Beard, and Torrent Bay with both animal and pest plants.
- Biological control is an increasingly important tool for long term control. TDC contribute to the Landcare Research biological control programme and participate in setting research priorities. They also offer a range of biocontrol organisms for release; staff select, release and monitor a these releases. The priority pest plants are nodding thistle, Old Man's Beard, gorse, broom and banana passionfruit. Very successful results have been achieved with ragwort control.
- Education and awareness-raising activities have been successful but limited by time and availability. There have been increased enquiries from the public on a range of pest issues. In particular, the demand for advice and assistance to control possums, mustelids, and magpies has grown, including lending traps, and for information on identification and treatment of Argentine and Darwin's ants. The major effort goes into Ecofest which attracts a large number of urban and rural landowners.

## 5. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

**Approve** the attached Review of the Operational Plan for 2004-2005.

Lindsay Vaughan  
**Policy Planner / Biosecurity Co-Ordinator**