
REPORT 2
(1215/13/IM)

FERAL GOAT ERADICATION FOR SOUTH-WEST WELLINGTON – EXTERNAL FUNDING PROPOSAL

1. Purpose of Report

Further to the paper submitted for the Board meeting of 18 March 2010, this paper is intended to explain the application process to the Department of Conservation's (DOC) Biodiversity Condition Fund for funding to carry out the proposed feral goat eradication project. The funding application is attached for the Board to consider as appendix one.

2. Executive Summary

An application has been drafted to apply for funding from DOC's biodiversity condition fund for feral goat control on private land in Wellington's south-west peninsula. Control and eradication where possible of feral goats from this area would be a huge step forward in protecting and restoring our region's unique biodiversity.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Makara/Ohariu Community Board:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree to support and endorse the Council's application to the Department of Conservation's Biodiversity Condition Fund for funding to carry out a feral goat eradication project on Wellington's south-west peninsula.*

4. Background

Wellington City Council currently spends \$32,000 per year on feral goat and pig control, but sustained biodiversity recovery is hampered by reinvasion from neighbouring properties. The vision for a goat-free peninsula bordered by State Highway 1 has been around for several years, especially from one of the main landowners in the area, Kinnoull Station. Support has slowly grown amongst the other major landowners, and it is felt that now is the time to make a funding application and try and make real inroads into achieving this vision.

Community support and buy-in is essential to this project's success, and a key part of the application is funding for a coordinator to lead it.

Feral goats are the most obvious, visible pest species in the area, and control of other animal pests such as possums should be able to leverage off their control, the relationships made and the biodiversity recovery observed. It is hoped that the major objectives will be achieved within three years.

5. Discussion

The fund is designed for maintaining and improving the condition of indigenous habitats, vegetation and species on land outside of public conservation lands. This may involve activities such as fencing, planting and pest control. It is fully contestable and is generally capped at \$60,000 per year per project. Applications open twice a year, with the latest round opening earlier this month. The land does not have to be officially protected by e.g. a QEII covenant.

The fund generally funds projects for a three year term, with the expectation that alternative funding will be sought if needed for longer term projects. Although it is a larger than usual funding request, the fund does have exceptions and it is felt that by detailing all the anticipated costs we can apply for the maximum and if necessary seek additional funding from other sources.

The final application will include letters of support from the major landowners.

Funding is usually allocated in instalments and if successful would be managed by setting up a separate activity under the existing PGC510 Animal Pest Control and Monitoring project run by the Parks and Gardens unit of Council. The Council would contract a coordinator to run the project part-time. This coordinator could report to the Board if appropriate.

The funding application has been reviewed and endorsed by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and the Wellington Poneke Area Office of the Department of Conservation. They are both able to provide in-kind support, technical advice and play an advocacy role, while GWRC are planning on providing up to \$20,000 in additional goat control in covenanted and coastal areas within the overall management area. Major landowners will likely contribute significant amounts of in-kind support.

6. Conclusion

Should the funding application be successful, then this project will better protect existing biodiversity values by removing a key pest species, and will allow restoration of indigenous forest habitats.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

This project is consistent with implementing Wellington City Council's Biodiversity Action Plan (2007).

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

Currently no impact – external funding is being sought in the first instance

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

No Treaty of Waitangi implications.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision. The report sets out a process which could be followed should an external funding application be successful.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

This is consistent with the Biodiversity Action Plan (2007) and with the resolution of the Makara-Ohariu Community Board's 18 March 2010 meeting.

b) Consultation with Maori

As above.

6) Legal Implications

No legal implications of this report.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This is consistent with Council Policy (both with the Pest Management Plan (2004) and the Biodiversity Action Plan (2007)).