



# Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022

Pest Animals and Pest Plants

Operational Plan 2009/10

Biosecurity Department

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

The Greater Wellington Regional Council Pest Management Strategy 2002–2022 (the strategy) was prepared in accordance with the Biosecurity Act 1993. The original strategy was approved by Greater Wellington on 17 September 2002. The five year review of the current strategy was adopted by resolution on 9 March 2009 and became operative on 12 June 2009.

This Operational Plan seeks to implement the first year of the reviewed strategy, and year eight of the overall strategy document. The reviewed strategy has added to, expanded and updated the original species and the corresponding aims and objectives of the strategy.

## **1.2 Linkage to the Regional Pest Management Strategy**

This Operational Plan has been prepared in accordance with section 85 of the Biosecurity Act 1993. The Plan identifies and outlines the nature and scope of activities Greater Wellington intends to undertake in the implementation of its Regional Pest Management Strategy for the financial year 2009/10.

The strategy contains objectives specific to individual pests and outlines the means by which Greater Wellington, as Management Agency, will achieve those objectives.

The strategy has clearly defined rules to be met by all land occupiers. Greater Wellington has responsibility to ensure land occupiers are aware of, and meet, their obligations for pest management on their properties. Greater Wellington can also undertake pest control operations where there is recognised regional benefit.

## **1.3 Implementation**

The purpose of the Operational Plan is to implement the Regional Pest Management Strategy for the Wellington region. The principal objectives are to minimise the actual and potential adverse and unintended effects of pests on the environment, the economy and the community, and maximise the effectiveness of individual pest plant and pest animal management via a regionally co-ordinated response.

## **1.4 Review**

The Operational Plan will be reviewed and reported on annually. The Plan may be amended to ensure that the objectives of the strategy will be achieved within its term. The Biosecurity Amendment Act 1997 allows Greater Wellington to make minor changes to the strategy, provided that it is satisfied that the change will not have any significant effects on the rights and obligations of any persons.

The strategy must be reviewed at least once every five years.

## **1.5 Integration with Annual Plan**

As far as practicable, the Operational Plan has been integrated with Greater Wellington's Annual Plan. The Annual Plan also provides an overview of related pest management activities for the 2009/10 year. Implementation costs are included in the Annual Plan.

## **1.6 Areas of responsibility**

This plan and the strategy are based on the following core areas of Greater Wellington's responsibility.

- **Regulation (standards and enforcement)**  
Standards, rules and restrictions are set and compliance enforced with penalties, when and where necessary.
- **Inspection and monitoring**  
Regular property inspections ensure that rules and regulations are being met and changes in pest densities are determined over time.
- **Direct control**  
Greater Wellington funds and undertakes pest control in some circumstances as a service for regional benefit.
- **Advice and education**  
Free advice is given to raise awareness of pest problems and to provide land occupiers with the information to control their own pests.
- **Community initiatives**  
Guidance and support is provided for community driven initiatives to control pests.
- **Cost recovery**  
A full cost recovery operational service is available for pest control.
- **Biological control**  
If approved biological control agents become available, then Greater Wellington may elect to utilise them. Biocontrol is currently a key tool in the management of various pest plants and rabbits.

## **1.7 Principle Legislation and Policy references**

- Biosecurity Act 1993 and amendments
- Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002–2022.

## 2. Regional Pest Management Strategy Review

Under the Biosecurity Act the Regional Pest Management Strategy (the strategy) is required to be reviewed every five years following the commencement date, or where it has been five years since it was reviewed. The five year review of the Greater Wellington strategy commenced in 2006, with the release of an initial consultation document. This was followed by the publication of a proposed strategy document.

Following consideration of public submissions on the proposed strategy, amendments made as a result, and acceptance of Greater Wellington's decisions, the final reviewed strategy was publicly notified and became the current strategy in June 2009.

### 2.1 How the pest species were decided

A cost-benefit analysis (CBA) was undertaken for all new species proposed for the strategy. This process decides what control, if any, is to be undertaken and what level of management is needed for the species. The CBA works in conjunction with the infestation curve, which designates the different management policies. The infestation curve has been updated in the five year review strategy.

#### Expanded infestation curve for the proposed RPMS:

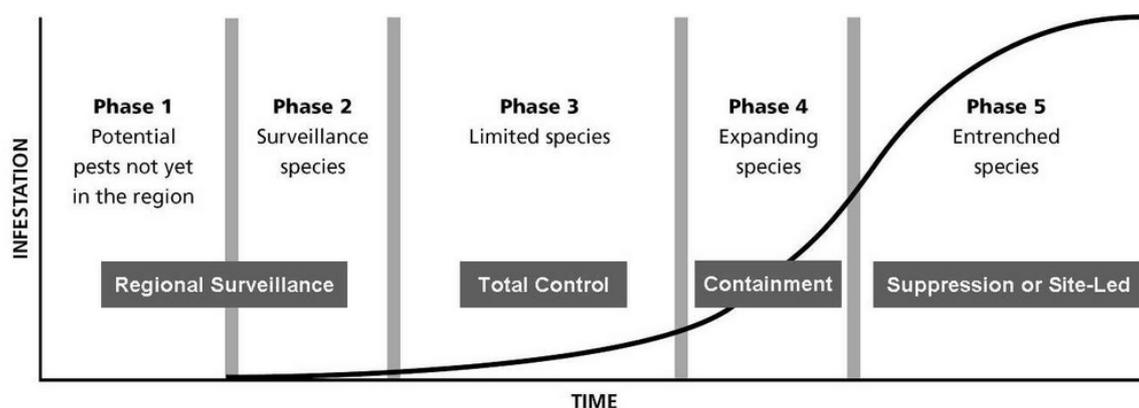


Figure 1: Phases of a pest through time in relation to its appropriate management. Adapted from Greater Wellington's Regional Pest Management Strategy, published April 2003.

Infestation phase	Phase characteristics	Management policies
Phase 1	Potential pest not currently in the region	Regional Surveillance
Phase 2	Recent arrival limited in distribution	Regional Surveillance
Phase 3	Limited in distribution and density	Total Control
Phase 4	Established but have not reached full distribution	Containment
Phase 5	Widespread or entrenched in most or all available habitat	Suppression or Site-Led

### **2.1.1 Changes to pest animal species:**

**Regional Surveillance** – Argentine ant, Australian subterranean termites, Darwin’s ant, red-eared slider turtle are all new additions to the strategy.

**Total Control** – rooks have been moved from containment control.

**Site-Led Biodiversity** – possums, feral goats, feral deer, feral pigs, feral and unwanted cats, gambusia and Koi carp have all been moved from KNE led species.

**Site-Led Human Health** – wasps are a new addition, and magpies have been moved from solely Site-Led.

### **2.1.2 Changes to pest plant species:**

**Regional Surveillance** – an extensive list has been added.

**Containment Species** – the containment zones for boneseed, evergreen buckthorn, hornwort and sweet pea have all changed.

A new containment zone for Hutt City has been developed to allow Hutt City Council to continue service delivery on selected species (old man’s beard, banana passionfruit and cathedral bells).

**Site-Led Boundary Control** – banana passionfruit, cathedral bells, nodding thistle, old man’s beard and wild ginger have all been moved from the suppression category. Changes have been adopted to the clearance distances for gorse.

**Site-Led Human Health** – blackberry and hemlock are new additions to the strategy.

## **2.2 How this affects the Operational Plan Report**

The new species and change in categories have been included in this 2009-2010 Operational Plan. The species are generally collated by category, but individual species or projects with a considerable investment are listed separately to provide greater transparency of spending.

### 3. Pest Animals

#### 3.1 Performance targets and measures

##### 3.1.1 Surveillance species

**Aim:** To prevent the establishment or minimise the impact, and prevent the further spread, of animal surveillance species in the region at a cost of \$44,800

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To monitor for the presence of surveillance species within the Wellington region.</li><li>2. To monitor and manage those surveillance species already present in the Wellington region.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the Surveillance species.</li><li>• Record and report any incidences of the Surveillance species in the region.</li><li>• Investigate the feasibility of eradication if a Surveillance species is detected within the region.</li></ul>

##### 3.1.2 Total Control species – rooks

**Aim:** Total control of rooks in the Wellington region at a cost of \$72,800

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To manage rooks to levels that protect economic values in the region.</li><li>2. Total Control of rooks within 25 years in the Wellington region.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery where rooks are known to exist.</li><li>• Survey rook populations annually in areas where they are known to exist, and where new infestations are reported.</li><li>• Support appropriate research initiatives, including biological control should it become available.</li><li>• Ensure compliance with the strategy rules in order to achieve the strategy objectives.</li><li>• Encourage Horizons Regional Council to actively pursue management of rooks within their region, that complements Greater Wellington's Total Control programme.</li><li>• Annually inspect pet shops and rook keepers to prevent sale and/or breeding of rooks.</li></ul>

### 3.1.3 Suppression species – rabbits

**Aim: To minimise the adverse impacts of feral rabbits at a cost of \$114,240**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<p>1. Ensure that no area in the region exceeds Level 5 on the Modified McLean Scale at any one time.</p> <p><b>Refer to Appendix 2</b> for the Modified McLean Scale of rabbit infestation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery to control rabbits on riverbeds, esplanades or similar public commons to ensure that rabbits do not exceed Level 5 of the Modified McLean Scale.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with the strategy rules in order to achieve the strategy's objectives.</li> <li>• Survey land in high to extreme rabbit prone areas to determine the extent of rabbit infestation.</li> <li>• Make occupiers aware of their responsibilities for rabbit control.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat rabbits pose to the region.</li> <li>• Release biological control agents for the control of feral rabbits when appropriate.</li> <li>• Support research initiatives including biological control.</li> <li>• Annually inspect pet shops to prevent the sale of feral rabbits.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.4 Site-Led species – human health - magpies

**Aim: To manage magpies to minimise adverse human health and environmental impacts in the Wellington region at a cost of \$44,800**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respond to reports of magpies attacking members of the public within 10 working days.</li> <li>2. Supply traps to occupiers wishing to undertake their own control.</li> <li>3. Establish representative population trend monitoring sites for magpies.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery of magpies within 10 working days where there is known to be a threat of injury to members of the public, or complaint(s) are made to that effect.</li> <li>• Respond to landowners wanting to undertake magpie control within 15 working days of receiving a request for information and/or assistance.</li> <li>• Provide advice, education and assistance to occupiers wanting to undertake magpie control.</li> <li>• Support appropriate research initiatives into magpie impacts.</li> <li>• Annually inspect pet shops to prevent the sale of magpies.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.5 Site-Led species – human health - wasps

**Aim: To minimise the adverse human health and environmental impacts of wasps at selected sites at a cost of \$5,600**

Objective	Means of Achievement
1. To reduce the anti-social and adverse environmental impacts of common and German wasps in the Wellington region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advice and education to occupiers wanting to undertake wasp control.</li> <li>• Provide a referral service to landowners/occupiers who require wasp control.</li> <li>• Support research initiatives into the human health impact of wasps in the Wellington region.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.6 Site Led – Mount Bruce (Pukaha) predator buffer

**Aim: Complement the native flora and fauna restoration programme undertaken by the Department of Conservation, Rangitaane o Wairarapa and the National Wildlife Trust at the Mount Bruce Scenic Reserve at a cost of \$40,320**

Objective	Means of Achievement
1. To enhance the survival of native flora and fauna species in and around the Mount Bruce Scenic Reserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a predator control programme over an area of approximately 2,223 hectares that is contiguous to the Mount Bruce Scenic Reserve.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.7 Site Led – biodiversity – feral and unwanted cats

**Aim: Minimise the biodiversity impact of feral and unwanted cats at a cost of \$28,000**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of feral and unwanted cats on the native fauna of the Wellington region.</li> <li>2. Prevent the establishment of unwanted cat colonies in areas of ecological significance.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat feral and unwanted cats pose to the native fauna of the region.</li> <li>• Undertake direct control of feral and unwanted cats by service delivery as part of the integrated pest management of KNEs and other selected sites.</li> <li>• Provide financial assistance to domestic cat desexing programmes in partnership with select organisations and businesses.</li> <li>• Work with communities to remove populations of stray or unwanted cats.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.8 Site Led – biodiversity – possum

**Aim: To minimise the adverse impacts of possums in areas of ecological significance and maintain accrued biodiversity and economic gains in the Wellington region at a cost of \$55,550**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To address the adverse impacts of possums in selected areas for catchment functions, biodiversity and economic prosperity.</li> <li>2. To minimise the adverse environmental impact of possums in areas of ecological significance in the region.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery in sites of ecological significance in agreement with the landowner/occupier.</li> <li>• Support the establishment of new possum control programmes, in collaboration with landowners, in areas which have historically received bovine Tb vector control and now meet the Animal Health Board criteria to be declared Tb free.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat possums pose to the region.</li> <li>• Provide advice, education and assistance to occupiers wanting to undertake possum control.</li> <li>• Provide a referral or cost recovery service to landowners/occupiers who require possum control.</li> <li>• Support research initiatives including biological control.</li> <li>• Annually inspect pet shops and other outlets to prevent the sale of possums.</li> </ul>

**Explanatory note:**

1. The cost of possum control associated with this Site-Led – biodiversity – possum category will only be for possum control carried outside the Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) programme.  
  
The management policy outlined in "Means of Achievement" to establish new possum focussed control programmes in declared bovine Tb free areas is not scheduled to commence until the 2010-2011 financial year.
2. This Operational Plan has a Site-Led category for Key Native Ecosystems (KNEs), Reserves and Forest Health with the aim of protecting indigenous biodiversity in a comprehensive range of KNEs throughout the Wellington region.
3. Possums, together with rats and mustelids are the principal target species in KNE management areas. This holistic management regime through multi species control makes it impracticable to separate and allocate specific costs to specific pests.

### 3.1.9 Site Led – biodiversity species

Feral and unwanted cats, feral deer, feral goats, feral pigs, gambusia and Koi carp

**Aim: To minimise the adverse environmental impacts of the Site-Led – biodiversity species in sites actively managed for ecological health at a cost of \$19,600**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To minimise the adverse environmental impact of Site-Led biodiversity species in actively managed KNEs or on Territorial Local Authority reserves with the owners consent.</li> <li>2. Work with the Department of Conservation and other agencies to prevent the release or spread of these species.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce densities of select Site-Led – biodiversity species in KNEs and Territorial Local Authority reserves.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat Site-Led biodiversity species pose to the region.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.10 Site Led – Key Native Ecosystems, Reserves and Forest Health

**Aim: To protect indigenous biodiversity in a comprehensive selection of Key Native Ecosystems and Reserves at a cost of \$561,120**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Achieve a measurable improvement in the ecological health and diversity of KNEs and reserve areas using a range of suitable indicators.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure KNEs are legally protected into perpetuity.</li> <li>• Establish and implement integrated pest management plans for all KNEs and selected reserves.</li> <li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery of pests identified in the management plan for KNEs and reserves.</li> <li>• Facilitate the involvement of community groups where appropriate.</li> <li>• Coordinate site management with other biodiversity initiatives where possible.</li> <li>• Use biological control agents where appropriate, and support relevant biological control research initiatives.</li> <li>• Monitor site recovery using a range of ecological indicators.</li> <li>• Manage external pressures that are inconsistent with KNE and reserve management objectives.</li> <li>• Provide public education and advice to foster biodiversity management outside formal KNE and reserve areas.</li> <li>• Maintain holistic management in existing managed KNE and reserve areas.</li> <li>• Where KNEs are identified on Territorial Local Authority land, seek funding from the relevant authority to form financial partnerships.</li> </ul>

## 4. Pest Plants

### 4.1 Performance targets and measures

#### 4.1.1 Surveillance species

**Aim: To determine the distribution and means of control for Regional Surveillance pest plants within the Wellington region at a cost of \$294,032**

Objectives	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To carry out a Regional Surveillance pest plant programme to determine the status of these species within the Wellington region.</li> <li>2. To carry out a trial control programme to ascertain the best method(s) for controlling selected Regional Surveillance pest plants within the region.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify new sites of Regional Surveillance pest plants by Greater Wellington Biosecurity officers, the public, or through the Regional Surveillance pest plant programme.</li> <li>• Undertake a control trial programme on selected Regional Surveillance pest plants within the region.</li> <li>• Undertake training and research to be conversant with the identification and biological characteristics of all Regional Surveillance pest plants.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat posed by Regional Surveillance pest plants to the region.</li> <li>• Annually inspect all plant outlets and markets within the region to prevent the sale and/or propagation of Regional Surveillance pest plants.</li> <li>• Report outcomes of investigations into new incursions or species known to be established in the region.</li> <li>• Use biological control agents where appropriate, and support relevant biological control research initiatives.</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.2 Total Control species

**Aim: To control all Total Control species within the Wellington region at a cost of \$389,317**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To control all Total Control species at all known sites on an annual basis.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On an annual basis undertake direct control by service delivery of all Total Control species at all known sites within the region.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat posed by Total Control species to the region.</li> <li>• Identify new sites of Total Control species through incidental reports by Greater Wellington Biosecurity officers, the public, or through the Regional Surveillance pest plant programme delimiting known infestation sites.</li> <li>• Annually inspect all plant outlets and markets within the region to prevent the sale and/or propagation of Total Control species.</li> <li>• Use biological control agents where appropriate, and support relevant biological control research initiatives.</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.3 Containment species

**Aim: To control all Containment species outside the Containment zones within the Wellington region at a cost of \$234,717**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<p>1. Control all Containment species at known sites outside the Containment zones on an annual basis subject to successful control trials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery of Containment species outside the Containment zone within the region on an annual basis.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat posed by the Containment species to the region.</li> <li>• Identify new sites of Containment species outside the Containment zones through incidental reports by Greater Wellington Biosecurity officers, the public, or through the Regional Surveillance pest plant programme.</li> <li>• Annually inspect all plant, animal outlets and markets in the region to prevent the sale and/or propagation of the Containment species.</li> <li>• Use biological control agents where appropriate, and support relevant biological control research initiatives.</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.4 Site-Led - boundary control and human health species

**Aim: To minimise the adverse impacts of Site-Led boundary control species and the risk to human health of species in specific situations throughout the Wellington region at a cost of \$162,974**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<p>1. Prevent the spread of Site-Led boundary control species onto properties that are clear, or being cleared of boundary control species.</p> <p>2. Prevent the spread of Site-Led human health species onto properties that are clear, or being cleared, of human health species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action complaints received to within the parameters of the Regional Pest Management Strategy.</li> <li>• Provide information and publicity to enhance public awareness of the threat posed by Site-Led boundary control and human health species to the region.</li> <li>• Annually inspect all plant outlets and markets within the region to prevent the sale and/or propagation of Site-Led boundary control and human health species.</li> <li>• Use biological control agents where appropriate and support relevant biological control research initiatives.</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.5 Site-Led – Key Native Ecosystems, Reserves and Forest Health

**Aim: To protect indigenous biodiversity in a comprehensive selection of Key Native Ecosystems and Reserves at a cost of \$448,680**

Objective	Means of Achievement
<p>1. Achieve a measurable improvement in the ecological health and diversity of KNEs and Reserve areas using a range of suitable indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure KNEs are legally protected into perpetuity.</li> <li>• Establish and implement integrated pest management plans for all KNEs and selected Reserves.</li> <li>• Undertake direct control by service delivery of pests identified in the management plan for KNEs and Reserves.</li> <li>• Facilitate the involvement of community groups where appropriate.</li> <li>• Coordinate site management with other biodiversity initiatives where possible.</li> <li>• Use biological control agents where appropriate and support relevant biological control research initiatives.</li> <li>• Monitor site recovery using a range of ecological indicators.</li> <li>• Manage external pressures that are inconsistent with KNE and Reserve management objectives.</li> <li>• Provide public education and advice to foster biodiversity management outside formal KNE and Reserve areas.</li> <li>• Maintain holistic management in existing managed KNE and Reserve areas.</li> <li>• Where KNEs are identified on Territorial Local Authority land, seek funding from the relevant authority to form financial partnerships.</li> </ul>

## 5. Indicative costs and funding sources

The table below outlines indicative costs and funding sources:

<b>Revenue Sources</b>	<b>Pest Animals \$</b>	<b>Pest Plants \$</b>
General Rate	1,254,771	1,469,720
External Income <sup>1</sup>	172,800	39,000
Internal Income	151,000 <sup>2</sup>	21,000 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Total Revenue/Expenditure</b>	<b>1,578,571</b>	<b>1,529,720</b>

## 6. Implementation report

A report on the Operational Plan and the success or otherwise of its implementation will be prepared no later than five months after conclusion of the financial year. Copies of the report will be available to the public.

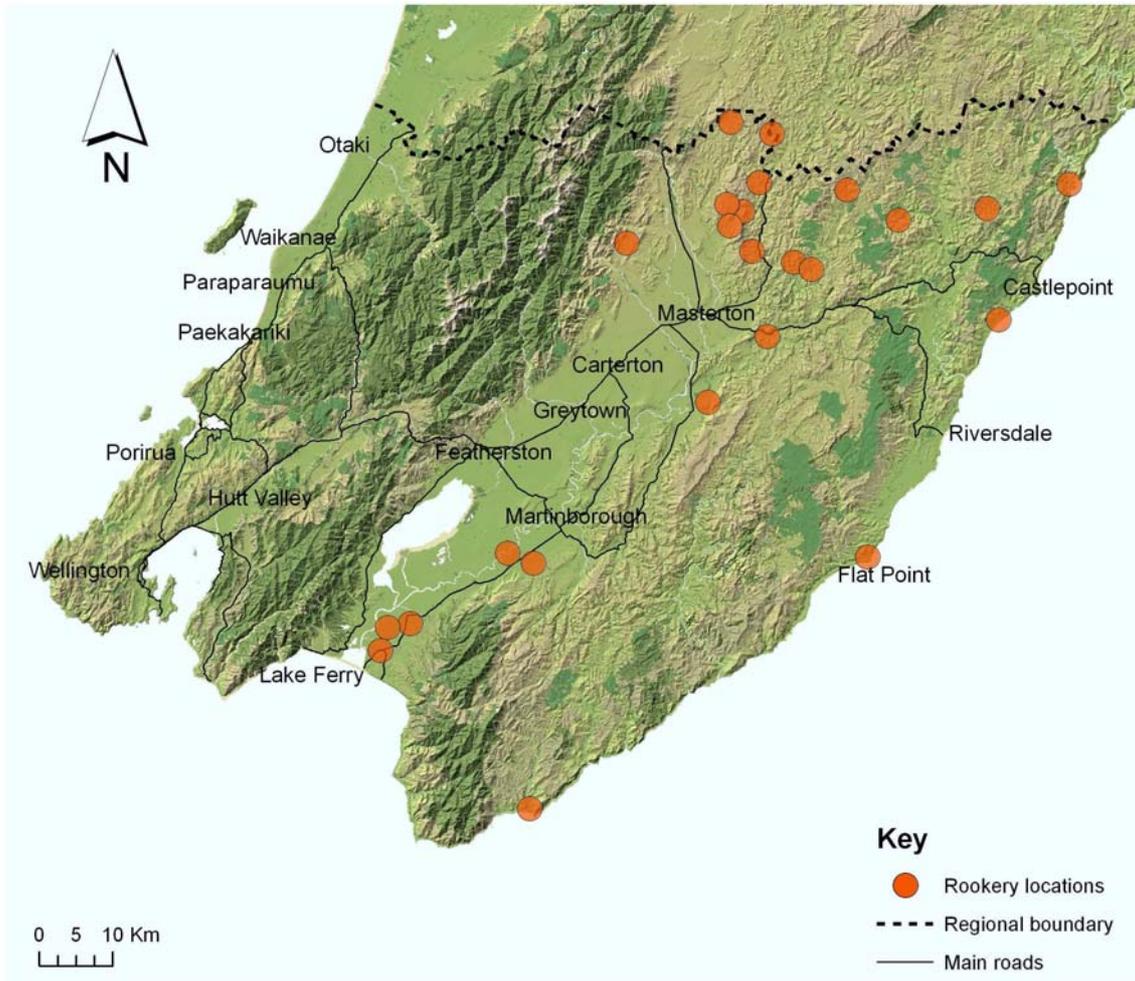
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<sup>1</sup> Cost recovery work, joint ventures, product sales

<sup>2</sup> Greater Wellington's Parks Department – forest health

<sup>3</sup> Greater Wellington's Environment Policy biodiversity condition funds

# Appendix 1



### Modified McLean Scale

Scale	Rabbit Infestation
1	No sign seen. No rabbits seen.
2	Very infrequent sign seen. Unlikely to see rabbits.
3	Sign infrequent with faecal heaps more than 10 metres apart. Odd rabbit may be seen.
4	Sign frequent with some faecal heaps more than 5 metres apart, but less than 10 metres apart. Groups of rabbits may be seen.
5	Sign very frequent with faecal heaps less than 5 metres apart in pockets. Rabbits spreading.
6	Sign very frequent with faecal heaps less than 5 metres apart over the whole area. Rabbits may be seen over whole area.
7	Sign very frequent with 2-3 faecal heaps often less than 5 metres apart over the whole area. Rabbits may be seen in large numbers over the whole area.
8	Sign very frequent with 3 or more faecal heaps less than 5 metres apart over the whole area. Rabbits likely to be seen in large numbers over the whole area.