Otago Regional Council

Regional Pest Management Plan Review

Discussion Document 2026

Welcome

Otago Regional Council (ORC) is reviewing its Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP).

We want to know how you think pests should be managed across our region over the next 10 years.

This is early engagement, and your feedback will help shape the draft RPMP before formal consultation begins next year.

Have your say!

In person at a community drop-in session: orc.govt.nz/pestfeedback

Email to rpmpreview@orc.govt.nz

Post to Otago Regional Council, 180 High Street, Central Dunedin, Dunedin 9016

Or online at orc.govt.nz/pestfeedback

Scan the QR code below

Got questions? Phone **0800 474 082**

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What is a regional pest management plan?

A regional pest management plan identifies pests in the region and sets goals to either keep these pests out of Otago, get rid of them, or reduce their presence.

The plan can also set rules for people to follow. While there are many nuisance species in Otago, only the ones that have a large impact on Otago's environment, communities and economy are managed as pests in the plan. The current plan manages 51 pest species.

Why are we reviewing the plan?

Pest plans need to be reviewed at least every ten years. The current pest plan was established by Council in 2019, so it's time we took another look at it.

Otago's geography is dramatically diverse, stretching from the coast through to the drier inland areas and high-alpine mountain ranges, glacial lakes and river valleys in the west.

The region's diverse geography and climate contribute to unique biodiversity, valuable ecosystems and an environment that supports a variety of land uses, which all contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of Otago's people and communities.

This landscape diversity also creates pest management challenges, with many nuisance species posing threats to the Otago region.

Managing pests in the RPMP

The RPMP is a regulatory plan established under the Biosecurity Act.

It can set rules to manage specific pests, and many will require landowners/occupiers to take action to manage pests, but it can't solve every biosecurity issue on its own.

A nuisance species is named a 'pest' species if it is included in the RPMP.

A species can only be included in the RPMP as a pest if it meets the following specific legal criteria:

- that species must be capable of causing real harm in the region
- managing the species under RPMP rules must be more effective than relying on voluntary action, and
- the benefits of managing it through the RPMP must outweigh the costs.

Species that don't meet these criteria can still be managed in other non-regulatory ways, such as catchment action plans and co-ordinated actions by communities, stakeholders, mana whenua and ORC.

Sandymount, Otago Peninsula

Management programmes

The National Policy Direction for Pest Management sets out the programmes that pest species may be managed under.

How widespread a pest is guides which of the management programmes is most appropriate. Programmes are: exclusion, eradication, progressive containment, sustained control, site-led and pathway management.

The current RPMP contains five of the six available programmes. It does not include pathway management; however, pathway management plans in other regions target marine or freshwater pests, and we may want to consider these for Otago.

Exclusion

The exclusion programme aims to prevent certain pests, that are currently not found in Otago, from establishing here. **Applies to pest plants not yet established in Otago.**

EXAMPLE PESTS
African feather grass and Chilean needle grass

Eradication

The eradication programme aims to get rid of these pests from Otago. **Pest plants in this category must still be at a manageable level.**

EXAMPLE PEST
Bennett's wallaby

Progressive containment

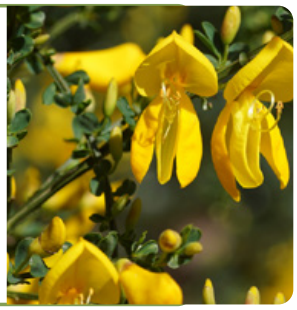
The progressive containment programme aims to stop a pest from spreading and/or contain it to a certain area. **Applies to pest plants that have built up numbers but haven't spread to most of Otago yet.**

EXAMPLE PESTS
Old man's beard and Bomarea

Sustained control

The sustained control programme aims to provide for ongoing control of the pest to reduce its impacts on environmental, economic and cultural values and spread to other properties. **These pests are already widespread, so we need to slowly reduce their numbers to achieve the best cost-benefit outcomes.**

EXAMPLE PESTS
Gorse and broom



Site-led

Site-led programmes have rules for specific pests that only apply in that area. **Site-led areas have special biodiversity and other values to protect.**

EXAMPLE PESTS
Banana passionfruit and Darwin's barberry in parts of Dunedin

Pathway management

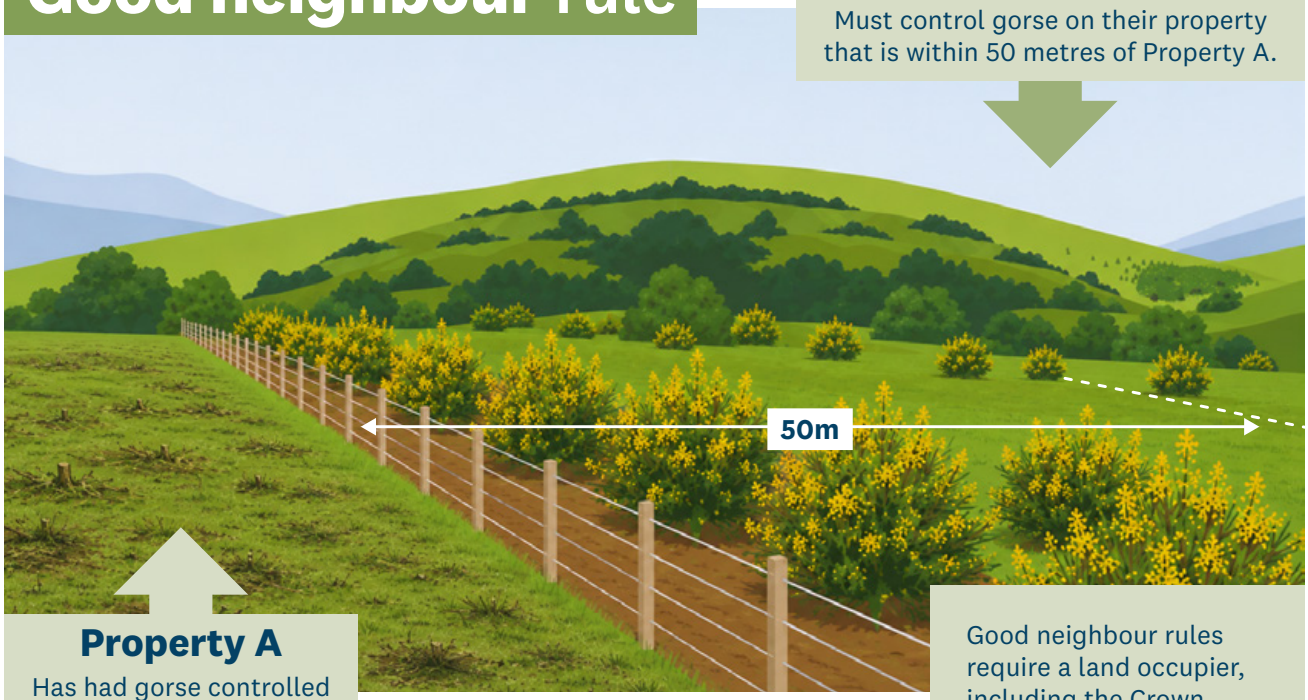
A pathway management plan aims to reduce the way pests are spread — **preventing multiple species from establishing rather than managing pests individually.**

EXAMPLE PEST
Freshwater gold clam

Photo: Tracey Burton, Toitū Te Whenua LINZ

Good neighbour rule

Property B
Must control gorse on their property that is within 50 metres of Property A.



Property A
Has had gorse controlled on their property.

Good neighbour rules require a land occupier, including the Crown, to manage a pest if it would otherwise spread to nearby land and cause unreasonable costs for neighbours who are already doing their part to control the pest. They only apply to an area that is a specified distance from a shared boundary.

Non-regulatory approach

A non-regulatory approach to regional pest management relies on voluntary actions and cooperative community-led initiatives rather than rules under an RPMP.

For example, ORC can support non-regulatory pest management by offering public education, providing operational services, and funding or coordinating community-led pest control activities.

The benefits, costs and responsibility

There are different ways to pay for pest management, and costs fall on different parties, depending on the pest and the intervention required.

ORC is responsible for managing the incursion of exclusion pests. These are pests new to the region, and a rapid response is required.

Eradication and site-led programmes provide public benefit and therefore may involve both council-led and rate-funded activity.

Progressive containment programmes, sustained control programmes and good neighbour rules require land occupiers to manage and fund pest control on their property.

A cost and benefit analysis for each species is required under the Biosecurity Act, and this determines if a pest is in or out of the RPMP.

If a pest is included, this analysis also helps to determine which management programme it will sit in.

Work done so far

Understanding what is and is not working with the current plan

An external review assessing the achievement of the RPMP objectives was completed in 2025. **The report summarised the effectiveness of the pest programmes in the plan as follows:**

Pest programme	Pest type or site-led area	How are we doing
Exclusion	African feather grass, Chilean needle grass, egeria, false tamarisk, hornwort, moth plant	On track
Eradication	Rooks, spiny broom	On track
	Wallaby	On track in raising awareness. Off track in reducing populations and preventing spread.
Progressive containment	Spartina	On track
	Pest conifers (includes 10 species), African love grass, nassella tussock	More work to do
	Bomarea, old man's beard	Off track
	Boneseed, bur daisy, cape ivy, perennial nettle, white-edged nightshade	More work to do
Sustained control	Feral rabbits	More work to do
	Gorse and broom, Russell lupin	Off track
	Nodding thistle, ragwort	More work to do
Site-led	Lagarosiphon	More work to do
	Otago Peninsula	More work to do
	West Harbour — Mt Cargill	More work to do
	Quarantine and Goat islands	More work to do

The review highlighted several factors that are working well and others that are not. Challenges include stable multi-year funding, delivering effective enforcement, and the need for more public education on RPMP objectives and rules. It did highlight that ORC has made significant investment to improve pest management functions since the RPMP came into force in 2019.

Getting community views on pests of concern

In early 2026 we asked the public which pest species most concerned them and why. We received over 900 responses, with rabbits being the species named most often, closely followed by cats, possums and pest conifers (wilding pines).

The species with the most responses are highlighted in 'Spotlight species', with extra information and targeted questions.

ORC has also been reviewing the content of the current plan to better understand existing issues and to support recommendations for the future management of pests in Otago.

In this discussion document, you will see:

- draft recommended management approaches for some pest species where we have a reasonable level of certainty of the best approach
- the proposed approach for some pest species still under review while we seek more information
- some additional information for spotlight species to help inform your input on the best management approach for these pests.

We have time to amend the draft recommendations before the plan is finalised and formally adopted by Council.

We also intend to make changes to the wording in the plan so the rules are consistent, clear and easy to apply.

Key dates for the RPMP

Spotlight species

Our 2026 survey results show these 'spotlight species' are front of mind for the Otago community, so it's important to hear your thoughts on how they should be managed.

Production pests

Production pests — which include rabbits and wallabies — have a huge impact on the economic wellbeing of Otago. These species are managed in the current RPMP, and we are seeking your feedback on the best way to manage them in the new pest plan.

Feral rabbits

Feral rabbits are a serious threat to our biodiversity, environment and economy. They graze native seedlings and vegetation, compete with stock for pasture and crops, and cause soil erosion and degradation.

Current management approach

Feral rabbits are managed through a sustained control programme in the current RPMP. This management approach has two main components.

Firstly, it sets rules for land occupiers to control rabbits on their property to Modified McLean Scale (MMS) Level 3 (shown on page 10).

Secondly, there is a good neighbour rule that requires land occupiers to reduce rabbit numbers to MMS Level 3 within 500 metres of their property boundary, where a neighbour is doing the same. MMS levels 4 and above are considered non-compliant under the current RPMP.

Additionally, ORC facilitates community rabbit management programmes. These programmes aim to identify rabbit-prone areas, provide education and guidance on effective rabbit management, and promote community collaboration, with the overall aim to reduce rabbit populations.

Our review found that the current RPMP has been partially effective in meeting the objective for feral rabbits in some areas of Otago; however, in other areas, it has been difficult to reduce rabbit numbers to MMS Level 3.

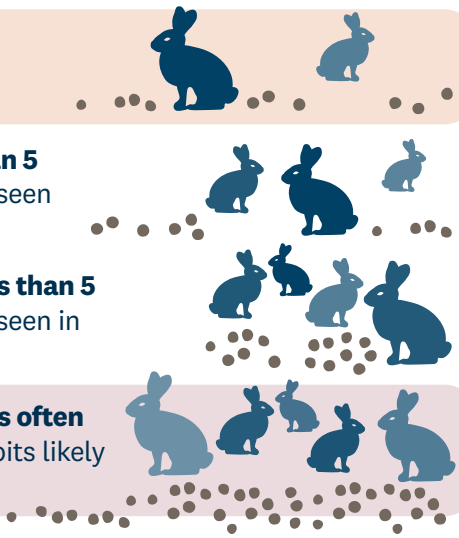
Rabbit numbers and their impacts vary across Otago, and a uniform approach may not be the best way to achieve successful rabbit management outcomes.

ORC is exploring what the appropriate, achievable scale for Otago might be, or whether different areas should aim to achieve different levels on the scale.

The MMS level set in the RPMP directly impacts land occupiers, as the lower the MMS target, the more it will cost for rabbit control. There is also a risk that, in some rabbit prone areas, land occupiers may struggle to meet the MMS target.

Modified McLean Scale

Scale	Rabbit infestation
1	**No signs found.** No rabbits seen.
2	**Very infrequent signs present.** Unlikely to see rabbits.
3	Pellet heaps spaced **10 metres or more apart** on average. Odd rabbits seen; signs and some pellet heaps showing up.
4	Pellet heaps spaced **between 5 metres and 10 metres apart** on average. Pockets of rabbits; signs and fresh burrows very noticeable.
5	Pellet heaps spaced **5 metres or less apart** on average. Infestation spreading out from heavy pockets.
6	Signs very frequent with pellet heaps often **less than 5 metres apart** over the whole area. Rabbits may be seen over the whole area.
7	Signs very frequent with **2–3 pellet heaps often less than 5 metres apart** over the whole area. Rabbits may be seen in large numbers over the whole area.
8	Signs very frequent with **three or more pellet heaps often less than 5 metres apart** over the whole area. Rabbits likely to be seen in large numbers over the whole area.



Source: National Pest Control Agencies

Question 1: What do you think is an appropriate target on the Modified McLean Scale for rabbit control in your area of Otago?

Question 2: How do you think feral rabbits should be managed?

- Current approach
- Sustained control programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Bennett's wallabies

Bennett's wallabies can significantly impact Otago's economy and biodiversity. They compete with livestock for food and can foul pasture, damage fences, destroy agricultural crops, contribute to erosion and kill plantation forest seedlings. Wallabies also stop native bush regeneration.

Current management approach

Bennett's wallabies are managed in an eradication programme to remove them from Otago. The Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, and Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes also seek to exclude them from these sites.

The current pest plan includes land occupier rules to destroy wallabies if they are present on a property, and a requirement to report their presence to ORC.

The eradication of wallabies in Otago is jointly managed and funded through the Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme and ORC.

The review found that the current RPMP target to fully eradicate Bennett's wallabies from Otago was off track due to the challenges of preventing the spread of a small number of wallabies over a large area. However, considerable gains have been made at raising awareness, eliminating populations and preventing the spread of wallabies in Otago.

The national eradication programme strategy is also under review, which may affect the national funding available to control wallabies in Otago.

Question 3: How do you think Bennett's wallabies should be managed?

- Current approach
- Eradication programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Gorse and broom

Introduced gorse and broom species were originally brought to New Zealand by European settlers in the 1800s as hedge plants. Due to little competition, they soon spread from these original plantings and began invading the landscape.

Gorse

Broom

Current management approach

Gorse and broom are currently managed in a sustained control programme to protect the areas of Otago that are currently gorse- and broom-free.

The plan rules require everyone within the gorse- and broom-free areas to eliminate gorse and broom on the land that they occupy.

A good neighbour rule also requires everyone outside the gorse- and broom-free area, on rural-zoned land, to eliminate all gorse and broom within 10 metres of their property boundary where a neighbour is doing the same.

The review found that the sustained control target for gorse and broom was off track due to low compliance rates and reinfestation of gorse and broom into gorse- and broom-free areas.

Question 4: How do you think gorse and broom should be managed?

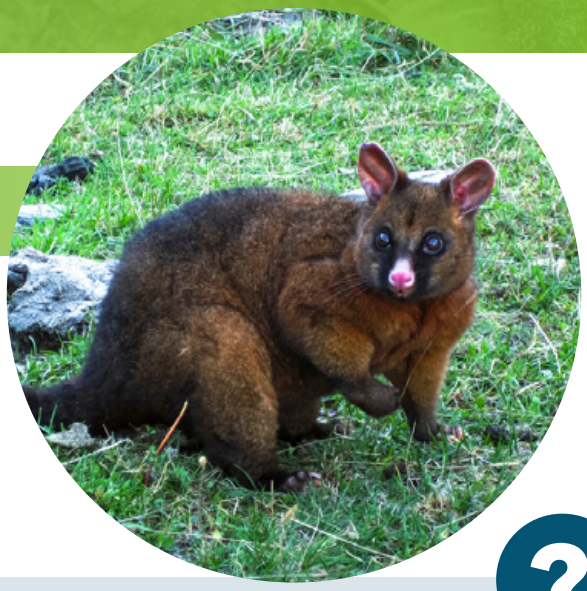
- Current approach
- Sustained control programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at **orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback**

The predators

The current plan includes some predator environmental pests in site-led programmes in the Dunedin area. We are seeking your views on how these pests should be managed in the plan.

Possums



Possums cause major problems for New Zealand's biodiversity and agricultural industries. They spread bovine tuberculosis (TB), a serious disease that can infect humans as well as cattle, deer and other animals. TB creates risks for both public health and farming, as infected animals can pass the disease on and cause significant economic and environmental damage.

Current management approach

Possums are only classified as a pest in the site-led areas: Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, Quarantine Island and Goat Island.

Only one rule for possums applies to the site-led areas: no one can keep, hold, enclose or otherwise harbour possums in these areas. You also can't bring them into the site-led areas.

OSPRI has led the landscape-scale possum control through its TBfree programme, which currently covers approximately 507,065 hectares in Otago. The Otago programmes are being scaled back as areas are declared TB-free, and the possum control programme is set to stop once TB-free goals are achieved.

Given their potential to cause damage across Otago, we are seeking views on how possums should be managed.

Question 5: How do you think possums should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site-led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Feral cats

Feral cats are wild and cannot be rehomed as companion cats, as they are unsocialised and often live far away from people, which distinguishes them from domestic and stray cats.

Current management approach

Feral cats are included in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, and Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes in the current RPMP.

The plan rules state that no person shall keep, hold, enclose or otherwise harbour in any place, feral cats — either in transit to, or present in, the relevant site identified in the plan.

There are no rules in the RPMP that relate to domestic or stray cats, and the current rules for controlling feral cats have been challenging to enforce. For these reasons, we're looking for feedback on the best way to manage feral cats.

Question 6: How do you think feral cats should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site-led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at **orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback**

Three cat populations in New Zealand

Cats living with, or **dependent** on, humans

Cats living in urban areas, with their **needs partly met** by humans

Cats living independently, which **do not rely** on humans for survival

Rats

Rats eat native plants and animals and can impact human health.

Current management approach

Rats are classified in the plan as pests in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, Quarantine Island and Goat Island site-led programmes.

Current rules aim to support the work of the community, should they wish to undertake management for rats within a site-led area.

Question 7: How do you think rats should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site-led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Mustelids

Mustelids (ferrets, stoats, weasels) threaten native birds, are implicated in the extinction of some native species, and are the major cause of decline of many others.

Ferrets are also a threat to human health and agriculture, particularly as they carry TB.

Mustelids are also a threat to poultry farms and carry parasites and toxoplasmosis, which can cause illness in humans and livestock.

Current management approach

Mustelids are included in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, and Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes in the current RPMP.

The current rule aims to support the work of the community where they wish to undertake management of mustelids within a site-led area.

Question 8: How do you think ferrets, stoats and weasels should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site-led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Hoofing around

Ungulates are hooved mammals, which include feral deer, pigs and goats. These animals threaten native biodiversity and forest health while also creating significant costs to primary industries through pasture depletion and disease transmission, leading to massive control costs.

Feral deer

Feral deer harm native biodiversity. They eat entire understories (smaller trees, shrubs, herbs and seedlings) of native bush, which then affects native plants and animals.

Deer can carry and spread TB and are a road safety hazard. While feral deer have a negative effect on farms, eating crops, they can also be a food source and provide tourism opportunities for hunting.

The term 'feral deer' includes several species, such as red deer, fallow deer and white-tail.

Current management approach

Feral deer are included in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, and Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes.

The current rule aims to support the work of the community where they wish to undertake management of feral deer within a site-led area.

Question 9: How do you think feral deer should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at **orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback**

Feral pigs

Photo: Gary Smith

Feral pigs can have major effects on our native ecosystems and threaten biodiversity. They eat the tops of native plants and dig up their roots, resulting in the decline of some species.

While feral pigs are valued for hunting and as a food source, they are also a threat to rural properties, as they root up pastoral land and have been known to kill and eat lambs.

Current management approach

Feral pigs are included in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, and Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes.

The current rule aims to support the work of the community where they wish to undertake management of feral pigs within a site-led area.

Question 10: How do you think feral pigs should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Feral goats

Feral goats cause considerable damage to our native forests. They are agile and well adapted to a wide range of environments, including steep, rocky slopes and bluffs, which can cause erosion and make it hard for plants to grow back.

Current management approach

Feral goats are included in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, and Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes.

The current rule aims to support the work of the community where they wish to undertake management of feral goats within a site-led area.

Question 11: How do you think feral goats should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Where the wildings are

Pest conifers

Pest conifers were identified as a pest of high interest in the online survey, particularly in the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago districts.

Pest conifers are introduced species that can establish and spread through self-seeding in a manner that may permanently alter ecosystems and landscapes, reduce water yields and land productivity, and limit future land use options.

The common term ‘wilding conifers’ refers specifically to any species of self-established introduced conifers growing wild outside intentionally planted areas.

The term ‘pest conifers’ is broader and includes both wilding conifers and certain intentionally planted introduced conifer species identified as significant sources of wilding spread.

These pest-classified conifers include intentionally planted non-forestry examples of Corsican, Scots, mountain and dwarf-mountain pines and larch. It also includes contorta pine, which is considered a pest in all situations, including forestry.

Current management approach

Pest conifers are managed in the progressive containment programme. Land occupiers are responsible for controlling pest conifers on their land and have a legal obligation to prevent their spread.

There are specific rules in the RPMP that require land occupiers to remove pest conifers, both wild (self-established) and planted (specific pest-classified conifer species in planted situations, such as gardens and shelterbelts).

There are also pest agent conifer rules that require land occupiers (other than forestry, which is managed by national regulations) to control any other planted conifers that are clearly causing adverse wild spread across property boundaries.

There is also a good neighbour rule to help prevent wilding conifers spreading from one property onto neighbouring properties by requiring neighbours to remove wild and planted pest conifers from within 200 metres of the boundary.

The National Wilding Conifer Control Programme led by Biosecurity New Zealand in partnership with regional councils, including ORC, coordinates collaborative wilding conifer management across New Zealand.

Question 12: How do you think pest conifers should be managed?

- **Current approach**
- **Progressive containment programme with modified rules**
- **Different programme with modified rules**
- **Non-regulatory approach**
- **Other**

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Space invaders

Willows and sycamores are invasive plants that spread into waterways and cause significant ecological and infrastructure issues across Otago. We are seeking feedback on the best management approach for these species.

Willows

Willows in Otago, particularly crack and grey willow, act as both beneficial bank stabilisers and invasive, damaging pests.

While they prevent erosion, they can also choke waterways, contributing to flooding. They degrade habitats by replacing native vegetation, reducing water flow, and dropping branches that block streams, prompting ongoing removal.

Current management approach

Willow species are an 'organism of interest' in the RPMP. Organisms of interest are not granted pest status in the plan and there are no rules to control willows in the RPMP.

The ORC does, however, monitor willows for their impact on waterways for flood management and provides management advice for land occupiers in Otago.

We are seeking your views on whether they should be included in the new plan or whether their management should remain non-regulatory.

Question 13: How do you think willows should be managed?

- Current non-regulatory approach
- Pest management programme with rules
- Other

Answer these questions at **orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback**

Sycamore

Photo: Weedbusters

Sycamores are large invasive trees that grow quickly and can outcompete native plants and damage indigenous ecosystems.

Sycamores invade a variety of habitats, can tolerate a wide range of conditions and form thick stands of trees that stop other species from growing. Sycamores produce many long-lived seeds that can be easily dispersed by wind or water.

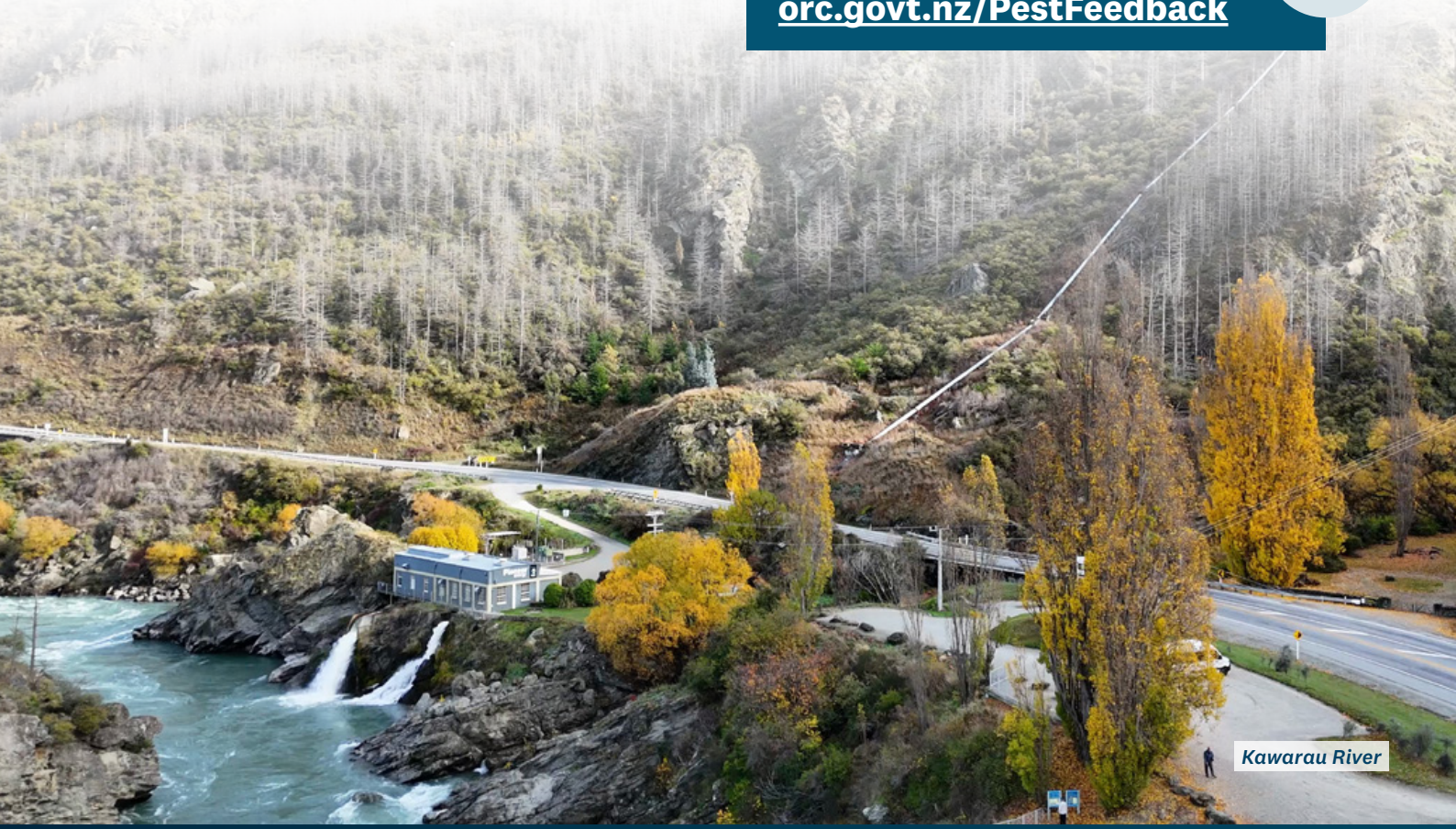
Current management approach

Sycamores are included in the Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, Quarantine Island and Goat Island site-led programmes in the current RPMP. There are no specific rules to control sycamores.

Question 14: How do you think sycamores should be managed?

- Current approach (site-led)
- Site-led programme with rules
- Different programme with rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback



Kawarau River

Aquatic enemies

Aquatic pests pose significant threats to Otago's freshwater and coastal environment. Spotlight species include lagarosiphon, which is currently managed in the plan, and several emerging pests that could be managed in the new plan.

Lagarosiphon

Lagarosiphon is a fast-growing freshwater weed that spreads easily by being carried on water currents, boats and fishing gear. It's also spread by disposal of aquarium and pond waste, and deliberate planting.

Once lagarosiphon is established, it takes over waterbodies, crowding out native plants, blocking water flow and intakes, and making activities like swimming and boating difficult.

Current management approach

Lagarosiphon is managed through a site-led programme in the current RPMP.

This programme seeks to control lagarosiphon in Lake Wānaka, the Kawarau River and Lake Dunstan and to prevent lagarosiphon from establishing in Whakatipu Waimāori / Lake Wakatipu and in lakes, rivers and tributaries where it is not already present.

The removal of lagarosiphon in these site-led areas is managed and funded by a LINZ-led control programme, which is supported by ORC.

The review found that the lagarosiphon control targets are on track in the Central Otago lakes. However, current rules are not effectively protecting other waterways in the region and are not stopping the spread by boaties or other water activities.

Question 15: How do you think lagarosiphon should be managed?

- Current approach
- Site led programme with modified rules
- Different programme with modified rules
- Pathway rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Yellow flag iris

Yellow flag iris is a highly invasive plant that outcompetes native species, disrupts water flow, and alters the natural structure of waterbodies.

It can also invade pastures and displace native vegetation, and it is toxic to livestock.

Yellow flag iris is found across Otago, including Mosgiel, Lake Wānaka, Lake Whakatipu, Lake Hayes, Tahakopa Estuary in Papatowai, and Ōamaru.

Current management approach

Yellow flag iris is an 'organism of interest' in the current RPMP.

Organisms of interest are not accorded pest status and there are no rules to control yellow flag iris in the RPMP. Given the potential impacts it can have, we are considering the best approach for yellow flag iris.

Question 16: How do you think yellow flag iris should be managed?

- Current approach (organism of interest)
- Pest management programme with rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Yellow flag iris

Photo: Kirk Roberston

Emerging freshwater pests

There are many emerging freshwater* species that pose a threat to Otago that could be included in the RPMP.

The species could include cabomba, clasped pondweed, hydrilla, parrot's feather, freshwater gold clam, gambusia, koi carp, brown bullhead catfish, and purple loosestrife.

Most emerging pests are not present in Otago, and if included in an exclusion programme, ORC would be responsible for managing an incursion. Typically, no land occupier rules apply because these species live in rivers and streams.

Current management approach

The management of freshwater plant and animal pests is very limited in the current RPMP, with only lagarosiphon in the site-led programme and egeria and hornwort in the exclusion programme.

A wide range of emerging freshwater pests pose risks to Otago's waterbodies. Many of these share common pathways of spread, such as boating and associated equipment.

**'Freshwater' includes submerged and semi-submerged plants and aquatic animals.*

Question 17: How do you think emerging freshwater pests should be managed?

- Current approach
- Pest management programme with rules
- Pathway rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Emerging marine pests

There are many emerging marine pests that pose a threat to Otago's unique coastal biodiversity and the commercial and recreational activities that occur on the coast.

Many marine species are not yet present in Otago, and if included in an exclusion programme, ORC would be responsible for managing an incursion. Typically, there are no rules that apply.

Aquatic enemies include Asian paddle crab, Mediterranean fanworm, invasive sea squirts and sea couch.

Current management approach

There are currently no marine pests included as pest species in the RPMP.

However, a few have been included as organisms of interest. They are not granted pest status and there are no rules to control these species in the RPMP.

A wide range of emerging marine pests share common pathways of spread, such as recreational boating, fishing, aquaculture and associated equipment.

Question 18: How do you think emerging marine pests should be managed?

- Current approach
- Pest management programme with rules
- Pathway rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Managing pests through site-led programmes

There are four site-led programmes in our plan.

The Otago Peninsula, West Harbour / Mt Cargill, Quarantine and Goat islands site-led programmes support Predator Free Dunedin in protecting the ecological and cultural values in these areas.

The lagosiphon site-led programme supports LINZ in controlling and eradicating lagarosiphon in the Queenstown and Central Otago lakes.

The current site-led programmes set objectives for pest management at each location. However, while rules exist for pest animals and lagarosiphon, there are no specific rules for the pest plants. Pest animal and lagarosiphon rules have been challenging to apply in practice.

Our review found that the current site-led programmes were partially effective. Of the 16 named pest species (seven plant species and nine animals), only lagarosiphon is currently subject to compliance inspections.

Collaborative pest management activities have resulted in successful outcomes. A key barrier to being fully effective is the limited rules requiring land occupier compliance.

ORC provides direct funding to the site-led programmes to achieve the RPMP objectives; however, the scale of the site-led areas is extensive and funding for pest management is limited.

We want to know whether you think site-led programmes should be included in the next plan. Are they the best way to support coordinated pest management in high-values areas? And if so, would including rules that require land occupiers to manage pest species be of benefit?

We are seeking your views on the use of site-led programmes to manage pests in Otago and protect special values.

Question 19: How do you think pests should be managed to protect biodiversity values?

- Site-led programme with rules
- Region-wide rules
- Non-regulatory approach
- Other

Question 20: Do you support the inclusion of site-led programmes in the RPMP?

- No
- Yes
- If yes, whereabouts?

Answer these questions at orc.govt.nz/PestFeedback

Proposed management approach for pests in Otago

Bold = Programme changed *MR = Modified Rule/s

Terrestrial plants

Pest name	Current programme	Recommendation
African feather grass	Exclusion	Exclusion
African love grass	**Progressive containment**	**Progressive containment MR***
Banana passionfruit	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Bomarea	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Boneseed	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Broom (common and montpellier gorse)	**Sustained control**	**Under review**
Buddleia	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Bur daisy	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Cape ivy	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Chilean flame creeper	**Site-led**	**Sustained control MR***
Chilean mayten	**Not in plan**	**Under review**
Chilean needle grass	Exclusion	Exclusion
Clematis taungitica (golden clematis)	**Not in plan**	**Under review**
Conifers (pest)	**Progressive containment**	**Under review**
Convolvulus	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Darwin's barberry	**Site-led**	**Under review**
False tamarisk	Exclusion	Exclusion
Giant hogweed	**Not in plan**	**Progressive containment**
Glyceria major	**Not in plan**	**Under review**
Gorse	**Sustained control**	**Under review**
Gunnera	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Hawthorn	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Hemlock	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Japanese knotweed	**Not in plan**	**Progressive containment**

Category definitions

Exclusion prevents a pest from establishing.

Eradication removes a pest entirely from a defined area.

Progressive containment stops a pest spreading further.

Sustained control is ongoing management to keep pest numbers low.

Site-led control protects specific high-value sites.

Pathway management reduces the way that pests are spread.

Moth plant	Exclusion	Exclusion
Nassella tussock	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Nodding thistle	**Sustained control**	**Sustained control**
Old man's beard	**Progressive containment**	**Sustained control**
Pampas	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Perennial nettle	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Purple loosestrife	**Organism of interest**	**Progressive containment**
Ragwort	Sustained control	Sustained control
Russell lupin	Sustained control	Sustained control
Spartina	Progressive containment	Progressive containment
Spiny broom	Eradication	Eradication
Sweet briar	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Sycamore	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Tradescantia	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Vinca major (greater periwinkle)	**Not in plan**	**Under review**
Vipers bugloss	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
White-edged nightshade	**Progressive containment**	**Eradication**
Yellow flag iris	**Organism of interest**	**Progressive containment**

Terrestrial animals

Pest name	Current programme	Recommendation
Argentine ants	**Not in plan**	**Under review**
Bennett's wallabies	**Eradication programme**	**Under review**
Cats (feral)	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Deer (feral)	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Geese	**Not in plan**	**Under review**
Goats (feral)	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Hedgehogs	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Magpie	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Mice	**Not in plan**	**Non-regulatory**
Mustelids (stoats, ferrets and weasels)	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Pigs (feral)	**Site-led**	**Under review**
Possums	**Site-led**	**Under review**

Rabbits (feral)	Sustained control	Under review
Rats	Site-led with no rules	Under review
Swan	Not in plan	Under review
Wasp	Not in plan	Under review

Freshwater plants

Pest name	Current programme	Recommendation
Alligator weed	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Cabomba	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Clasped pondweed	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Egeria	Exclusion	Exclusion / Pathway management
Hornwort	Exclusion	Exclusion / Pathway management
Hydrilla	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Lagarosiphon	Site-led	Under review
Marshwort	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Parrot's feather	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Yellow water lily	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management

Freshwater animals

Pest name	Current programme	Recommendation
Brown bullhead catfish	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Caudo	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Exotic Gobis	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Freshwater gold clam	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Gambusia	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Goldfish	Organism of interest	Under review
Gudgeon	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Guppy	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Koi carp	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Orfe	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management

Category definitions

Exclusion prevents a pest from establishing.

Eradication removes a pest entirely from a defined area.

Progressive containment stops a pest spreading further.

Sustained control is ongoing management to keep pest numbers low.

Site-led control protects specific high-value sites.

Pathway management reduces the way that pests are spread.

Red-eared slider turtle	Not in plan	Exclusion
Rudd	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Silver carp	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Swordtail	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management

Marine plant

Pest name	Current programme	Recommendation
Undaria	Organism of interest	Under review

Marine animals

Pest name	Current programme	Recommendation
Asian paddle crab	Organism of interest	Exclusion / Pathway management
Japanese mantis shrimp	Not in plan	Exclusion / Pathway management
Mediterranean fanworm	Organism of interest	Under review
Sea couch	Organism of interest	Exclusion

Question 21: Are there any pests that should be removed from the plan?

Question 22: Are there any other pests, that don't appear in the list above, that you think should be added to the plan?

Question 23: Do you have any further comments?

Have your say!

In person at a community drop-in session orc.govt.nz/pestfeedback

Email to rpmpreview@orc.govt.nz

Post to Otago Regional Council, 180 High Street, Central Dunedin, Dunedin 9016

Or online at orc.govt.nz/pestfeedback

Scan the QR code below

McLean Falls, Catlins