

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee will be held on:

Date: Tuesday, 11 February 2020
Time: 10.00am
Venue: Tararua Room
Horizons Regional Council
11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North

STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

MEMBERSHIP

Chair	Cr RJ Keedwell
Deputy Chair	Cr JM Naylor
Councillors	Cr AL Benbow
	Cr EM Clarke
	Cr DB Cotton
	Cr SD Ferguson
	Cr EB Gordon
	Cr FJT Gordon
	Cr WM Kirton
	Cr NJ Patrick
	Cr WK Te Awe Awe
	Cr GJ Turkington

Michael McCartney
Chief Executive

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Full Agendas are available on Horizons Regional Council website
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for further information regarding this agenda, please contact:
Julie Kennedy, 06 9522 800

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REGIONAL HOUSES	Palmerston North 11-15 Victoria Avenue	Whanganui 181 Guyton Street		
DEPOTS	Levin 120-122 Hokio Beach Rd	Taihape 243 Wairanu Rd		
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AGENDA

1 Welcome / Karakia

2 Apologies and Leave of Absence

At the close of the Agenda no apologies had been received.

3 **Public Forums:** Are designed to enable members of the public to bring matters, not on that meeting's agenda, to the attention of the local authority.

Deputations: Are designed to enable a person, group or organisation to speak to an item on the agenda of a particular meeting.

Requests for Public Forums / Deputations must be made to the meeting secretary by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting. The person applying for a Public Forum or a Deputation must provide a clear explanation for the request which is subsequently approved by the Chairperson.

Petitions: Can be presented to the local authority or any of its committees, so long as the subject matter falls within the terms of reference of the council or committee meeting being presented to.

Written notice to the Chief Executive is required at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting. Petitions must contain at least 20 signatures and consist of fewer than 150 words (not including signatories).

Further information is available by phoning 0508 800 800.

4 Supplementary Items

To consider, and if thought fit, to pass a resolution to permit the Committee/Council to consider any further items relating to items following below which do not appear on the Order Paper of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded.

Such resolution is required to be made pursuant to Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended), and the Chairperson must advise:

- (i) The reason why the item was not on the Order Paper, and
- (ii) The reason why the discussion of this item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

5 Members' Conflict of Interest

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of the items on this Agenda.

Minutes of the second meeting of the eleventh triennium of the Strategy and Policy Committee held at 10.00am on Tuesday 10 December 2019, in the Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North.

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), AL Benbow, EM Clarke, DB Cotton, SD Ferguson, EB Gordon, FJT Gordon, WM Kirton, JM Naylor, NJPatrick, and WK Te Awe Awe.

IN ATTENDANCE Chief Executive Mr MJ McCartney
Group Manager
Corporate and Governance Mr C Grant
Committee Secretary Mrs JA Kennedy

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:
Mr R Strong (Group Manager River Management), Dr N Peet (Group Manager Strategy & Regulation), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Natural Resources & Partnerships), Mrs R Tayler (Manager Policy & Strategy), Ms A Matthews (Science & Innovation Manager), Ms C Morrison (Media & Communications Manager), Summer Holiday Students, members of the public, and a member of the press.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Cr Te Awe Awe to say a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

SP 19-6 *Moved* **Keedwell/Naylor**
That the Committee receives an apology from Cr Turkington.
CARRIED

PUBLIC FORUMS / DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS

There were no requests for public speaking rights.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

There were no supplementary items to be considered.

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

SP 19-7 *Moved* **Keedwell/Patrick**
That the Committee:
confirms the minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 12 November 2019 as a correct record, and notes that the recommendations were adopted by the Council on 26 November 2019.
CARRIED

Chair and Councillor Verbal Updates were not given at this meeting.

HORIZONS ONE PLAN: PLAN CHANGE UPDATE AND PROPOSED PANEL APPOINTMENTS

Report No 19-193

This item provided Council with an update on the progress of plan changes being advanced to iterate the Horizons One Plan (One Plan), and sought Council's approval to appoint three hearing panel commissioners to hear, consider, report and make recommendations on decisions on submissions to Council for Plan Change 2. Dr Peet (Group Manager Strategy & Regulation) introduced the item, took Members through the specific decisions outlined in the recommendations, and clarified the role of Council in the decision making process. He outlined the skill set and expertise requirements of the hearing panel to hear and determine all submissions, and explained the panel's delegations. Members had the opportunity to express their views around the recommendations and their preferences for a way forward. Dr Peet and Mrs Tayler (Manager Policy & Strategy) clarified Members' questions and concerns raised around any possible risk of conflict between the One Plan panel and a proposed government appointed panel to hear Essential Freshwater proposals, and the skill set requirements of the proposed One Plan panel. To reflect Members' discussion, a new recommendation e. was proposed.

SP 19-8 **Moved** **Patrick/F Gordon**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 19-193;*
- b. *approves the appointment of the hearing panel for plan change 2 (Existing Intensive Farming Land Uses) pursuant to section 34A of the Resource Management Act as follows:*
 - i. *Brent Cowie – Independent Commissioner and Chairperson;*
 - ii. *David McMahon – Independent Commissioner; and*
 - iii. *Elizabeth Burge – Independent Commissioner.*
- c. *delegates to the Hearing Panel all of the powers, functions and duties under the Resource Management Act 1991 to hear, consider and make recommendations on submissions and further submissions on Plan Change 2, including (without limitation) any powers necessary to address preliminary matters and/or conduct of the hearing;*
- d. *authorises the Chair of Horizons to sign the appointment order on behalf of the Council, inclusive of the following conditions of appointment:*
 - i. *The Hearing Panel must conduct the hearing in accordance with the most recent version of the "Making Good Decisions" Workbook, 4th edition including the "Chair's Supplement".*
 - ii. *The Hearing Panel can continue to hear and make decisions if one or more of the commissioners is unable to continue with the hearing provided that there is at least one member of the panel able to hear the submitters.*
- e. *requests the Chief Executive to provide further evidence of Te Ao Maori experience in the panel, and if limited, provide a further option for the Council to consider.*

CARRIED

STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE: OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TRIENNIUM

Report No 19-194

This report set out an approach to strategic governance for the triennium, including identification of strategic challenges, the likely influences on the policy programme over the three-year term and potential direction setting for the next Long-term Plan for the 2021-2024 period. Dr Peet (Group Manager Strategy & Regulation) and Mrs Tayler (Manager Policy & Strategy) introduced the item and outlined the framework for determining the three strategic challenges for Council to consider. Members discussed the proposed strategic challenges, provided their views, and sought clarification around their importance and reasons for being identified. After further discussion the word 'top' was inserted into recommendation b. to note that the priorities were the top three in addition to other Council priorities.

SP 19-9 **Moved** **Naylor/Ferguson**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 19-194 and Annexes.*
- b. *note that the three top strategic challenges proposed for Council to consider are:*
 - i. *Climate Change*
 - ii. *Fresh Water*
 - iii. *Information Management*
- c. *agree that the strategic challenges decided by Council will be included in the first instance in a strengthened triennial agreement with Territorial Authorities and their Mayors; providing greater direction of the key priorities and focus of the Council.*

CARRIED

DRINKING WATER

Report No 19-195

Ms Matthews (Science & Innovation Manager) spoke to a powerpoint presentation which provided Council with a progress report on drinking-water research undertaken to date as part of Horizons new drinking water research programme introduced through the Long-term Plan, and outlined the next steps for the regional programme. Dr Roygard (Group Manager Natural Resources & Partnerships) and Ms Matthews clarified Members' questions.

SP 19-10 **Moved** **Cotton/Patrick**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 19-195.*

CARRIED

RIVER MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL GRANT PROCESS

Report No 19-196

This item provided an overview of the Environmental Grants for River Works (EGWs) process. Mr Strong (Group Manager River Management) introduced the item for Members' information.

SP 19-11 *Moved* *Cotton/B Gordon*

That the Committee recommends that Council:

a. receives the information contained in Report No. 19-196 and Annex.

CARRIED

The meeting closed at 11.50am.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

Report No.	20-04
Decision Required	

DRAFT NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY: CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report summarises the key issues identified in the draft **National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB)**, and discusses the potential implications for the management of biodiversity in the Horizons Region and the work that may be required from the region's territorial authorities. The report seeks council agreement to key themes for Horizons' submission on the NPSIB and the process for councillor input into finalising the submission.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. A discussion document and the draft NPSIB was released for consultation on 26 November 2019. The draft NPSIB aims to provide a comprehensive, nationally consistent approach to addressing the decline of indigenous biodiversity. This focus on improving biodiversity outcomes is a welcome step that could provide greater focus, and support and recognition for indigenous biodiversity initiatives. Indigenous biodiversity is one of the four key issues identified in the Horizons One Plan.
- 2.2. The draft NPSIB could have a significant impact on how we manage and regulate indigenous biodiversity in the Horizons Region, changing the way we manage biodiversity through the One Plan. Further financial resource will likely be required to implement the draft NPSIB and this may come at the expense of on-the-ground biodiversity protection, maintenance, enhancement, monitoring and research.
- 2.3. Council staff have engaged with officials throughout the development of the draft NPSIB and are working with the Ministry for the Environment to "road test" the draft version. Horizons is also currently reviewing the Horizons non-regulatory biodiversity programme, including the sites that are targeted for protection and community projects that are included in the programme. This work will assist in positioning Horizons for changes signalled by national policy direction.
- 2.4. A copy of the proposed NPSIB and discussion documents can be found on the Ministry for the Environment website <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/consultations/nps-indigenous-biodiversity>.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20-04; and
- b. notes that the draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB) could have a significant impact on how the council manages and regulates indigenous biodiversity in the Manawatū-Whanganui region;
- c. agrees to the following key themes to be progressed in the development of the submission for the council on the draft:
 - i. sets out the approach to indigenous biodiversity regulation and management in the Horizons Region and discusses the efficiency gains that can be realised when taking an adaptive management planning approach;
 - ii. demonstrates the estimated financial impact for councils within the region to implement the draft NPSIB and the trade-offs that may need to be made;
 - iii. demonstrates the importance of non-regulatory interventions and partnerships in realising biodiversity gains.
- d. directs the Chief Executive to circulate the submission to council for comment via email and to finalise the submission with the Chair.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. There is no direct financial impact on existing budgets as a result of this report. However, if the draft NPSIB is implemented as proposed, there is likely to be significant implementation costs for Horizons, well beyond the existing resourcing for biodiversity activities. These costs have not been budgeted for in the Long-Term Plan.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Community engagement and stakeholder consultation is the responsibility of the Ministry for the Environment, as this is a national direction tool under the **Resource Management Act (RMA)**.

6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1. In the development of the One Plan, Horizons identified threatened indigenous biological diversity as one of the four keystone issues that was important to address. The One Plan took a new and innovative approach of adaptive management, clarifying roles and responsibilities of Horizons and the territorial authorities. Horizons, through the One Plan, established itself as a lead agency in the region to control activities in specified habitats and work with land owners to protect and enhance these habitats. The newly proposed NPSIB identifies territorial authorities as the lead agencies for a range of biodiversity planning work.
- 6.2. The Government has developed new draft national direction under the RMA that aims to halt the decline of indigenous biodiversity. This is a welcome step that could provide greater focus and support for indigenous biodiversity initiatives and recognise its importance as part of our natural environment.
- 6.3. The Government consulted on its first iteration of the draft NPSIB in 2011. However, this version was set aside following public consultation (thought to be primarily due to stakeholder reaction to the proposals contained in the draft document). The current

process began in 2016 and its aim was to reduce the variability between different local authorities' approaches to, and effectiveness in, providing for indigenous biodiversity and preventing decline. This work was supported by the inputs from the Biodiversity Collaborative Group, a pan-sector group that delivered a report with proposals and recommendations to the Government in 2018.

- 6.4. A copy of the proposed NPSIB and discussion documents can be found on the MfE website <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/consultations/nps-indigenous-biodiversity>.
- 6.5. Horizons is currently undertaking a review of our non-regulatory biodiversity programme, including the priority sites and community projects that are targeted for inclusion in the programme. To assist this, Horizons has undertaken a desktop regional stocktake of biodiversity that is tenure neutral (i.e. includes all land in the region, not just rateable land and includes (for example) the conservation estate). This provides us with a valuable opportunity to achieve a nationally consistent and systematic approach to the management of biodiversity including early identification of any gaps that need to be addressed, positioning the organisation in advance of the NPSIB.

7. SUMMARY OF THE DRAFT NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

- 7.1. The draft NPSIB outlines six objectives:
 - to maintain biodiversity;
 - to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in the management of indigenous biodiversity;
 - to recognise and provide for Hutia Te Rito (see below 7.3) in the management of indigenous biodiversity;
 - to improve the integrated management of indigenous biodiversity;
 - to restore indigenous biodiversity and enhance the ecological integrity of ecosystems; and
 - to recognise the role of landowners, communities and tangata whenua as stewards and kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity by:
 - a) allowing people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing now and into the future; and
 - b) supporting people and communities in their understanding of and connection to nature.

Policy considerations

- 7.2. The draft NPSIB includes direction around providing for social, cultural and economic wellbeing, for example by enabling existing activities. Regional councils and TAs must also have regard to opportunities for development and customary activities on Māori land.
- 7.3. It also specifies that local authorities will recognise Hutia Te Rito, a concept which encompasses the broader connections between indigenous biodiversity, the wider environment and people, and the role of kaitiakitanga and stewardship in the maintenance and enhancement of mauri. There are requirements for local authorities to involve tangata whenua and incorporate mātauranga Maori in RMA processes and biodiversity management; identify and manage taonga species and ecosystems; and to provide opportunities for sustainable customary use and take.
- 7.4. The draft NPSIB requires that regional councils, territorial authorities, tangata whenua and the community work together to prepare a regional biodiversity strategy to promote landscape scale enhancement and restoration. Further, it also sets out new biodiversity programme requirements, including:
 - recognising and protecting taonga species and ecosystems
 - surveying and managing highly mobile fauna;

- integrating decision making between TAs and regional councils;
- promoting maintenance, enhancement and restoration of **Significant Natural Areas (SNAs)** and other areas important for connectivity or buffering; and
- extended monitoring and reporting.

Responsibilities and timelines

- 7.5. Overall the NPSIB outlines a collaborative approach to the implementation of most policies with local authorities working together and with others. Where there is an indication of a lead agency these are noted below. Several of the policies have implementation timeframes, whilst others require local authorities to determine the timeframes for implementation. All councils are to implement the NPSIB in full by 2028.
- 7.6. Territorial authorities will undertake a districtwide assessment to identify and map SNAs within five years. Any plan change necessary will be notified within six years of the NPSIB commencement date. Additionally, every two years territorial authorities must notify a plan change to add any area that has been identified as an SNA in the meantime, and every ten years will undertake the districtwide SNA assessment and update district plans.
- 7.7. Regional councils will work collaboratively with territorial authorities, tangata whenua, communities and stakeholders, initiate a Regional Biodiversity Strategy within three years for completion within six years. Policies without set timeframes include: working with territorial authorities and tangata whenua to identify indigenous taonga species and ecosystems; working with territorial authorities to source and disseminate data for highly mobile species; assessing and setting restoration targets for urban and rural areas within the region where indigenous cover is less than ten per cent; and developing a plan, with territorial authorities and tangata whenua, for monitoring indigenous biodiversity.

8. CURRENT APPROACH TO INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN THE HORIZONS REGION

- 8.1. Like many other councils, Horizons has an indigenous biodiversity management framework that includes both regulatory and non-regulatory aspects as outlined in the Biodiversity Strategy of the One Plan. This strategy recognises regulatory and non-regulatory methods are complementary and necessary to maintain both biodiversity patterns and processes across the region's diverse landscapes.
- 8.2. There are two key aspects to the One Plan's approach that differ from the approach taken by other regions making the Horizons approach to biodiversity unique within New Zealand.

Adaptive management

- i. Regulation is based on an adaptive management approach. SNAs are not identified or mapped in the One Plan; instead it sets out criteria to assess the significance of areas of indigenous vegetation or habitats (Policy 13-5, One Plan) and describes an extensive range of habitat types that are considered to be significant i.e. rare, threatened or at-risk (Schedule F, One Plan). Resource consent is needed for activities that adversely affect any area of indigenous biodiversity or habitat that meets the criteria of rare, threatened or at-risk.
- The two main reasons for using an adaptive approach rather than specifying mapped SNA to underpin the regulatory framework were:
 - the inherent errors associated with relying on a desktop exercise to identify the sites; and
 - the cost (both time and money) that would be required to carry out an in-field assessment of all sites and areas in the region.

- Adaptive management provides a range of effective mechanisms for management and protection of indigenous biodiversity, and this rationale was tested through appeals on the One Plan to the Environment Court.
- The advantage of this adaptive management approach is that it recognises that some ecosystems are unlikely, due to rarity, location or size, to have been mapped and allows for their protection under One Plan rules.
- The disadvantage is that this relies on a proactive approach, to identifying protected ecosystems within an area, prior to activities being undertaken.

Leadership in regional biodiversity protection and management

- ii. The regional policy statement (Part I, Chapter 6) within the One Plan sets the framework for maintenance and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity in the region, establishing that *Horizons is responsible for providing the regional approach, including the policy framework and methods (rules and non-regulatory programmes)*.

- 8.3. The One Plan identifies territorial authorities in the region are responsible for notable and amenity trees, but not indigenous biodiversity generally. However, the policy recognises that both the regional council and territorial authorities have responsibility to give effect to Part 2 of the RMA. This requires that protection of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna is recognised and provided for as a matter of national importance. In practice, this generally results in district plans retaining the territorial authority's ability to consider the impacts of activities that Horizons has no role in, such as subdivision, on indigenous biodiversity.
- 8.4. The High Court, as a part of the One Plan process, confirmed that this allocation of responsibilities is appropriate and lawful under the Resource Management Act (section 62(1)(i)(iii)).
- 8.5. Further, Horizons has a non-regulatory programme to support its indigenous biodiversity work. The core goal of the non-regulatory biodiversity programme is to maintain and enhance the full range of indigenous biodiversity across the region which is consistent with requirements under the RMA 1991. This includes all the voluntary methods by which Horizons assists landowners and communities in the protection of indigenous biodiversity. Examples of activities include protective fencing, planting of native trees and shrubs and plant pest control (i.e. weeds).
- 8.6. Currently we aim to achieve this by delivering work across three components:
 - The biodiversity priority sites programme – a site led programme working with landowners to maintain and enhance priority sites on private land;
 - The biodiversity partnerships programme – where projects extend beyond the boundary of a single landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies;
 - Management of the regional park – Tōtara Reserve.
- 8.7. Other programmes within Horizons also contribute to biodiversity outcomes; for example the implementation of the regional Pest Management Strategy which controls plant and animal pests across the region.

9. KEY ISSUES OF THE DRAFT NPSIB AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ONE PLAN AND BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMES

Recognising te ao Māori and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi

- 9.1. The draft NPSIB aims to provide clarity to councils as to how they can meet RMA obligations to the Treaty of Waitangi. It provides a strong focus on providing for te ao Māori, mātauranga and tikanga Māori in decision making about indigenous biodiversity and recognising tangata whenua as kaitiaki. These objectives and policies are important, and it

is recognised that the mahi, for iwi, involved in consultation and the work required to implement the draft NPSIB within the timeframes proposed may not support meaningful and authentic engagement, especially given the potential workloads around treaty settlements and other consultation, e.g. freshwater policy.

SNA identification, mapping and protection

- 9.2. The framework of identifying mapped SNAs in district plans in the draft NPSIB is fundamentally different to the existing regulatory framework of the One Plan and second generation district plans within the region. This would require significant changes to the One Plan (both the Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plan) and the District Plans of territorial authorities across the region. Implementation timeframes following gazettal of the NPSIB are proposed to be five years for identification and mapping of SNAs and six years to notify a plan change.
- 9.3. Significance is defined in the draft NPSIB using a standard set of ecological criteria, allowing national consistency in the identification of SNAs. The thresholds for identifying what is a SNA could potentially include a substantial area of land. These thresholds when combined with the proposed effects management policies this may be unduly restrictive. The identification and mapping of all SNAs within each district in the region is required for inclusion in a territorial authority plan by 2026.
- 9.4. Rare, threatened or naturally uncommon ecosystems are amongst the most challenging to predict using current identification, mapping methods and technologies. The draft NPSIB accounts for continued discovery and regulatory protection of newly identified SNAs, an approach consistent with the adaptive management approach taken in the One Plan. However, under the draft NPSIB new SNAs will need to be progressed through district plan updates every two years, which could be cumbersome and costly.
- 9.5. Although a mapping approach is often claimed to provide greater certainty to landowners, there is little evidence to suggest that mapping sites results in better outcomes for biodiversity. While mapping provides a regulatory marker indicating that there may be an area of interest, the static nature of the mapping approach and process associated with the biennial plan updates may not necessarily be effective. Both the NPSIB and One Plan require a proactive approach to ensure that no area eligible for protection is present prior to activities being undertaken. An additional challenge may be the ability to gain access to land to undertake such assessments. There is also some concern as to whether Horizons may have to undertake consequential plan changes as a result of work undertaken by territorial authorities in the region.
- 9.6. Horizons' knowledge of the spatial distribution of biodiversity within the landscape has grown significantly over the past ten years. A key focus of the biodiversity programme over the past 18 months has been implementing a nationally consistent approach to improve processes around the identification of biodiversity in the region as the organisation prepares itself for expected national changes. Recently completed modelling and mapping work has identified further sites for the biodiversity team to assess. This has led the implementation team to completing two to three times more Rapid Ecological Assessments (REAs) than in recent previous years. However, we acknowledge there will likely be important biodiversity sites across the region that have not yet been captured by site visits or modelling.
- 9.7. Improvements in remote sensing technologies, combined with existing technologies such as LiDAR and oblique photography are likely to increase detection of and changes to biodiversity across the region. However, until high value biodiversity areas are able to be accurately identified, they remain vulnerable and the need for proactive identification of these areas prior to activities being undertaken will remain necessary, regardless of the policies in place to protect them.

Skills and expertise in biodiversity identification and management

- 9.8. In the Horizons Region there is an acknowledgement of the limited capability and capacity of territorial authorities to identify and manage biodiversity, particularly in the smaller councils that are resource constrained, but can have large areas of biodiversity within their district. Horizons houses a small specialist biodiversity team and a combination of strong integrated and related functions across land management, freshwater management, biosecurity and science to support the front facing role required to effectively manage indigenous biodiversity in the region. Horizons also recognises the need to grow capacity and expertise in order to better understand, respond to and provide for mātauranga Māori.
- 9.9. While districts may in some cases have comprehensive knowledge of the biodiversity in their area, regional councils have a better understanding of the diversity and spatial extent of regional biodiversity. The broad range of functions undertaken by territorial authorities does not easily lend itself to this level of specialisation, and mapping of sites may be difficult given the financial cost of undertaking the work and the availability of suitably-qualified ecologists available to implement these policies nationally within the timeframes outlined.

Restoration and enhancement of biodiversity

- 9.10. The draft NPSIB promotes the restoration and enhancement of degraded SNAs; areas that provide important connectivity or buffering functions and wetlands and former wetlands. It also requires that in urban and/or rural areas with less than 10 per cent indigenous cover, a percentage-based target is set to increase indigenous cover.
- 9.11. Whilst restoration is an important part of biodiversity management, the priority should be the protection (including maintenance and enhancement) of existing high value sites. This is particularly important in areas with high proportions of remaining indigenous vegetation where resources may already be thinly spread managing existing sites. The council already experiences resource constraints when attempting to protect and manage the important biodiversity sites already identified for attention. Over time, through annual plan processes, targets for priority site programmes have been revisited and longer timeframes adopted. Restoration and enhancement work requires continual maintenance to reap the benefits for indigenous biodiversity. In general, the more sites that are added to the programme the greater the ongoing maintenance cost. Where this maintenance has lapsed or is not sufficiently allocated the areas run the risk of becoming infested with weed and pest species.
- 9.12. The non-regulatory biodiversity programme review has begun a process to classify ecosystems present in the region by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) threat rankings. This allows for the prioritisation of critical ecosystems for protection (including maintenance and enhancement) and for potential restoration. Additionally, a system to identify management goals and costs for individual sites is being trialled. These steps, combined with recently introduced reporting on the level of maintenance across all sites, work to provide greater transparency around the level of active management of priority sites. This system of priority based protection, followed by the restoration of priority ecosystems (those with high IUCN threat rankings), is likely to yield better outcomes for biodiversity than the broader approach to restoration outlined in the NPSIB.

10. DISCUSSION

- 10.1. The draft NPSIB sets ambitious goals which will require considerable increases in local government resourcing, along with workforce capability and capacity development if they are to be implemented successfully and within the timeframes proposed in the document. Some policies, including both protecting highly mobile indigenous fauna and comprehensive monitoring, would require a level of national collaboration and central government support and coordination to ensure consistency and avoid duplication of effort.

The Government has acknowledged this, but is not yet able to outline what this implementation would mean in practice.

- 10.2. Work improving Horizons biodiversity monitoring programme is ongoing, but current monitoring is limited, focusing on irregular assessment of specific types of habitat. Nationally consistent approaches to monitoring are yet to be developed for many ecosystems. There is much work to be done locally and nationally and standard monitoring, standard information management processes and systems would also be beneficial.
- 10.3. The financial resource associated with implementing several of the NPSIB policies (particularly SNA identification, mapping and plan changes) may well come at the expense of on-the-ground biodiversity protection (compliance enforcement, maintenance, enhancement), education and support of community projects, and risks a decline in indigenous biodiversity protection across the region if resources are directed away from on-the-ground activity.
- 10.4. Council staff have utilised several opportunities to provide feedback during the development of the draft NPSIB to the Ministry for the Environment who are leading the development of this new policy. While the fundamental approach has remained largely the same, some minor changes have been made. We have also taken up the opportunity to road test the provisions with the Ministry for the Environment and the Department of Conservation, and this will be provided to the Ministry for the Environment, to guide ongoing policy development.
- 10.5. Submissions on the draft NPSIB are due by 14 March 2020 and there is a sector submission being prepared by Local Government New Zealand. Annex A provides an outline of the issues LGNZ is considering in their submission. Given the importance of indigenous biodiversity as an issue within our region and the regulatory leadership role Horizons has established in the One Plan for the region, this is an important issue for Council to formally consider and provide direction on the content of the Horizons submission.
- 10.6. Council staff propose that Horizons' submission should cover the following themes:
 - the approach to indigenous biodiversity regulation and management in the Horizons Region and the efficiency gains that can be realised when taking an adaptive management planning approach;
 - the estimated financial impact for councils within the region to implement the draft NPSIB, and the trade-offs that may need to be made (that could impact on indigenous biodiversity);
 - the importance of non-regulatory interventions and partnerships in realising biodiversity gains.

11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1. No consultation was required for the development of this report.

12. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 12.1. Submissions on the draft NPSIB are due by 14 March 2020. Following the direction of council on the content and context of the submission, council staff will provide a draft submission letter for consideration to councillors for comment by email and will work with the Chair to finalise the submission.

13. SIGNIFICANCE

- 13.1. This is not a significant decision according to the council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Dr Lizzie Daly
SENIOR SCIENTIST - ECOLOGY

Penelope Tucker
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ANNEXES

There are no attachments to this report.

Report No.	20-05
Decision Required	

HORIZONS BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report introduces Horizons current approach to biodiversity management with a focus on the non-regulatory biodiversity activities. The paper also overviews a review of non-regulatory biodiversity activity that has been underway for some time and seeks councils decision on one part of this review in relation to Horizons' Biodiversity Partnerships Programme. This programme includes the range of collaborative projects with other agencies and community groups to enhance biodiversity within the Region.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. Horizons' One Plan provides the guiding strategy for management of biodiversity by Horizons within the Region.
- 2.2. The One Plan identified biodiversity as one of the Big 4 key resource management issues for the Region. The One Plan identified that the Region has only 23 percent of its original forest cover and three percent of its original wetland habitat.
- 2.3. The biodiversity chapters of the One Plan outlined the Regional Council has taken a more proactive approach to coordination of indigenous biodiversity management in the Region and outlined a two tiered strategy involving (1) halting the decline and (2) active management. The strategy for halting the decline related to a range of specific habitats identified in the One Plan to be provided a high level of protection through rules from activities likely to cause any further loss or modification. The active management component sought to proactively manage sites through collaboration with landowners for works such as pest control and fencing and provision of economic incentives such as grants and rates relief.
- 2.4. The One Plan outlined both rules and non-regulatory methods to achieve the strategy and Horizons' current non-regulatory programme has broadly been built around the non-regulatory methods in the biodiversity chapter and contains the following programmes:
 1. The priority biodiversity site programme; a site led programme working with landowners to maintain and enhance priority sites on private land;
 2. The biodiversity partnerships programme, where projects extend beyond the boundary of a single landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies; and
 3. Management of the Regional Park – Tōtara Reserve.
- 2.5. All of these programmes are currently undergoing review with the biodiversity partnerships programme being the focus of this paper. This paper seeks the new Councils guidance around the goals of the non-regulatory biodiversity programme and the biodiversity partnerships programme within that. Further the paper seeks councillor input into the structure of the community biodiversity programme which is currently predominately based on working with a limited number of other agencies, iwi/hapu and community groups. The paper seeks to work with Council to confirm a process by which programmes are selected for funding within the available budget and what proportion of funding should be allocated to projects over different timeframes e.g. 10 years, 3 year or annually.
- 2.6. The paper also identifies potential ways the programme could be enhanced to further engage or mobilise a large number of community members and seeks councillors view on

apportioning a part of the budget for this type of activity and for the purpose of leveraging external funding. The paper also provides an overview of the existing projects (Annex A) that are funded within this programme as outlined in the Natural Resources and Partnerships (NRP) Operational Plan.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20-05 and Annex.
- b. Holds a council workshop to scope:
 - i. the strategic overarching goal for the non-regulatory biodiversity programme;
 - ii. the goal/s for the community biodiversity programme;
 - iii. the process and criteria for allocating funds to the biodiversity partnerships projects with other agencies and community groups;
 - iv. options for a broader programme of community engagement around biodiversity projects; and
 - v. options for the allocation of funding between projects that engage with community groups; initiatives that mobilise community members at an individual or household level; and ensuring budget is available to capitalise on opportunities that bring additional funding to projects.
- c. directs the Group Manager of Natural Resources and Partnerships to report back on work of the Councillor workshop to Council for final decisions around the matters identified in (b).

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. There are no financial impacts associated with this item. The paper does however relate to ensuring Councillor oversight of the efficiency and effectiveness of the expenditure of the biodiversity partnerships budget including identifying the strategic goals for this work and providing for a process by which projects are selected for ratepayer funding. In 2019-20 the biodiversity partnerships programme has a budget of \$1,001,336 including \$89,000 from external sources.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. One of the primary focuses of the biodiversity partnerships programme is enabling community and community groups to undertake work to enhance biodiversity. The current format of the programme provides for Horizons selecting a range of projects working with community groups and/or other agencies, however does not have component whereby a wider range of community engagement around biodiversity is included. One matter for consideration by Council is if there is a desire for a component of the budget to be utilised to increase the level of community engagement in biodiversity enhancement by methods other than directly engaging community groups.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 6.1. This item is not considered a significant business risk impact.

7. BACKGROUND

State of Biodiversity in the Region

- 7.1. The state of biodiversity in the Region has recently been reported in Horizons' [State of Environment](#) (SoE) report. The SoE report identifies that in total around 34 percent of the Region, 757,000 ha, remains under native cover. Native bush would once have covered 86 percent of the Region or around 1,912,000 ha and now less than 32 percent of the original bush cover remains taking the current extent to around 611,000 ha. Around 80 percent of this is estimated to be secondary cover and much of the remaining 20 percent is likely to have been modified by selective logging. For wetlands less than three percent, 700 ha of the Regions original 22,000 ha of wetland habitat remain.

Horizons Biodiversity Strategy

- 7.2. Horizons' current biodiversity management programmes are primarily driven from the strategy within the One Plan. The One Plan identified indigenous biodiversity as one of our four keystone issues. The One Plan employs both regulatory processes (rules) and non-regulatory measures (incentives) to protect, maintain or enhance our Region's biodiversity. The objectives, policies and methods for managing indigenous biodiversity, including the non-regulatory approach, are set out in Chapter 6 and Chapter 13 of the One Plan. This is consistent with the current obligations of Regional Councils under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).
- 7.3. Regulatory methods are delivered via plan rules, which control activities that have the potential to have an adverse effect on areas of the region that are of value in terms of their contribution to indigenous biodiversity. These rules are described in Chapter 13 of the One Plan with supporting information in Schedule F.
- 7.4. Many of the region's indigenous ecosystems have fallen below self-sustaining thresholds and, without management, the original ecosystem will collapse and disappear. The One Plan identifies that the regulatory framework is not enough to protect these areas. In order to maintain these indigenous ecosystems restorative management action is required and this is outlined in the One Plan as being contributed to by the non-regulatory biodiversity programme. The non-regulatory methods are outlined in Chapter 6 of the One Plan and include proactive management: maintaining and enhancing indigenous biodiversity in partnership with landowners and others.
- 7.5. Regulatory and non-regulatory methods are complementary and work together to ensure both biodiversity pattern and process are maintained across the landscape.
- 7.6. Biodiversity work, by its very nature, requires a 'whole of agency' approach. The Council has a number of existing programmes that work alongside the non-regulatory biodiversity programme delivering biodiversity outcomes on private land, rivers, streams and wetlands. Work is underway to identify further opportunities for alignment between these programmes. Whether it be governance, monitoring, research, implementation, enhancement, protection, or communication, advice and education, the protection and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity, practically every section of the Council contributes to the biodiversity outcomes for the region.
- 7.7. To date the guiding strategy for biodiversity implementation has been the One Plan with resourcing for the biodiversity strategy largely being determined through Long-term Plan and Annual Plan processes. Our understanding of biodiversity in the region has increased since the time of the development of the One Plan. In part the new knowledge has come from implementing the strategy and this knowledge adds to new information from the science programme of Horizons and others. In particular, knowledge has increased of the number and type of biodiversity sites as well as their condition and the threats that they face has grown over the last decade. This new information is now being used internally to implement a more strategic, and nationally consistent approach to biodiversity management. A further consideration for the next steps of the non-regulatory work

programme is the signalled requirements of the proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity which is currently going through a legislative process and is signalled to be finalised later this year.

Horizons' Non-Regulatory Biodiversity Programme

- 7.8. Central to Horizons biodiversity work across the region is the NRP Biodiversity Programme. This programme delivers work across three components:
1. The priority biodiversity sites programme; a site led programme working with landowners to maintain and enhance priority sites on private land;
 2. The biodiversity partnerships programme, where projects extend beyond the boundary of a simple landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies; and
 3. Management of the Regional Park – Tōtara Reserve.
- 7.9. Other programmes within the NRP group activity also contribute to biodiversity, for example science contributes greatly to the strategic develop of the programme, as well as data management and development of monitoring protocols. The possum, pest plant control programme contribute in terms of landscape scale pest control, and the freshwater and land management programmes contribute in terms of fencing, retirement and indigenous planting. Figure 1 illustrates existing work programmes within the NRP group that contribute to positive outcomes for biodiversity.

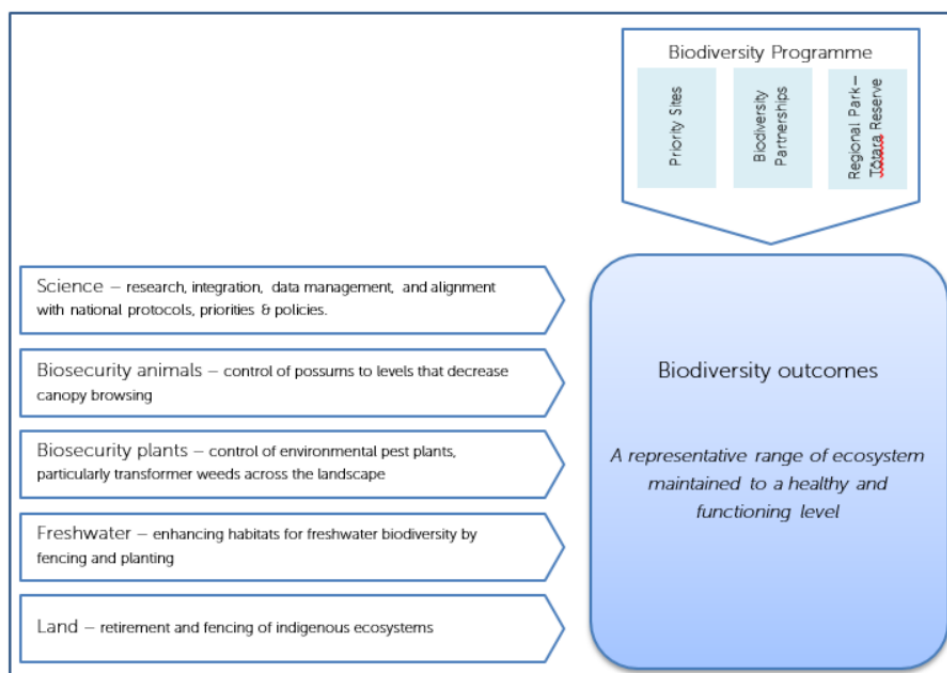


Figure 1: Illustration showing the contributions that programmes within the Natural Resources and Partnerships Group contribute to biodiversity outcomes across the region.

Biodiversity Programme

- 7.10. Over the past 18 months the biodiversity programme has been undergoing a review looking at ways to improve processes and biodiversity outcomes across the Region, whilst working to bring Horizons closer to meeting requirements under the proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity. The biodiversity programme review includes:
1. The priority biodiversity site programme; the development of a new and nationally consistent approach to selecting and managing priority sites across the Region. Reviewing the way sites are assessed in terms of their level of active management and introducing site management plans to assist with this.
 2. The biodiversity partnerships programme; confirming the strategic goals and providing for Councillors to review the decision making processes around which projects are funded and type of work being funded.
 3. Management of the Regional Park - Tōtara Reserve; development of a strategic plan by the advisory group to assist with prioritisation of activity within the work programme.
 4. Science support: providing research to develop and support the strategic direction; alignment with national direction and policies; assessing opportunities for integration with other programmes in the group; scoping of potential data management solutions; and assessing the proposed NPS – Indigenous Biodiversity to consider how this national policy direction compares to the current programmes (regulatory and non-regulatory).

Review of the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme

- 7.11. This item focuses on the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme, where biodiversity-related projects that extend beyond the property boundary of a single landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies. This programme has evolved through time and although there is no strategic overarching goal, the current suite of projects includes target sites or areas with environmental, social and cultural values. The accessibility or recreational potential of a site, is generally a factor in investment. Projects have been added to this programme over time through a range of mechanisms including Long-term Plan and Annual Plan processes. This paper seeks Councillors input to develop processes by which projects can be assessed alongside each other to provide a mechanism for allocating funding based on a set of strategic goals and criteria. This would also provide a mechanism for new potential projects to be considered for funding within the framework where the funding sought by projects currently exceeds the available budget.
- 7.12. The Biodiversity Partnerships budget accounts for over half (53%) of the total rate funding for the non-regulatory biodiversity programme. The programme is divided into two sections: biodiversity collaborations (\$490,094), and community biodiversity grants (\$135,852). Funding types are a mix of targeted and general rates. In addition to the specific projects, an amount is set aside (community biodiversity management), primarily for internal labour (staff costs) and vehicle costs to support these projects.
- 7.13. Whilst the current programme delivers biodiversity and community outcomes, a carefully developed strategic approach to the programme would likely deliver even greater benefits to biodiversity and communities within the region. Staff have undertaken a preliminary assessment to test this concept. To do this projects within the current programme were assessed for their relative contributions (low, medium, high) to each of the following:
1. Biodiversity value:
This measure included consideration of: the threat status of the ecosystem or protection for threatened species; if the project provided buffer protection for nearby taonga ecosystems or species; or provides habitat connectivity, or amenity value.

2. Biodiversity outcomes:

This was a measure of what the project delivered in terms of contribution to biodiversity management, including protection, restoration and enhancement. As outcomes are not measured for most projects management inputs were used as a proxy for outcomes.
3. Community empowerment:

This measure included consideration of: the level of active participation from the community; the accessibility of the site; and the educational values associated with the project.
- 7.14. This framework of assessing projects provided a useful mechanism to consider the relative benefits of projects and it was identified that some more detailed criteria will be required to ensure a robust repeatable ranking process can be undertaken. This paper is seeking a workshop with Councillors to assist with refining the process by which projects can be ranked to determine funding priorities. To finalise the process the outcomes sought from these projects will require further refinement and an underlying ranking criteria will need to be developed. Another consideration for Council is the duration of funding for the projects e.g. should projects be funded on an annual basis or should some be funded for longer periods of time e.g. Over the term of the Long-term Plan (10 years) or over the first three years of a Long-term Plan.
- 7.15. In summary staff suggest that council consider a review of the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme addressing:
 1. The development of a strategic overarching goal
 2. The format of the programme for example, implementing a three tiered funding structure:
 - a. identifying icon projects which will receive for a ten year period
 - b. projects that are funded for LTP duration (3 years)
 - c. projects that are funded for annually
 3. The development of a set of assessment criteria to assess projects against
 4. Assembling a Councillor panel or council process to annually assess projects against the developed criteria and make funding allocation decisions.
- 7.16. The proposed process is that Councillors hold a workshop to discuss the items identified above and this is reported back to a Council Committee meeting for decision making and that the new system be implemented from the start of the new financial year.
- 7.17. As a part of this process, staff are also seeking Councils view on the current approach of solely funding, directly with other agencies, community groups and not having a component of broader community engagement around biodiversity. An initiative such as this would seek to engage and mobilise community members at an individual or household level through activities such as urban pest control programmes or having an active programme of opportunities for community members to attend biodiversity type events e.g. [BioBlitz](#), planting days etc.
- 7.18. A further component of the biodiversity partnerships programme could be actively seeking external funding opportunities to assist with biodiversity enhancement projects including collaborative projects with other agencies and the community. Often a requirement of these types of funding programmes is the requirement to have a funding share and Councils view on utilising some of the biodiversity partnerships programme funding for this type of initiative is sought.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1. The decision to review the biodiversity partnerships programme is one that may be of considerable interest to the various parties that receive this funding at present and also to those that would seek funding should there be an opportunity for new projects to be funded.

9. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 9.1. It is proposed that a Council workshop be arranged for a time in March/April, and that the Group Manager of Natural Resources and Partnerships reports back to Council for final decisions to provide for the approach to be utilised in the 2020/2021 financial year that starts in 1 July 2020.

10. SIGNIFICANCE

- 10.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

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BIODIVERSITY – COORDINATOR

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ANNEXES

- A Biodiversity Partnership Programme Projects

Annex 1: Biodiversity Partnership Programme Projects

Biodiversity Collaborations

The seven biodiversity collaboration projects are outlined below.

1. Rangitikei Environment Group

HRC contribution: \$95,000 – targeted rate

The Rangitikei Environment Group (REG) carries out pest plant control works within the Rangitikei District with financial support from Horizons and Rangitikei District Council (RDC). Old man's beard (OMB) is the main focus for REG and work is split between urban, rural and public reserves (including roadsides). Urban sites are tackled in a manner that is almost identical to Horizons' Weedbusters Palmerston North programme. In rural areas, REG encourages and assists OMB Self-Help Groups with control works. REG also undertakes some walking track maintenance and native planting within RDC reserves.

2. Kia Wharite

HRC contribution: \$150,000

This project is a partnership between Horizons, DOC, and local iwi and landholders aimed at improving the health of more than 180,000 ha of private and conservation land within the Whanganui River catchment. It benefits threatened species such as the North Island brown kiwi and whio (blue duck), and has the additional benefit of improving overall biodiversity and forest health.

3. Weedbusters Palmerston North

HRC contribution: \$52,301

Weedbusters is a partnership between Palmerston North City Council, DOC and Horizons. It is a site-led urban weed programme primarily focused on the control of old man's beard, gunnera, wild ginger and banana passionfruit in the greater Palmerston North city and Feilding areas.

The public are our eyes and ears out in the field, identifying infestations and calling our freephone number to report weeds. Our staff visit all reported sites between November and April, control infestations, GPS the sites and log them for follow-up visits in the next control season. Occupiers visited are also given an information pack on weed control.

4. Tawata Mainland Island

HRC contribution: \$50,000

This project comprises approximately 100 ha of forest on land administered by the Tawata Whanau Trust and Taiaoroa I.T. Farm (formerly Titi Tihu Putere Farm). It is on the true left bank of the Whanganui River about 47 km southwest of Taumarunui. Whanganui National Park is on the other side of the river.

The project's goal is to restore the health of the forest, turning it into a wildlife sanctuary suitable for the reintroduction of lost species. With Horizons' support, the forest is now completely fenced off from stock and control is ongoing for possums, rats, mustelids and goats.

5. Waitarere Beach Community Project

HRC contribution: \$7,000 – targeted rate

The Waitarere Beach Progressive & Ratepayers Association (WBPRA) approached Horizons in 2010 about a problem with coastal wattle and other exotics invading the dunes and affecting views and the aesthetic appeal of the beach. Most of the weeds present were not among the plants that Horizons dealt with under the Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy and, therefore the Council had no mandate to control them.

Horizons commissioned an independent report and presented the findings to a public meeting with the Waitarere Beach community. The community agreed to pay a **targeted** rate to Horizons for the purposes of controlling the exotic plants and restoring the native plants on the dunes. The targeted rate has been used to control coastal wattle, yucca, cape ivy, lupin and other unwanted plants and to propagate native spinifex grass for replanting cleared areas of the dunes.

6. Pūkaha Mount Bruce

HRC contribution: \$26,779

Horizons and GWRC operate a possum and predator control buffer zone around the reserve. The Horizons contribution from the Biodiversity Partnerships budget this year is \$26,779 and is spent on pest animal control undertaken by our Regional Response team. Rates funding is.

Pest plant control in the buffer zone, which includes privately owned native forest, is managed by our Biodiversity team. The pest plant work is paid for from the Biodiversity Pest Plant Control budget as this site also features within our Priority Sites programme.

7. Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge

HRC contribution: \$109,010

The high significance of the Manawatu Gorge to many sectors of the community resulted in a collaborative approach to managing the area with the formation of the Te Āpiti Manawatu Gorge Biodiversity Project 2006-16. This has been further strengthened with the formation, in 2016, of the Te Āpiti Manawatu Gorge Governance Group to support the project. The Governance Group includes representatives from Horizons Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Rangitaane o Manawatu, Rangitaane o Tamaki nui a Rua, Kahungunu ki Tamaki nui a Rua, Palmerston North City Council, Tararua District Council, Manawatu District Council and a community representative.

Community Biodiversity Projects (\$135,852)

The Community Biodiversity project budget provides support for community groups to undertake biodiversity enhancement work. Descriptions of the projects supported under this budget are provided below. Rates funding for this entire budget is 50% General Rate and 50% UAC.

8. Te Potae o Awarua

HRC contribution: \$ 15,000

Te Potae o Awarua roughly translates to 'the protection of the Awarua lands' and is the name given to a joint initiative by the Aorangi Awarua Trust and the Department of Conservation. It is situated in the north-western part of the Ruahine Range in an area of high biodiversity value, and incorporates land administered by both the Trust and DOC. The project has developed into a predator control programme predominantly for protecting whio (blue duck) with

benefits also for kiwi. Horizons' funding support helps the Trust with the costs of servicing the stoat lines on their land and also helps with the cost of transporting volunteers to service the lines on public land.

9. Massey Hill

HRC contribution: \$ 5,000

A partnership between Horizons, Massey University, Fergusson Hall Presbyterian Trust and Palmerston North City Council, this project was the response to complaints about the extent of exotic weeds on the site. Weed control is ongoing and thousands of natives have been planted to improve the aesthetics and fill the gaps left by weed removal.

10. Turitea Reserve

HRC contribution: \$ 23,000

This project has an over-arching strategy to protect and enhance biodiversity values in Palmerston North's water supply catchment. It is a partnership with Palmerston North City Council and Horizons provides funding assistance for pest animal control and outcome monitoring within the reserve. Monitoring trends for pest levels and bird recovery have led to the formation of a group to investigate the reintroduction of species to the reserve.

11. Bushy Park

HRC contribution: \$ 20,000

Horizons' funding support assists Bushy Park Trust with the costs of their predator control programme. Additionally to the financial contribution HRC staff also provide advice on pest animal control, pest plant control and wetland restoration.

12. Kahuterawa Stream Biodiversity Restoration Project

HRC contribution: \$ 22,000

A partnership between Horizons, Massey University, C T Keebles Bush Trust, Rangitāne, and the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). The project aims to enhance the biodiversity values of the Kahuterawa Stream from the bridge at Linton to the confluence with the Manawatū River by revegetating the stream corridor with eco-sourced native plants. Massey University and NZDF provide additional income of \$8,000 each.

13. Foxton River Loop

HRC contribution: \$ 1,000

Advice and funding assistance to the Save Our River Trust and Wildlife Foxton Trust for weed control, revegetation plantings, fencing and environmental education initiatives.

14. Manawatū Estuary & Predator Project

HRC contribution: \$ 8,000

Horizons provides advice and funding assistance to the Manawatū Estuary Management Team for pest animal control, weed control and environmental education initiatives. The pest animal control is a predator trapping programme focussing on mustelids in and around Fernbird Flat and undertaken by our Regional Response Team.

15. Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park

HRC contribution: \$ 8,000

Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park is a valuable wetland forest remnant with strategic importance for the future walkway/cycleway network and recreational opportunities in and around Feilding. Horizons' Biodiversity Coordinator is an advisory trustee (no voting rights) on the Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust. Horizons provides advice on ecological matters and funding for educational signage, planting and pest plant control.

16. Ahimate Reserve

HRC contribution: \$ 7,000

This reserve was formerly called Waitoetoe Park. Horizons supports the Ahimate Reserve community with planting days, plant maintenance and weed control. Rangitāne and Palmerston North City Council are partners in the project.

17. Gate Pa Bush Restoration

HRC contribution: \$ 1,000

A partnership between Horizons, New Zealand Defence Force and Massey University to protect and enhance one of the rare tōtara titoki forests in our Region. Gate Pa Bush is located within the Ohakea Air Force base. Horizons provides assistance with weed control in the bush.

18. Ohau Beach Walkway

HRC contribution: \$ 1,000

The project is a partnership with Horowhenua District Council and the community to create a walkway from the end of Muhunua West Road to the beach. There is an opportunity to restore the natural vegetation sequence from the foredune to the road 900 m inland. Horizons will provide advice on restoration planting and funding for weed control and plant propagation.

19. Cape Turnagain

HRC contribution: \$ 10,000

This is a seven-part restoration project on the Cape, focusing on the restoration of coastal vegetation – specifically *Pimelea prostrata*, securing habitat for a moth endemic to Cape Turnagain; the control of invasive pest animal and plant species; and community education. The project runs from Horizons region into Hawke's Bay region. It runs through three properties and stretches along 14 km of rugged coastline. Work is focused on the restoration of 203 ha of coastal treeland, flaxland, dunelands and cliffs which are legally protected by QEII National Trust covenants. The three year project has a total budget of \$144,000 with Horizons committing to \$30,000, split over three years (i.e. averaging \$10,000 per annum) and 2019-20 will be the final year.

20. Moawhango River Willow Clearing

HRC contribution: \$ 5,000

This is an ongoing collaboration with Genesis to remove willows from the banks of the Moawhango River. The Horizons contribution to this project is \$5,000 per annum.

Community Grants (\$21,384)

This programme is designed to help community groups, schools, early childhood centres, and iwi/hapū groups with not-for-profit projects that enhance our region or encourage more people to engage with our natural environment. By providing funding and advice we are able to support the great work these groups do while encouraging more people to think about the ways we interact with our natural environment.

Community Grant applications are sought annually and guidelines have been developed to help determine whether a project could be eligible for a grant.

Iwi Biodiversity Grants (\$15,000)

This fund is designed to support iwi with environmental projects that enhance our Region's biodiversity. This budget may be allocated to other biodiversity work if suitable projects are not located over the year.

Report No.	20-06
Information Only - No Decision Required	

IWI QUARTERLY REPORT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report provides Council with an update on iwi matters in the region including progress in Treaty settlement negotiations, and ongoing iwi engagement. This quarter also provides information on some of the economic opportunities that iwi are advancing within the region.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. Settlement arrangement and negotiations within the region continue, with progress being made on the statutory acknowledgement drafting for Ngati Maniapoto, and continued preparation for Ngati Rangi Iwi Te Waiū o Te Ika (the Whangaehu River Catchment Strategy).
- 2.2. Engagement with iwi continues across the region, with agreement being reached for regular engagement with a number of Iwi this year, and a keenness to continue to build capability.
- 2.3. Iwi have been successful in seeking funds from government's economic initiative programmes (including the Provincial Growth Fund), as well as using their own resources in their efforts to provide benefits for their people.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20.06;
- b. notes that Te Arawhiti is due to distribute the Ngāti Maniapoto draft Deed of Settlement for discussion and an indication of support from Council;
- c. notes the economic opportunities that iwi are pursuing for the benefit of their people;
- d. notes that Horizons staff are developing a relationship agreement in partnership with Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho;
- e. notes that Horizons staff are in the initial stages of planning for an iwi regional hui.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. There are no financial impacts associated with this item.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Horizons engages with iwi and hapū across the region within Treaty of Waitangi settlement processes, as well as the ongoing relationship building, and normal business activities.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 6.1. There are no significant business risks impacts associated with this paper.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. The previous quarterly report provided Council with an overview of previous and ongoing Treaty settlements and negotiations. This report will provide an update on those activities, where appropriate, and discuss other general engagement matters.
- 7.2. Iwi, hapū and **Post Settlement Governance Entities (PSGE)** within the region are continually seeking opportunities that will benefit their people and are working on a range of initiatives that collectively contribute to the overall economic wellbeing of the region.

8. DISCUSSION

Treaty Settlements

- 8.1. **Ngāti Rangī** – have been engaging with other iwi that will participate in preparing the strategy for Te Waiū o Te Ika (the Whangaehu River). We are awaiting an update as to when the governance group, Ngā Wai Tōtā o Te Waiū, will start. There has been a suggestion of initiating a **Technical Advisors Group (TAG)**; this could comprise of members from iwi, appropriate central government agencies and the four territorial authorities. The TAG would likely be providing assistance with the process and feed in technical support to assist with strategy development, similar to the TAG of Te Awa Tupua.
- 8.2. **Ngāti Maniapoto** – the iwi is seeking to have statutory acknowledgements over all named waterways within their rohe. Late last year Te Arawhiti sought feedback on proposed wording for the statutory acknowledgements within the Deed of Settlement. It used the standard wording as seen in other settlements, and no issues were identified. Te Arawhiti intends to distribute an updated version of the draft Deed of Settlement early this year and will seek a formal Council resolution agreeing to the arrangements.

Iwi Engagements

- 8.3. Engagement with iwi regarding Plan Change 2 will continue as we seek an opportunity to meet with those who submitted. Horizons will try to keep all iwi informed throughout the process.
- 8.4. Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho and Horizons began meeting late 2019 to discuss a relationship agreement. Staff are meeting with Runanga representatives monthly, and this is proving valuable in terms of developing a suitable relationship agreement that is led by Mana Whenua, and allows for both flexibility and innovation. While more resource intensive in the initiation stage, we are hopeful that this will prove to be more enduring, and also be an approach that can be useful with other iwi and hapu over time.
- 8.5. Iwi of the region and Horizons need to discuss a range of matters. This includes topics such as representing their views, resource consent processing, mātauranga Māori and policy set by central government. We are in the initial planning stages but propose holding a regional hui in the middle of this year.
- 8.6. We are working to engage with all iwi and hapu involved with Te Awa Tupua in providing information relating to **Land Information New Zealand's (LINZ)** proposals to remove legislative provisions relating to the long-defunct Wanganui River Board. We have prepared an information sheet for iwi and hapu so that they have the full information on the issues raised by LINZ. In essence, LINZ are looking to repeal redundant provisions of historical acts that are minor, technical and non-controversial. For example, the provision for the Wanganui River Board to publish a guide book. As the Board was disestablished in 1940, the need to publish a guide book no longer applies.

Economic Opportunities

- 8.7. This scan discusses economic opportunities that iwi and PSGEs have been pursuing on behalf of their people. It uses information that is readily available or has been discussed in the public arena. It does not represent a full stocktake but is designed to give members a flavour of, in particular, projects being developed using the provincial growth fund and similar initiatives
- 8.8. **Ngaa Rauru Kii Tahī** – in recent years the iwi formed Kaitahi; a native superfood company. They have been developing easy to use superfood products; frozen drops that are added to a liquid to provide a smoothie energy drink without the requirement for a blender. Their product range is now available through a national supermarket. The iwi is seeking investment from the **Provincial Growth Fund (PGF)** to prepare a business case for a small scale food innovation factory.
- 8.9. **Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui** – the PSGE of the Whanganui River settlement recently partnered with Whanganui District Council Holdings Limited to purchase the former St George's School site in Whanganui. The site will provide additional classroom facilities for a commercial pilot training centre that has already secured a contract to train cadets from Indigo Airlines, out of India.
- 8.10. It is anticipated that Ngā Tāngata Tiaki and the local Whanganui iwi will be integral to the proposals to the PGF for the re-development of the Whanganui Port area.
- 8.11. **Te Iwi Mōrehu** – In late 2018, the government announced that it would invest \$1.9 million towards housing infrastructure to support new buildings in the Rātana Pā community. Earthworks for the project started recently.
- 8.12. **Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa**– in early 2018 the iwi purchased the property that was Turakina Māori Girls College. A year later the iwi re-opened the site as their operational base, now called Te Poho o Tuariki. They are now seeking PGF investment to allow them to develop the premises into a training centre, particularly for the youth of the local community; to meet the needs of local industry. The iwi has also invested in planting mānuka for honey production.
- 8.13. **Ngāti Tūwharetoa** – the iwi was involved in the 2009 Central North Island settlement, and then settled their historical claims in late 2018. This iwi has multiple trusts, and commercial entities managing a wide range of iwi and hapū assets. The iwi estate is largely outside of the Horizons region however, they are involved in two notable investment opportunities. Firstly, eight iwi commercial entities formed a limited partnership to commit \$9.4 million of the required \$25 million towards the Ruapehu Alpine Lift project.
- 8.14. In another project, ten of the iwi commercial entities formed another limited partnership to join with 25 other iwi to establish a \$115 million investment fund. The purpose of the fund is to pool financial resources to increase Māori investment into a broader scale of assets.
- 8.15. **Ngāti Rangī** – were successful with a \$400K PGF application to update and extend the technology available at Te Pae Tata, a community learning and technology hub run by their business arm. The updated facility will assist local businesses to grow their online presence, and allow them to adapt to new opportunities.
- 8.16. **Rangitāne o Manawatū** – has invested in a hotel project that is due for completion this year. The building, located in Fitzherbert Ave, will be leased to the Quest apartment hotel chain. The iwi is also working towards a housing subdivision development in the Hokowhitu area.

9. NEXT STEPS

- 9.1. When Horizons receives the draft Ngāti Maniapoto Deed of Settlement from Te Arawhiti, it will be tabled for discussion and a formal Council resolution.
- 9.2. Officers will keep council informed on the plans and arrangements for the proposed regional hui.

10. SIGNIFICANCE

- 10.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Jerald Twomey
SENIOR POLICY ANALYST IWI

Rebecca Tayler
STRATEGY & POLICY MANAGER

ANNEXES

There are no attachments for this report.