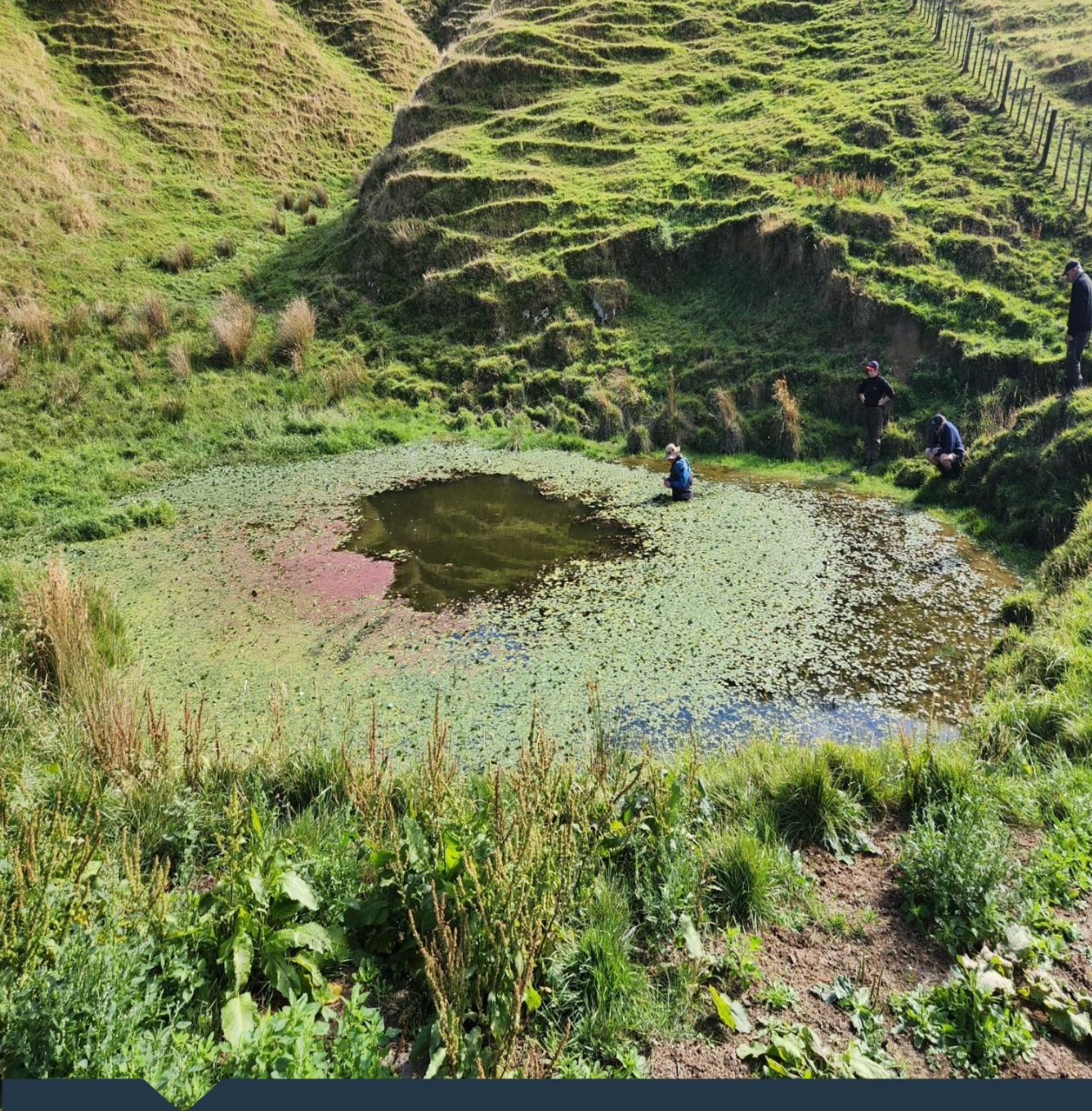




2024-25 Biosecurity Pest Plants Operational Plan and 2023-24 Monitoring Report

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Author
Mike Beech

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CONTACT 24 hr freephone 0508 800 80

Help@horizons.govt.nz

www.horizons.govt.nz

SERVICE CENTRES	Kairanga Cnr Rongotea and Kairanga-Bunnythorpe Roads Palmerston North	REGIONAL HOUSES	Palmerston North 11-15 Victoria Avenue	DEPOTS	Taihape 243 Wairanu Road Taihape
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POSTAL ADDRESS Horizons Regional Council, Private Bag 11025, Manawatū Mail Centre,
Palmerston North 4442

F 06-952 2929

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1 OVERVIEW

This Monitoring Report and Operational Plan report on the previous year's activities, as well as the nature and scope of activities Horizons intends to undertake for pest plant management and the implementation of the Regional Pest Management Plan 2017-37 (RPMP) for the 2024-25 financial year. Performance measures and other targets by which performance can be assessed by Council are identified.

This Operational Plan delivers on the key priorities for pest plant management established through the RPMP and Horizons non-regulatory pest plant management activity. The implementation components of pest plant management programmes are summarised as follows:

1.1 Direct management

Horizons funds and organises control for 18 plant species across the region and a further 11 plant species within individually-specified active management zones for regional benefit. Horizons records spatial information, plant population measures, the biological maturity and hence risk of spread, and abundance.

1.2 Regulation

Rules and restrictions are set, and compliance enforced with appropriate processes and penalties, including the recovery of costs incurred. Enforcement of the RPMP rules, particularly good neighbour responsibilities, aims to prevent adverse effects of pest plants on the occupiers of clear properties and is a strong theme of Horizons' new approach through the RPMP.

The RPMP includes both regulatory and non-regulatory commitments. Advising about and enforcing the rules is an additional component of the Pest Plant team's work. The principal objectives for pest plants identified in the RPMP are surveillance, eradication, progressive containment, and boundary control. The RPMP identifies that if the associated plant-specific rules are not met, an authorised person will:

1. Advise the occupier of their non-compliance and direct them to take remedial actions;
2. Follow the initial inspection with a further inspection to confirm what remedial action has been taken and/or identify outstanding requirements.
3. In circumstances of non-compliance, the authorised person will utilise the administrative and enforcement provisions of the Act.

1.3 Biological control

Horizons will release and redistribute appropriate agents for the control of production and environmental pest plants as biological control offers the prospect of ongoing suppression without the ongoing costs of physical or chemical intervention. Horizons will provide financial and logistical support for research into biocontrol agents and the biocontrol programme is structured around effective establishment, distribution and impact monitoring. We regularly liaise with occupiers to ensure the ongoing success of biological control release sites.

1.4 Surveillance

Horizons undertakes inspections of potential infestation areas for high threat plants not presently known in the region and will monitor for, and act to eradicate, any infestation of the Exclusion species to prevent production and natural areas being adversely affected. Horizons staff also survey retail outlets to ensure compliance with regulations banning plants from propagation, distribution and sale in the RPMP and the National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA). Surveillance is also

carried out for notifiable plants and any discoveries will be reported to the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

1.5 Awareness and behaviour change

Advice is given to raise awareness of pest plant problems and to provide land occupiers with information to control their own pest plants. This includes explaining people's obligations under the RPMP and responding to complaints and enquiries from the public. Horizons' goal is to have an initial response to a complaint within three working days of the complaint being received.

Awareness programmes are generally outcomes-focused, targeting changing people's behaviour, e.g. responsible gardening and freshwater hygiene. Horizons' biosecurity promotion activity also includes public liaison, including awareness and education programmes, developing community group initiatives and responding to complaints and enquiries from the public.

1.6 Resources

Within Horizons Biosecurity Pest Plant team there are five Biosecurity Officers - Plants (BOPs), two Senior Biosecurity Officer Plants (SBOPs) and one Team Leader- Pest Plants. They have primary responsibility for inspection, enforcement, advisory, and monitoring activities. The Biosecurity Officers are also responsible for organising contractors to carry out control work on eradication of targeted plants and enforcement work. Contractors undertake treatment or remedial work, although isolated plants and smaller sites may be treated or removed by BOPs. The activity of the Biosecurity plants team is further supported by activity of other Horizons teams, particularly the Biodiversity team who complete a substantial amount of pest plant control in priority bush remnants and wetlands.

2 MONITORING REPORT 2023-24

The RPMP describes in section 6.2 the monitoring required under the Biosecurity Act 1993 (Section 100B 2) of pest plant operational plans:

Horizons will report annually, by August, on work conducted over the previous financial year to achieve the objectives of the RPMP. Reporting will include (but is not restricted to) the following performance measures:

1. The results of inputs, outputs and outcomes monitoring. Reasons for changes in pest population or infestation number, size or density (positive or negative) will be explained;
2. The results of outcomes and outputs monitoring as detailed in any programmes to identify and control new incursions;
3. The change (positive or negative) in the extent of biocontrol agents and suggested reasons for the change.
4. The results of trials;
5. An evaluation of work programmes, including review of the operational plan and, if necessary, amendment;
6. Reporting on education initiatives with a statement on the perceived success of these, and guidance on the direction of future education work; and
7. An overview of community initiatives including extent of work, methods and results

The following sections provide detail against the seven performance measures.

2.1 Outcome monitoring against control programme targets

The percentage of Eradication species at zero levels at year-end is 83%, which corresponds exactly to the Horizons [Long Term Plan 2021-31 \(LTP\)](#) target of 83% (Figure 1).

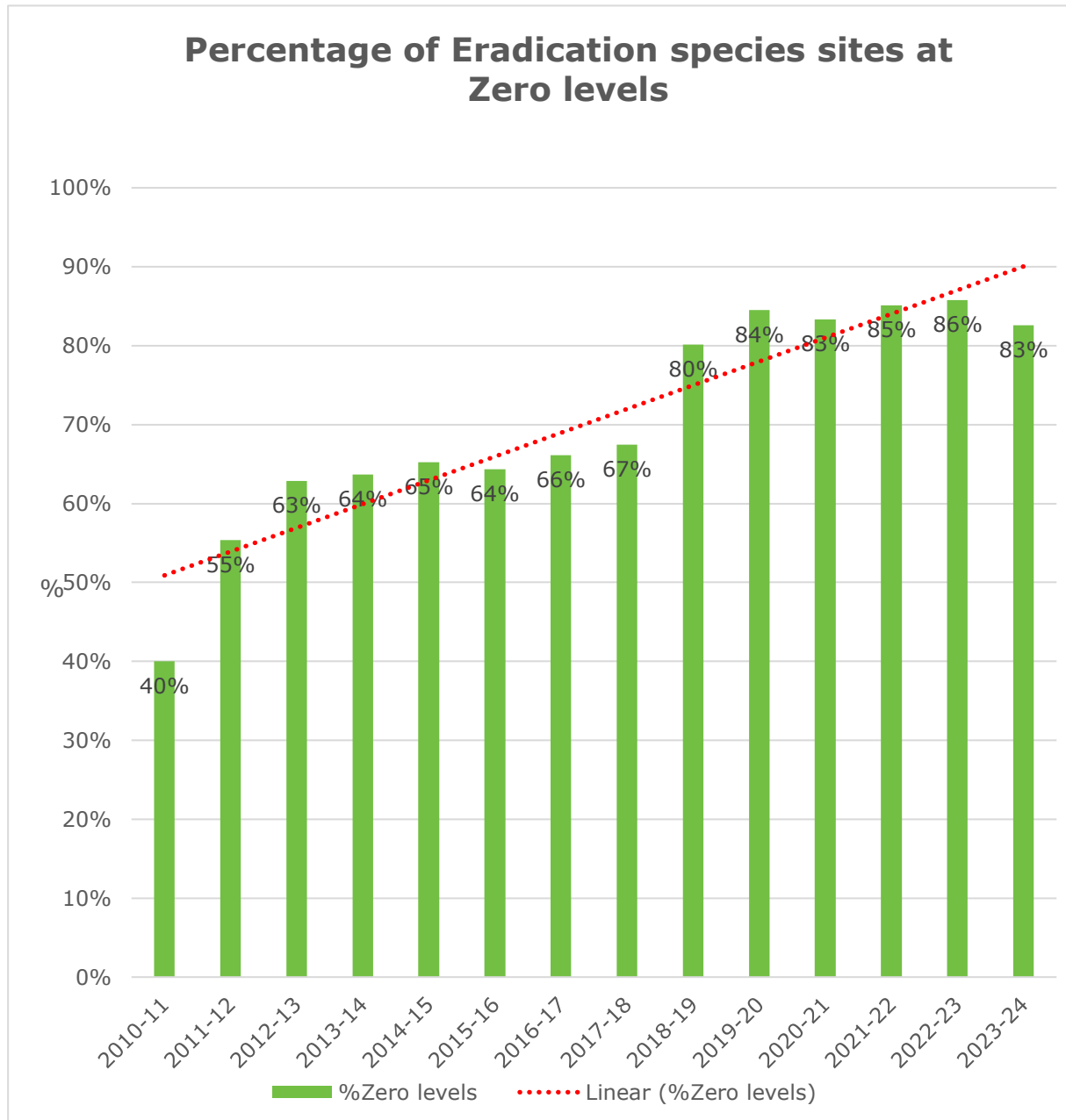


Figure 1: Eradication species percentage at zero levels.

The **Area of Occupancy (AOO)** describes the number of hectares that are occupied by the plants themselves over the extent of an area. For 2023-24 the Eradication species showed an upward trend. This was the result of the continued discovery of new sites, particularly in the Palmerston North operational area which has only been fully serviced by a full-time Biosecurity officer for the past two financial years. (Figure 2)

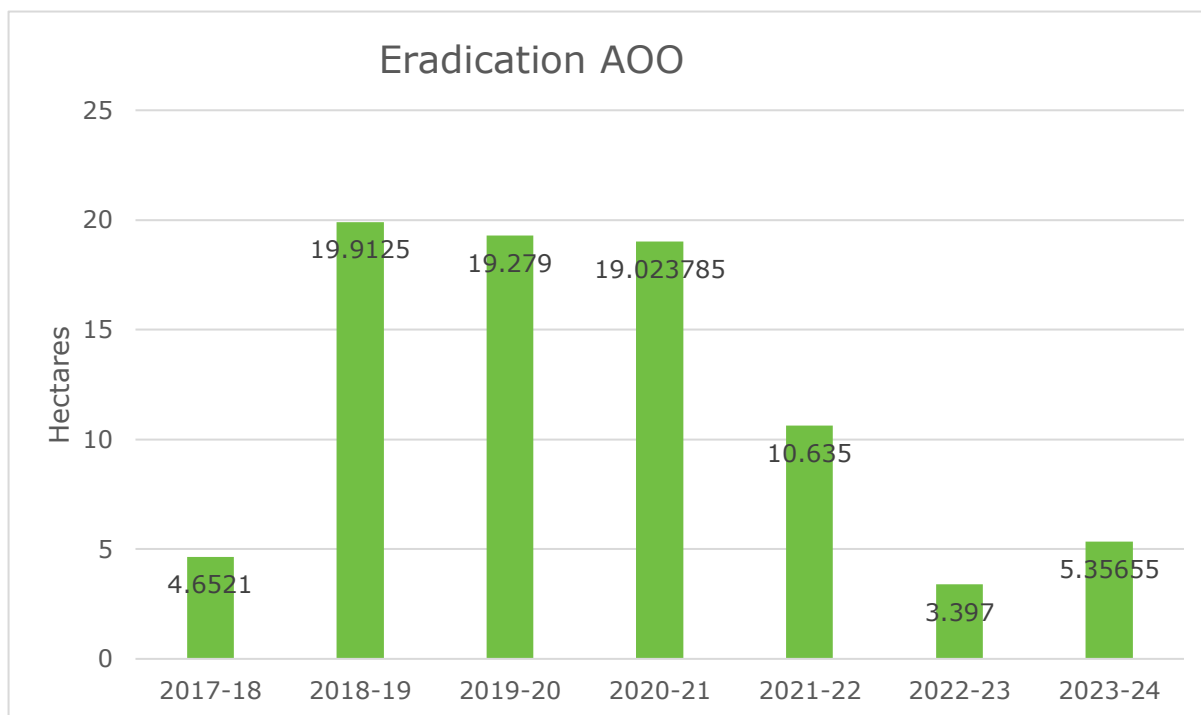


Figure 2: Eradication species area of occupancy 2023-24.

For Progressive Containment Mapped sites, the year-end result of 71% fell short of the annual plan target which was 82%. (Figure 3).

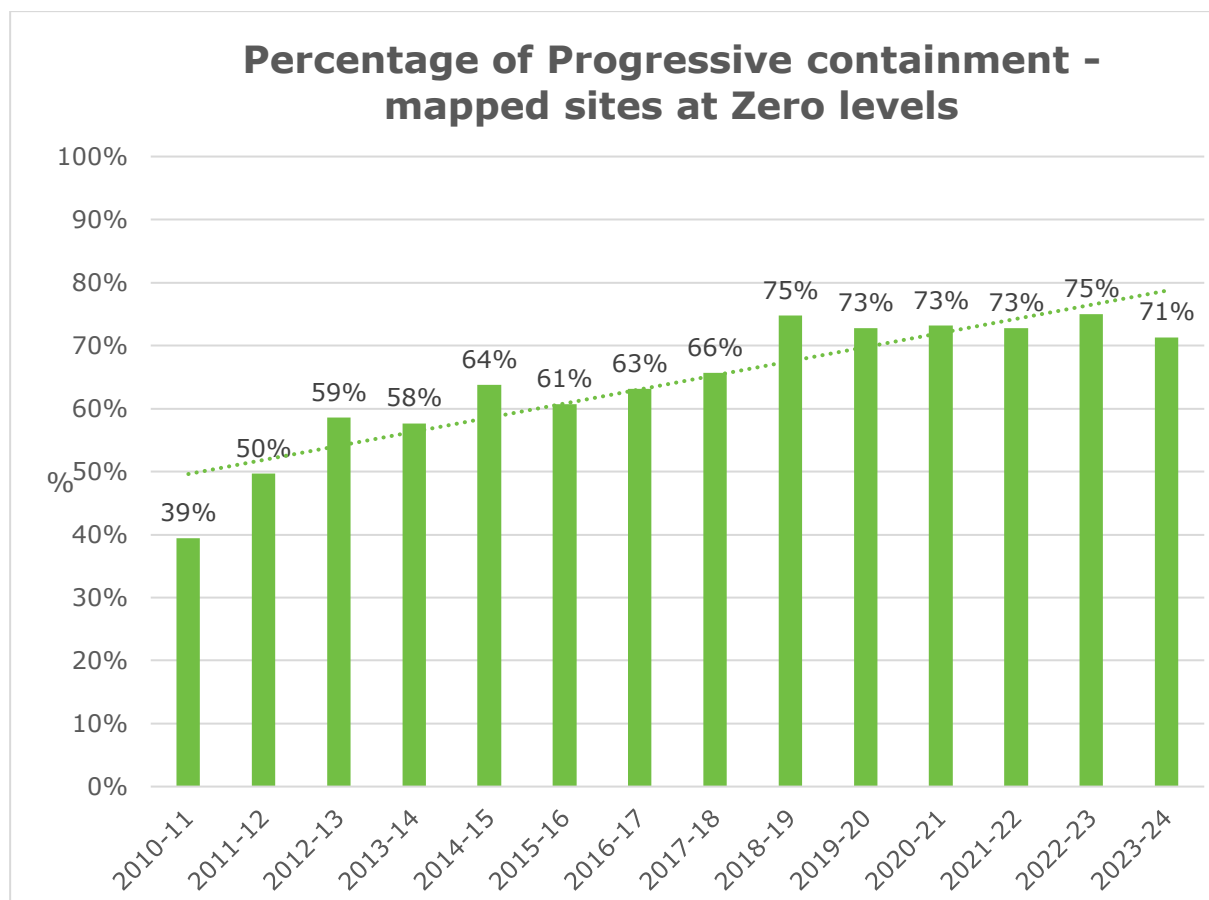


Figure 3: Progressive containment – mapped sites zero-levels percentage

The AOO for Progressive Containment – Mapped species shows an upward trend. This can be attributed to finding new sites of these species due to continued spillover from their respective containment zones.

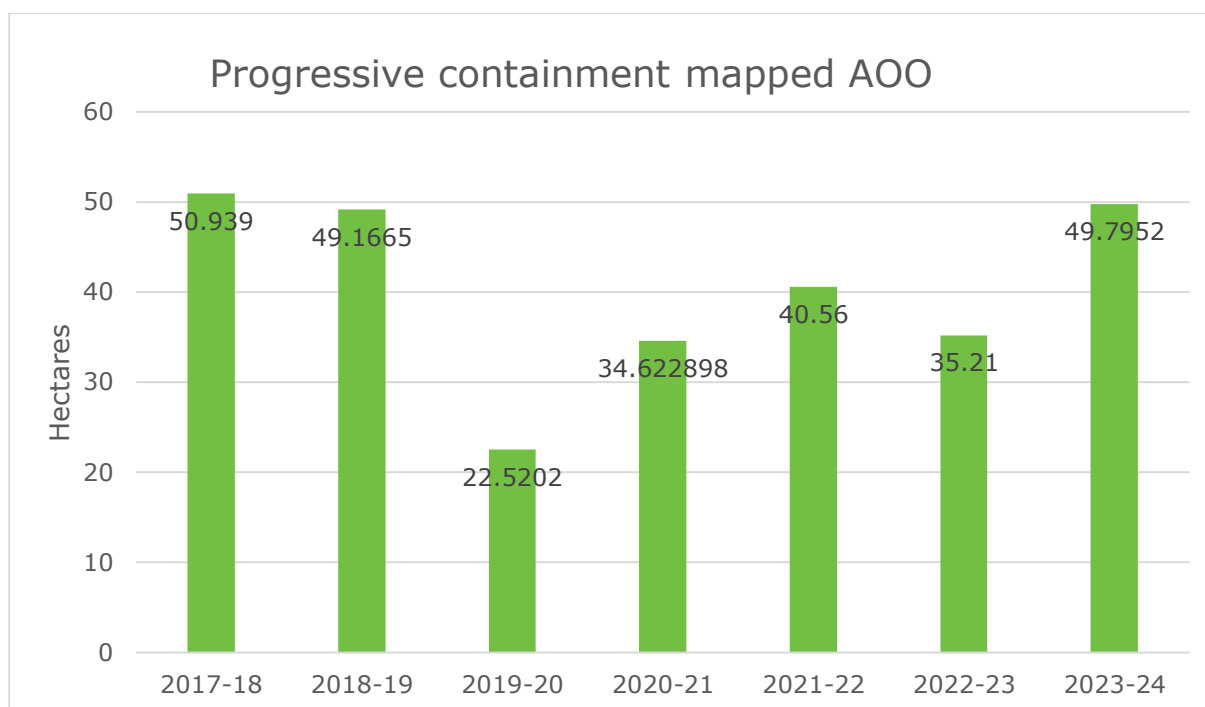


Figure 4: Area of occupancy, Progressive containment mapped species 2023-24.

2.2 Outcome monitoring against new incursions

Sagittaria

Regrowth *sagittaria* was removed from the Pioneer Drain at Palmerston North in January 2024 with no plants discovered in the lower Mangaone Stream. A new site of *sagittaria* was discovered in February 2024 in a pond at a farm just north of Eketāhuna but a survey found that the infestation was restricted to the pond with no outlet present. Plants were successfully controlled with herbicide a week after the discovery.

No other Exclusion category plants were found in the region this year.

New to the region incursions

New incursions to the region this year were fringed water lily, which was thought to have been eradicated from New Zealand, and *Asparagus declinatus*, which was not known to be in the country.

The fringed water lily was identified by eDNA results after discovery by a catchment group doing monitoring in the Mangaone River near Eketāhuna. Two farm dams were found to have infestations and one was controlled via herbicide while the other involved burying the dam and removing the water from it.

The asparagus was discovered on the roadside in Kimbolton. Only one plant was present. This species was not known to be present in New Zealand and is listed as an invasive species in Australia. The plant was controlled with herbicide and a visit to surrounding properties yielded no other plants.

2.3 Extent of biological control agents

Biocontrol has been successful this year with the highlight being the re-release of old man's beard sawfly at five locations in the Tararua, Whanganui and Rangitikei districts. The sawfly was originally released in the region in 1998 but failed to establish. Recently established populations in Canterbury have proved successful and act as nurseries for nationwide re-releases.

A further four old man's beard gall mite releases were made in the Palmerston North, Rangitikei and Ruapehu districts. This will be the final releases for this agent as evidence from other regions shows that the agent spreads rapidly once established.

A further shipment of *Acacia longifolia* gall wasps were released at the existing sites along the western coastline to bolster numbers at the initial release sites. Post-release monitoring is continuing, with staff assisting **Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research (MWLR)**.

Monitoring continues with the tutsan beetle and the two initial release sites were checked, with signs of damage present but no beetles seen.

2.4 Results of trials

Not applicable in 2023-24 as no trials were undertaken

2.5 An evaluation of work programmes

Old mans beard

Old man's beard is the largest direct control programme in the pest plant programme. The **Active Management Zone (AMZ)** is large and is currently under pressure from a number of areas within the AMZ not being controlled due to resourcing and challenging management condition particularly including topography, tools availability, indifferent vegetation types and the presence of old man's beard on crown land. The joint Ruahine old man's beard project between Horizons and the **Department of Conservation (DOC)** was created to enable a tenure-neutral approach to managing this pest plant, with the aim of coordinated and aligned control protecting both organisations' priority work areas. This year was the first to be completed and was successful, with Horizons taking the lead in delivering the programme. Both parties funded their respective land tenures, with DOC being able to provide extra funding for additional surveys later in the season in response to the project's survey component finding more plants in the forest park than previously known. Horizons' project area covers only some of the RPMP AMZ, effectively shrinking the work area to best match resources with where they can be spent to enable success.

Evergreen buckthorn

The evergreen buckthorn programme in Horowhenua and Palmerston North has been reviewed and it was decided not to continue the control of the plant in these areas due to lack of funding and resources to be able to manage infestations in urban areas and the large amounts present in the Horowhenua. Discovery of large numbers of plants across multiple properties in urban Palmerston North and Tokomaru will result in the creation of low priority zones in these areas

Carbon farming impact on work programmes

Carbon farming continues to be a major challenge for the Pest Plant team with large tracts of hill country farms being converted to carbon farms, particularly in the Tararua and Ruapehu districts. This proves challenging because large tracts of land are now vulnerable to invasion by species that we manage such as old man's beard, gunnera and banana passionfruit. This is compounded with access issues due to most of the roads being planted out and lack of techniques available to control plants while not impacting upon the pine plantations. Properties that are now in carbon farms and have pest plant sites that are actively managed will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to see

whether control work is feasible with estimated costs of doing it and working with the landowners to see if they are able to contribute resources and/or funding for control.

2.6 Reporting on education initiatives

Staff assisted the Enviro Schools programme by participating in a pest plant day for the Ruapehu district, repeating the previous year's event. Positive feedback was received from children and adults and the pest plant team helped to host the teacher who was part of the Science In Schools programme from Longburn School. She accompanied the Pest Plant team on different activities including biocontrol, direct control of plants and surveillance activities.

2.7 Overview of community initiatives

No community initiatives were done in the 2023-24 financial year.

3 2024-25 Operational Plan Financials

3.1 Financial Overview

Council apportions the rate take for Pest Plant Biosecurity into programmes that were created under the previous Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy and this split is used for financial reporting. The RPMP designations have a slightly different breakdown of activity within the cost codes. Table 1 shows the Council programme codes and budget mapped to the Operational Plan programme.

Table 1: 2024-25 Horizons internal programme name to Operational Plan Programme map.

Internal programme name	Equivalent Operational Plan programme	2024-2025 Operational Plan budget
Biological Control	Biological control	\$176,360.00
Crown/non-rateable (vector)	Exclusion/Eradication/PC-unmapped	\$45,272.00
Surveillance activity	Exclusion/Response, Investigation and Surveillance	\$88,838.00
Production	Exclusion / Eradication/ PC-mapped/ PC-unmapped	\$386,840.00
Zero-density	Eradication/PC-mapped/PC-unmapped	\$1,434,711.00
Promotion	Promotion	\$117,956.00
National and regional initiatives	Regional Pest Management Plan Review	\$100,000
TOTAL		\$2,349,977.00

For the 2024-25 year, the budget has been increased by approximately \$136,000 which mostly recognises an additional \$100,000 from Council reserves for a review of the RPMP. Table 2 describes the budget for each of the Operational Plan programmes.

Table 2: Financial overview of 2024-25 by Pest Plan designation and Operational Plan programme

Programme	Staff hours (#)	Staff hours (\$)	Km (\$)	External expenses (\$)	Total budget (\$)
Exclusion	156	\$19,428	\$500	\$21,500	\$41,428
Eradication	2464	\$231,790	\$6,200	\$167,550	\$405,540
Progressive Containment mapped	5512	\$535,718	\$43,717	\$753,000	\$1,332,435
Progressive Containment unmapped	824	\$102,248	\$12,000	\$5,000	\$119,248
Biological control	544	\$64,910	\$3,000	\$108,450	\$176,360
Promotion	988	\$103,956	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$117,956
Response, Investigation and Surveillance	468	\$48,510	\$2,500	\$6,000	\$57,010
National and regional initiatives	0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000
TOTAL	10,956	1,106,560	71,917	\$1,171,500	\$2,349,977

Every effort is being made to deliver on the Pest Plan targets and outcomes, while operating within this budget. Close monitoring of expenditure will ensure budgets are not exceeded.

4 ANNUAL PLAN TARGETS

Table 3: Biosecurity Plants Annual Plan targets for 2024-25.

Performance Measures for Levels of Service	2024-25
Any exclusion category pest plants that are found in the region are promptly managed, with an initial response plan completed within the specified timeframe that is appropriate for that particular species.	Response plans enacted with their specified timeframes (target 100%)
Number of managed sites at zero-levels (ZL) increases for pest plants identified for Eradication and Progressive Containment - mapped in the Regional Pest Management Plan.	Overall percentage of managed sites at zero-levels (ZL) increases from the baseline year (2023-24), which is 76%.
Financially support the national bio-control agent development programme and report annually to Council on this programme.	Financial support provided and annual report to Council
Monitoring of RPMP programmes according to Biosecurity Act requirements	Annual monitoring report to Council

5 REGIONAL PEST PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Programme overview

The Biosecurity Plants activity is strongly linked to the delivery of Horizons' RPMP, which can be reached via the following link <https://www.horizons.govt.nz/HRC/media/Media/Pests/2017-2037-Regional-Pest-Management-Plan.pdf>

The activity reporting is arranged in sections as per the RPMP groupings for pest plant management programmes as outlined in Figure 2. More information on these groupings is on page 25 of the RPMP.

Table 4: Activity Summary for Biosecurity Plants.

Aim	Programme	Key Deliverables
Preventing establishment	Exclusion Programme	Keep unwanted pest plants that are not present out of the region.
Eradicating	Eradication Programme	Controlling and reducing the prevalence and extent of Eradication species.
Rolling back	Progressive Containment Programme	Containing and reducing the geographic distribution of the pest plant to an area over time.
Maintaining low densities	Progressive Containment – unmapped	Ongoing control to reduce species' impact and spread to other properties.

5.2 Regional Pest Management Plan Activity

Preventing establishment - Exclusion Programme

For pest plants that are in New Zealand but not in our region, Horizons' goal is to prevent establishment. We aim to detect these plants before they become widely established in the region and facilitate a quick response through appropriate funding that will enable the control or management of these species on rateable land. There are 11 species in this category and Chilean needle grass is an example.

Staff will monitor for the regrowth of *Sagittaria platyphylla* and include this plant in in-stream surveillance while looking for alligator weed in the lower Mangaone Stream and Manawatu River. The dump site will continue to be monitored to ensure that no regrowth occurs. A second site will also be monitored on a farm property near Eketāhuna for any regrowth following discovery of this species last financial year.

Other species covered by the surveillance plan included in Table 7.4 in the appendices. NB the following species are removed from work programme due to species-specific reasons such as no ability to control, similar to previously discontinued species.

Table 5: Exclusion species removed from work programme in 2023-24

Species	Removal rationale
Heath rush	DOC estate recipient of vectors
Humped bladderwort	No control tools available
Manchurian wild rice	MPI National Interest Pest Response target
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Same effects as <i>P.karka</i> and is well controlled in Hawkes Bay with no spread risk.
<i>Sagittaria platyphylla</i>	Move to Eradication as control will be long term.
Tussock hawkweed	DOC estate recipient of vectors

Table 6: Overall Exclusion Programme expenditure

Total cost	\$41,428
Exclusion activity	\$21,500
Staff time	\$19,428
Kilometres	\$500

Eradication Programme

High-risk species that should be completely removed from the region are managed via the Eradication programme. There are 18 species in this category and at the start of the financial year our information was that 82% of the 1,729 sites were at zero levels.

A similar programme to previous years across all Eradication species with notable focuses to include African feather grass as a joint management programme with DOC on the Whanganui River, with DOC providing the funding for their area and Horizons managing work in a similar way to old man's beard in the Ruahines.

Table 7: Eradication species planned activity

Species	Activity	Cost 2024-25	
		Hours	External
African feather grass	Whanganui River catchment control from Mangatiti Stream down to lowest known infestations on Whanganui River. To be a joint programme with DOC. Also Manawatū River control and surveillance	164	\$20,000
Alligator weed	Mangoane Stream and Taumaurui oxidation ponds surveillance. Includes surveillance with detector dog for Taumarunui site (\$3,000). Spend also includes \$7,000 contribution for 3-year AgResearch national programmes	264	\$20,000
Arrowhead	Control and surveillance at Levin site	16	
Blue passionflower	Urban site treatment across Whanganui, Palmerston North, Manawatū and Horowhenua.	70	
Cathedral bells	Sites visited and treated twice yearly; across the southern half of the region	186	\$33,000
Chilean rhubarb	Control and surveillance across region. Large sites contracted out	584	\$39,000

Species	Activity	Cost 2024-25	
		Hours	External
Chinese <i>pennisetum</i>	Whanganui River sites control and surveillance. Contracted out	24	\$20,000
Climbing <i>alstromeria</i>	Surveillance and staff controlled. Southern half of region	16	
Climbing spindleberry	Region wide control. Large new sites in Ruapehu to be contracted out	468	\$15,000
Himalayan balsam	Surveillance and control of new sites in particular in Ruapehu	16	
Knotweed	Focus on surveillance and control in Ruapehu. New sites at Ongarue. Ongoing control in Palmerston North	104	\$550
Nassella tussock spp	Staff surveillance and chemical for site control.	64	
Purple loosestrife	Operationally treated as Progressive Containment - mapped programme. No active control of Lake Horowhenua and Hokio Stream, and Nga Kawau Lagoon due to lack on control tools and political reasons. Ongoing control for other sites outside this area	184	
Queensland Poplar	Whanganui urban sites. New sites in Palmerston North and Horowhenua	40	
Rum Cherry	New sites in Ohakune. Surveillance at Owango after an indication from eDNA result	8	
Senegal tea	Sites in Whanganui, Ashhurst, Palmerston North and Kuku. Staff to treat these.	32	
Spartina	DOC control at Manawatu, Waikawa and Ohau estuaries. Horizons to assist with surveillance	48	
Woolly nightshade	Sites located in Whanganui, Manawatū, Palmerston North and Horowhenua. Large sites at Tokomaru and Whanganui to be contracted. Palmerston North surveillance continuing.	152	\$20,000

Table 8: Overall Eradication Programme expenditure

Total Eradication cost		\$405,540
Control programme activity		\$160,550
Alligator grass AgResearch study		\$7,000
Staff time		\$231,790
Kilometres		\$6,200

Rolling back – Progressive Containment programme

Where population levels or difficulty and expense of control prevent achievement of a region-wide zero-density objective, high-threat pest plant species will be managed under a Progressive Containment objective. For each species managed this way, an active management zone is defined within which the pest plant species will be controlled wherever it is found, as in the Eradication designation.

Progressive Containment - Mapped Species

Eleven Progressive Containment species fall into the mapped category (e.g. old man's beard). At the start of the year the data showed 71% of 2,750 sites were at zero levels in the zones actively managed for these species.

The old man's beard conjoint programme with Department of Conservation for the Ruahine Forest Park will continue this financial year. An increase in funding from DOC has been requested for this financial year due to more old man's beard being found in the park than was previously known,

Table 9: Progressive Containment - Mapped species activity

Species	Activity	Cost 2024-25	
		Hours	External
Banana passionfruit	Control and surveillance particularly in Tararua, Horowhenua and Pohangina	494	\$55,000
Boneseed	Contractors to be used in Waitarere Forest. Southern Waitarere Forest to be treated operationally as a Containment zone. In-house control and surveillance of sites at Foxton and Whanganui.	240	\$15,000
Darwin's barberry	Surveillance and control of Taumarunui, Tongariro, Waewaepa and Rangiwahia areas.	880	\$155,000
Evergreen buckthorn	Whanganui infestations continuing control. Low priority zone continuing around Levin urban area. Plants present across Horowhenua, Palmerston North and Tokomaru. Assessment to be made if programme continues operationally in these areas	128	\$4,000
Grey Willow	Assessing requirements according to joint organisation control programme	8	
Moth plant	Whanganui and Horowhenua areas, in-house control surveillance and control. Increased surveillance around Kairanga, Rongotea and Foxton as new sites discovered there	48	
Old man's beard	Horizon's biggest programme. Programmes being conducted region-wide. Second year of a conjoint programme with Department of Conservation to survey and control plants across both private land and public conservation land (see attached map, appendix 2).	1,752	\$392,500

Species	Activity	Cost 2024-25	
		Hours	External
Pest conifers	Work against four pest conifer species, time and contribution towards the national wilding conifer control programme where Horizons acts as fund holder and has two staff as project managers for work within the central plateau. Expenditure also includes support for the Wilding Pine Network and the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme (NWCCP) fund holder role.	1,200	\$124,000
General expense	Chemicals and equipment upkeep		\$7,500

Table 10: Overall Progressive Containment – Mapped programme

Progressive Containment – Mapped costs		\$1,332,435
Progressive Containment activity		\$753,000
Staff time		\$535,718
Kilometres		\$43,717

Progressive Containment – Unmapped Species

Fifteen Progressive Containment species fall into the unmapped category (e.g. gorse). These species are generally widespread but some parts of the region are clear and it is desirable to keep them clear. This programme does not have a strong information base to report on progress against these weeds. Horizons' involvement is primarily through regulation via the Good Neighbour or Clear Land rules of the RPMP and through non-regulatory advice or in some cases by biological control. For occupiers of large land areas, farmers and other organisations we have the ability to allow responsibility to be acknowledged and actions planned via Approved Management Plans. The intent of these plans is to meet the objectives of rules and contribute to the outcomes of the RPMP by eradicating or reducing the spread of pest plants from the place/s occupied or managed by the plan-maker.

Table 11: Summary of Pest Plant Management Plan documents with Territorial Authorities and Crown Entities.

TA/ Crown Agency	Approved Management Plan	Memorandum of understanding	Notes
Ruapehu District Council	Consultation		GHD completing report
Rangitikei District Council	Current		
Whanganui District Council	Current		
Manawatū District Council	Current		
Tararua District Council	Current		
Palmerston North City Council	Consultation		
Horowhenua District Council	Consultation		
NZTA – Southern	Current		
NZTA – Northern	Consultation		Consultation with other NOCs
KiwiRail	Current		
DOC	N/A		Consultation – RPMP rules apply
LINZ	N/A		Consultation – RPMP rules apply

Project Yellow, the Desert Road invasive legume control project, is progressing through the memorandum period and is likely to undertake only one more final assessment flight at project close in 2025-26. Learnings from previous distribution map assessment include that the outliers are very important to the overall success of the project. The project oversight is also being shared, with Waikato Regional Council and Horizons sharing the lead role to facilitate work across crown and iwi land.

Table 12: Overall Progressive Containment – Unmapped programme expenditure

Total Progressive Containment – Unmapped costs		\$119,248
Desert Road Invasive Legume Control Group		\$5,000
Kilometres		\$12,000
Staff time		\$102,248

Progressive Containment – Unmapped aquatic species

6.2.9 Aquatic pest plants are also part of the Progressive Containment – Unmapped grouping of the RPMP and are grouped together on the basis that they are aquatic pests managed the same way for the same objectives. Eel grass, egeria, hornwort, lagarosiphon and reed sweetgrass are aquatic pest plants included in the Progressive Containment section of the RPMP 2017-37. Their distributions are not yet mapped with any certainty and our aim is to progressively contain or reduce the number of sites affected across the region, to prevent further spread and to reduce adverse effects on the environment.

Activity is focused on staff time to support the Check Clean Dry freshwater advocacy campaign. And responding to enquiries. This is reported in the Awareness section.

Table 13: Overall programme expenditure

Progressive Containment – Unmapped aquatic costs		\$2,232
Programme costs		\$0
Staff time		\$2,232
Kilometres		0

6 Regional Pest Plants – Other programmes

6.1 INCURSION RESPONSE

6.1.1 Programme overview

The Incursion Response programme aims to provide immediate and effective assistance for all national or regional biosecurity incursions and any transitions to long-term management. This is a function detailed by a Memorandum of Understanding between the **Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)** and regional councils.

6.1.2 Velvetleaf

The longstanding velvetleaf programme will continue this year with Horizons funding use of the detection dog as well as part-funding with other regional councils in the North Island for a community contractor who has been liaising with farmers affected by velvetleaf. This community contractor will meet with land occupiers who have high-risk infection zones to plan paddock-specific interventions.

6.1.3 Sea spurge

The sea spurge response will continue with DOC taking the lead, having secured funding for this financial year for a FTE doing liaison work. Horizons will provide support by controlling some sites. A total of 60 hours will be committed by the Pest Plant team to help with surveillance and control when required.

6.2 BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

6.2.1 Programme overview

Many entrenched pest plants in the region are now the target of our Biological Control programme, which aims to assist the development of insects and diseases to control a wide range of pest plants and to release, distribute and monitor those agents within the region.

6.2.2 Purple loosestrife

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has now approved the import of up to four agents for use against purple loosestrife. Staff will now work with Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, to undertake on-site biological control introductory workshops and follow-on discussion around potential release sites with mana whenua and landowners.

6.2.3 Old man's beard

Staff will look to release old man's beard sawfly at a further three locations across the region in addition to the five that were released last financial year.

6.2.4 Tutsan

Three long-awaited tutsan beetle releases, which have been stalled for five years, will also be carried out in the Ruapehu and Horowhenua districts. Difficulties mass rearing the beetles prevented the releases from happening sooner.

Table 14: Overall Biological Control Programme expenditure (2024-25)

Biological Control costs		\$173,360
New Zealand BC Collective		\$40,000
ID service		\$3,000
Purple loosestrife project		\$45,050
Old man's beard sawfly x 3		\$19,000
Equipment		\$1,400
Staff time (644 hrs)		\$64,910

6.3 INVESTIGATION

6.3.1 Programme overview

A number of plants present in the region may have the potential to become economically and ecologically damaging. This output contains the Pest Plant Investigation Programme and the [National Pest Plant Accord \(NPPA\)](#).

Inspections of nurseries as per the biennial regime.

Table 15: Overall Investigation Programme expenditure (2023-24)

Investigation and surveillance costs		\$51,010
Potential plant activity		\$0
Staff time		\$48,510
Kilometres		\$2,500

6.4 ADVICE, PROMOTION AND AWARENESS

6.4.1 Programme overview

The aim of the Awareness Programme is to alert the community to issues, threats and solutions to ensure region-wide best-practice pest plant management. This includes responding to enquiries from the community and undertaking collaborative projects.

Staff will again seek funding from MPI for the [Check Clean Dry \(CCD\)](#) programme to advocate for behaviour change by freshwater users. Horizons will also support this programme with financial and in-kind contributions.

Staff will work with Horizons communications staff to promote weed species through the 'weed wizard' videos and a particular focus on the region's exclusion plants, to reinforce the importance of the public reporting these plants if they find them.

Table 16: Overall Pest Plant Awareness expenditure

Promotion costs		\$117,956
Collateral and CCD programme support		\$10,000
Staff time		\$103,956
Kilometres		\$4,000

6.5 COLLABORATIVE PEST PLANT CONTROL

6.5.1 Programme overview

Collaborative projects undertaken by Horizons staff and external stakeholders provide a team approach to managing weeds in some challenging environments. Working with others and providing advice and leadership has delivered some excellent results that otherwise would not have eventuated. A summary of this activity is provided in Table 5.

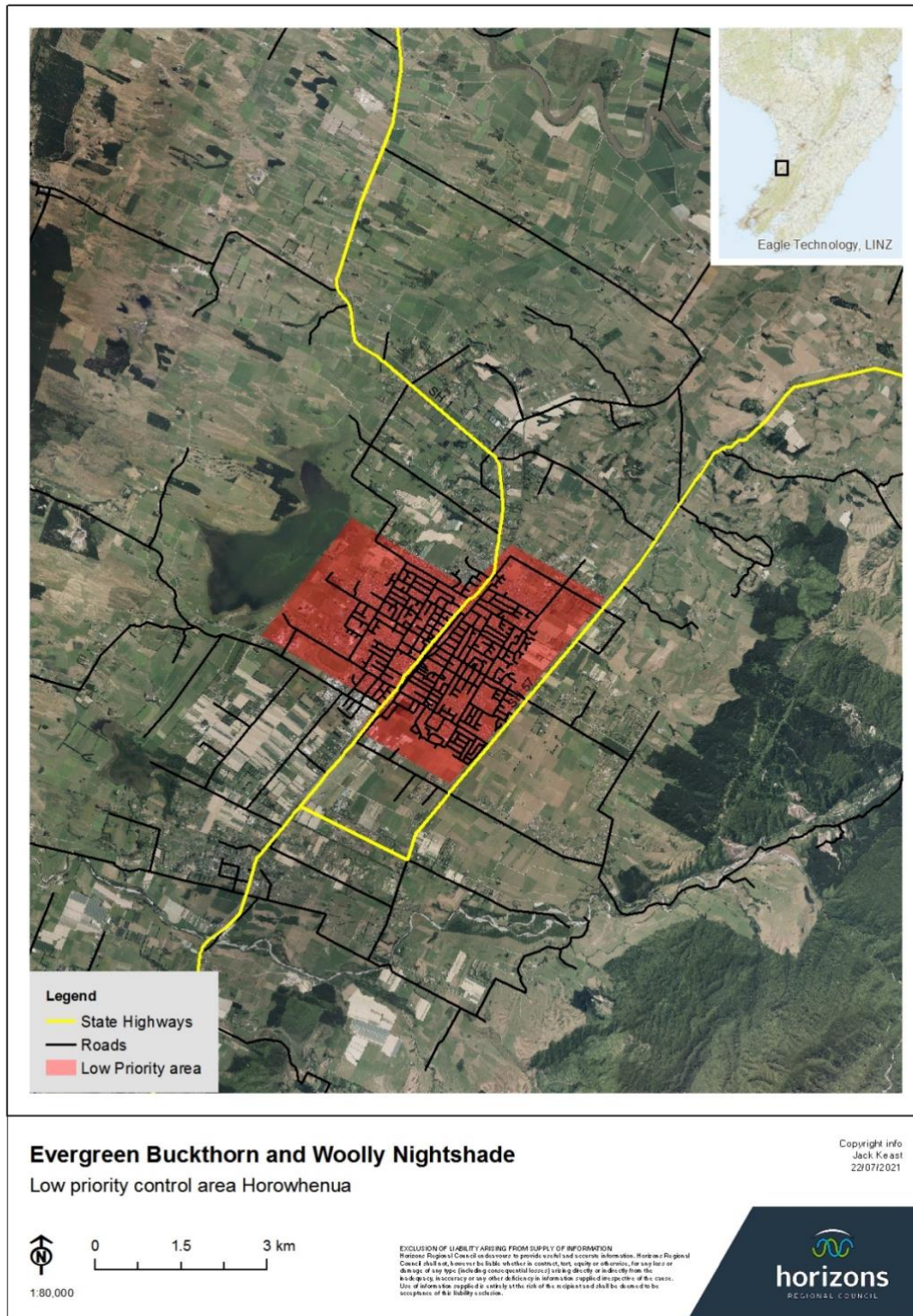
Table 17: Collaborative Pest Plant Control Projects.

Project	Key Deliverables	Horizons' Role
Wilding Conifer – Central North Island Regional Coordination Group (RCG)	Work with partners and other stakeholders on: - Planning for management unit (MU) activity and reporting - Managing the budget - Annual meeting scheduled Deliver on annual work programmes as agreed by RCG. In 2022-23 the national programme was approximately \$1.3-1.5 million.	Contracted to MPI as the agency for managing Central Government funding for this activity in the Central North Island. Fund holder and Chair of the RCG.
Central North Island Wilding Conifer Group	Facilitate the sharing of programme information amongst a broad group of Central Plateau conifer controlling organisations	To coordinate the biennial meetings and chair the meetings
Desert Road Invasive Legume Control Group	- Relationship between parties maintained. - Memorandum of Understanding maintained and implemented. - Coordinated action in priority areas undertaken against target species.	Relationship between parties maintained. Meeting facilitation with Waikato Regional Council
Freshwater Biosecurity Partnership Programme and Check, Clean, Dry (CCD) advocacy programme.	Representing Horizons at a national forum to champion behaviour change and freshwater protection. Attendance at high-risk events and strong advocacy with the main users of waterways in our headwater areas.	Provide staff and manage the CCD programme in the region.

Project	Key Deliverables	Horizons' Role
Ruahine Ranges old man's beard conjoint project (DOC/Horowhenua council)	Surveying and controlling old man's beard within the park and the buffer surrounding it. Also reporting on an annual basis as per management plan.	Contract management including auditing, managing health and safety, quality control and acting as a fund holder.
Sea spurge	Work with partner organisations to control plants at known sites. Assisting DOC sea spurge ranger with liaison with iwi groups and surveillance activities if required	Surveillance and control at some sites in conjunction with DOC, liaison with iwi groups doing surveillance and control
Velvetleaf	Commit \$3,000 to shared contract with North Island regional councils for employment of community liaison officer. Providing funding for surveillance of known sites with detector dog at least twice during the growing season	Assistance with removing plants if any found. Liaising with community liaison officer about landowners. Providing advice for affected landowners where needed.
<i>Spartina</i>	DOC to provide report on season's work with spartina. Assist in surveillance with the detector dog if needed.	Provide financial assistance if required for detector dog. Provide a jet boat if needed for transport of detector dog to surveillance sites.

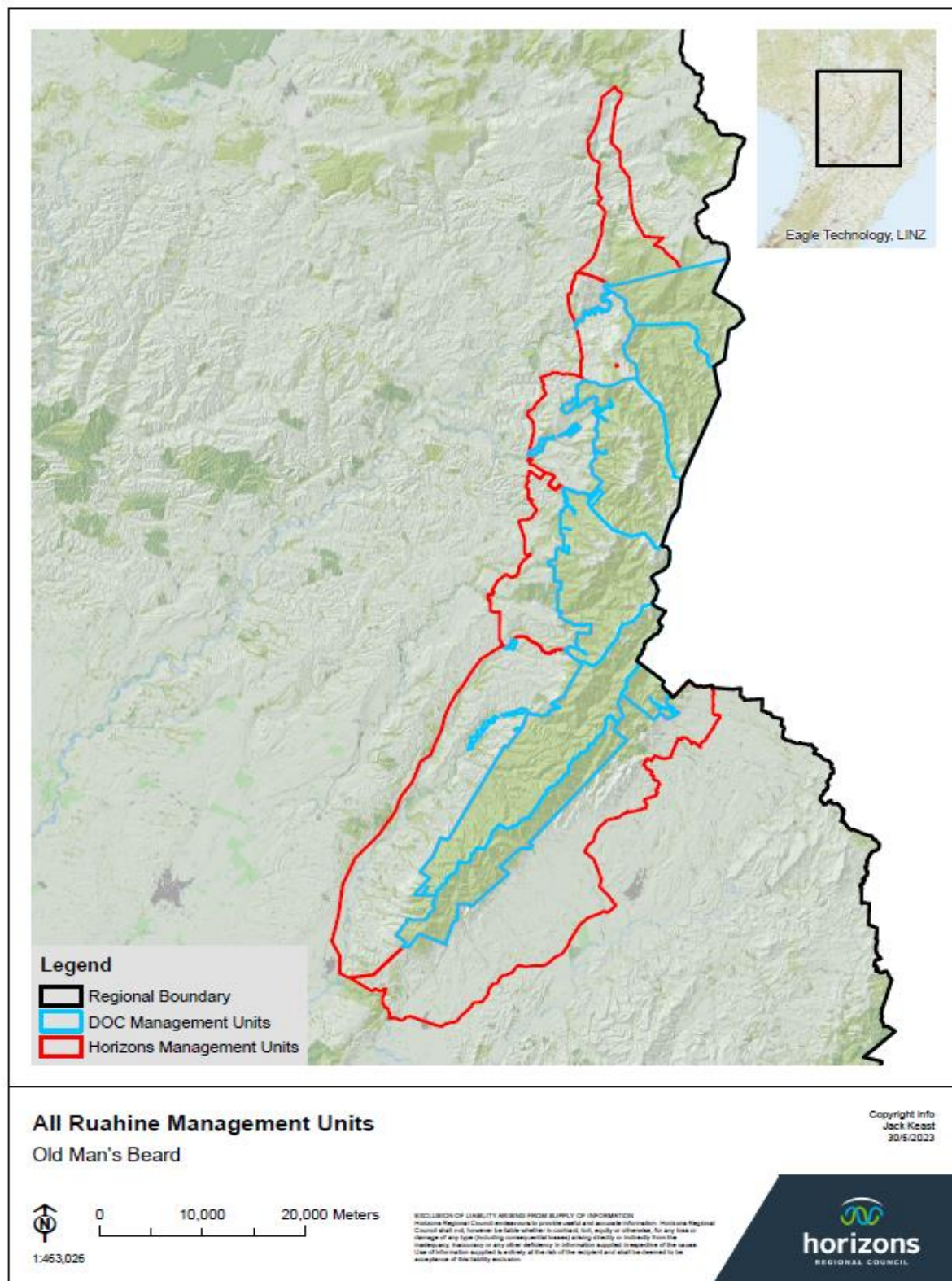
7 APPENDIX

7.1 Woolly nightshade and evergreen buckthorn Low Priority zone



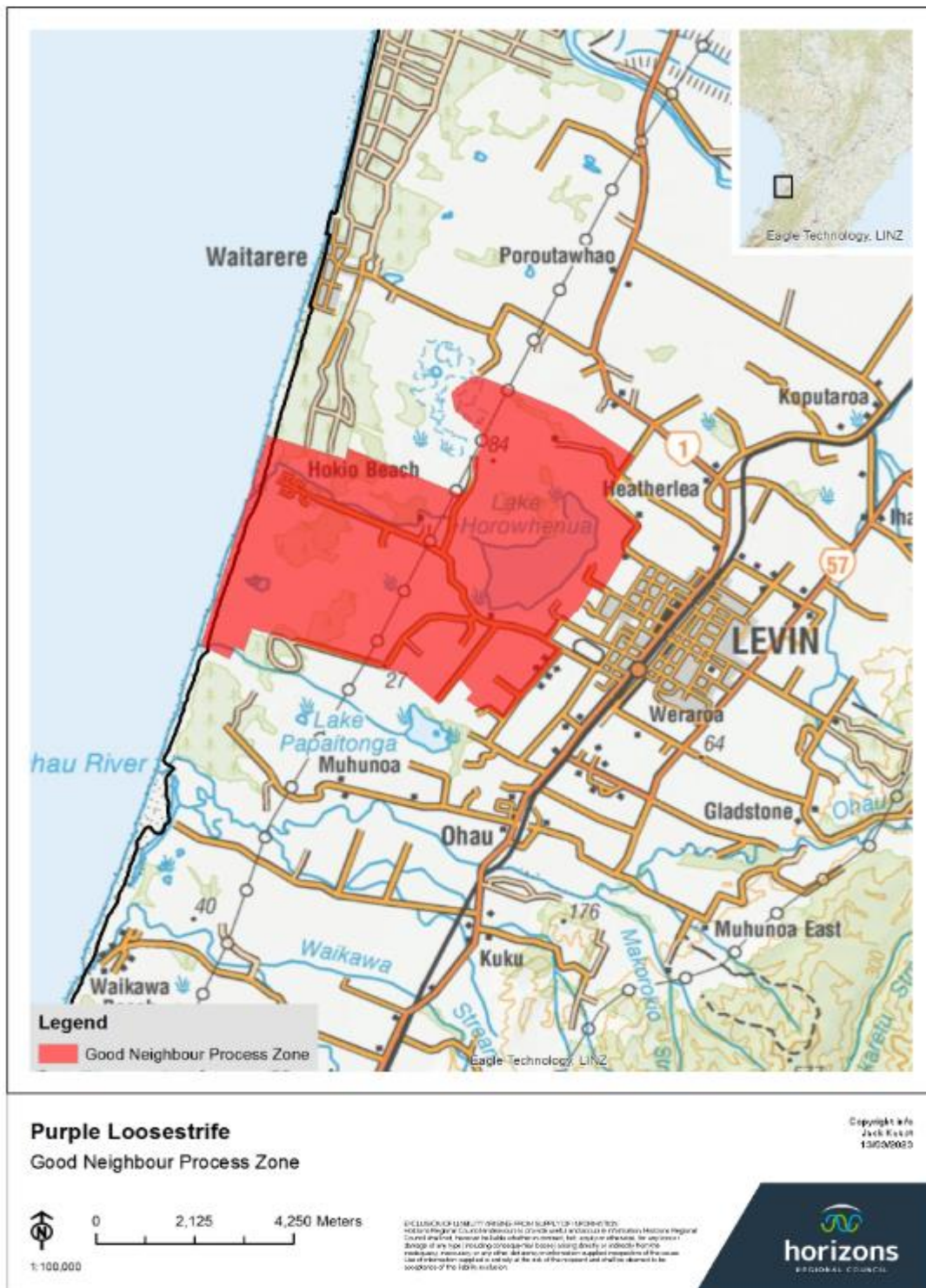
Map 1: Woolly nightshade and evergreen buckthorn low priority zone

7.2 Ruahine Forest Park old man's beard project map



Map 2: Management units for Ruahine Forest Park old man's beard programme

7.3 Purple loosestrife Progressive Containment zone



Map 3: Purple loosestrife Progressive Containment zone

7.4 RPMP Exclusion plant register

Exclusion pest plant	Frequency (relates to live vectors)	Vector	Alertness score 1= low probability; 10= highly likely	Alert factors	Timeliness	Specific places	Secondary	Passive, Connected endeavours	Notes	Staff	Specific tasks
Californian bulrush	Ongoing coastal and one-off at treatment sites	Contaminated plants from Northland nurseries; coastal movement from Waikato rivers.	2	Previously known but eradicated, potential for coastal dispersal, nursery contamination low risk	Summer	Taumarunui settling ponds; Hunterville settling ponds. Estuaries of western coastline	West coast beaches	Whitebaiters and bird watchers	NPPA plant. Difficult to engage with folk over plant hard to id and tell apart from similar species.	Bash, Kelsi, Robbie	Consider building a 'what are you looking at..... Flyer'
Chilean needle grass	Ongoing	Small risk of stock movement from Hawke's Bay to Horizons region.	7	Geolocation and movement of contractors, suppressed by Hawke's Bay Regional Council rules on known locations.	Nov-Feb	Contractor washdown yards i.e. the Hermitage, Tararua; Norserwood and Ormondville farmland. Levin meatworks paunch material site and discharge field.	All other areas during flowering season	Station owners	Vectors fairly well controlled by HBRC pest plan. However, post Cyclone Gabrielle, gravel can be extracted from Tukituki River. Potential for further range expansion of CNG	Jack, Malinda	MM/JK – Provide funding for AgResearch gravel extraction paper. Contact with HBRC staff about consent form for gravel, contractor biosecurity wash-down sheet and ute guides to be disseminated to contractors and landowners that have both land in HB and MW.
Noogoora burr	Ongoing	Ex BOP/Waikato via contractor machinery or feed	5	Geolocation and movement of contractors	Feb-March		Ruapehu cropping land		Find with seed pods before plant dies off in Autumn.	Bash, Kelsi	Staff to contact EBOP and WRC to assess spread potential. Social media posts to go up in November.
Saffron thistle	Ongoing	Human assisted via diggers, stock and feed. Ex Canterbury and Hawkes Bay.	7	Geolocation and movement of contractors and other vectors esp. roadside mowers.	Feb-April	Contractor wash-down yards i.e. The Hermitage, Tararua. Levin meatworks paunch material site and discharge field. Dannevirke saleyards		Hawkes Bay Regional Council staff	Likely near chicken coop/production areas	Jack, Malinda	Contact HBRC staff for spread risk assessment
Sweet pittosporum	Ongoing	Nurseries and plantings	1	Not presently known nearby	Sep-Feb		Old garden centres and urban areas		NPPA plant; white flowers and large orange fruit. Known only from Northland	Robbie, Kelsi	
Unknown/ MPI	Ongoing	Various - plant breeders, aquarium trade, gardeners, farmers.				Fly-tipping sites, abandoned nurseries, coastal access areas/dunes.				All	

7.5 Season activity and timeliness

Month is when activity starts

Month	Incursion	Exclusion	Eradication	Progressive containment - mapped	Progressive containment un-mapped	Biological control	Investigation	Promotion
July			Woolly nightshade	Evergreen buckthorn	Report on AMPs			
August			Alligator Weed (PN)	Darwin's barberry, boneseed	Sign off 2021-22 AMPs	Contract with MWLR for purple loosestrife releases		Woollybusters
September	Velvet leaf - Farmer contact	Site visits	Spartina, Blue passionflower, knotweed, alligator weed (PN)	Banana passionfruit, pest conifers, Darwin's barberry		Darwin's barberry and Chilean flame creeper consultation		CCD – Lake O, Woollybusters
October	Sea spurge site visits	Site visits	Cathedral bells, alligator weed (PN)	Banana passionfruit, Darwins barberry		NBC meeting, green thistle beetle harvest and distribution		CCD, Chilean needle grass
November		Sagittaria surveillance around flowering	Chilean rhubarb, Senegal tea, rum cherry alligator weed (PN), arrowhead	Moth plant, banana passionfruit	Site audits	Tutsan agent release, old man's beard gall mite monitoring		CCD, Noogoora burr
December		Site visits	Nasella, Himalyan balsam, alligator weed (PN)	Old man's beard, moth plant	Site audits	Broom gall mite distribution and site monitoring, field horsetail weevil monitoring		CCD, weed wizard videos
January		Site visits	African feather grass, Chinese <i>pennisetum</i> , alligator weed (PN, TMN)	Old man's beard	Site audits	Tradescantia monitoring and distribution		CCD
February	Velvetleaf paddock surveillance Sea Spurge site visits	Site visits, fringed water lily visits	Purple loosestrife, Alligator Weed (PN), climbing spindleberry	Old man's beard	Site audits	Green thistle beetle harvest and distribution, old man's beard gall mite monitoring and sawfly release		CCD
March		Site visits	Cathedral bells, alligator weed (PN), bomarea	Old man's beard	Site audits			CCD, weed wizard videos
April			Alligator weed (PN), Queensland poplar	Banana passionfruit				CCD
May			Alligator Weed (PN)	Banana passionfruit				
June	Sea spurge site visits		Woolly nightshade	Evergreen buckthorn	AMP reports due			Prepare for NETS conference Palmerston North 2025



horizons.govt.nz

24 hour freephone 0508 800 800

fax 06 952 2929 | email help@horizons.govt.nz

Private Bag 11025, Manawatu Mail Centre, Palmerston North 4442