

ACTIVITY GROUP: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND INFORMATION

Activities for this Group

The activities for this group include:

- Environmental Policy.
- Environmental Science and Monitoring.
- Biosecurity (Pest Management).

The financial aspects for this Activity Group are shown below in the table entitled "Operating and Capital Costs and Funding Forecast (\$000) – Environmental Policy and Information". Operating costs of this activity represents 6.8% of total activity expenditure.

Rationale for Council Involvement in this Group of Activities

This group of activities encompass a statutory framework which contributes to the community outcomes of prosperity, environmental sustainability.

The Marlborough District Council is a Unitary Authority and as such has both regional and district functions, powers and duties in relation to the Resource Management Act 1991. Under this Act the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- Preparing a Regional Policy Statement, a Regional Coastal Plan, Regional Plan(s), and a District Plan, and
- State of the environment monitoring.

The Council also has the responsibility under the Biosecurity Act 1993 of preparing and implementing Regional Pest Management Strategies.

Assets and Levels of Service

Each activity details:

1. Any assets required for its delivery are detailed under the relevant activity.
2. Planned levels of service, performance targets and measures.
3. Estimated expenses of achieving and maintaining the identified levels of service and the integrity of any assets.

Significant Negative Effects Associated with this Group of Activities

Potential negative effects in terms of the sustainable management of our physical and natural resources may result through ineffective monitoring of the environment and/or inadequate resource management policy with potential flow-on social and economic impacts on the community.

Each activity has identified and highlighted issues and changes that may affect this group of activities.

Issues and Changes affecting the assets that support this Group of Activities

The principal assets supporting this group of activities are people and information. Staff with skills relevant to these activities are in high demand nationally and internationally. Personnel policies designed to attract and retain appropriate staff are therefore important as is ensuring the functional structure of the group provides for efficient interaction.

Information systems and databases associated with these activities are fundamental for maintaining historical resource records of which sound decisions and resource trend analysis is based.

The principal information asset is the environmental monitoring (telemetry) network that captures rainfall, river, aquifer level data and resource quality information. This information also underpins the flood forecasting and modelling systems, water allocation and policy formation.

The network, information systems and consequent functions are at risk if not managed to a high standard and kept fully operational at all times.

Known changes to demands on asset capacity are discussed in the context of specific activities. Maintenance, renewal and replacement of assets will be undertaken according to the policies set out in relevant asset management plans if applicable. The anticipated costs of maintenance, renewal and replacement of assets are shown in the Operating and Capital costs and funding forecast shown under each activity.

ACTIVITY: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Outcome

Sustainable management of Marlborough's natural and physical resources.

Related Community Outcome

Environmental sustainability, prosperity.

How this Activity Contributes to Related Community Outcomes

This activity contributes primarily to the community outcome of environmental sustainability by providing a planning framework for the sustainable management of Marlborough's natural and physical resources. This activity also contributes to the prosperity Community Outcome by proactively supporting the growth of new and existing economic activity.

What is this Activity About?

This activity involves the development and review of environmental policy and planning provisions under the RMA in response to resource management issues for Marlborough. These provisions are aimed at the sustainable use, development and protection of Marlborough's natural and physical resources, including land, water, air, indigenous ecosystems and the built environment. Many of the provisions are mandatory; the Council is required to prepare a Regional Policy Statement, a Regional Coastal Plan and a District Plan under the RMA. It may also develop other regional plans, as necessary.

The Council has an existing resource management policy framework, which is described below. Significant effort has gone into getting this framework to an operative status, in order to provide greater certainty to resource users and the wider community.

Policy Framework

Council's three core RMA policy and planning documents are:

- **The Marlborough Regional Policy Statement (RPS)**
This is an operative document that provides a community-based vision and direction for managing the natural and physical resources of Marlborough. It identifies five regionally significant issues for Marlborough and how they are to be addressed.
- **The Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan**
This is an operative combined regional plan, regional coastal plan and district plan that provides the framework by which the natural and physical resources of the Marlborough Sounds area are to be managed.
- **The Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan**
This is an operative combined Regional Plan, Regional Coastal Plan and District Plan that provides the framework by which the natural and physical resources of the Wairau/Awatere area of Marlborough are to be managed.

The Marlborough RPS and the Resource Management Plans identify resource management issues, establish objectives for addressing these issues, provide policies

for achieving the objectives and identify regulatory and non-regulatory methods for implementing the policies. The provisions collectively seek to enable resource use, but in a manner that ensures any adverse effects arising from that use are avoided, remedied or sufficiently mitigated. The Council is required to report on the efficiency and effectiveness of these policy and planning provisions on a 5 yearly basis under the RMA.

The Environmental Policy Group works closely with the Environmental Science and Monitoring Group, which collects state of the environment and trend data, and the Regulatory Group, which uses the resource management policy framework to determine the status of activities, assist with the processing of resource consent applications and for compliance purposes. Monitoring results and feedback from the implementation of the provisions are used on an ongoing basis to identify pressures and signal the need to make changes to the policy and planning documents.

Issues and Changes

The Council has committed to undertaking a comprehensive review of the of the current resource management framework. This is in response to the statutory requirement to review the Marlborough RPS, but it is also necessary to meet the sustainability challenges created by increasing resource use, climate change and changing community expectations. These challenges are discussed in greater detail in Part II: Marlborough's Key Challenges. The review process provides the opportunity to prepare a resource management framework that enables appropriate resource use, while maintaining or enhancing the quality of the land, water and air resources, indigenous ecosystems and the built environment that sustain our community. A key component of the new framework will be provisions that enable the allocation and reallocation of public resources, such as freshwater and coastal space. Where possible the Regional Policy Statement will be developed in conjunction with other authorities in the top of the south island, ie; Nelson City and Tasman District Councils,

Central Government initiatives, including legislative change, national policy statements and national environmental standards, are also likely to influence the review of the current resource management framework.

Once the review is complete, there will be an ongoing need to use state of the environment monitoring data to identify new issues and adjust the resource management framework, where necessary, through plan changes.

As the current Resource Management Plans are operative, any person can apply for a private plan change to the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan or Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan. Ongoing demand for private plan changes is unknown, but will need to be accommodated in response to statutory requirements.

ACTIVITY GROUP: Environmental Policy and Information

Levels of Service: Environmental Policy						
Performance Targets (for the financial year)						
Level of Service	Indicator	Baseline	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-19
A reviewed resource management policy framework. A resource management framework that reflects current and emerging issues.	Timeliness of review and adoption of key strategy documents.	New measure	Notification of a new Marlborough RPS by 31 December 2009. The completion of an urban strategy for the Central Business Zone by December 2009 with a wider Blenheim strategy completed by 31 December 2010. The completion of an efficiency and effectiveness assessment of the existing resource management plans by 31 December 2009.	The completion of an urban strategy for the Central Business Zone by December 2009 with a wider Blenheim strategy completed by 31 December 2010. A water re-allocation conceptual framework completed by December 2010.	Notification of a new combined resource management plan by 31 December 2011.	The completion of an efficiency and effectiveness assessment of the Regional Policy Statement and Resource Management Plan five years after they become operative.
The sustainable management of natural and physical resources.	Physical, chemical and biological soil parameters.	New measure(s).			Baseline targets established for predominant soils.	Positive long-term (5yr +) trend in soil quality as measured against baseline.
	Physical, chemical and biological freshwater quality parameters.	New measure(s).			Baseline targets established for all catchments.	Positive long-term (5yr +) trend in water quality as measured against baseline.
	Freshwater and coastal water bathing sites gradings.	New measure.			Grades for recreational bathing water sites established.	Quality of recreational bathing water sites either maintained or improved
	Average Groundwater Nitrate levels.	New measure.	Baseline targets established for all aquifers	Positive long-term (5yr+) trend in ground water quality as measured against baseline	Positive long-term (5yr+) trend in ground water quality as measured against baseline	Positive long-term (5yr+) trend in ground water quality as measured against baseline.
Average monthly winter concentration of PM10 at:	New Measures.					
Redwoodtown			<37 mg/m ³	<37 mg/m ³	<37 mg/m ³	<37 mg/m ³
Middle Renwick Road			<27 mg/m ³	<27 mg/m ³	<27 mg/m ³	<27 mg/m ³

ACTIVITY GROUP: Environmental Policy and Information

	The ecological condition of Significant Natural Area (SNA) sites.	New measure(s).			Baseline targets established for representative SNA sites.	Positive long term (5yr +) trend in the condition of indigenous vegetation within SNA sites as measured against baseline.
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Levels of Service apply to the period of this plan. Changes to targets, and to levels of service overall, will be reviewed periodically to reflect any changes to the operating environment and/or community expectations.

ACTIVITY: ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND MONITORING

Outcome	Related Community Outcome
Knowledge, information and services to enable the management of Marlborough's natural and physical resources in a sustainable way.	Environmental sustainability, prosperity.

How this Activity Contributes to Related Community Outcomes

This activity contributes primarily to the community outcome of environmental sustainability by providing resource information to measure our progress toward desired environmental outcomes for Marlborough's key natural and physical resources. This activity also contributes to the prosperity Community Outcome by ensuring resources are available to support economic growth.

What is this Activity About?

This activity involves the monitoring of natural and physical resources, carrying out science based investigations, providing advice, and facilitating sustainable resource management programmes.

The monitoring of natural and physical resources is carried out to:

- Obtain information about the condition of the environment.
- Raise awareness of environmental issues.
- Assist in identifying areas where there is a need to improve the quality of the environment and enable Council to support a range of methods that can be applied to address specific issues, and
- Allow Council to assess the effectiveness of its policies and methods contained in the RMA policy and planning documents.

Science based investigations are dynamic and will change to reflect new environment pressures. Emphasis has been placed on monitoring and developing sustainable

programmes associated with water resources. This reflects the value of water to the community and its vulnerability to over use and contamination.

Other monitoring programmes involve measuring air quality, land use, land cover, contamination, soil quality, and the extent and condition of biodiversity. Monitoring of river flood flows is also undertaken for real time emergency response and to support flood design and planning.

This activity also involves implementing sustainable resource management programmes that promote sustainable resource use, for instance Council is active in promoting the restoration and protection of biodiversity values on private land. The activity also involves education and advocacy with the resource users and the wider community.

Asset Description

Council operates 82 automated monitoring stations that measure a number of environmental parameters.

Environmental Parameters (Automated)	Number Monitored
Rainfall	22
Water level	31
River Flow	21
Groundwater Level	29
Groundwater Temperature	11
Groundwater Conductivity	7
Air Quality (PM10)	3
River Water Quality	3

Issues and Changes

As economic growth continues, pressure is placed on natural resources and more monitoring of the condition of those resources is required to gain a better understanding of issues and potential responses.

The Regional Policy Statement and resource management plans which are under review will provide the strategic direction for future levels of service in terms of the community expectations of resource monitoring, science investigations and the mitigation of effects.

A number of key resource monitoring issues that will be addressed in this work are described below.

Air Quality

Marlborough's air quality is generally perceived to be very good. However, there are localised issues with urban air quality particularly in relation to particulate matter (Pm10). Periodic monitoring of other pollutants, including spray drift, will be required in the future and programmes may be extended to see whether air quality in other urban areas is acceptable.

Fresh Water Quality

Generally Marlborough's water quality is good; however land use within a river catchment has a potential influence on water quality. Diffuse pollution remains as the biggest threat to water quality in the District, while particularly for ground water, naturally occurring metals or salts and chemicals like arsenic continue to be of community concern in some localities.

The current monitoring regime consists of 36 surface and 33 ground water telemetered sites. Whilst the surface monitoring programme provides a relatively intensive monitoring framework not all "at-risk" catchments are currently monitored. In terms of ground water monitoring the current regime is seen as adequate, however the programme will need to evolve as community expectations change along with pressures such as climate change and population growth.

It is envisaged that these issues will be addressed over the next five years.

Coastal Water Quality

The coastal environment is a popular residential, recreational and tourist area, as well as a major economic resource for commercial fishing, marine farming and port related activities. These activities are often conflicting, and can place immediate pressure on the marine environment.

Council currently undertakes water quality monitoring at 20 recreational bathing water sites and 16 shell fishing gathering sites for the purpose of monitoring environmental factors affecting public health. Monitoring of the overall health of the coastal environment in terms of measuring effects from land use, sewage disposal, vessel waste, siltation and marine farming is not that well understood and will require a review over the next five years.

Water Quantity

The demand for both surface and ground water for consumptive uses has risen in recent years and there is no indication that this demand will decrease. This increased demand is accompanied in some instances by a reduction in the actual availability of water or by an increasing awareness that some water resources are approaching or are already fully allocated.

In addition as land use change occurs across the region the demand for water is occurring in areas where previously there was little demand.

This requires a continuation of existing and pre-emptive monitoring and investigations, including the introduction of national standards during the next five years to measure water use in order to ensure that our precious resource are sustained.

Land

Land use change such as the increase in viticulture over the last decade and the intensification of land use activities in general are putting increasing pressure on our land resources. Monitoring of indicators such as site contamination, soil quality, erosion, natural hazards, land use and cover is required to quantify any change in land use effects.

ACTIVITY GROUP: Environmental Policy and Information

Over the next five years, the soil quality monitoring network is intended to be expanded to incorporate more soil types and land use activities across the region. Further work will also be required to gain a better understanding of the risks associated with land stability, coastal erosion and flood hazards.

Biodiversity

A number of pressures and threats to biodiversity values exist. While some require ongoing monitoring and investigations, others will require protection programmes or the introduction of other methods to mitigate threats. In particular biosecurity threats, and human influences, such as land development will require ongoing assessment and mitigation strategies over the next five years.

Levels of Service: Environmental Science and Monitoring						
Performance Targets (for the financial year)						
Level of Service	Indicator	Baseline	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-19
Effective Environmental Monitoring Network is operated.	Percentage availability of the Environmental Monitoring network.	New measure	99%	99%	99%	99%
Monitor, undertake investigations, gather and analyse information, and report on the state of Marlborough's natural resources including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil quality. • Contaminated sites. • Water quality. • Water quantity. • Air quality. 	Timeliness of completion data integrity audit.	New measure	30 June	30 June.	30 June	30 June
	Number of technical monitoring report cards completed.	New measure	5	5	5	5
	Timeliness completion of resource investigations and reporting to the Environment Committee.	New measure	30 June	30 June	30 June	30 June
	Completion date of a comprehensive State of the Environment report.	Published (2008/09)				2014
Encourage the community and industry to look after and restore the environment through communication, education and advocacy.	Percentage of planned educational programmes (including public campaigns, fact sheets, web site) are completed annually.	New measure	90%.	90%.	90%	90%
	Date the Marlborough Environment Awards made.	2008/09		Marlborough Environment Awards made.		2012 and biannually thereafter.
Restoration and protection of indigenous biodiversity on private land.	Long-term (5yr +) trends in number of protected (Significant Natural Areas) biodiversity sites.	41 (2008)	50	55	60	65

Levels of Service apply to the period of this plan. Changes to targets, and to levels of service overall, will be reviewed periodically to reflect any changes to the operating environment and/or community expectations.

ACTIVITY: BIOSECURITY (PEST MANAGEMENT)

Outcome	Related Community Outcome
The economic and ecological impacts of pests in the District are minimised.	Prosperity, environmental sustainability.

How this Activity Contributes to Related Community Outcomes

This activity contributes to community outcomes of environment sustainability and prosperity by reducing the impacts of animal and plant pests on pastoral farming and our natural environment.

What is this Activity About?

Introduction

This activity is delivered in accordance with a Regional Pest Management Strategy which is prepared in conjunction with stakeholders, the community, and in compliance with the Biosecurity Act 1993, the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Regional Policy Statement. The Council is also involved as a stakeholder with nationally led pest management programmes, for instance the National Pest Management Strategy for Bovine Tb.

Regional Pest Management Strategy

The Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) defines and declares 37 plant and animal species as pests in the region. The pests are divided into three groups:

- **Total Control Pests** - pests to be eradicated throughout the region. The onus for control is shared between the land occupiers, Council and in particular circumstances, the Department of Conservation.
- **Containment Pests** - pests that require control to prevent spread and to reduce overall pest density levels over time. The control of these pests is primarily the responsibility of the land occupier.
- **Surveillance Pests** - pests which have significance but where the only control is the banning of sale, propagation and distribution. Council provides advice and education as well as carrying out monitoring to determine impacts and distribution.

A major part of Council's pest management activity is therefore directed towards providing advice to land occupiers on identifying and controlling pests and monitoring to ensure compliance with pest control programmes. Council also has an active service delivery role in controlling pests that are classified as total control.

Ecological Threat Programme

Council also promotes the protection of biodiversity values as outlined in the environment science and monitoring activity. The RPMS has listed a range of plant and animal species that potentially threaten those values. The overall objective of the programme is linked to the outcomes associated with the Significant Natural Area (SNA) programme of which Council has a role to; encourage community initiatives, site specific management programmes, providing advice, information, and facilitating a range of control methods.

Issues and Changes

The issues over the next five years are centred on the need to adequately respond to:

- The statutory requirement to review the Regional Pest Management Strategy by June 2013.
- The need to review policies to manage biodiversity pest threats on sites that are identified as SNA, in particular within those areas where the Animal Health Board plans to withdraw possum control programmes.
- The potential for the rabbit population to recover and the need to work with the community on the use of conventional control methods.
- The Animal Health Board's review of the National Pest Management Strategy for Bovine Tb, including Council's funding contribution.
- Government's development of proposals to clarify roles and responsibilities, funding, and provide for across agency/industry partnerships to either prevent or mitigate the risks associated with incursions of harmful organisms and pests into the environment, including the marine ecosystem.

Monitoring and Reporting

In addition to reporting on this Plan a detailed report on the performance of this activity, entitled RPMS 'operational plan report' will be prepared annually.

ACTIVITY GROUP: Environmental Policy and Information

Levels of Service: Biosecurity (Pest Management)						
Performance Targets (for the financial year)						
Level of Service	Indicator	Baseline	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-19
Provide an overall level of service that meets or exceeds residents' expectations.	Resident satisfaction with this service as measured by survey, where 10 = "service delivered extremely well".	6.3	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.5
Prepare and publish a Regional Pest Management Strategy Operational Plan annual report	Timeliness completion of annual report to Environment Committee.	New Measure	30 October	30 October	30 October	30 October
Control the spread and impacts of animal and plant pests.	Area of plant pest infestations in hectares of:					
	• Nassella Tussock	55,927 ha	<55,927 ha	<55,927 ha	<55,927 ha	<55,927 ha
	• Chilean Needle Grass.	2,706 ha	<2,706 ha	<2,706 ha	<2,706 ha	<2,706 ha
	Number of properties where the maximum allowable rabbit population levels as measured by RPMS Modified Mclean Scale indices are exceeded for:					
	• Upper Awatere/Clarence level 4.	6	<10	<10	<10	<10
	• Remainder of District level 3.	4	<15	<15	<15	<15
	Number of control pests as measured by plant numbers destroyed. (excluding boneseed, spartina and eelgrass)	6,000	5,500	5,000	4,500	4,000
% of properties issued with a containment pest control programme that have undertaken control actions, without enforcement, as verified by inspection and audit regimes.	80-90%	85%	85%	85%	85%	
Level of land occupier compliance with Regional Pest Management Strategy rules as measured by the number of directions issued.	30	<50	<50	<50	<50	
Provide community and industry awareness of pest management responsibility through communication, education and advocacy.	% of planned educational programmes (including public campaigns, fact sheets, web site) are completed annually.	New measure	90%	90%	90%	90%

Levels of Service apply to the period of this plan. Changes to targets, and to levels of service overall, will be reviewed periodically to reflect any changes to the operating environment and/or community expectations.

ACTIVITY GROUP: Environmental Policy and Information

Operating and Capital Costs and Funding Forecast (\$000's)										
Environmental Policy and Information	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Operating Costs										
Environment Policy	1,341	1,475	1,568	1,607	1,646	1,695	1,728	1,774	1,827	1,876
Environment Science and Monitoring	2,329	2,393	2,454	2,504	2,564	2,637	2,692	2,763	2,839	2,900
Biosecurity (Pest Management)	1,261	1,350	1,348	1,381	1,413	1,452	1,522	1,522	1,564	1,603
Total Operating Costs	4,931	5,218	5,370	5,492	5,623	5,784	5,942	6,059	6,230	6,379
Funded by										
Rates	4,259	4,548	4,699	4,831	4,976	5,133	5,290	5,414	5,588	5,738
General Revenues Applied	561	556	555	543	529	530	534	528	526	530
Subsidies & Grants	10	10	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12
Other Revenue	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Revenue	4,831	5,115	5,266	5,386	5,517	5,675	5,837	5,955	6,127	6,281
Operating Deficit Funded from Reserve	100	103	104	106	106	109	105	104	103	98
	4,931	5,218	5,370	5,492	5,623	5,784	5,942	6,059	6,230	6,379
Capital Expenditure										
Environment Science and Monitoring	49	51	52	53	54	55	57	58	59	61
Total Capital Expenditure	49	51	52	53	54	55	57	58	59	61
Funded by										
Depreciation Reserve Transfer	49	51	52	51	49	50	47	44	41	35
Other Reserve Transfers	-	-	-	2	5	5	10	14	18	26
	49	51	52	53	54	55	57	58	59	61