



STAFF REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Subcommittee

FROM: Lindsay Vaughan, Policy Planner

REFERENCE: B102

SUBJECT: **RPMS OPERATIONS PLAN FOR 2005 / 2006 – REPORT EP05/11/13** – Report prepared for 16 November 2005 Meeting

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to introduce the 2005 / 2006 Operational Plan and to outline a number of the upcoming issues.

2. BACKGROUND

The Biosecurity Act 1993 requires councils to produce an Operational Plan for the current year describing how it will implement the Strategy.

3. OPERATIONAL PLAN 2005-2006

- The budget for this year has increased to \$316,600, an increase of \$19,100. This is due to the need for additional resources to deal with a wider range of pests and the need to support Biosecurity NZ and its contractors in dealing with new incursions, such as rock snot (*Didymosphenia geminata*) and sea squirt (*Styela clava*).
- Reorganisation of central government biosecurity responsibilities has seen Biosecurity NZ, a division of MAF, take over responsibilities for biosecurity work previously undertaken by the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries. The Council has negotiated a contract with Biosecurity NZ to carry out surveillance of hornwort. A separate contract will be required if treatment is required. Eradication of hornwort infestation from the Moutere Stream and from local ponds remains the objective.
- Biosecurity NZ is continuing to liaise with regional councils as they work through a number of issues. These include a Memo of Understanding on carcass disposal in the event of a foot and mouth outbreak, clarifying responsibility for the management and funding of pests once they are no longer classified as unwanted organisms, and responsibility for management of marine pests. The Biosecurity Act is currently under review and it may end up being rewritten.

- Increased effort is being put into pest management at sites of high public value. The Torrent Bay programme in particular continues to grow and Council Biosecurity Officers will continue to work with local residents and DoC staff on an enhanced animal pest control programme. Contributions, both financial and in-kind, from the Department of Conservation and local residents, support this programme; funding from the Biodiversity Fund will assist in the ongoing control of wilding pines and pest animals. The objective is to bring back the dawn chorus to this attractive and popular site, providing benefits to both landowners and the general public, and to stop the spread of weeds into adjoining areas of Abel Tasman National Park.
- Biological control is expected to provide the only viable long term control for a range of difficult-to-control pests. Good results have been achieved with pest plants like ragwort, but trials on Old Man's Beard with a range of biocontrols have been disappointing, and traditional methods involving physical removal and herbicide treatment continue to be used. Council Biosecurity Officers continues to work with landowners, community groups and Department of Conservation staff, to slow its spread in the upper reaches of the Motueka catchment and in Golden Bay.
- A major issue for this year is the five-yearly review of the Regional Pest Management Strategy. Meetings will be held with all major stakeholders to discuss changes to the Strategy, recognising that the inclusion of additional pest will reduce the effort going into the management of existing pests, unless additional resources are made available. Public meetings will also be held in Nelson, Richmond and Takaka. A subcommittee of councillors from Tasman District and Nelson City will consider a range of recommendations on changes to the Strategy. These changes will then go into a Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy and this will be available to all interested parties in early 2006. Submissions will be heard by the subcommittee who will decide on any further changes to the Strategy. Any appeals will be heard by the Environment Court. These will be incorporated in 2006 – 2010 Tasman - Nelson Regional Pest Management Strategy.

4. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

Approve the Regional Pest Management Operational Plan for 2005-2006.

Lindsay Vaughan
Policy Planner / Biosecurity Co-Ordinator