**Proposed Changes to Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP)**

**Details of Each Pest**

**Blue passion flower**

Status: Not currently in RPMP

Proposal: **Eradication**

Background

* Currently found on about 200 properties, mainly in Nelson South, and a couple sites in Hope and elsewhere in Tasman;
* It is spreading into the Grampians;
* Given the low extent of infestations currently, Eradication is feasible;
* Some control has been undertaken by NCC already;
* But Councils need the legislative teeth of its inclusion in the RPMP to enforce control.

#### Proposed Plan Rules:

**Specific Rule for Blue Passion Flower in the Tasman-Nelson region**

Over the duration of this Plan, occupiers within the Tasman-Nelson region must:

a. Report sightings of blue passion flower on their land to Tasman District Council within five working days of their sighting.

b. Destroy any blue passion flower on their property, on an annual basis, on the direction of an authorised person.

A breach of this rule is an offence under Section 154N(19) of the Act.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules as they are written***

**Boneseed**

Status: **Eradication** in the whole region – except the current Port Hills exclusion area

Proposal: **Sustained Control** programme proposed for Port Hills area only, maintain **Eradication** for remainder of region

Background

* Boneseed is present across properties on the Port Hills, which is providing a seed source to other sites, such as Rabbit Island;
* Boneseed can be eradicated from Rabbit Island and elsewhere if the seed source is stopped from entering the wider ecosystem;
* Unlikely to eradicate boneseed from the Port Hills so the aim is to prevent spread.

#### Proposed Plan rules:

#### ****Specific Rule for Boneseed in the Port Hills area****

Over the duration of this Plan, occupiers in the Port Hills area of Nelson, as shown on the Map 1 (in this Proposal), must destroy any boneseed on their land, on an annual basis, prior to the completion of flowering, unless there is a negotiated agreement in place between the Management Agency and occupier as an alternative way to achieve this rule.

A breach of this rule is an offence under Section 154N(19) of the Act.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules as they are written***

**Feral and stray cats**

#### Status: Feral cats are only included in the site-led programme for Waimea Estuary

#### Proposal: Site-Led; f**urther site-led programmes are proposed, targeting both feral and stray cats in Tasman and Nelson**

Background

#### Both Councils wish to step up feral and stray cat management at sites with important biodiversity values and further promote responsible companion cat ownership overall;

#### This proposal concerns the management of feral and stray cats at in areas in Nelson, Abel Tasman NP and St Arnaud;

#### There are maps on the Shape Tasman webpage delineating the relevant areas;

#### The existing rules around cat management in Waimea Estuary remain in place;

#### The webpage also has definitions of companion, stray and feral cats;

#### A cat can also be deemed a ‘pest agent cat’ under the RPMP, with rules;

#### Pest agent cat definition under this Plan is: any cat that in any way leads to the replication or survival of stray or feral cat populations;

#### The RPMP cannot make bylaws, but both Councils are looking to make bylaws for cat management around desexing and microchipping – this is a separate process from the RPMP;

#### National laws may also be enacted that will impact cat management.

#### Proposed Plan rules:

New approaches for (i) Nelson City – specific high value sites, (ii) current Abel Tasman NP site-led programme and (iii) new St Arnaud environs site-led programme. Rules are noted as follows:

##### Nelson city rules

**Specific rule for feral and stray cats in the Nelson City site-led programmes**

Over the duration of this Plan, and with regard to high value sites within Nelson City:

a) Any person who suspects the presence of any feral or stray cat in any named high value site must report its presence and location to Nelson City Council within 48 hours of their sighting;

b) No person shall feed or shelter any feral or stray cat in any named high value site.

##### ***Specific pest agent cat rule for the Nelson City site-led programme***

No person shall deliberately release into the wild (i.e., in any named high value site in Nelson as shown on Map 3.1 in this Proposal) any companion or stray cat.

##### St Arnaud rules

**Specific rule for feral and stray cats in the St Arnaud environs site led programme**

Over the duration of this Plan, and with regard to the St Arnaud site-led programme:

Any person who suspects the presence of any feral or stray cat observed within the mapped area must report its presence and location to Tasman District Council within 48 hours of their sighting.

***Specific pest agent cat rule for the St Arnaud environs site-led programme***

Over the duration of this Plan, and with regard to the St Arnaud site-led programme:

a. No person shall keep, hold or harbour any companion cat within the mapped area unless it is desexed and its identity is microchipped and the chip is registered on the NZ Companion Animal Register;

b. No person shall deliberately release into the wild (e.g. Nelson Lakes National Park and environs) any companion cat from or living within the mapped area.

##### Abel Tasman National Park rules

**Additional rule for Abel Tasman National Park private enclaves**

Following existing rules a. and b. and in relation to the ATNP site-led programme areas – Awaroa, Torrent Bay and Marahau North, as shown in three maps:

a. Any person who suspects the presence of any feral or stray cat within the ATNPSLP must report its presence and location to Tasman District Council within 48 hours of their sighting.

A breach of these rules is an offence under Section 154N(19) of the Act.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules with two caveats for the Nelson City programme:***

1) Re: b) No person shall feed or shelter any feral or stray cat in any named high value site.

The requirement to not feed or shelter any feral or stray cat within the Nelson programme area is problematic, as it may become an animal welfare issue. It can be very difficult to determine if a cat is a stray or merely lost or in distress. Preventing people from assisting a cat that requires assistance when the cat does not belong to them is not acceptable, as animal welfare must be the first concern. It assumes that NCC animal management staff are going to be available at all times to respond to reports of stray cats, which seems unlikely. There should be a provision whereby a person can contain the cat, look after it and feed it if required, whilst reporting it to Nelson City Council. This also provides the opportunity for the person containing the cat to check community social media sites for lost pets, whilst the cat is contained.

##### 2) Re: ***Specific pest agent cat rule for the Nelson City site-led programme***

No person shall deliberately release into the wild (i.e., **within 5 km of** any named high value site in Nelson as shown on Map 3.1 in this Proposal) any companion or stray cat.

This allows for the extent of likely travel of cats from outside to inside the named high value sites.

**Moth Plant**

Status: Not currently in RPMP

Proposal: **Eradication** across whole region

Background

* A small number of urban sites are reported to Council staff each year, generally with a few seedlings;
* However legislative powers are required to enter properties to search for the weed and enforce control;
* Eradication across the region is feasible and brings Nelson-Tasman in line with Marlborough DC, ensuring consistency across the Top of the South for this weed.

#### Proposed Plan rules:

Over the duration of this Plan, occupiers within the Tasman-Nelson region must report sightings of the named Eradication Pests\* on their land to Tasman District Council within five working days of their sighting.

A breach of this rule is an offence under Section 154N(19) of the Act.

\* There is an existing blanket rule for 14 eradication pests and requirements for reporting moth plant would be added in with these.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules as they are written***

**Pampas grass (both common and purple pampas grass)**

Status: Not currently named pests in RPMP, but listed as “organisms of interest”

Proposal: **Sustained Control** programme proposed for 2 areas in Golden Bay:

 Aorere Valley and Whanganui Inlet to Puponga

Background

* Both species of pampas are widespread across much of the region (sadly!);
* The RPMP recognises that controlling these species is not feasible;
* However, the two named areas in Golden Bay are relatively free of pampas and controlling the limited number of pampas plants in these areas will provide protection to large areas, including protecting the indigenous biodiversity values of bush margins, indigenous grasslands, escarpments and wetlands in these areas;
* This is particularly important as one of the currently known infestations is on private land that borders DOC land.

#### Proposed Plan rules:

**Specific Rule for Common and Purple Pampas in the Tasman-Nelson Region**

Over the duration of this Plan:

a. Occupiers in Golden Bay (within the Sustained Control areas - Aorere Valley and Whanganui Inlet to Puponga) as shown on the map must destroy any common and purple pampas on their land, on an annual basis, prior to the completion of flowering.

b. Occupiers in Golden Bay (adjoining the Sustained Control areas - Aorere Valley and Whanganui Inlet to Puponga) as shown on the map must destroy any pampas within 200m of their property boundary (before completion of flowering) where the adjoining occupier (within the Sustained Control area) is taking reasonable steps to destroy pampas on the adjoining land. This is a Good Neighbour Rule.

A breach of this rule is an offence under Section 154N(19) of the Act.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules as they are written***

**Pest and wilding conifers**

#### Status: No species of conifers are currently named as pests except for Douglas fir, and only within the Abel Tasman NP enclaves and subsequent ATNP site-led programme

Proposal: **Progressive Containment**

Background

* There are 10 pest conifer species listed and 2 wilding species – radiata pine and Douglas fir;
* The pest species are generally not grown commercially, unlike the 2 wilding species;
* See webpage for details of all species;
* Inclusion of pest and wilding conifers in the RPMP for the first time allows Councils to cement the gains made over recent years in controlling wilding pines across the region;

#### Proposed Plan rules:

Very detailed!!! Please see webpage.

Key points:

* Aim is to keep currently clear land clear of wilding conifers;
* Owners of conifer plantations must pay for the cost of wilding removal on neighbouring land, up to 200 m from the forest boundary – where the neighbour has laid an official complaint;
* This situation would arise in response to concerns from a neighbour, rather than the forest owner being proactive;
* Specific rules have been made to govern the situations within four areas currently under wilding conifer management, including a Good Neighbour Rule.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules with one caveat:***

Rules (b) and (c) in their current form require a neighbour to complain to Council before action is initiated. We wish to see these rules amended to read that if the adjacent land is owned by Council, that no complaint is required for rule enforcement. That is: if wilding conifers are establishing on Council-owned land and the source is adjacent Council-owned land, then the Council must proactively and promptly clear the wilding conifers. It is envisaged that this scenario would apply where plantation forests owned by Council are the source of wilding conifers in adjacent area/s that are not plantation forests, and also where pest agent conifers on Council-owned land are creating the wilding population. This addition is required to keep Council-owned areas with biodiversity values free of wilding conifers.

**Sabella (Mediterranean fan worm)**

Status: Eradication over the whole region with rules requiring occupiers to report Sabella presence and to allow access to places they occupy for control

Proposal: **Eradication**

Background

* The proposed amendments align with the Marlborough RPMP and bring consistency to control of this marine pest across the Top of the South coastal marine areas;
* The proposed rule changes will strengthen existing rules and increase enforcement powers.

#### Proposed Plan rules:

*There is a lot of detail on the website which I haven’t copied across to here. If you want to read it for yourself, then please go to the relevant page on the Shape Tasman website to check it out.*

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules as they are written***

**Water celery and Vietnamese parsley**

Status: Not currently in RPMP

Proposal: **Sustained Control** programmes proposed for whole region for both species

Background

* The two species are listed together for management purposes as the approach taken is the same for both plants;
* These two aquatic weeds are in the early stages of establishment in several local waterways;
* However, infestations are too large for eradication to be feasible, particularly as the most effective herbicide options require resource consent for use over water;
* Both species can spread by seed and by fragments, making control challenging.

#### Proposed Plan rules:

**Specific Rule for water celery and Vietnamese parsley in the Tasman-Nelson Region.**

Over the duration of this Plan occupiers within the Tasman-Nelson region must:

a. Destroy any water celery and Vietnamese parsley on their land, on the written direction of an authorised person, on an annual basis, prior to the onset of flowering.

b. Remove all fragments of water celery and Vietnamese parsley from their places (i.e. machinery, equipment and craft that have been in contact with waterway vegetation) when leaving infested waterways, and dispose of all fragments to landfill.

A breach of this rule is an offence under Section 154N(19) of the Act.

***Recommendation: Endorse Councils’ proposed plan rules, with the following caveats:***

* Where biodiversity values are high and infestations limited, e.g. water celery in Brook Stream, Council must seek to **eradicate** these weeds from these waterways;
* All contractors and Council staff carrying out work of any nature in and around **all** urban streams must check equipment, materials and machinery prior to leaving site to ensure all are clean of any seed or fragments of either species, with any seed or fragments found disposed of to landfill.

New/Additional Weeds For Inclusion into RPMP

* + Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*);
	+ Potentially problematic palm species;
	+ Tree privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*);
	+ Elaeagnus (Elaeagnus x reflexa)
	+ Woolly nightshade(*Solanum mauritianum*) – extend control to all of Tasman.