

FURTHER EVIDENCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

To: Environment Canterbury

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide further evidence

The staff report P11 provides no support for the inclusion of goats in the Regional Pest Plan

The report states 'some submissions relate to organisms that the Council is undertaking control on but do not require rules or regulation, for example, feral goats on Banks Peninsula. There is regulation for feral goats under the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 (administered by the Department of Conservation) and staff do not consider that further regulation is required in the RPMP.'

Comments have been made that the Wild Animal Control Act is difficult to administer. Staff do not consider this sufficient grounds to develop duplicate regulation, but would encourage or support changes to that legislation (if required).'

1. We need to find a way forward with greater control being considered and need goats to be included .We have spent over \$300,000 and considerable time and effort and cannot waste these inputs and what has been achieved to date . We cannot see the numbers of goats on Banks Peninsula rise to those earlier levels.
2. **The story of removing thousands of goats from Banks Peninsula** is worth telling as there have been several earlier attempts at eradicating goats with little evidence of real success. We need to continue the pressure as we cannot return to the earlier levels
3. **Banks Peninsula is known as a 'high value area'** and has extensive areas of significant indigenous vegetation in public and private ownership. Goats and their insatiable appetite for lush indigenous vegetation can cause horrific damage to the environment.
4. **Feral goats have populated BP since the late 1800's and increased in numbers in the 1980's due to the collapse of the goat industry** and subsequent reluctance to spend money recovering escapees.
5. **The Department of Conservation had a strategy and between 1992 and 2002** controlled the goats in their reserves to protect the indigenous vegetation. The areas

were continually being re infested from the adjacent private land so some work was carried out on private land where agreement could be meet mostly in the same area.

6. **In 1998 a group of concerned landowners**, members of the public and the Department of Conservation formed a liaison group to institute some control.
7. **In 2005 a joint control Strategy was developed by J Parkes Land Care Research** with funds provided by the Biodiversity Advice Fund for the Department of Conservation, Environment Canterbury, the Christchurch City Council and the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust. Over 5000 goats at a cost of over \$300,000 have now been removed but there continues to be the debate as to how achievable complete eradication would be.
8. **There are only a few pockets of remaining goats.** The Goat programmes over recent years have had additional challenges - the earthquakes and more recently - the Port Hills fires. New populations have appeared on the Port Hills as a result of the fire and the difficulty with controlling them in highly accessible public land is proving extremely costly and difficult to fix. Those existing sites now can be identified.
9. **The 'hunting world' seeing goats as a resource is of major concern** particularly around the outskirts of the city and walking tracks across Banks Peninsula . There are considerable issues in dealing with the feral goats in and around built up areas and around residential areas.
10. Elimination is possible but not with the current thinking and approach. Rules in the Regional Pest Plan can at least provide an additional layer of complexity for those that see them as legitimate stock type or worse as a hunting resource.
11. The Department of Conservation states that the Wild Animal Control Act is almost completely unenforceable and should only be used as a last resort! DoC does not have the resources to implement this except in a very extreme situation. This cannot be relied on as a broad solution for even the small number of properties.
12. The reality is if we are to going to get rid of goats we need the tools to support as well as the WAC Act with Doc.
13. Recently I have come across a think piece -'The Willis Report' and the Role of Regional Councils -July 24 2017 that talks about more emphasis is needed on achieving active biodiversity management [particularly pest control]. **We are looking for a biodiversity gain for Banks Peninsula**
14. **We need all the tools we can with goats and given the HVEA sites/areas within Banks Peninsula and the connecting ecological corridors - it is important to include goats within the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan.**