

Biosecurity Bites

Northern Issue

WINTER 2017

Submissions invited on Proposal for Regional Pest Management Plan

The Proposal for the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan has been notified for public submissions. Animals and plants declared as pests can threaten the natural environment and livelihoods. We need to make sure the right rules are in place to manage existing pests and new pests.

We want to:

- Protect biodiversity and the natural environment
- Protect production activities from the impact of pests
- Be able to better respond to pests as soon as they get here
- Be better equipped to respond to changes in climate and land use, new tourism opportunities, changes in freshwater habitats and water movement.

Some of you have been involved in community discussions to date and responded to last year's discussion document. You can now make a submission on the resulting Proposal. The Public Notice at www.ecan.govt.nz/pests tells you how to do this. Submissions close on 3 July 2017.

Plan to import new strain of rabbit calicivirus



Environment Canterbury is part of a national consortium of agencies leading a programme that proposes to import and release a new strain of rabbit calicivirus, RHDV1 K5. The consortium includes regional councils, Federated Farmers, the Department of Conservation and Land Information New Zealand. It is targeting a release date of March 2018.

The targeted release timeframe is later than first anticipated, as further work has been required to address the regulatory requirements that will allow the legal importation of the new strain.

Before it can be imported and released, approval is required from the Ministry for Primary Industries under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act and the Biosecurity Act.

The revised timeframe will allow the consortium to learn valuable lessons from the Australian release, which is currently underway. A successful release of this new strain would help landholders achieve control objectives in the Regional Pest Management Plan.

Boneseed - Be on the lookout

Boneseed is an evergreen shrub that can grow up to three metres tall with dull green, toothed leaves covered with a cottony down. Daisy-like flowers are produced in bright yellow clusters from late winter until late summer. Up to 50,000 seeds per plant can be produced in a year and can remain viable for up to 10 years. Seeds are mainly dispersed by birds, water and natural spread down cliffs and slopes below parent plants. Tolerant of dry, infertile soils, boneseed can establish in coastal areas where its vigorous growth will displace desirable plants, shade out native seedlings and reduce or prevent public access to coastal and beach areas. It is highly flammable and will regenerate prolifically after fire. The Northern team has been working on boneseed for a number of years. This season work will focus on Amberley, Motunau, Gore Bay, Claverley and sites around the peninsula and along the coast at Kaikōura when these can be accessed safely.



Boneseed



Boneseed flower



Stop the spread of pests: Keep it Clean!

If it can move, it can carry diseases, pests and weeds. For this reason vehicles and machinery pose a high biosecurity risk to farms and should be managed accordingly. To stop the spread of pests, make sure all vehicles and machinery that visit your property are clean. You should also limit the number of vehicle access points and keep track of who has entered. Simple actions like these can greatly reduce the risk of a new pest incursion to your farm.

What's the Biosecurity team up to?

Over autumn the team has been busy with the annual nassella tussock monitoring programme. Fifty properties across North Canterbury have been monitored and plant numbers collected. Information collected provides data on whether the objective of progressively reducing nassella is being met.

The nassella search programme also started in March, with contractors carrying out some of this work. About 20% of land considered susceptible to infestation is searched each year, so all susceptible land is searched over a 5-year period.

The focus for the team over the next few months switches to gorse and broom. Scattered and isolated plants, patches of less than 50 square metres and plants along boundaries are the focus of the regional rules.

For information on gorse and broom, go to www.ecan.govt.nz and search on pest name. Alternatively, contact Customer Services on 0800 324 636 for a pamphlet. For information on control options, please call your local Biosecurity team.

Did you know?

A Pest Management Liaison Committee (PMLC) made up of local representatives is in your area. Their role is to work with Environment Canterbury and the community to implement the Regional Pest Management Plan and make recommendations that will help us manage pests in your district and across the region. If you would like to discuss a pest issue with your representatives you can contact your local chair:

Ashley Pest District
Ian Ford
03 314 4319

Kaikōura Pest District
Derrick Millton
03 319 4341

Waikari Pest District
Harry Pawsey
03 314 4169

Hurunui Nassella Tussock PMLC
David Hyde
03 314 3894

Amuri Pest District
Hamish Roxburgh
03 315 6049

Chilean Needle Grass PMLC
Charles Wiffen
03 319 2836

Saffron Thistle



Saffron thistle is a threat to New Zealand's agricultural industry. Once established it can form dense stands, preventing stock movement, competing with pasture species and reducing stock-carrying capacity. Stock can suffer injuries to the eyes and mouth from the sharp spines which can also get stuck in wool.

Readily distinguishable from most other thistles by its bright yellow flowers, saffron thistle is spread by stock, water, vehicles and in soil to other locations. Seed can remain viable for up to 8 years.

Please contact the Biosecurity team if you see this prickly pest.

Introducing new officers

Tom Robin – Biosecurity Officer



Tom joined the Northern team in February having graduated with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree from Lincoln University. Tom has a passion for New Zealand's unique environment and regularly participates in tramping and hunting. He is also interested in cooking, horse racing and rugby league.

Dan Logan – Biosecurity Officer



Dan also joined the Northern team in February, having spent the past two years in the River Engineering section. For five years before that he was carrying out possum and ferret control throughout the region. Dan enjoys hunting and fishing and just being in the great outdoors.

Kristi Andreassen – Biosecurity Support Officer



Kristi joined the Biosecurity team in September last year, having moved to New Zealand from the Sunshine Coast. She comes from a long background of mining/construction administration and more recently in aged care. Kristi is loving living in New Zealand, especially seeing snow for the first time. She is a rugby league fan who enjoys exploring the country. Kristi is based with the Northern team at Amberley, and undertakes the administration role for the three Biosecurity teams.

Remember to book your nassella contractor

Remember, if you use a nassella contractor to book early, to allow enough time to complete your control programme before the compliance date and to maintain previous control efforts.

For a list of contractors who carry out this work, contact Environment Canterbury's Amberley Office via 0800 324 636.

Who do I call?

For all pest enquiries, please contact the Northern Biosecurity team at Amberley on 0800 324 636 or biosecurity@ecan.govt.nz