

# Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough

## Operational Plan 2010/2011



**MARLBOROUGH**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



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# REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY OPERATIONAL PLAN 2010/2011

## 1.0 Introduction

The “Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough” (the Strategy) was made operative on 2 July 2007.

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a framework for the efficient and effective management or eradication of pests and unwanted organisms so as to:

- Minimise actual and potential adverse and unintended effects associated with the targeted pests; and
- Maximise the effectiveness of individual pest management through a regionally co-ordinated approach.

The strategy classifies a number of plants and animals in the region as pests, and specifies the management regime for each pest. For each pest, the management programme sets out the effects of the pest to be addressed, the objective to be achieved, the main methods to achieve the objective and the rules relating to each pest.

### 1.1 Purpose of Operational Plan

The Operational Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, and identifies and outlines the nature and scope of activities the Marlborough District Council intends to undertake in the implementation of its Regional Pest Management Strategy for 2010/2011.

Statements on performance measures are included in the Operational Plan. This will enable key stakeholders and the community to judge the performance of the Marlborough District Council as the Management Agency for the strategy.

### 1.2 Linkages

The Operational Plan is integrated, as far as possible, with Marlborough District Council’s Regional Policy Statement, Resource Management Plans, and the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). The LTCCP provides an overview of all Marlborough District Council functions, including pest management and biosecurity activities, for 2010/2011.

This Operational Plan should also be read in conjunction with the Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough.

## 2.0 Pest Management Programmes

### 2.1 Introduction

The Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough classifies 32 plant and 4 animal species as pests because they cause or are capable of causing, a significant negative impact on Marlborough's economy and/or environment. The strategy separates individual pests into classifications <sup>(1)</sup>, which require various levels of intervention.

The management regime for each pest applies to all or a specified part of the land within the district. In most situations, the obligation lies with the land occupier to actually carry out the control of these pests. The only exception is for pests classified as 'Total Control' where either the Marlborough District Council or the Department of Conservation will implement control programmes directly.

Marlborough District Council is primarily responsible for the co-ordination of pest control programmes, ensuring occupiers comply with their obligations, carrying out surveillance to determine new infestations of pests and educating and advising land occupiers as to the most appropriate form of control for each pest.

### 2.2 Pest Plant Status

The table below summarises the district's pest plants and their designated status as classified in the Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough.

Plant Pest Species	Status <sup>(1)</sup>	Comments
African Feathergrass	TC	Marlborough District Council initiative. These pest plants are limited in their distribution, but have the potential to severely affect either pastoral farming or cereal harvesting and/or environmental values in the district. Implementation of these programmes is delivered by Marlborough District Council. The cost of control for these pest plants is shared between the Marlborough District Council (75%) and the land occupier (25%) where the infestation occurs.
Bathurst Bur	TC	
Bur Daisy	TC	
Saffron Thistle	TC	
Giant Needlegrass	TC	
Chinese Pennisetum	TC	
Parrots Feather	TC	
Boneseed	TC	Marlborough District Council/Department of Conservation joint initiative. These pest plants are limited in their distribution, but have the potential to invade large areas of the district's indigenous forest, scrub or waterways. Implementation of these programmes is delivered by Marlborough District Council/Department of Conservation. The cost of control for these pest plants is shared between the Department of Conservation and the Marlborough District Council.
Climbing Spindleberry	TC	
Eel Grass	TC	
Madeira Vine	TC	
Moth Plant	TC	
Spartina	TC	
Evergreen Buckthorn	TC	
Senegal Tea	TC	
Cathedral Bells	TC	

<sup>(1)</sup> Refer to the Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough definitions of Total Control (TC), Containment Control (CC) and Surveillance (S)

Plant Pest Species	Status <sup>(1)</sup>	Comments
Nassella Tussock	CC	Land occupiers are required to annually destroy all plants on their properties before they produce seed.
Chilean Needlegrass	CC	Land occupiers are required to annually destroy plants on their properties before they produce seed.
White-Edged Nightshade	CC	
Kangaroo Grass	CC	
Broom and Gorse	CC	Land occupiers are required to progressively control broom in the Upper Awatere River and broom and gorse in the Upper Wairau River catchments. All land occupiers are required to destroy all broom and gorse plants within 10 metres of their property boundary if the adjacent property is free of these pest plants.
Ragwort	CC	Land occupiers are required to destroy Ragwort plants within 50 metres of their property boundary if the adjacent property is free of this plant pest.
Nodding Thistle	CC	Land occupiers are required to destroy Nodding Thistle plants within 100 metres of their property boundary if the adjacent property is free of this plant pest.
Contorta Pine	CC	Land occupiers are required to destroy all plants with the exception of properties located directly adjacent to the Wye Reserve.
Reed Sweet Grass	CC	The Marlborough District Council is responsible for controlling this pest plant.
Blue Morning Glory	S	The key objective for management of these pests is to monitor their distribution, their impacts and gain some understanding of the spread of these organisms over time.
Climbing Asparagus	S	
Egeria	S	
Cotton Thistle	S	
Kahili Ginger and Yellow Ginger	S	
Lagarosiphon	S	
Purple Loosestrife	S	

## 2.3 Animal Pest Status

The table below summarises the district's animal pests and their designated status as classified in the Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough.

Animal Pest	Status <sup>(1)</sup>	Comments
Rooks	TC	Successful rook control has been carried out in Marlborough and ongoing surveillance to monitor any re-establishment continues. No rookeries have re-established since 2005. If rooks, were allowed to re-establish they are capable of causing significant damage to cereal crops and pasture. The Marlborough District Council will carry out any rook control within its district with the aim of eradication.
Rabbits	CC	High rabbit populations affect soil and water quality, have a detrimental impact on economic production and increase the risk of soil erosion. It is the Marlborough District Council's responsibility to ensure land occupiers comply with their obligation to control rabbits. Council will continue to carry out rabbit population trend monitoring and offer advice on control.
Possums	CC	Possums cause extensive defoliation of native forest and predate on ground and tree nesting native birds and their eggs. At present in Marlborough, there are no possums on our offshore islands. A rule in the strategy prohibits the release of possums onto any offshore island in the Marlborough Sounds.
Invasive Ants	S	Darwin's Ants are in the RPMS as an invasive species that originates from Australia. Surveillance for these and other invasive ants will be carried out annually to determine their presence and/or distribution.

<sup>(1)</sup> Refer to the Regional Pest Management Strategy for Marlborough definitions of Total Control (TC), Containment Control (CC) and Surveillance (S)

### 3.0 Total Control Pest Objectives and Performance Targets

<b>Objective</b>		
To eradicate total control pest plants from Marlborough.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
3.1 Complete control operations at 100% of known sites by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan, implement and manage services required to carry out control operations.</li> </ul>	<p>The Marlborough District Council is responsible for implementing plant pest control works for pests classified in the 'Marlborough District Council Initiative'.</p> <p>The Marlborough District Council and the Department of Conservation are jointly responsible for implementing pest plant control works for pest plants classified in the 'Marlborough District Council/Department of Conservation Joint Initiative'.</p> <p>Land occupiers are responsible for 25% of the costs of controlling pest plants identified in the Marlborough District Council initiative.</p>
3.2 Carry out not less than 360 hours of surveillance for total control pest plant spread outside known sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out surveillance work for each pest based on risk.</li> </ul>	
3.3 Complete surveillance programmes for total control pest plants by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record and maintain pest plant abundance and distribution data to enable trend monitoring over the duration of the strategy.</li> </ul>	
3.4 No new infestations resulting from known sites of these pest plants established in Marlborough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recover 25% of the control costs, as deemed reasonable</li> </ul>	
3.5 A measured decline to <5000 pest plants destroyed over all sites by June 2012 sites by 2011.		
3.6 Recover by 30 June 2011, 25% of all costs, for those total control pest plants identified in the Marlborough District Council initiative		

<b>Objective</b>		
To eradicate rooks in Marlborough.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
3.7 Annually, monitor all historical rookeries in Marlborough by 30 November 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively seek public and land occupier reports of sightings of rooks.</li> </ul>	Land occupier and general public are encouraged to report sightings of rooks.
3.8 Implement a control programme if technically feasible by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out an annual rook survey and report on population trends.</li> <li>Plan and implement a control programme if technically feasible and conditions are suitable.</li> </ul>	<p>Survey work will continue at all sites, including historic rookeries.</p> <p>Absolute rook numbers can fluctuate from year to year depending upon population breeding cycles and spread from other regions.</p>

## 4.0 Containment Control Pest Objectives and Performance Targets

<b>Objective</b>		
To prevent any increase in the distribution and density of pest plants and reduce infestation levels where possible.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
4.1 Prepare and distribute pest plant control programmes to land occupiers where active infestations of pest plants occur by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually prepare control programmes for all land occupiers where an active infestation of a pest plant occurs.</li> </ul>	<p>The Marlborough District Council maintains records of all properties where an infestation of a pest plant occurs. Occupiers are issued with control programmes which formalise their requirements to manage these pest plants.</p> <p>The control programmes specify recommendations for control methods and completion dates outlining when control activities must be completed by a land occupier to comply with obligations.</p> <p>Compliance inspections are carried out on a scheduled basis after control programme completion dates. Council endeavours to carry out all compliance inspections and control work carried out under default before these pest plants produce seed.</p> <p>The development of management plans for sites infested with Chilean Needlegrass is designed to achieve eradication by working collectively with land occupiers.</p>
4.2 Complete compliance inspections of properties issued with a control programme for each pest plant by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out inspections or verify compliance, for each pest plant.</li> </ul>	
4.3 85% land occupier compliance with the requirements of the Strategy rules by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out enforcement action where required to ensure that occupiers meet their obligations to control pest plants.</li> </ul>	
4.4 <50 land occupiers issued with notices of direction under the non compliance requirements of the Strategy rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan, implement and manage services required to carry out control operations.</li> </ul>	
4.5 Undertake not less than 70 hours of surveillance for each pest based on risk by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out surveillance work for pests based on risk.</li> </ul>	
4.6 Complete planned control operations for Reed Sweet Grass by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any spread of pest plants to be recorded by GPS or field map notation and captured on Council GIS for later mapping and area calculation.</li> </ul>	
4.7 Respond to all complaints with regard to pest plants within 5 working days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Reed Sweet Grass control programme on D'Urville Island.</li> </ul>	
4.8 Undertake to develop Chilean Needlegrass management plans, on request from occupiers by June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to all requests to develop management plans.</li> </ul>	

4.9 Complete planned control operations for Pinus Contorta by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and target specific areas of control where Pinus Contorta has spread from the containment area</li> </ul>	Pinus Contorta continues to spread by wind blown seed from within the containment areas of the Wye River and Waihopai to adjacent properties
<p><b>Objective</b></p> <p>To minimise the impacts that feral rabbits have on pasture production, crops, forestry plantations and soil conservation values in Marlborough by maintaining feral pest rabbit populations at levels at or below the maximum allowable level (MAL) identified for the two sub-regions, the 'Upper Awatere/Clarence' and the 'Remainder of the area within the District'</p>		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>4.10 Complete initial inspections of properties identified for inspections by 30 June 2011.</p> <p>4.11 Prepare and distribute pest rabbit control programmes by 30 June 2011, to land occupiers where populations exist above the MAL.</p> <p>4.12 &lt;10 land occupiers exceed the Strategy rule MAL 4 by August 2011</p> <p>4.13 &lt;15 land occupiers exceed the Strategy rule MAL 3 by August 2011</p> <p>4.14 Complete compliance inspections of previous year's control programmes by 30 October 2011.</p> <p>4.15 Trend monitor the 12 established night count transects by 30 June 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a geographical representative sample of properties deemed 'at risk' of rabbit population increase by end March and implement an inspection regime.</li> <li>Where rabbit infestations exist above the maximum allowable level issue a control programme and where possible provide an adaptive management approach to ensure the land occupier can meet their responsibilities.</li> <li>Re-inspect all properties issued with a control programme to ensure compliance.</li> <li>Carry out the planned population trend monitors.</li> </ul>	<p>Inspections will be carried out on properties determined by risk that have a previously recorded history of being rabbit prone, and there are indicators of rabbit population increases determined from existing knowledge, feedback, other inspection processes, and complaints.</p> <p>Land occupiers are given advice of rabbit population levels, and responsibilities including, recommendations for control, timeframes for the completion of any necessary work along with advice on technical control method parameters and legislative compliance matters.</p>

<b>Objective</b>		
To prevent the establishment of possums on offshore islands in the Marlborough Sounds.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
4.16 Respond to reported sighting of possums on offshore islands within 5 working days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit public feedback on any possums sighted on all offshore islands</li> <li>• Report all sightings to the Department of Conservation who will undertake investigations with Marlborough District Council staff in support if required.</li> </ul>	Surveillance of this nature is carried out in partnership with DOC.

## 5.0 Surveillance - Pests

<b>Objective</b>		
To monitor the distribution, the impacts and the spread of surveillance pests, fund appropriate research projects regarding surveillance pests and educate the public as to their identification and most appropriate method of control.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
5.1 Undertake surveillance and evaluate pest distribution and impacts for Darwin Ants and other invasive ant species and report findings by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect properties to determine pest status and identify the distribution of surveillance pest if it is present.</li> </ul>	The Marlborough District Council has different approaches to surveillance.
5.2 Undertake not less than 70 hours of surveillance for pest spread, other than total control pest plants, outside known sites and evaluate pest distribution and impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act on feedback from the public in relation to new pest infestations or instances of any unwanted organism or potential incursion of a harmful organism.</li> </ul>	The first is a 'passive' approach where information can be passed from the general public to alert the Marlborough District Council of any potential threat from an unwanted or harmful organism entering Marlborough.
5.3 Update records, within 5 working days of finding or being informed of any plant or animal pest, while carrying out surveillance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record pest distribution on maps and in database records.</li> <li>Utilise contract services to assist in the undertaking of specific surveillance for invasive ants.</li> </ul>	There is also an 'active' approach for pest surveillance where inspections will be carried out on properties to determine the distribution, spread and gather information on impacts of pests classified in the Strategy. The information will be used by the Marlborough District Council for future evaluation of the pest status of the species.

## 6.0 Ecological Threat Programme

<b>Objective</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage community initiatives and site led management programmes.</li> <li>• Identify sites with significant ecological value where the reduction of a range of ecological pest threats would be effective in protecting those values.</li> <li>• Provide information material and advice on impacts, threats and control options.</li> </ul>		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
6.1 To continue to support land occupiers with pest/weed work on prioritised significant natural area sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marlborough District Council has a voluntary land owner assistance programme applying to significant natural areas sites, which includes pests/weed threat works.</li> </ul>	The Marlborough District Council is continuing with its land owner assistance programme prioritised to protect identified SNA values through a range of methods.
6.2 To encourage community led pest management initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Marlborough District Council is developing an active programme to support community led pest management initiatives which will include not less than two targeted meetings/workshops to follow up the public seminars held in June 2010.</li> </ul>	Two public animal pest control workshops were held during June 2010 to provide general information
6.3 To further investigate options for implementing control of wilding exotic trees on private land on D'Urville Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate a management plan to D'Urville Island landowners and discuss control options.</li> </ul>	

## 7.0 Educational Programme

### Introduction

The Marlborough District Council recognises the advantages of a strong advisory and educational role in pest management and therefore takes a very active role in providing information and advice on the various impacts caused by pests and the best methods for controlling animal and pest plants.

<b>Objective</b>		
To educate the public in the identification of regional plant and animal pests and promote and encourage the most appropriate management and control options.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
7.1 Review and where necessary publish pest fact sheets for pests listed in the Regional Pest Management Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a strong advisory and educational role to create a greater understanding of land occupier pest management roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Attend both the Ward A &amp; P show and the Marlborough Garden fete.</li> <li>• Liaise with the Marlborough District Council's website manager to coordinate web site updates.</li> </ul>	<p>The Marlborough District Council is available as requested to attend a number of meetings and field days to educate land occupiers and the public on the identification of the different plant and animal pests.</p> <p>The Marlborough District Council will assist land occupiers in identifying plant and animal pests and advise them as to the most appropriate management and control options.</p>
7.2 Organise and attend at least one public display by 30 June 2011.		
7.3 Continually review the overall structure and scope of information on the Marlborough District Council's website by June 2011.		

## 8.0 Biological Control Programme

<b>Objective</b>		
To enhance the establishment of biological control agents for a range of pest plants, with the aim of achieving an environmentally acceptable and cost effective method of control.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
8.1 Agree on annual biological control programme outcomes in conjunction with the Biological Control Collective Group by 30 March 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the collective biological control programme managed by Landcare Research.</li> </ul>	<p>The Marlborough District Council has a collective agreement between regional authorities and Landcare Research for the biological control of weeds. Each year the programme is reviewed and outcomes negotiated between parties.</p> <p>A sum of \$16,000 is provided annually to Landcare Research consortium to conduct research into biological control agents for pest plants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A priority is to seek approval from ERMA for the importation and release of a rust for Chilean Needlegrass.</li> </ul>
8.2 Provide biological control agents which have established in the region, to occupiers, on request, for the purpose of further distribution, by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support research initiatives for the selection and introduction of biological control agents.</li> </ul>	
8.3 Undertake 3 releases of the Broom Gall Mite and 3 releases of the Green Thistle Beetle by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the distribution of biological control agents and harvest and release biological control agents where required to enhance their distribution.</li> <li>Undertake initiatives to assess the impact on pest plants, of biological control agents released in Marlborough since 2009.</li> </ul>	

## 9.0 National Pest Plant Accord

<b>Objective</b>		
To prevent the sale, distribution or propagation within New Zealand, of any plant pest listed in the National Plant Pest Accord.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
9.1 Annually inspect 50% of the plant retail outlets in Marlborough by 30 June 2011 annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect half of the plant retail outlets each year on a rotational basis for any plants identified on the National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA).</li> <li>• Ensure compliance of obligations.</li> <li>• Promote a strong advisory and educational role in association with the NPPA.</li> <li>• Record and report inspection results to Biosecurity New Zealand.</li> <li>• Ensure all inspections are carried out by warranted officers.</li> </ul>	<p>Targeted inspections will occur of garden retailers and plant wholesalers.</p> <p>The NPPA has a list of organisms which are classified as unwanted organisms under the Biosecurity Act 1993.</p> <p>The NPPA is a partnership programme between central, regional government and industry.</p>
9.2 Respond to any complaints relating to the sale of banned plant species within 5 working days.		
9.3 Respond to notification by Biosecurity New Zealand of any pest incursion.		

## 10.0 Research

### Introduction

The Marlborough District Council understands the need for research in the field of pest management and provides funding for a number of research projects.

<b>Objective</b>		
To support research programmes which benefit pest programmes in the Marlborough district.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
10.1 Provide resource to undertake research as approved by the Marlborough District Council by 30 June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue working through the ERMA and ACVM application processes for the full registration of Taskforce herbicide.</li> </ul>	<p>The trials carried out in the Hawke's Bay and in Marlborough using Taskforce herbicide have been completed. The laboratory analysis of these samples is near completion and this report will accompany an application to ACVM to allow the use of Taskforce herbicide in New Zealand.</p> <p>The Marlborough District Council's biosecurity officers undertake a serological sampling regime and submit the samples to a laboratory which determines the RHD status of the rabbit population. This work is part of an ongoing national project.</p>
10.2 100% of RHD immunity level surveys completed by June 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake serological sampling of rabbits in support of the national project to determine the effectiveness of RHD following the use of conventional rabbit control techniques.</li> <li>Evaluate proposals and gain approval for any expenditure.</li> <li>Verify appropriate use of budget and ensure outcomes are documented and reported.</li> </ul>	

## 11.0 Biosecurity Programmes - Other

<b>Objective</b>		
To facilitate partnerships with industry and the Crown in the management and coordination of national pest and unwanted organism programmes.		
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<b>Action taken to meet Target</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>11.1 Continue to support the implementation of the Didymo Long Term Management Plan objectives by 30 June 2011.</p> <p>11.2 Provide ongoing support in the implementation of the Management Plan for the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Strategy.</p> <p>11.3 Provide partnership support to Biosecurity New Zealand to respond to any new pest incursion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Didymo Long Term Management Plan in partnership with the Department of Conservation, with support from MAF, Biosecurity New Zealand, Fish and Game and Tasman District Council.</li> <li>• Manage the contractual relationship of the service provider of the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Strategic Plan on behalf of the Top of the South Marine Partnership.</li> </ul>	<p>Biosecurity New Zealand is providing a coordination role and seed funding for a social marketing programme to slow the spread of Didymo.</p> <p>The Marlborough District Council is a partner along with other Top of the South councils, government agencies, Iwi and the marine industry in support of implementing a Marine Biosecurity Strategic Plan. The plan undertakes to coordinate marine biosecurity education, advocacy activities along with integrating regional and natural biosecurity systems, surveillance and response to incursions.</p>