

## NEW INITIATIVE (C)

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### Project title: Funding for Pest Management Implementation Plan

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*Background: this project aims to increase the level of service for pest management through the addition of key native ecosystems – sites Of environmental significance. It has been developed in line with the Biodiversity Action Plan that was agreed by Council in 2007.*

*The pest management programme has been in place for over two years and proved effective at minimising the impact of pest animals and plants on the city's green spaces. It has developed into a successful community-based programme with thousands of volunteer hours supporting the work each year.*

*It is recommended that the initiative be included in the draft annual plan.*

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### 1. The Proposal

The initiative seeks confirmation of funding for the implementation of the the Pest Management Plan. This has been refined over a number of years and makes a significant contribution to the priority of introducing a Biodiversity Action Plan.

### 2. Project costs

Projects C509 and C510	Operating expenses \$000							
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
Pest Management Implementation Plan	832	892	937	963	1,014	1,009	1,024	1,024
LTCCP (Figures current as of January 2008)	758	759	757	759	760	759	759	759
New funding required total	74	132	180	204	253	249	264	264

### 3. Project Outline

The ten year pest management implementation plan was originally agreed in 2005 with a caveat that it be reviewed in light of the priorities that were to be agreed in the (then forth-coming) Environmental Strategy. This in turn led to

the development of the Biodiversity Action Plan. The final seven years of the implementation programme have now been set to reflect the objectives set out in the Biodiversity Action Plan.

The Biodiversity Action Plan recognises effective pest management as a critical factor and a high priority in the ongoing protection and restoration of Wellington's indigenous biodiversity. This requires resources and funding.

Additional funding to that originally forecast is now required. This will cover the on-going control of pest animals and plants at 12 established key native ecosystems sites (KNEs) and at three additional KNEs each year.

The total funding will also cover pest animal control programmes across the city including the control of goats, deer, pigs, rabbits, hares, rodents, mustelids and possums. And our weed led programmes to support the work of Great Wellington Regional Council and our responsibilities under the Regional Pest Management Strategy.

The risks of not funding the work include:

- Failure to protect the important areas of the city, particularly our KNEs and coastal areas, will allow further degradation of important environments with a high probability that they will be degraded beyond recovery or species lost entirely over the next decade.
- The money that has been spent on pest control up until this point could be wasted if the programmes outlined in the Pest Management Plan are not implemented.
- Pest control programmes need to be expanded to allow for the continuation of effective management, otherwise areas are at risk of reinvasion from other parts of the city. The early integrated management of potential pests also minimises future costs – economic, environmental and social.
- The financial/time equivalent contributions of community groups would likely be compromised. Expectations surrounding pest control are especially high amongst community groups that work in and around our parks and reserves. All of these groups already carry out some form of pest control. The programme is a successful demonstration of the Council leadership role and commitment to walking alongside communities.

A full evaluation of the project will be undertaken prior to 2014/15. If the evaluation confirms the continuation of the project out year funding will be required (it is expected at this time that these costs will plateau rather than continue to increase).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Pest plant and animal control is a recognised priority for Council. Effective control will be achieved through the implementation of the Pest Management

**Implementation Plan.** This is required to ensure that the Council fulfils the commitments it made in the Biodiversity Action Plan.