

2. PROPOSED REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2003

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The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval for a submission to be made on the Environment Canterbury's Proposed Pest Management Strategy 2003. The closing date for submissions is 1 September 2003.

INTRODUCTION

On 17 June 2003, the Canterbury Regional Council adopted the Proposed Pest Management Strategy 2003 under the provisions of the Biosecurity Act 1993. This followed from consultations undertaken in 2002 on the discussion document "Review of Regional Pest Management Strategy (1998)". Comments received were evaluated and have aided the development of objectives and preferred measures now contained in the strategy. The strategy will operate alongside the Regional Pest Management Strategy - Biodiversity Pest (2002), which will be in force until 2012.

THE PROPOSED REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2003

The pests which will be covered by the strategy are largely the same as those covered by the 1998 strategy. They were identified as having significant effects on economic wellbeing, spill-over effects on neighbouring properties or are capable of having adverse effects on conservation values that are not necessarily shared by land occupiers. Additions that have been made include rooks, Darwin's barberry, bell heather, sycamore and red flowering currant.

Some of the species evaluated were excluded as individual action was considered to be sufficient to prevent serious adverse effects, eg rats, mice and hares. The Fish and Game Council currently manages Canada geese and magpies were considered too numerous to be effectively controlled.

A new initiative is the provision under the Containment Control Programme for Community Initiative Programmes where controls can be stricter than under the containment specifications if the community desires. These programmes would be community funded and facilitated by the Canterbury Regional Council.

At present 67 plants and four animals are proposed to be declared as pests under the strategy. All but 13 plants are known to be present in Canterbury as at 1 June 2003.

Total Control Pest Programmes will apply to eight plants and one animal (rooks), with the aim of eradication.

A Progressive Control Pest Programme is proposed for *Nassella tussock*. This involves treatment at regular intervals with the aim of systematic progress towards eradication.

Containment Control Pest Programmes will apply to five plants and three animals. These programmes aim to reduce the spread of infestation or the containment of populations within a specified threshold. There are also provisions for Community Initiative Programmes for these species.

The Biodiversity Pest Programme, covering five plants, complements the Regional Pest Management Strategy - Biodiversity Pests 2002 and makes provision for the incorporating the two strategies if required. The programme aims to manage pests in targeted areas with high environmental values. Ecological and utility factors and partnership opportunities are taken into account in defining these areas.

The Restricted Pest Programme replaces the previous category of 'surveillance plant pest' in the 1998 strategy. The plant species covered are the same except for the exclusion of species that are listed nationally under the Biosecurity Act as 'unwanted organisms'. Both restricted pests and unwanted organisms are banned from sale, propagation and distribution.

SUBMISSIONS

The Council's submission on this strategy (attached) covers some technical corrections, changes to the status of some pests, and raises questions as to how some of the proposed objectives are to be achieved in practicality.

The Council's submission was also considered by the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee meeting on 13 August 2003. The Regulatory and Consents Committee supports the inclusion of the plant *Bidens frondosa* (Beggars tick) in the new strategy as proposed by the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee. The need for more public education on the proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy was also noted.

Recommendation: That the Council make the attached submission to Environment Canterbury on the Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy (2003).