



If calling, please ask for Democratic Services

Environment Committee

Thursday 17 October 2024, 9.30am

Taumata Kōrero - Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba St, Te Aro, Wellington

Quorum: *Seven Members*

Members

Councillors

Penny Gaylor (Chair)

David Bassett

Chris Kirk-Burnnand

David Lee

Daran Ponter

Yadana Saw

Simon Woolf

Quentin Duthie (Deputy Chair)

Ros Connelly

Ken Laban

Thomas Nash

Hikitia Ropata

Adrienne Staples

Appointee

Barbie Barton

Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council

Environment Committee (A Committee of the Whole)

1 Purpose

Oversee the development, implementation and review of Council's:

- a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators to improve environmental outcomes for the Wellington Region's land, water, air, biodiversity, natural resources, parks and reserves, and coastal marine area
- b Regional resilience priorities in the delivery of plans, programmes, initiatives and activities for flood protection, erosion control, and regional parks and forests
- c Regulatory systems, processes and tools to meet Council's related legislative responsibilities
- d Plans, programmes, and efforts to increase volunteer uptake, community involvement and mahi tahi with others seeking to improve environmental outcomes in the Wellington Region.

2 Specific responsibilities

The Committee's environmental responsibilities include the areas of land use management, air quality, water health and quality, regional natural resources, river control, flood protection, regional parks and reserves, coastal marine environment, maritime navigation and safety, biosecurity and biodiversity.

- 2.1 Apply Council's Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles when conducting the Committee's business and making decisions.
- 2.2 Oversee the development and review of Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regional resilience prioritiesand recommend these matters (and variations) to Council for adoption.
- 2.3 Review periodically the effectiveness of implementing and delivering Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regional resilience priorities.
- 2.4 Consider regional, national and international developments; emerging issues and impacts; and changes in the legislative frameworks for their implications for Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regulatory systems, processes and tools.

- 2.5 Recommend to Council changes to improve the effectiveness of Council's:
 - a Environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators
 - b Regional resilience priorities
 - c Regulatory systems, processes and tools.
- 2.6 Review Greater Wellington's compliance with Council's related legislative responsibilities¹, and the monitoring and enforcement of compliance.
- 2.7 Ensure that the Committee's decision making:
 - a Considers climate change-related risks (mitigation and adaptation)
 - b Is consistent with Council's plans and initiatives to give effect to Council's declaration of a climate emergency on 21 August 2019, including agreed emissions reduction targets.
- 2.8 Review, after each Farming Reference Group meeting, a written report of the business conducted at that meeting.

3 Delegations

- 3.1 Subject to sections 3.3 to 3.7, Council delegates to the Committee all the powers, functions and duties necessary to perform the Committee's responsibilities (except those that must not be delegated, have been retained by Council, have been delegated to another committee, or have been delegated to the Chief Executive).
- 3.2 The Committee has the authority to approve submissions to external organisations for matters pertaining directly to the Committee's purpose.
- 3.3 The Committee may make decisions on matters with a financial impact only where the related costs are:
 - a Budgeted for in the relevant business group's budget
 - b Not budgeted for in the relevant business group's budget, but can be met from savings within that budget.
- 3.4 Where the Committee considers a decision with a material financial impact is needed², the Committee must refer the matter to Council for its decision.
- 3.5 The Committee may not make a decision that is materially inconsistent with Council's Annual Plan or Long Term Plan.
- 3.6 Where a matter proposed for consideration by the Committee (including during the development of proposed Greater Wellington plans and policies) is of strategic

¹ These responsibilities include those under the Resource Management Act 1991 and for the granting of resource consents, the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1967, the Biosecurity Act 1993, the Reserves Act 1977, and the Maritime Transport Act 1994.

² That is, where savings are identified from other business groups' budgets to meet the related costs; or no savings are identified across Greater Wellington's overall budget to meet the related costs.

importance to the Wairarapa Constituency, that matter shall first be referred to the Wairarapa Committee or its members for their consideration.

- 3.7 The Committee shall ensure that it acts under the guidance of the Memorandum of Partnership in working with Greater Wellington's mana whenua partners of the Wellington Region to ensure effective Māori participation in the Committee's deliberations and decision-making processes.

4 Members

- 4.1 All thirteen Councillors.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Farming Reference Group.

5 Voting entitlement

The Chair of the Farming Reference Group sits at the table and has full speaking rights, but has no voting rights at any Committee meeting.

6 Quorum

Seven Committee members.

7 Meeting frequency

The Committee shall meet six times each year, with additional meetings as required.

Environment Committee

Thursday 17 October 2024, 9:30am

Taumata Kōrero - Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba St, Te Aro, Wellington

Public Business

No.	Item	Report	Page
1.	Apologies		
2.	Conflict of interest declarations		
3.	Public participation		
4.	Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on Thursday 8 August 2024	24.426	6
5.	Predator Free Wellington Update	24.548	9
6.	Biosecurity Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Conservation, Biosecurity New Zealand and Te Uru Kahika	24.556	22
7.	Regional Parks Update	24.510	30
8.	Te Rōpū Taiao Environment Update – October 2024	24.490	39



Please note these minutes remain unconfirmed until the Environment Committee meeting on 17 October 2024

Report 24.426

Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on Thursday 8 August 2024

Taumata Kōrero – Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington, at 9.31am

Members Present

Councillor Gaylor (Chair)
Councillor Duthie (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Bassett
Councillor Connelly (from 9.46am)
Councillor Kirk-Burnnand
Councillor Laban
Councillor Lee
Councillor Nash
Councillor Ropata
Councillor Saw
Councillor Staples

Barbie Barton

Barbie Barton participated at this meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams and counted for the purpose of quorum in accordance with clause 25B of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Act 2002.

Karakia timatanga

The Committee Chair opened the meeting with a karakia timatanga.

Public Business

1 Apologies

Moved: Cr Nash / Cr Duthie

That the Committee accepts the apologies for absence from Councillor Ponter and Councillor Woolf, and an apology for lateness from Councillor Connelly.

The motion was **carried**.

2 Declarations of conflicts of interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

3 Public participation

Chris Gibbons, Whitireia Park Restoration Group, spoke on the activities of the Restoration Group.

Councillor Connelly joined the meeting at 9.46am, during the above item.

4 Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on 13 June 2024 – Report 24.322

Moved: Cr Staples / Cr Saw

That the Committee confirms the Public minutes of the Environment Committee meeting on 13 June 2024 – Report 24.322.

The motion was **carried**.

5 Dangerous Dams Policy – Deliberations – Report 24.385

Jo Frances, Lead Consenting Advisor, spoke to the report.

Moved: Cr Staples / Cr Laban

That the Committee:

- 1 Considers the submission received on the proposed Policy on Dangerous Dams, Earthquake-prone Dams, and Flood-prone Dams 2024.
- 2 Agrees to the changes advised by officers:
 - a include the phrase “*and may work with the owners of identified*” in paragraph 16, and
 - b entirely redrafted paragraph 25, and
 - c amendments to paragraphs 17 and 19, and
 - d reordering paragraphs 3, and 16-22, and
 - e amend paragraph 13 to include a provision to actively contact affected parties downstream.
- 3 Recommends that Council adopt the policy as amended.

The motion was **carried**.

6 Crown Funding Contribution to Implementing Floodplain Management Plan Outcomes – Report 24.384 [For Information]

Graeme Campbell, Strategic Advisor Flood Resilience, spoke to the report.

7 Farming Reference Group Chair Update – Report 24.410 [For Information]

The Committee Chair spoke to the report.

8 Te Rōpū Taiao | Environment Group Update – August 2024 – Report 24.375 [For Information]

David Boone, Manager Ecosystems and Community, Shaun Andrewartha, Manager Environmental Regulation, and Megan Oliver, Principal Advisor Knowledge, spoke to the report.

Noted: The Committee requested:

- Officers to include more graphs and diagrams in future update reports, particularly showing trends over time in environmental regulation.
- Officers to provide an update on pest control operations in our regional parks.

Karakia whakamutunga

The Committee Chair closed the meeting with a karakia whakamutunga.

The public meeting closed at 11.00am.

Councillor P Gaylor

Chair

Date:

Environment Committee
17 October 2024
Report 24.548



For Information

PREDATOR FREE WELLINGTON UPDATE

Te take mō te pūrongo **Purpose**

1. To update the Environment Committee on Predator Free Wellington.

Te horopaki **Context**

2. Predator Free Wellington Ltd (PFWL) is one of the landscape scale projects supported by Predator Free 2050 Limited. Predator Free 2050 Limited is an entity to invest Crown funds into initiatives to achieve the Predator Free 2050 goals. It currently supports five large-scale elimination projects around the country including PFWL.
3. PFWL is not to be confused with Predator Free NZ Trust, which shares a similar name. Predator Free NZ Trust is an independent organisation established in 2013. The Trust administers the Kiwibank Predator Free Community programme, which supports communities to take action in their backyard.
4. The Predator Free Wellington project covers 30,000ha and around 70,000 households. It stretches from Miramar Peninsula across to the south-west corner of Mākara and up to a boundary along the SH1 motorway to Porirua City.
5. PFWL is supported by its foundation partners; Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City Council, Predator Free 2050 Ltd, NEXT Foundation and Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika.
6. James Willcocks is the Director of PFWL. He was appointed to the role by the board of directors; those directors were appointed by the foundation partners.
7. Of all the partners PFWL works most closely with Greater Wellington. Greater Wellington provides the staff and technical expertise to complete the operations in the field. The project is an example of how successful a partnership between local government and a private Non-governmental organisation (NGO) can collaborate effectively.
8. PFWL is highly community focussed and works closely with residents to achieve its goals; the project is primarily operational in private residences but also works with community groups and individuals to complete eradication activities.

9. One of the project’s goals is to advance the pest/predator control efficacy for the Region and country by building and testing new techniques and trialling new innovative technologies. This is achieved by working closely with research and development organisations to inform best practice and test potential groundbreaking tools.

**Ngā āpitihanga
Attachment**

Number	Title
1	Predator Free Wellington presentation

**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories**

Writer	John Hambidge – Project Leader, Environment Operations, Predator Free Wellington
Approvers	Myfanwy Hill – Manager, Environment Operations Jack Mace – Director Delivery, Environment Group Lian Butcher – Group Manager, Environment Group

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> This reports supports the Environment Committee's responsibility to review periodically the effectiveness of implementing and delivering Council's environmental strategies, policies, plans, programmes, initiatives and indicators.
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> Environment outcomes are linked to the integrated Environment Group Long Term Plan objectives.
<i>Internal consultation</i> There was no internal consultation.
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> There are no known risks and impacts related to this report.



Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari he toa takitini

— OUR STRENGTH DOES NOT COME FROM OURSELVES ALONE, OUR STRENGTH
DERIVES FROM THE MANY

Where we left off – back to Miramar

- Getting to zero was one thing, holding it for a year is the real prize!!
- Continuously adapting the system to drive defence costs down
- Layers of protection to secure the gains
 - Community vigilance
 - Highly specialised volunteers
 - Detection dog
 - Rapid response to any intel < 24 hours
 - Cameras at the right density
- No system is completely infallible: speed and precision are key



Miramar Rat Data

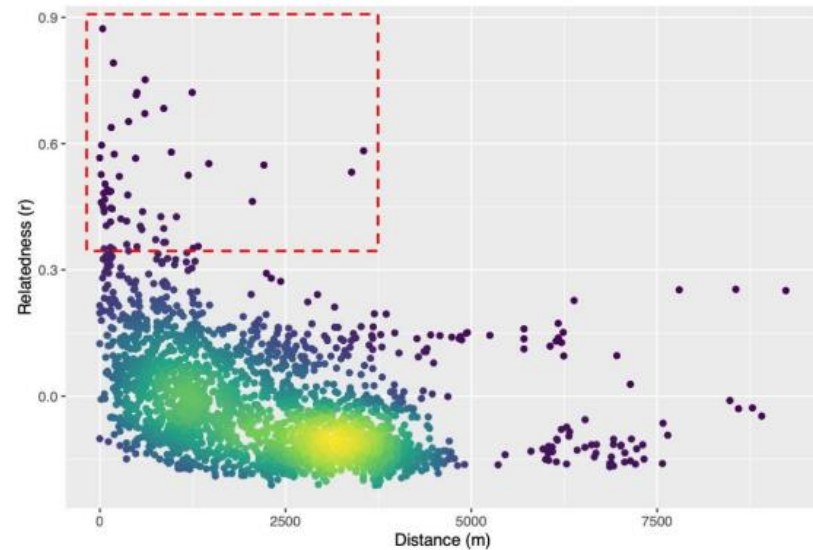
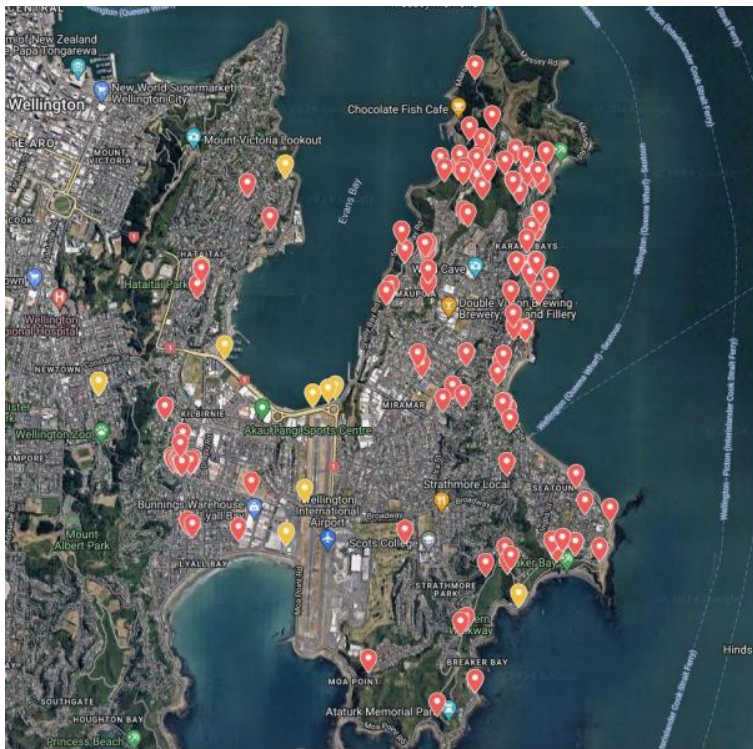
17th September - 1 October 2024



Genomic Sequencing of Ship Rats – another layer of protection

158 rats collected with DNA extracted that gave us 30,000 genetic markers to build a detailed population map

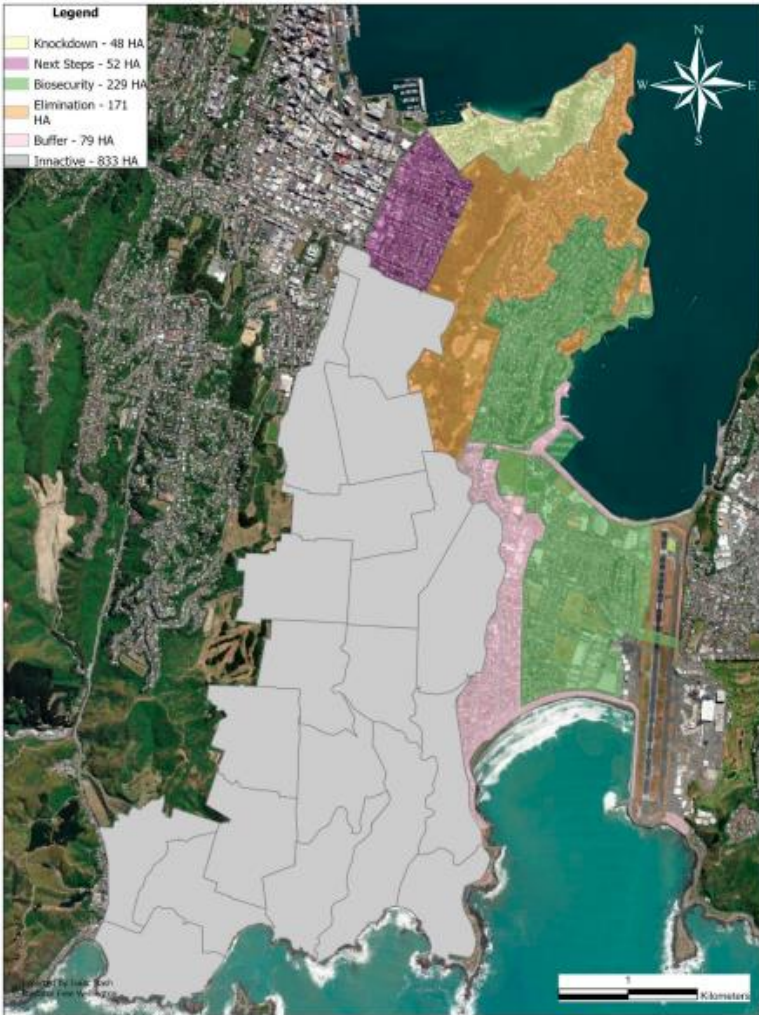
- Testing our assumptions on the origin of the last rats on Miramar
- Test whether we could tell a Miramar rat from a rat from somewhere else
- Understand whether rats were able to cross our barrier system back onto Miramar



(Veale, 2024)

Forward Progress – Where we are at now

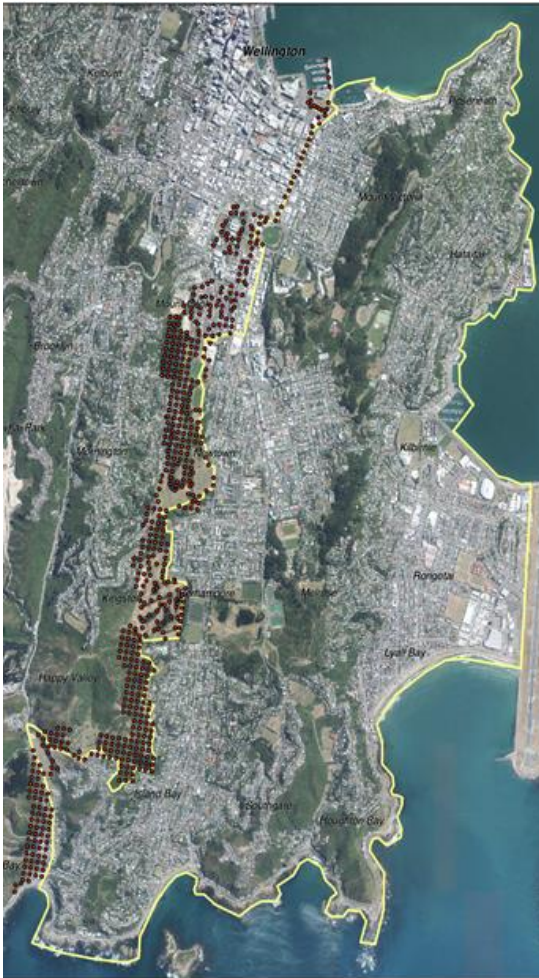
- Optimisation is the theme – faster and harder
- Successfully eliminated and secured over 308ha in Phase 2
- Includes some of the most challenging terrain we will face
- Over 300 bait station interactions by rats a fortnight in Hataitai alone through the peak knockdown period



Phase 2 Operational Zones
As of 1st October 2024



Optimising the power of volunteers



- Role of volunteers has changed dramatically
- Volunteers and Community are critical to the effort and critical to the exit strategy
- It is how we drive behaviour change required
- Includes:
 - 123 Volunteers managing the 7km Phase 2 buffer/barrier system to prevent target species returning
 - 39 Specialist Biosecurity Flying Squad volunteers on Miramar preventing re-incursion and tracking down a stoat
 - Over 2,000 individuals (10,000 households) undertaking backyard trapping
 - Conservative estimated contribution of 54,510 hours annually directly to Predator Free Wellington activity. This excludes all volunteer effort in public reserves

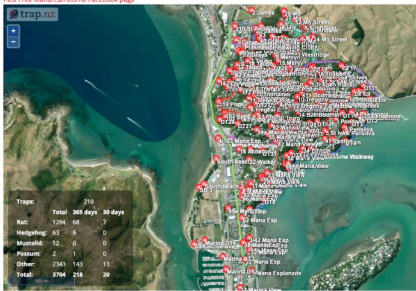
From Wellington to the Region??

Pest Free Mana & Camberne

A coordinated approach to making Mana and Camberne pest free and bringing back our native species.

pestfreeana@gmail.com

Pest Free Mana/Camberne Facebook page



Predator Free Titahi Bay

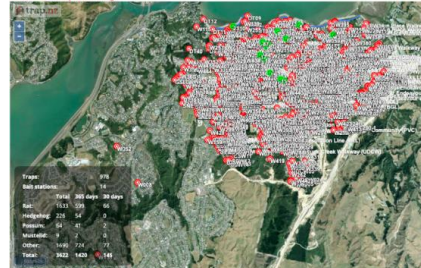
Predator Free Porirua
trapins@porirua.govt.nz.uk Superdeber13@gmail.com
Reporting page for catches



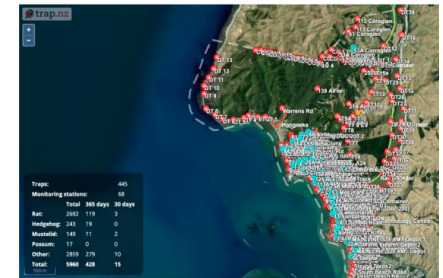
Predator Free Whitby

View Edit Members Project categories

Predator Free Whitby
predatorfreewhitby@gmail.com
Reporting page for catches



Plimmerton



Building the social movement required to deliver was wired into this project from the start, it's now bolting regionally

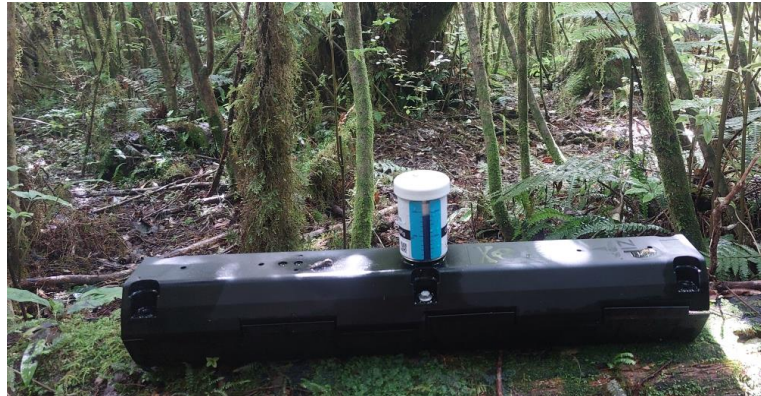
What roll are we playing?

- Capability building to hone methods and achieve greater impact
- Co-ordination with other funders and partners critical to a regional approach
- Integration with GWRC work programmes. Personnel development through embedding in our team
- Demonstrating success

What roll could we play?

- Formalised capability building programme with regional PF groups
- Deployment of new technology to drive great impact,
- Coordinate activity across landscapes to prevent duplication
- Grow specialist expertise

Technological Innovations driving efficiency and efficacy



- Partnership with ZIP Ltd to change the game
- One of two projects in the country trialing H2Zero automated bait station lure
 - Uses hydrogen cell technology to continuously supply lethal bait for up to one month



- First urban project in the country trialing Ziplnn live cage traps with automated reporting and continuous bait supply
 - Live capture trap with minimal failure rate, continuously baited with automatic lure pump, upon activation the chamber fills with CO2

Challenges – the National Picture



- The deal with PF2050 Ltd has changed – the largest funder of landscape scale elimination projects delivering on the national vision has a lack of funding
- Only able to continue funding 5 projects instead of the previous suite of 18 – we are one of the five
- Based on the current trajectory of spend from the 2026 calendar year we are facing a funding cliff of 1.5mil a year
- Ongoing funding from PF2050 Ltd orientated around embedded R&D to help answer critical questions to support a 2028 budget bid
- We have proof of concept, we have improved the price point, We are part way through roll-out and now is not the time to take our foot off the gas

How are we attempting to address potential funding concerns

- We saw this coming – and recruited a new Partnerships and Philanthropy Role within the project to help.
- Tactics include – Central Government, Corporate sponsorship, Targeted public fundraising campaign, high net worth individuals/philanthropists here and overseas, working with our current partners to determine how we can solve the challenges
- Successes we've had – Wellington Airport, we have another one at this level just about ready for sign off and a 3rd which is advancing well
- New partnerships - Russell McVeagh, Mitre 10, Kiio and Fix and Fogg
- Operational improvements to reduce labour component
- Optimizing the role of volunteers and community
- Contingency planning

Airport signs on for a Predator Free Wellington

Frances Chin | The Post

August 28, 2024

Share



  **Predator Free Wellington** 

Posted by David Sebastian Klein
30 Sep · 🌐

morning – a kārearea NZ falcon. They even brought their own brekkie (an introduced rock pigeon).

'It was a huge thrill to see this on my door step in Brooklyn!' David says. 'The only other time I'd seen a kārearea was on the Milford Track. It's amazing to have our native manu thriving in our backyard.'

[#LifeWithoutRats](#) [#NatureCity](#)



[See insights and ads](#) [Boost post](#)

 Like  Comment  Share

   389

 Write a comment...   

Environment Committee
17 October 2024
Report 24.556



For Information

**BIOSECURITY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION, BIOSECURITY NEW ZEALAND AND
TE URU KAHIKA**

Te take mō te pūrongo
Purpose

1. To inform the Environment Committee (the Committee) of:
 - a the recently signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Te Uru Kahika – the Regional and Unitary Councils of Aotearoa New Zealand (TUK), the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Biosecurity New Zealand, operating under Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)
 - b some of the major works, tensions and opportunities for regional councils under this new partnership.

Te horopaki
Context

2. This relates to Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) environmental protection commitments both through our Regional Pest Management Plan as well as our Rōpū Taiao work programmes established to protect native biodiversity and our communities.
3. There are some direct potential impacts for Greater Wellington because of this agreement which includes sharing data between DOC and Greater Wellington to benefit our region-wide terrestrial programme. The region-wide terrestrial programme monitors vegetation health, bird populations, possums and ungulates. The partnership provides a platform to build on for Greater Wellington and DOC to work towards better alignment and collaboration of pest control programmes both in the Terrestrial and Marine space.
4. Reducing impacts of pests on our environment and economy often requires a collaborative and collective approach. Regional councils as a sector play a key role in the biosecurity system alongside MPI and DOC. It can be a challenge to overcome some of the internal system barriers between agencies when they are large and operating on different scales, e.g. regional vs national.
5. It can be challenging for national agencies to coordinate across multiple regional councils, and TUK plays a key role in creating space for councils to collaborate,

share knowledge, discuss matters of regional significance, and to bring a collective voice to the table with DOC and MPI.

6. Under TUK are several special interest groups, one of which is the Biosecurity Working Group (BSWG) which works in the biosecurity field on behalf of the Bio-managers Special interest Group. Greater Wellington is an active member of TUK, collaborating with specialists from other regions across the country. The representatives at these special interest groups are also the primary contact points for their fields of expertise with both DOC and MPI.
7. In 2023, senior leaders in MPI, DOC and TUK agreed to work more collaboratively towards delivering better biosecurity outcomes for our communities and te taiao, and the regional sector provided input through the BSWG to the drafting of the MOU.
8. In August 2024, the MOU was signed by Stuart Anderson (Deputy Director-General, Biosecurity New Zealand at MPI), Stephane Rowe (Deputy Director-General, DOC) and Michael McCartney (Chief Executive, TUK). Formal implementation of the MOU will need additional work and will take shape as the relationship matures.

Te tātaritanga

Analysis

Working towards a more productive partnership

9. The finer details of how the three partners work collaboratively on both a strategic and operational level, is yet to be determined. Overlapping roles and responsibilities, funding constraints and national coordination of responses with a focus on regional delivery, are current challenges the partners are working through.
10. It does, however, mean that these new or improved systems will need to be developed alongside managing active programmes and response planning in real time.
11. With the recent reduction in funding for both MPI and DOC as well as the associated restructures, the regional sector is likely to feel the impacts of reduced work plan investment and a reduction in the effectiveness of biosecurity control from a national approach.
12. The partners will work towards a 'one voice' approach, which simplifies messaging to communities and ministers.
13. Data and knowledge sharing is an ongoing challenge due to internal data management protocols of different agencies. The partners however have identified their commitment to simplifying and improving data sharing to enhance collaboration.
14. To facilitate the new partnership, the BSWG is developing a guide for MPI and DOC on how to work effectively with the regional sector both through the BSWG and outside of the working group.

15. The MOU partnership enables a pathway for the regional sector to raise issues and opportunities through a collective voice (TUK) with its partners towards integrated solutions and better outcomes for the environment and our communities.

Current Work programmes that would benefit from the Partnership

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI or 'bird flu')

16. This highly contagious viral disease that affects both domestic and wild birds has not yet been detected in New Zealand. It is likely that it will enter the country through wild bird migration pathways. MPI is focused on the primary sector whereas DOC is focused on wild bird populations on conservation land. Local authorities are expected to respond to their own areas. The BSWG has also raised the lack of mana whenua involvement throughout the planning process. In initial discussions MPI and DOC agreed to connect with mana whenua directly.
17. MPI and DOC approached the BSWG to present scenarios and to gain feedback from the regional sector. The BSWG raised the point that several local authorities do not have the necessary resources, capacity and capability to respond to such events and that national guidance and support was needed to ensure a unified approach and clear messaging across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Proposed Amendments to the Biosecurity Act 1993

18. The proposed amendments to the Biosecurity Act 1993 are now available for review and MPI is welcoming submissions. The BSWG is working on a sector response to MPI on the proposed amendments. This will assist smaller councils in drafting individual submissions as well as providing a unified voice from the regional sector to the Government. MPI has used the BSWG a conduit to address regional councils from across the country, invite questions and establish touch points to assist throughout the process. The deadline for submissions is 29 November 2024. Officers are optimistic about the proposed changes which include improvements on system-wide issues, funding and compensation, readiness and response, long-term management and surveillance, and the legislative interfaces.

Corbicula transition to long-term management

19. *Corbicula* (exotic freshwater clams) pose a significant risk to biodiversity and infrastructure in Aotearoa New Zealand. Currently, the clams are restricted to the Waikato Region although there are risks of it spreading. MPI is leading a long-term transition plan as it can no longer be eradicated. Through TUK, regional councils have been able to provide input into this planning process.

Marine Biosecurity Pathways plan

20. There has been little traction from MPI in the past to establish a Marine Biosecurity Pathways plan. Regional councils in the top of the North Island drafted a localised plan, focussing on Northland, Auckland and the Waikato. Recently they sought input from the remainder of regional councils to expand the plan to a national Marine Pathways plan. There wasn't any appetite for such a plan from Ministers, due to the additional costs required from the boating communities to support the work. In the interim MPI will be continuing its commitment to the Clean Vessel Programme and Marine Biosecurity Forums.

Other ongoing work programmes

21. Several of MPI's nationally focused programmes have recently experienced reduced funding and restructures. This is concerning to the regional sector as these programmes already operate at a fraction of the resource required to be effective, and need national coordination, especially across multiple regions.
22. Through TUK, the regional sector has an avenue to address their concerns in a collective voice directly with its partners. The MOU provides a starting point to have meaningful discussions with MPI and DOC, to find solutions that provide benefits to protecting biodiversity and communities.

Ngā hua ahumoni

Financial implications

23. There are no financial implications to this MOU. In fact, through data sharing, and integrating work across the agencies, there should be cost savings as work is not doubled and agencies can leverage off each other's systems and processes.
24. Any additional work needed to be produced on behalf of TUK, would be done within the TUK budget which each council plays a role in contributing to.

Ngā Take e hāngai ana te iwi Māori

Implications for Māori

25. All parties have identified that each entity holds respective relationships with iwi and hapū. TUK will be leading work on how all parties are able to collaborate and benefit from these existing relationships to make better connections with mana whenua.
26. Further discussions with our mana whenua partners are required to identify how the partnership under the MOU could benefit mana whenua within the region and how other programmes benefit from it at place.

Te huritao ki te huringa o te āhuarangi

Consideration of climate change

27. As the climate changes throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, we expect to see an increase of the spread of pest animals, plants and pathogens across the country. With limited resources, the reliance on good relationships and collective approaches will benefit effective surveillance work, quick responses to new pests as and when they arrive, and higher efficiency in managing pests over larger landscapes, especially land parcel boundaries.

Ngā tūāoma e whai ake nei

Next steps

28. The new partnership will conduct a stock take of pest management work that the agencies are involved with. TUK will be leading on this, and all regional councils will feed into this stock take. Further to this, the partners will look toward joint

prioritisation processes and planning sessions. The partners will also look to work together to create a one voice approach and collaborate to benefit from each other’s expertise and respective relationships, including the need to connect with the Ministry for the Environment.

- 29. It will be in the Region’s best interest to submit on the proposed changes to the Biosecurity Act 1993. Officers have indicated opportunities for great improvement. Greater Wellington’s pest animal team is a leader in the regional sector and would have valuable insights to ensure Greater Wellington is able to use the Biosecurity Act 1993 more effectively. Officers’ advice is that there is merit in submitting on the Biosecurity Act proposals and we will bring you further information regarding timing.

**Ngā āpitihanga
Attachments**

Number	Title
1	Signed MOU between Biosecurity New Zealand, DOC and TUK
2	Letter from Te Uru Kahika regarding the signing of the MOU

**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories**

Writers	Henk Louw – Principal Advisor Ecosystems, Delivery Matt Hickman – Principal Advisor Strategy, Policy & Regulation Megan Oliver – Principal Advisor Knowledge, Knowledge and Insights
Approvers	Ali Caddy – Chief Advisor Design and Planning Jack Mace – Director Delivery Dave Hipkins – Director Knowledge and Insights Lian Butcher – Group manager Environment

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<p><i>Fit with Council’s roles or with Committee’s terms of reference</i></p> <p>This new partnership fits with the Committee’s terms of reference in relation to its purpose to oversee the development, implementation and review of Council’s initiatives and indicators to improve environmental outcomes for the Wellington Region’s land, water, biodiversity, natural resources, parks and reserves and coastal marine areas. It furthermore aligns with the Committee’s responsibilities which include biodiversity and biosecurity.</p>
<p><i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i></p> <p>This new partnership contributes to the delivery of the Regional Pest Management Plan and Biodiversity strategy.</p>
<p><i>Internal consultation</i></p> <p>At this stage, work has concentrated within Rōpū Taiao. Next steps will be to broaden this out to Te Hunga Whiriwhiri as we explore further engagement with our iwi and hapū partners.</p>
<p><i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i></p> <p>There are no perceived risks to the signing of this MOU.</p>

Memorandum of Understanding between Biosecurity New Zealand, Department of Conservation and Te Uru Kahika – Regional and Unitary Councils Aotearoa

Context

Biosecurity is the exclusion, eradication or management of pests and diseases that pose a risk to economic, environmental, cultural, social and human health (zoonotic diseases and disease vectors, such as mosquitos and ticks) values. The biosecurity system spans offshore, border and domestic activities across all domains (terrestrial, freshwater, and marine environments).

Signatories to this MOU have:

- Critical roles to play in mitigating and managing biosecurity risks.
- Common interest in ensuring biosecurity activities are delivered efficiently and effectively and that opportunities for coordination and collaboration are acted upon.
- Different biosecurity mandates and drivers, and financial and stakeholder considerations.

Effective trust-based working relationships are essential for success.

Scope

Domestic biosecurity relationships and activities (including diagnostics, surveillance, investigation, readiness, response, long-term management) and the transitions to and from the different states along this continuum.

Relationship principles and collaborative work planning, prioritisation and delivery to address issues and opportunities in planned and reactive work in a timely manner.

Note: Signatories are also expected to work collaboratively with others (e.g., other government agencies, Māori and Government Industry Agreement industry signatories) where biosecurity roles, accountabilities and interests overlap. DOC and Te Uru Kahika have a separate MOU covering bilateral working arrangements. This three-way MOU with BNZ takes precedent for **biosecurity-related** working arrangements.

Purpose

To provide an overarching collaborative framework for Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ), Department of Conservation (DOC) and Te Uru Kahika to work together on biosecurity matters.

Principles

Foundation

1. Communicate and share information in a regular, open and honest manner, and in line with confidentiality requirements. Proactively and constructively work through disagreements or conflict.
2. Work together co-operatively to establish an interactive, effective, efficient and positive relationship.
3. Recognise the statutory functions, mandates, drivers, regulatory powers and duties of each Signatory.
4. Make best use of collective strengths, capability and resources in managing biosecurity risks.

Decision-making

These principles encompass the broad spectrum of decisions within the scope of this MOU including for identification and management of biosecurity risks, resourcing and prioritisation.

Decisions impacting core responsibilities of Signatories will follow an agreed framework or process to ensure:

- A Treaty grounded approach.
- Appropriate involvement of MOU Signatories (and others) where their accountabilities or responsibilities are affected.
- Decisions are timely, transparent, and communicated to those affected.
- Support fair and reasonable allocation of costs, both financial and non-financial.
- Decisions are informed by the best information available at the time, with uncertainty treated explicitly, so decisions are not prevented or delayed.
- People making decisions have the authority from their organisation and decisions will be upheld.

Oversight and Implementation

Signatories to this MOU commit to:

- Keep the MOU current and fit-for-purpose through regular review, monitoring and reporting.
- Develop, resource and implement a collaborative and prioritised work plan aimed at continuous improvement in systems and relationships, and to address operational issues and opportunities.
- Embed improved ways of working into BAU systems, processes and procedures and monitor to ensure they are having the desired impact.
- Maintain a record of MOU oversight and implementation documents in a shared-access repository.

Oversight and implementation of the MOU will be provided by:

- Bi-annual meetings of the three MOU Signatories.
- A nominated MOU implementation sub-group to:
 - drive joint work planning and delivery, and
 - report annually to Signatories on MOU performance.



[Signature]

Stuart Anderson
Deputy Director-General
Biosecurity New Zealand

Date: 16/08/2024

[Signature]

Stephanie Rowe
Deputy Director-General
Department of Conservation

Date: 16 Aug 24

[Signature]

Michael McCartney
Chief Executive
Te Uru Kahika

Date:



Guiding documents

The foundation for this MOU is set through the following strategy, policy and guidance documents, which should be referred to for more detailed information about the biosecurity system, including roles, responsibilities and expectations of agencies and other system participants:

- **Draft Biosecurity System Strategy** and Actions (sets national direction for the system and a foundation to unite and empower participants to manage biosecurity risks in their spheres of influence).
- **Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy – Te Mana o Te Taiao**, 2020 (sets national direction for biodiversity) and Implementation Plans (sets out priority actions for achieving outcomes and objectives).

- **New Zealand Government Biosecurity Response Guide**, 2018. High level information on how responses work and roles and responsibilities of participants.
- **MAF Risk Organism Response Policy**, 2008. Sets expectations for MPI readiness and response, including roles and responsibilities of different parties. Includes a biosecurity response decisions framework.
- **Pest Management National Plan of Action**, 2011. Includes decision principles and guidance on roles responsibilities for pest management programmes.
- **National Policy Direction for Pest Management**, 2015 (under review). Supports alignment of pest management programmes across New Zealand.
- National and Regional Pest/Pathway Management Plans.

[Version: 27 June 2024]



DATE: 13 SEPTEMBER 2024

FROM: STEVE RURU, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL

SUBJECT: FOR INFORMATION: TE URU KAHIKA-MPI-DOC BIOSECURITY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

PURPOSE

To update Council on the recent signing of the MOU and the move to working in partnership with Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ) and Department of Conservation (DOC) on biosecurity matters.

BACKGROUND

Regional councils play a key role in the Aotearoa New Zealand biosecurity system alongside BNZ and DOC. It is imperative that this system works effectively to ensure that new and existing pests are managed to reduce impacts on our environment and economy. There are many barriers between agencies that affect how well we work together, which has become apparent during recent pest incursion responses. Senior leaders across the three organisations agreed that we needed focus on how we work together to deliver better biosecurity outcomes for our communities.

In September 2023, representatives from BNZ, DOC and Te Uru Kahika directed officials to draft a new principles-based MOU. The purpose of the MOU is to provide an overarching framework for BNZ, DOC and Te Uru Kahika to work together on biosecurity matters in a more effective and efficient way. The scope of the MOU includes readiness (including surveillance and preparedness), response (including long term management and investigation) and the transition to and from the different states along this continuum.

Staff from the three agencies developed the MOU (Attachment 1), which was endorsed by RCEOs at their 3 May 2024 meeting. On Friday 16 August, the MOU was signed by Michael McCartney (RCEO chair) on behalf of Te Uru Kahika, Stephanie Rowe on behalf of DOC and Stuart Anderson on behalf of BNZ.

WORKING TOWARDS A MORE PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIP

The premise of the MOU is for the regional sector, BNZ and DOC to work in a partnership arrangement. It'll take some time to work through specific issues and bed in an improved 'normal' way of working, but all parties to the MOU are positive and willing.

As part of this, it'll be important for each council and the wider regional sector to play our parts to give life to the MOU. Where issues need to be raised with BNZ and/or DOC, councils should work through the Chief Executive to use the MOU partnership as a first step, which provides a key operational pathway through Te Uru Kahika to resolve these.

Additionally, where appropriate, we will unify our voice with BNZ and DOC to provide clearer, single-message communications for our communities.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- NOTES this report and the MOU

ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Signed MOU

Environment Committee
17 October 2024
Report 24.510



For Information

REGIONAL PARKS UPDATE

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To provide an update about implementation work on Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 (Toitū Te Whenua), parks capital expenditure planning and other parks operational work.

Te tāhū kōrero

Background

2. Council adopted Toitū Te Whenua in 2020. Officers provided an update about implementation progress last year. Website pages about implementation progress were also published and these are being progressively updated.¹
3. The Asset Management Plan (AMP) for Regional Parks sets out the direction for the management of assets within the Regional Parks so that they are:
 - Fit-for-purpose;
 - Managed and maintained in an efficient and effective manner; and
 - Meet present and anticipated future circumstances.AMP directions and key actions align with Toitū Te Whenua directions.
4. There are 7,787² built assets maintained by Greater Wellington in the Regional Parks, with an estimated replacement value of \$86 million. These assets are maintained in line with the lifecycle process shown in *Figure 1* below.

¹ <https://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/plans-policies-and-bylaws/plans-and-reports/parks-plans/toitu-te-whenua-parks-network-plan-2020-30/implementing-toitu-te-whenua-parks-network-plan-2020-30/>

² as of December 2023.

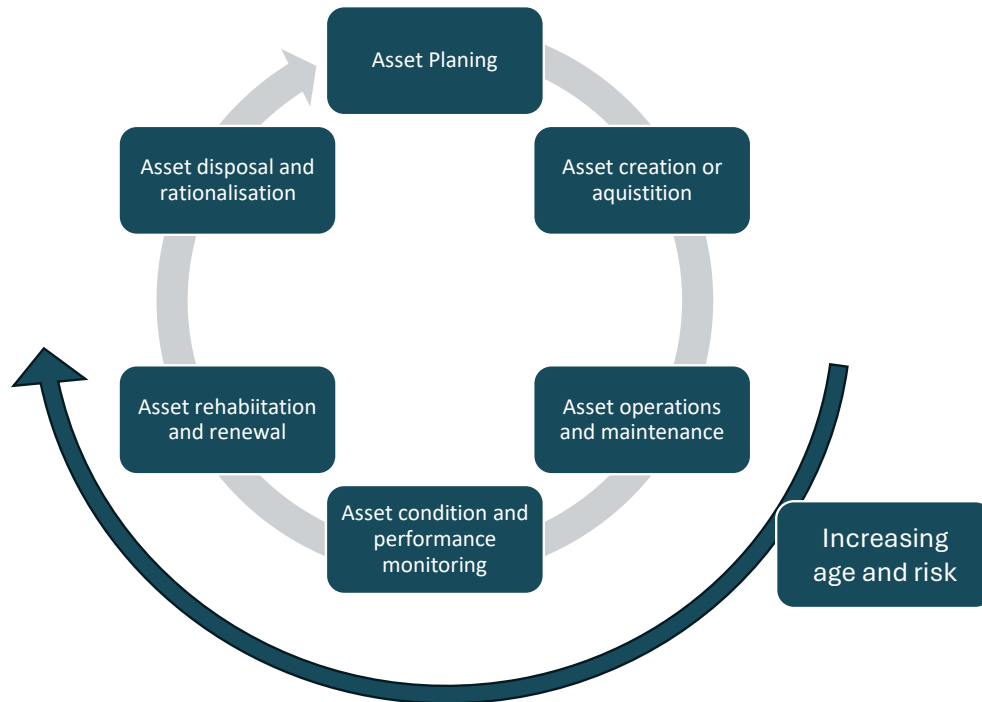


Figure 1: Asset lifecycle process

5. The overall condition of the Parks assets is shown in *Figure 2* below.

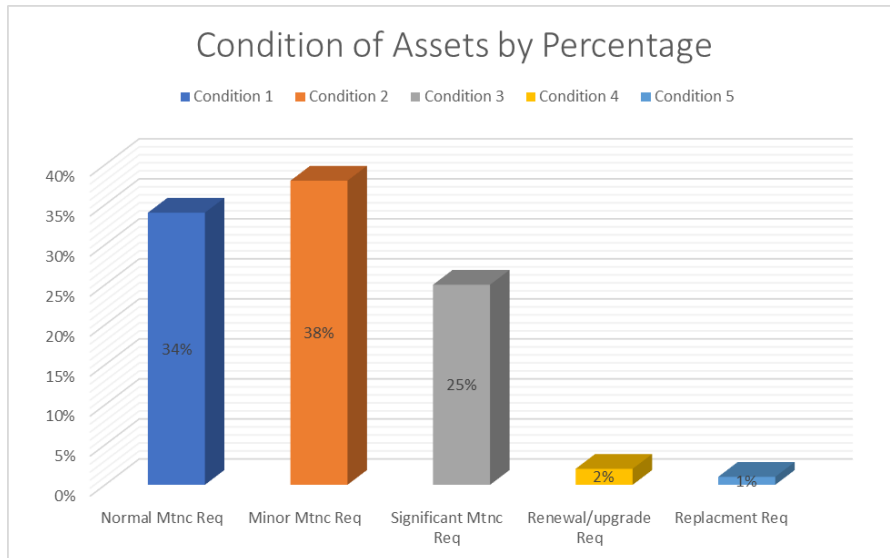


Figure 2: Condition of assets

6. The forecast cost of both OPEX and CAPEX for managing the Park assets and the supporting management activities in the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan fluctuates between \$5.6 to \$7.6 million including overheads. The year-to-year fluctuation is due to the timing of asset replacements or significant upgrades. In certain years,

there is a higher demand for more costly asset replacements. This includes operating, maintaining, monitoring, renewing, or removing the assets (e.g. redundant fences) to maintain the service potential of the assets and ensure that they achieve their potential. It also includes the cost of ranger and other visitor services, work to support restoration and biodiversity, campgrounds, park cottages, revised track networks, grazed areas of parks, fire threat management, visitor satisfaction monitoring and much more.

7. The average annual Capex budget required is estimated at \$3.4 million in the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan. This is used to build or purchase new assets where parts of the system are currently performing below target service standards or to allow development to meet future demand requirements.

Asset Management Plan issues

8. Key issues identified in the Asset Management Plan include:
 - ***Aging infrastructure and legislative obligations.*** Legacy and historic assets have varying degrees of vulnerability to extreme climate events/natural hazards/seismic. Heritage assets require careful and sometimes complex preservation work. Campgrounds and toilets have required freshwater and wastewater service upgrades to meet NZ Standards.
 - ***Climate emergency.*** Managing assets in a constantly changing climate is challenging. In 2019 Council declared a climate emergency. Directions to support action (resilience, adaption, and mitigation) are reflected in Toitū Te Whenua Goal Six, 'Climate change and sustainability.' Building resilience, working more sustainably, and responding to more extreme weather events is ongoing.
 - ***Increasing user expectations.*** Toitū Te Whenua Goal Two is about enhancing visitor recreation activity experiences, improving access to and within parks, and getting more benefits from existing park facilities such as park buildings. Adapting to sustain high levels of satisfaction and meet public expectations comes with cost implications but will ultimately ensure that park assets deliver more benefits from the investment in them.
 - ***Working with others in asset management.*** Working with others who undertake activities in parks requires effort and resources. In practice this can mean adapting facility buildings, ensuring water supply for park nurseries, developing agreements, supporting grant funded works such as wetland rewetting (e.g. weir assets), fish passage improvements and a variety of other works.
 - ***Protecting natural values.*** We are renewing or replacing assets to protect natural values. This includes protection and enhancement of indigenous species and habitats, seeking energy efficiencies across activities and encouraging walking and cycling to and around the Regional Parks.

Asset Management prioritisation

9. There are competing priorities for capital expenditure, including risk mitigation, legislative requirements, and the implementation of Toitū Te Whenua actions with limited capital and operational resourcing.
10. Capital expenditure is prioritised as follows:
 - a Health and Safety risks (e.g. asset end of life);
 - b Environmental or regulatory impact;
 - c Lifelines/critical infrastructure or partnership (e.g. funding opportunity);
 - d Storm damage (return to level of service);
 - e Reputational risk if the work is not done;
 - f Delivers on a Toitū te Whenua action; and
 - g Continuous improvement proposal, park specific.
11. Most capital projects in the last two years have focused on projects in the a-e range. Projects in the f-g range have been limited.

Asset Management delivery

12. Over the last two years the work programme in Parks has focused largely on compliance with legislation and risk management. This has been delivered through the programmes of work below.

Compliance

13. We have diverted \$700,000 in capital resourcing to ensure compliance with the new water treatment regulations (Drinking water standards for New Zealand) and to ensure our park visitors have safe drinking water. Delivering water treatment solutions across the park network has involved the creation of water treatment equipment, bore construction, and the development of management plans and testing regimes.
14. Broadscale inspections of our wastewater septic systems in 2021 found that 23 of the 38 Parks systems were at risk of regulatory non-compliance due to age and/or being undersize due to increased usage. We have invested \$400,000 in these systems across the network to date with a further \$1.6 million planned in the next 12 months. It is estimated it will cost \$3 million to bring the remaining assets up to full compliance.
15. \$70,000 was spent on Birchville dam safety assurance to meet the new Dam Safety Regulations.

Fire risk management

16. The retirement of grazing across parks has resulted in increased vegetation build-up and increased fire risk until native vegetation matures. Unmanaged, this would pose a risk to life and properties should a wildfire start. To mitigate this risk Parks has invested in fire planning in retired areas where fire risk is the highest.

17. These fire plans resulted in several recommendations such as firebreak construction, activity controls, risk management signage, low flammability species planting and fire pond construction. So far Parks has spent \$910,000 on this programme of works, while looking for opportunities to tie in Toitū Te Whenua actions such as track upgrades (through fire break construction) along the way.
18. We expect that retirement of grazing at Belmont will have significant cost implications for the Parks capex budget (in excess of \$2 million) to allow for proper fire risk management, amongst other things. However, any new fire breaks or tracks can align with new shared trail opportunities and improve access to under-visited parts of the park.
19. Toitū Te Whenua identifies that 'Restoring native vegetation offers the best medium-long term defence against fire.' In the long term, active and natural processes of restoration will mitigate fire threat as it has throughout the Region. For example, Hutt City no longer maintains fire break tracks in the eastern hills because native vegetation has outgrown much of the gorse. Planting 'green fire breaks', restoring wetlands and maintaining mown perimeter fire breaks are other common ways of managing seasonal fire threat, along with park rules about no lighting of fires. Education activities and science-based facts will minimise concern of potential future fires.

Storm damage/resilience works

20. Increasing damage from weather events has meant that resources have had to be diverted to protect campgrounds and other assets.
 - \$88,000 was spent on stream erosion protection at Dry Creek in Belmont Regional Park;
 - The new bridge at Wainuiomata Regional Park (\$370,000) was relocated to reduce the impacts from flooding and allow for better accessibility; and
 - An estimated \$120,000 will be spent on erosion protection at Battle Hill and Kaitoke to address the damage from 2024 storms.
21. Any new assets created need to be made more robust to face potential impacts from climate change.

Partnerships

22. We have focused on partnerships that enable us to deliver environmental protection. Partnership successes are noted below where each of these projects were co-funded 50/50 between Greater Wellington and other benefiting partners:
 - \$150,000 with Transpower to deliver the Whakatiki ford;
 - \$100,000 with commercial forestry right holder Forest 360 to deliver a bridge at Battle Hill; and
 - \$75,000 with Paekākāriki surf lifesaving club on a new septic tank system.

Toitū Te Whenua Implementation

Parks spatial planning

23. Spatial planning has not been delivered in the way it was envisaged in Toitū Te Whenua. The process of engaging with mana whenua as partners in delivery has taken place much more slowly than expected. We have been guided by iwi priorities and the ongoing practice of building relationships. Whilst engaging with mana whenua we have been delivering Toitū Te Whenua plan actions when possible.
24. ***Queen Elizabeth Park***. We have agreed an indicative timeframe with Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira that will see the production of spatial plans by late 2025. Discussions are currently in progress with mana whenua to determine what work they lead or support. Once this is known, Reserves Act 1977 processes will commence to develop a spatial plan map with public input.
25. ***Belmont Regional Park***. A similar timeframe planning agreement (as noted in the above paragraph) is in progress with Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui. Development of a trails plan will be a precursor to amenity area spatial planning because identification of new trail locations and trail network changes is required before broadscale restoration plantings take place. Development of the trails plan is expected to involve engagement and public feedback opportunities. The development of a detailed restoration plan will guide delivery and may be led by mana whenua.
26. ***Wainuiomata Regional Park***. A spatial plan is still required for the amenity entry area, but the current focus is on enhancements at the lower dam via the Storytelling Project.

Recloaking Papatūānuku

27. The Parks restoration programme has seen 120 hectares a year restored in Parks over the past two years. Current funding allows up to 100 hectares a year of active planting, plus patch planting and natural process of regeneration, which is supported by pest plant and animal management work. The restoration programme includes maintenance of plants over three years to support successful establishment.
28. At Battle Hill Farm Forest Park, the long-term sustainable grazing area will be reduced over five years (or as restoration programme funds permit) from 85 hectares to approximately 34 hectares and all the Park's wetlands and streams will be protected.
29. Most of the Waitangirua part of Belmont Regional Park has now been planted (approximately 120 hectares was planted in 2023 and 2024).
30. The approximate 1,000-hectare legacy grazing licence at Belmont Regional Park concludes in January 2026. Staff are currently working on options for restoration of the grazed areas using a structured decision-making process based on plan policies and rules. The development of a fire threat management plan for this area is in progress.

Wairarapa forests

31. Initial investigation and engagement work with mana whenua was undertaken in 2023 and concluded that of the three Greater Wellington regional forest areas, Hiwinui, located only 15km from Martinborough, is the most suitable for public recreation purposes. Tauanui and Stoney Creek Forests will remain accessible for recreational hunting by permit only and no further public access is foreseen at this stage.
32. To guide management of the Wairarapa forests, planning work for either a Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan chapter or a stand-alone co-management plan (covering all three locations) will commence in 2025. Further discussions with mana whenua are planned. Initial public consultation is expected after baseline values work is completed, late in 2025.
33. Pre-planning work for Hiwinui includes investigating and mapping natural values in the entry area where some native vegetation remains. Hiwinui could open to the public once car park facilities have been developed in 2027. Greater Wellington is proceeding based on enabling public access, whilst allowing time for meaningful mana whenua partnership in future park management strategy development and operations.

Other delivery actions

34. Completion of the first two park cottages for visitor accommodation – one at Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui and one in Belmont Regional Park. The Baring Head cottage has received a high level of interest, with heavy demand for bookings and positive feedback. The Belmont cottage is in the final stages of preparation for bookings.
35. All the wetlands at Battle Hill Farm Forest Park have been mapped and park grazing areas assessed and prioritised for restoration, recreation, and ongoing grazing. A five year+ programme is proposed to support wetland and waterway protection and enhancement. A public expression of interest process is currently underway, seeking new, low impact, visitor experiences, new grazing activities and adaptive reuses of park buildings such as the woolshed. The Ranger team support for more enriching experiences has included improvements to the small chicken flock, eel viewing area, and amenities.
36. All grazing is identified as high impact in Toitū Te Whenua, but recreation or community related horse grazing is permitted provided assessment of environmental effects (AEE) processes are undertaken. A consistent approach has been developed for all horse grazing, eventing licences and concession agreements.
37. A regional equestrian working group was formed in 2023 and a regular schedule of meetings continues. The group has representatives from the equestrian community, Greater Wellington Park Rangers, Kāpiti Coast District Council, Wellington City Council, Riding for Disabled with others periodically attending. The group's initial focus has been on improving information about riding opportunities. As this work is completed, the focus is shifting to addressing practical aspects of access, such as gate/ barrier improvements. The meetings are key collaboration and sharing opportunity about public land equestrian matters.

38. We are developing six storytelling projects in our parks, funded via Crown funding:

- A consultant has been engaged and design work for storytelling installation is in progress for the Belmont Regional Park (World War II munitions stores) and Akatarawa Forest Karapoti Road end amenity area (Akatarawa Forest history);
- A consultant has been engaged for design and development of a sensory garden and nature play space near the Battle Hill homestead. The nature play space will have a farming/equestrian theme;
- Taranaki Whānui is developing storytelling material and carvings for Parangarahu Lakes, which may include installation of a pou and storytelling panels;
- Planning is in progress with the Rōngoa Collective and mana whenua at Queen Elizabeth Park to develop the Ramaroa hub as a storytelling focal point and a Rōngoa education garden; and
- At Wainuiomata Regional Park the storytelling that will support hosting night sky events in the Lower Dam area is at the concept stage.

Ngā kaiwaitohu

Signatory

Writer	David Boone - Manager Ecosystems & Community
Approver	Jack Mace -Director Delivery Lian Butcher – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Rōpū Taiao Group Manager Environment

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> The Environment Committee has responsibility to consider all matters across the development and implementation of the work programmes of Greater Wellington's Environment Group.
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> Development and implementation of related work programmes fall under the core activities of the 2023-2034 Long Term Plan.
<i>Internal consultation</i> Internal consultation was limited to officers of Greater Wellington.
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> Risk/impacts relative to ongoing park management responsibilities of Greater Wellington.

Environment Committee
17 October 2024
Report 24.490



For Information

TE RŌPŪ TAI AO | ENVIRONMENT UPDATE – OCTOBER 2024

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To inform the Environment Committee (the Committee) on:
 - a The strategic direction and priorities of the Environment Committee
 - b The work underway, across the Wellington Region and within each catchment.

Te horopaki

Context

Strategic direction

Government's Quarter 4 action plan

2. The Government has released 43 points for the action plan for Q4¹, many of which impact on Greater Wellington's business and are matters of interest to the Committee. Officers will bring further advice to you as specific proposals emerge.

Resource Management Changes

3. The first Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) amendment, the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill has been reported back from Select Committee (on 30 September). Council submitted on this Amendment Bill and spoke to our submission at Select Committee. A summary of the recommendations of key components of the Bill is below:
 - a exclude the hierarchy of obligations contained in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) from resource consenting requirements. **Select Committee Recommendation:** no change.
 - b amend the NPS-FM, the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPSIB), and the National Environment Standards for Freshwater (NES-F) to align the consenting pathway for new and existing coal mines with other mineral extraction activities. **Select Committee Recommendation:** no change.

¹ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-09/Q4%20Action%20Plan.pdf>.

- c suspend requirements under the NPSIB for councils to identify and include in district plans new significant natural areas (SNAs) for three years. **Select Committee Recommendation:** introduces new concept of NPS-IB SNA for the purposes of NPS-IB implementation. ‘Other’ SNA implementation can continue but won’t meet the NPS-IB requirements. Timeframe for confirming methodology extended. No further power to Minister to directly change NPS-IB.
 - d amend the Resource Management (Stock Exclusion) Regulations 2020 to remove the map of “low slope land” and associated requirements. **Select Committee Recommendation:** no change.
 - e amend the NES-F to repeal the permitted and restricted discretionary activity regulations and associated conditions for intensive winter grazing. **Select Committee Recommendation:** added in clause to require an area of land that is used for intensive winter grazing to be located at least five metres away from the bed of any river, lake, wetland, or drain
 - f streamline processes for preparing and amending national direction instruments so that they are less onerous and more efficient. **Select Committee Recommendation:** added new step to require Minister to consider steps for using a streamline approach. Can now only extend timeframes for implementation rather than change. Added back in consideration of Part 2 matters. Seems to have exempted all national direction from S32 evaluation requirements. Insert minimum consultation period for national direction.
 - g Section 107 (not in original Bill): recommend inserting new clause to amend section 107 of the RMA. This would enable a discharge permit or a coastal permit to be granted where the discharge may contribute to significant adverse effects on aquatic life, if the consent authority:
 - i is satisfied that receiving waters are already subject to significant adverse effects on aquatic life
 - ii imposes conditions on the consent
 - iii is satisfied that those conditions will contribute to a reduction of those significant adverse effects on aquatic life over the duration of the consent.
4. The proposed amendment to section 107 is likely to be of most relevance for existing discharges which are already contributing to a degradation of water quality. Any new discharges will only exacerbate significant adverse effects and so will not be able to meet the requirements of the third bullet point. This amendment is likely to assist with providing a consenting pathway for wastewater and stormwater consent applications and would be consistent with the objectives and policies of the regional plan that require improvements as well as the expectations of the community.
5. Under the current wording of section 107, the consent authority must not grant a resource consent if the activity is likely to give rise to a number of adverse effects in

the receiving environment, including significant adverse effects unless there are exceptional circumstances, the discharge is a temporary activity, or associated with maintenance work. Given the ongoing nature of wastewater and stormwater discharges, the proposed amendment could provide more certainty for city and district councils and could assist with progressing wastewater and stormwater consent applications, while also improving the receiving environment.

6. Note: it is recommended that all Bill provisions apply to all resource consent applications, including those already lodged with a consent authority. Any resource consents that have previously been declined, could be reapplied for.
7. The Bill will now return to the House for second and third reading. Officers will update you on how the Bill progresses and bring you specific advice on how this impacts our work.
8. Minister Bishop has announced the content of RMA amendment Bill #2, a timeline for review and replacement of a suite of national direction, the introduction of new direction and a replacement to the RMA itself. The second bill and national direction suite should be released by the end of this year and be in place by the middle of next year. The key contents are outlined in this factsheet². Given the expected tight timeframes, officers will bring further details to a workshop with Council in November 2024.
9. Further detail has been provided by the Government on the direction and process for the new resource management system and replacement of the RMA:
 - *“A new system based on the enjoyment of property rights:*
 - *The enjoyment of property rights will be the guiding principle for the new resource management system.*
 - *In practice, this means the resource management system should allow people to do more on their own property more easily, so long as it doesn’t harm others.*
 - *Where an activity is harming others, the resource management system should step in to protect property owners’ rights from being compromised by unreasonable activities happening around them.*
 - *Two new laws:*
 - *One focusing on driving much needed urban development and infrastructure, aligning with the suite of policies in our Going for Housing Growth programme and the recently announced 30-year National Infrastructure Plan.*
 - *Another focused on environmental protection and managing the environmental effects that flow from the activities we use natural resources for.*
 - *Expert Advisory Group:*

² <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-08/FACT%20SHEET%20-%20RM%20Bill%20%20and%20National%20Direction%20Work%20Programme.pdf>

- *Will take the framework for the new system and work to develop a blueprint for replacing the RMA.*
- *Made up of experts with relevant technical knowledge ranging from resource management law, to planning and te ao Māori.*
- **Next steps:**
 - *The Expert Advisory Group will develop and provide a blueprint for replacing the RMA to the Minister for RMA Reform before Christmas 2024.*
 - *The Minister for RMA Reform will seek Cabinet agreement to key aspects of the replacement legislation at the beginning of 2025, after which detailed policy work and legislative drafting will begin.*
 - *Legislation is expected to be introduced to Parliament next year and be passed into law by mid-2026.”*

10. We will bring you further updates as this work progresses.

Regional overview

Summary of current fast track applications

11. The table below lists the current fast track applications and status, as of 26 September 2024:

Project	Description	Status as at 26/9/24
Plimmerton Farm Stage 1	Residential development	Experts conferencing undertaken, draft conditions to be updated and provided to Expert Consenting Panel by applicant. Panel considering application and expert statements; invitation by Panel to comment on draft conditions pending.
Otaki Māori Race Course development	Residential development	Draft conditions released, Greater Wellington comments on draft conditions provided 9/9/24. Further discussions occurring with applicant regarding draft conditions. Expert Consenting Panel considering application and comments on draft conditions.
Metlifecare retirement village, Karori	Retirement village	Greater Wellington comments on application provided 21/6/24, Expert Consenting Panel considering application, processing suspended at time of reporting.
Moy Estate, Otaki	Residential development	Consents granted 15/7/24
Waikanae North	Residential development	Consents granted 25/7/24

Harmony Energy Solar Farm, Carterton	Solar farm	Consents granted 23/9/24
Jamaica Rise development, Grenada North	Residential development	Consents granted 22/7/24

12. Further information on each of the above projects can be found on the EPA website³

Regional Policy Statement Change 1

13. Council made its decision on Regional Policy Statement (RPS) Change 1 at the Council meeting on 26 September 2024, with the changes made being largely based on the recommendations made by the independent hearings panel. This is a great milestone bringing together years of work.
14. The Decisions version of the RPS was notified on 4 October 2024 and is now open to appeals. Aspects of the change which went through the Part 1 Schedule 1 process are open to appeals through the Environment Court until 18 November 2024, whereas aspects of the change which went through the Freshwater planning process are only open to appeals to the High Court on points of law.
15. We're now proceeding with our engagement strategy, with a heavy focus on connecting with territorial authorities with a view to making the appeals process as smooth as possible.

Natural Resources Plan Change 1

16. Natural Resources Plan (NRP) change 1 implements the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM). It solidifies the regulatory recommendations from the Te Whanganui-a-Tara and Te Awarua o Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP) in a planning instrument, resulting in significant changes to the operative NRP. It has now been notified and both the submission and further submission periods have closed. Over 270 submissions were received, comprising more than 10,000 individual submission points.
17. Officers are now working with technical experts and consultant planners to prepare for the first hearing stream, which will be held from 4-8 November 2024. This will be the first of five hearing streams, which are currently planned to be scheduled as follows:
 - a Hearing Stream 1 (Overarching matters and region-wide topics) from 4-8 November 2024
 - b Hearing Stream 2 (Objectives and wastewater) in March 2025
 - c Hearing Stream 3 (Earthworks, forestry, and rural land use) in May 2025
 - d Hearing Stream 4 (Stormwater) in June 2025

³ <https://www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/fast-track-projects/>

- e Hearing Stream 5 (Integration and right of reply) in July 2025
- 18. On 27 June 2024 Council appointed the Part 1, Schedule 1 Hearings Panel that will hear submissions and issue recommendations on submissions. The Chief Freshwater Commissioner has also appointed the Freshwater Planning Panel. The two Panels will have overlapping and identical membership.
- 19. We have also inserted a direct policy from the NPS-FM on 27 August 2024 on wetlands direction, following the withdrawal of a judicial review on NPS-FM clause 3.22 by Forest and Bird. The details of this insertion were covered in the paper presented to Council on 27 August 2024.

Flood incident management training and exercising

- 20. In the last reporting period, the Environment Group has been focussing on the flood incident management capability. This has included the following activities:
 - a Training of a new Duty Officer cohort from across the Environment Group.
 - b Integrating new Duty Officers with the existing Flood Incident Management team at training workshop.
 - c Training ‘Senior Managers’ from across the Environment Group in flood incident management.
 - d Signing the contract for the delivery of new flood forecasting capability for the region.
 - e Worked with the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO) to develop key links with stormwater management agencies across the Region (Wellington Water and Kāpiti Coast District Council in the emergency management space).
 - f Establishment of a new role in the Knowledge and Insights function to lead risk management and resilience including the coordination of Greater Wellington’s flood incident management capability.
 - g Supporting WREMO in the delivery of an evacuation planning exercise in Lower Hutt.
 - h Running the annual flood response exercise from the Kāpiti Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) focused on a major flood event in the Hutt catchments.



Figure 1 - SCRUM meeting Exercise Deluge 2024



Figure 2 - Flood Incident Management Team receiving a briefing from the Group Controller.

21. The Environment Group will be working closely with WREMO on the continued development of our flood incident management capability, including the conversion of flood hazard mapping for use in emergency management, completing the wider rollout of the automated warning system and considering how we plan and manage overdesign flood events.

Pest Animals

22. The annual rook work began in September 2024 across the Region, including notification through signage, pamphlets, social media posts, etc. The aerial survey was completed on 20 September 2024 with eight rookeries identified: substantially fewer active nests than previous years and a promising reduction in numbers. More sightings are being followed up before baiting occurs around mid-October 2024.
23. There are no active wallaby sightings.
24. Rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus (RHDV) was detected in the Waikanae River. This was the newest strain (RHDV2) and the only place in the Region.
25. Rabbits and possums continue to dominate enquiries received, with possums dominating the sales for traps, pellets, etc.
26. There is a backlog for fulfilment of mustelid trap orders due to sourcing the mechanisms and getting boxes made.
27. The team are providing planning and pricing support for Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) work around the region for Environmental Restoration staff, including the Akatarawa Rat Project, proposed expansions of Wairarapa KNE sites and proposals for adding pest animal control to Wairarapa KNE sites

Parks restoration and Rimutaka Prison plant supply

28. 320,000 natives have been planted across the regional parks under the Recloaking Papatūānuku project. About 200,000 of these natives were sourced from Rimutaka Prison nursery which operates a social enterprise aiming to support rehabilitation of prisoners and skills development.

Fire risk management in regional parks

29. Please see [Attachment 1](#) for an update on fire risk management in our regional parks.

Restoration Day

30. Restoration Day is an annual event for community ecological restoration volunteers to network, learn and receive acknowledgment for their contributions. The Restoration Day Project Strategy developed in partnership with the Department of Conservation | Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) in 2018 is currently under review, with a focus on strategy, partnership and delivery models. The Community Capability and Change Team is leading the review, with support from Knowledge and Insights, to design a refreshed strategy in collaboration with partner agencies. Restoration Day events will not be held in the 2024 calendar year due to the review.

Fish pass remediation

31. In the August 2024 update our team noted "*more sustainable methods of barrier remediation*" which raised questions around what 'more sustainable' means. In this case, it refers to the use of rock and concrete to create permanent solutions within the riverbed, such as back-watering and rock ramps. This is an emerging technology, and the team is learning how to do this successfully. To date the remediations have focussed on solutions that, while sometimes temporary, provide significant benefits such as plastic baffles, floating fish ramps and occasionally, mussel spat rope. This creates a clear benefit, allowing fish to pass, but will need management and more frequent replacement. More sustainable options tend to have significantly higher costs as the design is more complex and larger in scale. Although these solutions require substantial resources, including expert input and environmental assessments for consenting, we remain optimistic and focused on finding the best possible outcomes, balancing sustainability, cost effectiveness and developing best practice.

Recreational Water Quality Programme

32. A critical factor in the success of Greater Wellington's Recreational Water Quality Programme is the collaboration with our partners group including territorial authorities, Public Health Service and Wellington Water. The partnership group recently had its annual meeting which sets the directions for the upcoming bathing season for both monitoring and communication of water quality-related health risks of swimming and other recreational activities. The success of the Wellington Region's toxic algae community education (there have been no dog deaths for a number of years now) is owed to the effective collaboration of this group and features as a case study in the new cyanobacteria guidelines soon to be published by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) and the Ministry of Health.

Climate information and the latest seasonal outlook

33. Check out the great climate resources on our website⁴ for latest information about climate drivers and the seasonal outlook, plus drought check and catchment-based climate summaries. A couple of interesting insights are that:
- a Winter 2024 was significantly warmer than the long-term average, with the Kāpiti Coast measuring the second warmest winter on record for measurements since 1953;
 - b The total accumulated seasonal rainfall was above average for the Kāpiti Coast and parts of the Wairarapa, which helped ameliorate the dryness remaining from the El Niño summer; and
 - c Spring temperatures should be warmer than average, with increasing likelihood of early heatwaves forming this year, possibly developing together with marine heatwaves.

Te Awarua-o-Porirua

34. Te Awarua o Porirua Whakaritenga - Porirua Harbour Accord - Wellington City Council (WCC) agreed to the draft documentation in September 2024 and WCC and Porirua City Council (PCC) are looking to schedule Accord presentations to their respective councils in October 2024. The fortnightly Accord project team meetings were reestablished in September 2024.
35. Monitoring collaboration in Te Awarua o Porirua kicked off in September 2024. The new Te Wai Māori o Porirua monitoring programme is a partnership between Ngāti Toa, ESR (Crown research institute), PCC, Mountains to Sea Wellington and Greater Wellington. This collaboration includes monitoring seven streams in the catchment (Porirua, Kenepuru Iti, Mahinawa, Kahotea, Wai o Hata/Duck Creek, Takapūwāhia and Hongoeka). The monitoring work includes deploying passive samplers to collect E. coli readings, cultural health assessments (led by Ngāti Toa), terrestrial vegetation assessments (led by PCC), and water quality sampling (led by Greater Wellington).



Figure 3: Te Wai Māori o Porirua monitoring.

⁴ <https://www.gw.govt.nz/environment/environmental-data-and-information/climate-monitoring/>

District Planning

36. Greater Wellington officers attended mediation on an appeal on the Natural Hazard provisions in the Proposed Porirua District Plan (PDP) on 26 August 2024.
37. Greater Wellington opposed the removal of the fault rupture rules and hazard overlays sought by the appellant on the basis that inappropriate development could proceed in high hazard areas or that development may occur that is suitably constructed to withstand the effects of fault rupture hazards. However, Greater Wellington agreed that the regulatory framework did not effectively implement the objectives of the PDP.
38. Greater Wellington supported PCC's position to initiate a plan change to address the shortcomings of the natural hazard provisions in the PDP, in relation to seismic hazards and argued for retention of the fault hazard overlays and associated provisions as an interim planning response until they are superseded by a more comprehensive suite of seismic hazard provisions.
39. All parties attending the mediation agreed to amendments to improve the decisions version of the PDP provisions that provide for seismic risk and the fault rupture zones. PCC will continue to progress the plan change referred to above.

Wairarapa Coast

40. Fence material donations are being provided from various regional park fence removal efforts following de-stocking of parks. Materials that were removed from Queen Elizabeth Park, Kaitoke and Baring Head have been bundled together and will be transported to the East Wairarapa cyclone recovery project to assist landowners in the ongoing recovery efforts.

Pest Animals

41. Contracted work on last year's Regional Predator Control Programme areas (Castlepoint and Stronvar) have been monitored, with results achieving the desired Wax Tag Index target. This year's operations are well underway.
42. Awaiting confirmation from Masterton District Council (MDC) to implement the Riversdale KNE extension, all equipment is ready to go out.
43. Greater Wellington has obtained Regional Public Health approval for the upcoming possum control in the Tinui area.
44. The annual rook work will begin towards the end of October 2024.
45. More equipment has been procured and supplied to Castlepoint Ratepayers Association to expand their Predator Free Castlepoint trap network.

Water Resilience

46. Greater Wellington has been awarded funding to improve the resilience of the regions worst hit by cyclone Gabrielle. The primary focus is around site upgrades, building infrastructure to better capture flood flows and forecasting models.

Ruamāhanga

Notification of the consent application for the Featherston Waste Water Treatment Plant

47. South Wairarapa District Council's resource consent application (WAR230290) to continue the discharge of treated wastewater into Donalds Creek and contaminants to air from the Featherston Wastewater Treatment Plant (FWWTP) was notified on 2 October 2024 and is now open for submissions. Information about the application can be viewed on the Greater Wellington website.⁵ Submissions close on 31 October 2024.
48. A previous application (WAR170229) for the FWWTP was notified in July 2018. This previous application is no longer being progressed by the applicant.
49. The new application proposes to introduce a series of upgrades to the FWWTP including land disposal in the form of a trial of irrigation of wastewater to land and installation of a constructed wetland and vegetation area, to improve the treated wastewater effluent quality.

Wairarapa Moana

50. The Environment Group is currently exploring integrated planning of all our activities in Wairarapa Moana for the next three years. This work is also addressing transition arrangements associated with the 30 June 2025 end-date for MfE funded work under the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project.
51. Officers are supporting the transfer of governance over the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project to the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board. This transfer was anticipated and provided for by the previous governance group and has recently been accepted by the Board.
52. Let's Talk Kākahi was a mini science expo at Featherston town hall hosted by the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project partnership for Conservation Week on Thursday 5 September 2024. The event was to explore the 10 years of citizen science monitoring of the freshwater mussel (Kākahi) in Lake Wairarapa, as reported to Environment Committee in August 2024 (Te Rōpū Taiao | Environment Group Update – August 2024 - report 24.375). 150 community members joined thirty experts from twelve different organisations and the hall was full of lively discussion about the health of the lake and the future of this species.

Whaitua and Water Resilience implementation

53. The Environment Group is reporting to the November Environment Committee meeting on Whaitua Implementation.
54. A combined governance group of Wairarapa councils and iwi have recently approved shared funding for a Programme Director to oversee implementation of the Wairarapa Water Resilience Strategy (WWRS). This is Wairarapa-wide and not restricted to the Ruamāhanga Catchment. The councils and iwi have approved a high-level work programme for the 2024/25 financial year with priority workstreams

⁵ <https://haveyoursay.gw.govt.nz/>

and specific projects for scoping (see [Attachment 2 – Overview of the Wairarapa Water Resilience Work Programme 2024-25](#)).

55. Natural Attenuation and Water Allocation workstreams under the WWRS are currently being led by the Environment Group with support from external partners.

Te Kāuru – Upper Ruamāhanga River Floodplain Management Plan

56. Flood risk management options for the Waipoua urban reach of Masterton are being developed by the Waipoua Project Team for wider community engagement later this year. The team has looked at a range of management options, including catchment processes, nature-based solutions, and works through the urban area. The current focus is on management options through the urban reach. The Upper Ruamāhanga River Management Advisory Committee and Masterton District Council are being involved in this process. Once a short list of options has been developed and community engagement has been undertaken, the work will be brought to the relevant committees including the Wairarapa Committee.

Pest Animals

57. Mustelid work has begun along the Ruamāhanga and Waingawa River corridors as part of the Regional Predator Control Programme (RPCP). Equipment has been deployed.
58. Pest Teams have been undertaking possum control in Langdale and Waipoua. Possum night shooting has been added into the programme this year, targeting willow trees when they are in bud. Tinui North area has been tendered out for contractors to complete possum control, this is expected to begin sometime in October 2024.
59. Hare and Rabbit control has begun around the new Daleton Nursery, to protect the poplar and willow stakes that have recently been planted.
60. While undertaking night shooting for pest animals at the Tauanui Confluence, five Bittern were detected while using the thermal imaging equipment.
61. Possum night shooting was implemented at Boggy Pond, Mathews Lagoon and the Wairio Restoration Block with good success.

District Planning

62. Greater Wellington officers attended hearing stream 3 on the Urban and Open Space Zones in the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan on 26 August 2024.
63. Greater Wellington sought amendments to the proposed district plan to better enable well-designed and located intensification to maintain compact urban form and make efficient use of existing infrastructure and transport links, including public transport services.
64. Specific relief sought to achieve the above included removing or reducing the extent of the low-density residential precinct, identifying new areas for medium density residential zoning, amending residential zone and town centre zone provisions to better provide for housing variety and choice and reducing the extent of the future urban zone.

Kāpiti

Notification of the consent application for Paraparaumu WWTP

65. Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC) has applied for consent to continue the discharge of wastewater to the Mazengarb Stream and the discharge of contaminants to air from the Paraparaumu Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The existing consent suite expired in March 2022. KCDC is continuing to operate the WWTP discharges under section 124 of the RMA.
66. Greater Wellington regulatory officers completed a notification assessment in June 2024 and decided that, based on the effects assessment, the consent application to continue the WWTP discharges needed to be publicly notified. At the request of KCDC, an independent review of the notification decision/effects assessment was undertaken by an expert agreed to by Greater Wellington and KCDC. The independent review concurred with Greater Wellington's assessment to publicly notify this consent application. The likely notification date will be 9 October 2024 with submissions closing on 7 November 2024.

Kāpiti whaitua implementation programme and next steps

67. Council received the Kāpiti Whaitua Implementation Programme at Raukawa Marae on 10 September 2024. It was a wonderful celebration with approximately 60 people in attendance with the Kāpiti Whaitua taurite giving positive feedback on the response from Councillors. There was some [media](#) coverage of the event.
68. We will now move to an implementation phase to carry the programme's recommendations forward and will continue to work closely with the KCDC community, and mana whenua.
69. The Whaitua Committee will be undertaking a debrief on 21 October 2024.
70. Greater Wellington's senior leaders met with ĀRT (Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai, Ngāti Raukawa ki te tonga and Ngāti Toa Rangatira) leaders to discuss the implementation phase of the WIP programme and have asked Greater Wellington to undertake some analysis of regulatory and non-regulatory recommendations.
71. Te Horo re-wetted wetland completion: two weirs were installed on a farm in Te Horo at a site called Parahamuti, where the original 1ha extent of wetland has now been re-wetted to increase the extent to 5ha and planted with native species.



Figure 4 - Te Horo Wetland Completion

Pest Animals

72. Ōtaki Mustelid trapping was extended through winter this year, with two ferrets caught in the August service. The traps have been lifted to avoid catching hedgehogs.
73. Predator pathways trap network has been started with traps been deployed in the Te Horo area of the expressway, targeting ferrets. Volunteer groups are servicing the majority of the network. Conversations with the NZ Transport Agency – Waka Kotahi regarding access to Transmission Gully Corridor have almost concluded, with plans in place to commence the work soon.
74. RHDV2 virus was detected in the Waikanae River area as part of our annual rabbit virus monitoring, and this was the only site in the Region where virus was present in the environment.
75. An additional area has been added to the cost recovery private Ōtaki Forest predator control work in Ōtaki Gorge, with one of the neighbouring properties wanting to have work done also

Regional Parks

76. Recloaking Papatūānuku funded just over 8,000 seedlings for Queen Elizabeth Park. These were planted by the Community Nursery Groups, Corrections group and with Rangers on the school's Arbor Day. The highlight was the rare hybrid species *Carex raotest* collected at Queen Elizabeth Park, propagated by Rimutaka

Prison and then planted by their Corrections working group. The recent story is on our website⁶

Waikanae River instream works

77. Officers recently met with KCDC and Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai to discuss issues around the gravel accumulation on the lower river and the potential impact on flooding, drainage, and the natural opening of the river mouth. Since this meeting a KCDC trail on the true right bank near the river mouth has been closed due to bank erosion, and a detour is in place.
78. In the short term, we are investigating options to remove the gravel accumulation at the mouth in conjunction with DOC and Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai. We have surveyed the gravel beach to determine what scale of work will be required and this will inform the resource consenting pathway.

Te Whanganui-a-Tara

79. The Greater Wellington marine habitat mapping work has made the news again⁷ following our discovery of rich marine habitats in Wellington Harbour. This is part of the ongoing mapping work we carry out each year in partnership with Victoria University. The focus has been on Wellington Harbour, the south coast and the Kāpiti Coast in recent years but we are looking to extend our mapping to key sites on the Wairarapa east coast this coming summer. High biodiversity sites that meet NZ Coastal Policy Statement criteria are scheduled in the NRP for more stringent management.
80. Maritime NZ has indicated it will approve the oil transfer response plan for a Seaview oil terminal that will allow the discharge and re-loading of low sulphur fuel oil at the Seaview oil terminal. Due to concerns and level of interest this process was managed by Maritime NZ with input from Greater Wellington (rather Greater Wellington approving the plan). This will see the re-introduction of fuel oil to Wellington and the first time fuel oil will be transferred in both directions over Seaview oil wharf.
81. There have already been some boating safety incidents on the harbour that are likely to be followed up. There were open water swimmers that were caught out by a sudden drop in water temperature and after an approach by some swimmers, Harbourmaster staff are assisting with a safety session.
82. Recreational vessels have obstructed commercial shipping, as well as Bylaws breaches for non-carriage of lifejackets. These are being followed up.
83. On the evening of Thursday 19 September 2024 the Cook Strait ferry Connemara lost power after leaving Wellington. Due to conditions no distress call was made, Centreport tugs provided assistance and brought the ship safely back into Port.

⁶ <https://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/news/thousands-of-plants-grown-in-prison-to-regreen-wellington-region/#:~:text=Eco-sourced%20seeds%20from%20Greater%20Wellington%E2%80%99s%20regional%20parks%2C%20grown,and%20most%20ambitious%20native%20planting%20projects%20in%20Aotearoa.>

⁷ <https://www.thepost.co.nz/nz-news/350430096/remarkable-marine-animal-forests-found-around-wellingtons-coast>

There will be more detail in the November 2024 report to the Finance, Risk and Assurance Committee.

Waiwhetū/Seaview

84. Greater Wellington officers are supporting a Seaview Rōpū involving Taranaki Whānui, Ngāti Toa, and officers from Hutt City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, and Wellington Water, to review the intermittent discharge consent from the Seaview wastewater treatment plant to the Waiwhetū Stream. The consent expired in 2018. Recently, the group agreed to expand its scope beyond the consent to the long-term infrastructure requirements to manage wastewater from. The scope now includes the main outfall pipe, the wider wastewater network, and options for the treatment plant.
85. The group recently met to discuss the wastewater pipe failure at Days Bay on 10 August 2024 which resulted in treated and untreated wastewater discharges to the Waiwhetū Stream and harbour, and a rāhui being put in place by Taranaki Whānui.

Days Bay Pump Station Update

86. A leak on the discharge pipework from the Days Bay pump station occurred on 10 August 2024. Both the Days Bay discharge and the Main Outfall Pipeline (MOP) were connected to the leak. The two valves which isolate the MOP from Days Bay discharge pipework could not isolate the flow.
87. On 11 August 2024, treated treatment plant effluent was diverted to the Waiwhetū Stream and draining of the Main Outfall commenced to enable a repair. The repair also required Point Arthur and York Bay pump stations to be isolated as they are directly connected to the pipework from Days Bay. Sucker trucks were mobilised to those pumping stations for several days to minimise overflows until they could be brought back into operation. Sucker trucks were required for Days Bay throughout the repair works period.
88. A new valve was installed close to the MOP and the treatment plant was brought back into normal operation on 24 August 2024. The repair works were complex due to the depth of the MOP connection, the proximity of underground services to that connection, the extent of affected pipework and valving and additional care required to manage penguin nesting risk.

Pest Animals

89. A contractor has begun planning the Zero Ungulate Wainui project. This is a very exciting project and will require lots of collaboration and set up or resource.
90. The Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water catchment was removed from OSPRI's Northern Remutaka aerial 1080 operation. Weather delayed the operation, and we were unable to fully meet requirements from Wellington Water for intake shut down periods. It is hoped this part of the operation can occur next winter. There are considerations regarding funding, impact on zero ungulates project start dates, working with dogs and the 1080 caution period, etc. Additionally, heavy beech flowering this spring may indicate a mast year which may attract rats. This will need to be a focus next winter.

91. Recloaking Papatūānuku pest animal control work in this catchment has been hampered this quarter with restrictions on access due to lambing. Weather conditions have also been a factor. Work has still progressed well with the time available.
92. Belmont Korokoro KNE, North Korokoro Stage 2 planning has finished, and work has commenced to install the proposed trap network. Stage one is operation with volunteer involvement.
93. TeKopohau AT220 traps received a second full service of another 993 possums caught in the AT220 network. This brings the total to 2,530 over the two services. Pigs are continuing to be a huge issue in this block, scavenging carcasses as well as disruption our traps/ramps. This project is a collaboration between WCC and the RPCP programme.
94. RPCP Ohariu-Makara Medical Officer Heath approval for the use of possum poisons has been granted. Possum control can now begin in early October 2024.
95. Two requests for pest animal control to protect lizard translocation works from landfills have come to our team to manage. The first request for significant pest control works in new operation around Silverstream Landfill and the adjoining Horoeaka Reserve has been confirmed. This project will protect lizards being translocated from landfill works into the Stokes Valley Horoeaka Reserve. The second site is much smaller and is in a two-hectare area in Te Kopahou Reserve. Both these sites are high priority.
96. Scheduled ungulate work is progressing well in Hutt City Council sites, East Harbour, Parangarahu Lakes, Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Catchment, Kaitoke Regional Park, Akatarawa Forest, Pakuratahi Forest, Hutt Catchment.

Predator Free Wellington

97. Work continues to advance into the capital city, with the Predator Free Wellington (PFW) team extending into new areas, including Roseneath, Oriental Bay, and parts of Mount Victoria. The project uses a 'rolling front' approach, meaning areas are cleared of predators, creating 'clean spaces' that can be monitored and protected.
98. Strong collaboration with the community continues. Residents are trained to Greater Wellington /PFW standards and are playing a critical role in advancing the project's goals. The aim is to grow this movement, giving people ownership of the outcomes, while also providing predator control at a more cost-effective level. Beyond the operational collaboration, the PFW project team has been engaging with the wider community. Recent activities include Ngaio Keas group talk, Prince of Wales Park community trap training refresher, Victoria University Sustainability week lecture, Sustainability week expo stall at the Victoria University Hub, Island Bay Residents Association meeting, Brooklyn Seniors meeting, Mt Victoria Rotary talk.
99. The team has been training a Gateway student from a local school, giving students who aren't necessarily academically inclined the chance to gain industry experience. Additionally, an intern has been learning the various facets of fieldwork with the team.

100. The PFW team continues to work alongside the dozens of volunteer trapping groups across Wellington city. This includes supplying trap boxes, peanut butter, connecting volunteers and giving expert advice. We're also sharing our operational knowledge with groups across the region. PFW are supporting community efforts along Kapiti coast in efforts to control stoats and ferrets. There are more planned community efforts being supported by PFW in the Te Horo area.
101. Work is ongoing with the H2Zero bait trials. H2Zero, developed by Zero Invasive Predators Ltd, aims to make predator control more effective. The trial will provide valuable data on how the tool performs in an urban environment.
102. Plans are underway for a collaboration with other agencies to trial Norbormide, a rat-specific toxin. If the trials show positive results, the tool could have a significant impact on the pest control industry.
103. The PFW team is committed to continuous improvement, with thorough reviews underway to ensure work is being carried out as efficiently, thoroughly, and cost-effectively as possible. The first review of operations has been completed, and changes are already being implemented, with noticeable improvements in productivity.
104. Since the last Committee meeting, the Predator Free Wellington project has gained international and local attention. It was featured on BBC World and in Mindfood Magazine, both represented by Greater Wellington staff. The project and Greater Wellington were also highlighted in a recent editorial series in The Post, written by Tim Pankhurst.
105. An interagency communications partnership is being formed between Greater Wellington and PFW Ltd, with the aim of lifting both organisations and celebrating their environmental successes. This is in the early stages of development.

Regional Parks

106. Work is progressing on the final stages and site reinstatement of the Wellington Water Flume Bridge replacement project at Kaitoke Regional Park. The final inspection occurred in late September with the iconic swing bridge track expected to be fully re-opened to park visitors later in October 2024.
107. Baring head accommodation has proven very popular after a single post on social media lead to all weekend dates being booked out until June 2025.

District Planning

108. Greater Wellington officers attended hearing stream 11 on Indigenous Biodiversity and Ecosystem provisions in the proposed WCC District Plan on the 11 September 2024.
109. Greater Wellington supported the WCC process undertaken to identify SNAs with significant biodiversity values and the provisions they include to protect these areas. This is consistent with the RPS. However, we opposed the decision not to apply SNAs to residentially zoned land, as this does not give effect to Policy 24 of the RPS.

110. Greater Wellington also sought the addition of new SNA sites for significant bird habitat and active and stabilised dunelands, which are threatened ecosystems (endangered) in the proposed district plan.

Designations

111. Greater Wellington has requested to roll over existing designations (excluding WRC 6) into the Hutt City Council proposed District Plan (pDP) for flood protection and erosion control purposes. We have requested some minor modifications to some of these existing designations to better reflect the activities and sites. A designation is a provision in a district plan that authorises works and activities by a requiring authority on a particular site, without the need for land use consent.
112. We are also designating the remainder of the Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River corridor and the Regional Parks (Belmont, East Harbour and Wainuiomata) within the Hutt City Council boundary for flood and erosion purposes, and recreation, conservation and restoration activities. Both the new and existing designations will be publicly notified as part of the District Plan review.
113. The Hutt City Council pDP is scheduled to be released for public consultation in early 2025.

Regional Parks

114. Through the Recloaking Papatūānuku project, nearly 50,000 native plants have been planted at East Harbour Regional Park this winter. The majority were purchased from the Hem of Remutaka team nursery and planted by contractors, including the Hem of Remutaka kaimahi tīma. Pest plant and animal control is ongoing to ensure the seedlings have the best chance of survival.
115. An additional 20,000 native plants have been planted at Kaitoke Regional Park this winter, grown by prisoners at Rimutaka Prison. Restoration plans are underway for winter 2025.
116. Restoration and planting also continued at the Parangarahu Lakes in partnership with Taranaki Whānui and Rōpū Taiki. The planting demonstration was led by the HEM of Remutaka Kaimahi tīma, with Zealandia and GNS staff also present.



Figure 5: Rōpū Taiki and HEM of Remutaka planting day at Parangarahu Lakes

117. Greater Wellington completed the 21st year of the Kererū Counts at Kaitoke Campground this September. Kererū are a keystone ecological engineer and the only remaining species able to disperse the fruits and seeds of our largest forest canopy tree species. We do pest predator control in Kaitoke and the Hutt Water Collection Area to protect these and other native species and monitor their population health to test the outcomes of our efforts. This year the total number of birds counted was 430. The survey is only a snapshot of what may be happening to the kererū population in the wider environment. Since the start of the surveys in 2003, numbers of kererū have risen steadily as a result of pest control.

**Ngā āpitihanga
Attachments**

Number	Title
1	Update on fire risk management in regional parks
2	Overview of the Wairarapa Water Resilience Work Programme 2024/25

**Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatory**

Approver	Lian Butcher – Kaiwhakahaere Matua Taiao Group Manager Environment
----------	--

He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga Summary of considerations
<i>Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference</i> The Environment Committee has responsibility to consider all matters across the development and implementation of the work programmes of Greater Wellington's Environment Group
<i>Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies</i> Development and implementation of related work programmes fall under the core activities of the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan
<i>Internal consultation</i> Internal consultation was limited to officers of Greater Wellington's Environment Group.
<i>Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.</i> This report covers the full breadth of work programmes, and equally a broad range of environmental, reputational, legal, financial and health, safety and wellbeing risks and associated implications.

For Information

UPDATE ON FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT IN REGIONAL PARKS

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To provide an update to councillors on fire risk control measures in our Regional Parks, the key issues identified in the first season's implementation of these new measures, lessons learned with public communications and Greater Wellington's approach going forward.

Te tāhū kōrero/Te horopaki

Background/Context

2. Greater Wellington implemented fire risk activity controls in our Regional Parks and forests in the 2023/24 summer. This was a critical step in ensuring the safety and well-being of our park users due to a combination of factors we now face.
 - As we grapple with the impacts of climate change, the threat of wildfires has increased, meaning we're now taking proactive measures to mitigate risks. In particular, the El Niño weather pattern this past summer contributing to increased risk compared to a typical fire season.
 - The decision to restore former grazing land in some parks to native vegetation has also temporarily, but long-term over many decades, increased the risk of fire as planted natives establish.
3. In 2023/24, following specialist advice we established a colour coded fire risk system - each level triggering activity restrictions within our parks, such as:
 - Restriction of public access or activities allowed.
 - Limitation on what activities staff, contractors and concessionaires can undertake (particularly any hot works or those that create sparks).
4. Given the change in behaviour required from the public and the potential impacts on Greater Wellington work programmes the implementation of new fire risk controls was a success. This was particularly the case given that some parks faced the driest weather on record in 30 years.
5. When there were fires in parks, appropriate controls were in place that reduced the number of users and the risk of people becoming entrapped in the event of a wildfire. Greater Wellington staff and contractor awareness of fire risks was improved. However, there were some unforeseen issues that were encountered over the 2023/24 summer and following review we have identified improvements in fire risk control which are explained below.

Improvements planned for 2024/25 fire season

Major lessons learned from the 2023-24 fire season

6. A major issue we faced in 2023/24 was due to inconsistency of approach and messaging between ourselves and other local TA's. For example, there were issues on the Pencarrow Coast Road which affected local businesses who weren't prepared for the impacts of potential closures. The Greater Wellington Parks team is collaborating with our partners at Hutt City Council to produce joint fire activity controls for the whole coast for next summer, in addition Eastern Parks is hosting a meeting with local TA's and FENZ staff to discuss consistency of messaging and approach.
7. Some stakeholders didn't understand the activity controls documentation. While we have already simplified this document, we understand it is still quite technical – Park rangers will work with stakeholders before the next fire season to discuss our approach and potential impacts on stakeholders. Marketing & Communications (M&C) will lead external communications, taking a similar approach to 2023/24 communications methods. However, park rangers will have an additional role of engaging with park stakeholders prior to summer and educating them on the controls and potential impacts (lesson 14 below).
8. There were some delays in gathering information on the ground conditions due to the fire team being spread thin. Prior to this summer the Park ranger team will be trained in assessing grass curing and providing this information to the fire team to help inform their decision making.
9. Some Greater Wellington work programmes were impacted due to the uncertainty of the situation leading into the first summer of implementing fire risk controls. The team leaders in charge of this work have advised that they will be able to work around access restrictions by taking this into account when planning their work programmes.

How we communicate externally

10. M&C will expand current web content to better explain access restrictions and the reasoning behind them to foster public understanding and cooperation.
11. There will also be a focus on improving how fire risk is communicated using clearer calls to action using direct language —meaning more specific, actionable instructions that guide the public on what they should do or avoid during different fire risk levels.
12. M&C will create visually distinct graphics to signify changes in fire risk levels, such as “moving from Red to Orange.”
13. To maintain public engagement and awareness throughout the fire season, M&C will implement regular updates.
14. Explore the possibility of introducing permanent signage in key park areas.
15. Over the previous season M&C only had the ability to successfully reach our internal audience. Budget prioritisation will enable Greater Wellington to broadcast

Attachment 1 to Report 24.490

awareness of the park fire restrictions to a wider regional audience. This could include paid media such as radio, print, and/or digital advertising.

How we will communicate with councillors

16. Establish a line of communication with councillors via email, with oversight from Marketing & Communications (M&C) to ensure consistency and effectiveness. Staff will aim to distribute information internally before going out to the public, following this order: *Councillors/staff* → *stakeholders/contractors* → *engaged park users (key holders/clubs)* → *general public*. The urgency of fire risk conditions changing may sometimes prevent this ideal comms chain from being followed.
17. Develop a general one-pager document or webpage accessible to councillors outlining the decision-making process for fire risk levels and expectations during the fire season, and issue this before fire season so councillors can better communicate with their communities.

Figure 1. The Work Programme for 2024/25 is organised into five targeted work streams to bring about the implementation of recommended actions in the Wairarapa Water Resilience Strategy 2021

