

## Meeting Notes

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Meeting title	<b>BIOSECURITY ADVISORY GROUP</b>
Group Area	Southern Canterbury
Date	20 September 2021
Time	1:30pm – 4:30pm
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Invited	Angela Johnston, Cllr. Anne Munro, Brent Glentworth, Carl Diamond, Cllr. Elizabeth Mckenzie, Gary Foster, Ines Stager, John Talbot, Laurence Smith, Michael McMillan, Paige Lawson, Rich Langley, Rob Young, Richard Paterson, Zoe Buxton, Matt Simpson, Gavin Loxton, Kaitlin Brydon, Gina Slee, John Abelen
In attendance	Angela Johnston, Cllr. Anne Munro, Brent Glentworth, Carl Diamond, Cllr. Mckenzie, Gary Foster, Ines Stager, John Talbot, Laurence Smith, Michael McMillan, Paige Lawson, Rich Langley, Rob Young, Richard Paterson, Zoe Buxton, Matt Simpson, Gavin Loxton, Kaitlin Brydon
Apologies	John Abelen, Gina Slee

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Person:</u>	<u>Action:</u>
1.	<b><u>Welcome, introductions, apologies &amp; housekeeping</u></b> Cllr. Mckenzie opened meeting with Karakia.	Cllr. Mckenzie	
2.	<b><u>Notes/Actions</u></b>	Rich Langley	
2.1	<b><u>Group Admin &amp; Actions from last meeting</u></b> Brief introduction to using Microsoft Teams. Meeting administration – payments should be up to date, payments for this meeting will come shortly. BioBites – photos look great, soft copy was sent around last week, gone to post now. A few model release forms still to be collected, will be collected next time in person. Group thanked for photos.  <b><u>Actions from last meeting</u></b> Wilding conifer & Wallaby programme updates – have started sending these out. A more comprehensive update on the wallaby programme to be provided later in the agenda. Information on Yellow Bristle Grass has been sent out.	Rich Langley	

<p>2.2</p>	<p>Weed Risk in Canterbury Report – has been shared and Laurence will provide some more context around this later in the meeting.</p> <p><b><u>Council Update</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ines Stagers deputation to Council – ECan starting to talk about feral grazing animals. Reminder than anyone can make a deputation online, or in person. Really good way to raise profile of things that are important, that Council may be able to act on.</li> <li>• Council applied to renew their consent for the use of herbicides, discussion around that, have asked ECan staff to come back with a pesticide reduction plan for future, spraying our environment indefinitely with herbicides is not sustainable. Alternative approaches would be good long term.</li> <li>• Wallaby long-life bait issue – Brent will cover this later in the meeting</li> </ul>	<p>Cllr. Mckenzie</p>	
<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p>	<p><b><u>Main Discussion Items</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Regional and local programmes update</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update report sent out to group. Cllr Mckenzie requested a run through of the update.</li> <li>• Feral animal issues are being highlighted by the community from a number of quarters. Main issues are pigs and deer, other feral animals have raised concerns also. Meeting with number of groups, Runanga, DoC, Forest &amp; Bird, LINZ, Federated Farmers, OSH, Fish &amp; Game, Deer Stalkers association etc. Biosecurity’s role is around coordination and facilitation of first meeting, and of other meetings in different areas where issues have been raised.</li> <li>• Marine Biosecurity – have undertaken a survey for fanworm, found quite a bit of it in Lyttelton. The survey was quick and relatively limited in Timaru, found nothing there, but is an area we are continuing to work in.</li> <li>• New advisory groups – Nassella Advisory Group (NAG) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG). NAG currently on hold (see report for details). TAG terms of reference have been created, hopefully will get this group up and running in the next few months, in line with the new position that has been advertised recently, Biosecurity Officer - Invasive Organisms.</li> </ul>	<p>Laurence Smith</p>	

- Nassella Tussock – selection list has been created across Canterbury; early inspections have been available for people on the list who have completed their work.
- Chilean Needle Grass – This programme has been handed over to Matt Smith. Northern Biosecurity Officer, Noel Crump, has been visiting CNG properties with Matt to talk to land occupiers about their property's containment plans.
- Great Willowherb – MPI response, working with them on some of the sites.
- Velvet leaf – found in some radish seed (grown for further radish seed) at the border – information has gone out to purchasers of the seed. 0.01% of seed gets through MPI border process.
- Pest Pathways – MOU put together with a few other councils to work together for pathway management. 'Southern Biosecurity Collaborative Partnership'.
- African love grass – contracted John Taylor and his dog Wink to search for African Love Grass. Dogs have proven they can search faster and more accurately than people.
- Find-a-Pest app – promoting it as much as we can, hopefully everyone has downloaded it, helpful if people can report anything they find.
- Weed biological control – looking at how Australians use a system to categorize proposed success of a biological agent – about gaining a better understanding of what agents will be successful. Previously haven't known how successful agents will be, but this new system should be able to provide a better indication on whether this agent will be successful or not before it's brought in. Better use of money. National Biological Control Collective funds \$500,000 of biocontrol every year, ECan contribute \$25,000 to the fund, last year we spent \$100,000 outside of the collective on bio control.

Discussion around effectiveness of this system, how it will work, limitations etc.

#### Local update

- Gorse and broom – Covid19 & rain have gotten in the way of work programmes. Gorse and broom inspections underway on high country
- Nassella tussock – halfway through inspecting 47 properties.
- Darwin's barberry –working our way through known sites.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rabbits – poison programmes have all been completed, officers will be undertaking post-operative inspections after lambing.</li> </ul>		
3.2	<p><u>Wilding Conifer Update</u></p> <p>Rich previously sent out a separate update. In addition to that there have been questions around longevity of the program and what happens with handing maintenance control back to landowners. There are rules in the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan that occupiers must comply with. ECan are not implementing currently because the program is still in place and will be for next 8-9years. Landowners are contributing 20% towards what's happening on their properties – substantial contribution. ECan are currently formulating a document that easily explains what the rules mean, to give to landowners in preparation for the future. Once we do get 8-9years down the track we will hand responsibility over. ECan will retain a Wilding Conifer program, not sure how that will look.</p> <p>Discussion re cutting down trees, while also being told to plant them. This is a common interpretation of what is happening but does not accurately reflect reality. The big issue with wilding conifers is that they have a huge biodiversity impact, rate of spread at 90,000ha a year, impact on our water and catchments and the uptake of water. Some locations have conditions which make it difficult for native species to grow.</p> <p>A 'Plant me instead' booklet that gives advice on what to plant is being created. Also looking at other options, including potential sterile trees that don't spread.</p>	Laurence Smith	
3.3	<p><u>Wallaby Programme Update</u></p> <p>Wallaby Programme Leader Brent Glentworth presented an update to the group that will be presented to MPI next month.</p> <p>Three work stream priorities – continue to control known breeding populations outside containment area (Mckenzie, TMA and South Waitaki Management Units), search wider areas outside containment to ensure no unknown populations exist, and intensive control within the containment area/buffer fringe areas to reduce wallaby spread.</p> <p>Different approaches needed for different areas.</p> <p>Question re bait breakdown – information went out to BAG members with agenda about why there has been a wait in bait that breakdowns faster. Working with relatively new supplier in</p>	Brent Glentworth	

South Island to look at a bait that breaks down quickly, not as easy as it initially seems, any additive can reduce palatability.

Question – overall, are the numbers of wallabies reducing compared to their breeding cycle, and are they reducing outside the containment zone, but increasing in the containment zone? – Yes, female wallabies produce one young per year. Effectively measuring the impact of the programme is going to take a few years, but we will have a better idea every year. Numbers could be increasing inside the containment area even though half the national spend last year was in areas in the containment area. The programme has just started planning an inspection approach for management units that aren't currently being worked on at moment. Still reliant on occupiers doing the work, they opted for user pays.

Question - what would it take in terms of government support to control the containment area? – For Feratox, \$80million, for 1080, \$50million (but wouldn't get consent for 1080).

Discussion around use of dog and gun vs. defence force.

Discussion around wallaby fence, ability of group members to combat misinformation, reasoning for needing consents (any new fence is required to be consented by Mackenzie District Council).

#### 3.4 'Weed Risk in Canterbury' Assessment

Laurence

Last year, AgResearch were engaged to look at 30 different species in terms of risk. Species were ranked from 1-30. Some could have a high risk of spread, but not be a top priority in terms of threat to agriculture or biodiversity. Next step is to look at their impacts, dispersal methods, pathways they move on, likely places we could find them if they're not in Canterbury already. First step is to work with the new Biosecurity Officer - Invasive Organisms, and with the Technical Advisory Group once both are on board. Hoping to collaborate and spread costs across some or all of NZ. Hundreds of things we could look at, need to narrow that down to the most problematic that are just emerging or potentially threatening us here in Canterbury.

Discussion re correspondence from a reporter about Chinese Businesses using lupins to advertise tourism in NZ. Laurence sent the reporter links to sections of the Biosecurity Act re communicating pests. Current rules are in place for rural zone properties, and properties adjacent to waterways. It's not illegal to use images.

	<p>Discussion around impact of Russell lupins and images of them.</p> <p>Terms of reference for group outlines best approach for when approached by media.</p> <p>Discussion around importance of raising awareness.</p>		
3.5	<p><u><i>Biosecurity Communications and Engagement Programme</i></u></p> <p>Biosecurity Comms/Engagement Plan will be passed on following the meeting for the group to provide feedback.</p> <p>ECan is currently working to increase their communications and engagement programme to enhance how we take our programme out to the community. ECan want the community to play their part and value biosecurity. This includes passive surveillance to assist with managing pests at the front end of the invasion curve. Ties in with Biosecurity NZ's 'Ko Tātou – this is us' vision – 5 million sets of eyes.</p> <p>Workshop last year with BAGs, asked for ideas on how we can better engage with community, have taken a lot of those ideas and fed them back into the plan.</p> <p>Brief run through of abridged version of the plan that will be sent out – not to be shared with public yet as still a work in progress.</p> <p>Group asked if there are any other tactics or events they believe ECan could explore. These don't necessarily have to go into the plan. Members are encouraged to make suggestions at any time if they know of upcoming opportunities.</p> <p>Suggestion – it would be good to target small groups of individuals that are undertaking pest control already. As these people are engaged and would likely be interested.</p> <p>Also looking to understand how BAG members (as stakeholders) are involved out in the community, and what might be useful tools for members to use when attending meetings to utilise networks – i.e. brief power point presentations etc.</p>	Paige & Rich	Plan to be shared with group to provide feedback, Currently is an internal plan only, not to be shared with public.
3.6	<p><u><i>Biocontrol Update</i></u></p> <p>Update on biocontrol distribution.</p> <p>Horehound - Cost is around \$150,000 through Landcare Research. Looking at elimination by grazing and using Clearwing moth together, by establishment in half a dozen catchments and through co-funding. Horehound has to be at least two years old for the Clearwing moth to be effective. 16</p>	Gavin Loxton	If any BAG members are interested, Gavin will send email out.

	<p>releases are planned over the next two years, if members are interested there will be a mailout of the newsletter once there is final confirmation that the project can go ahead.</p> <p>Also looking at biocontrol of burdock, as sheep numbers are falling it's becoming more of a problem. It's a bi-annual plant, particularly a problem with dairy cattle, getting stuck in tails and heads, only way to remove it is by shaving the fur. There are four potential bio-control agents that all attack the seed, when it goes to seed in its second year. Two of these agents are moths, and the other two are flies. Have to work closely with a UK group – that's where it originated from. It is a 3 to 4-year project, haven't applied for any funding yet, still doing the background work.</p>		
3.7	<p><b><u>Consideration of Potential BAG Projects</u></b></p> <p>Opportunity discussed to get involved in a couple of smaller projects which wouldn't be onerous and able to be completed by 1 or 2 members. Ideally it would involve working with ECan staff where possible to support the biosecurity programme. e.g. provision and spreading of education and awareness around pest projects.</p> <p>A couple of initial projects could include one with a rural focus, and one with an urban focus. E.g. talking about and raising awareness about Yellow Bristle Grass etc. Garden escapees are always reasonably topical from an urban perspective.</p> <p>Looking to see who is interested, Gary will put together another email with suggestions and send it out to gauge interest from the group with being involved. Appreciate that everyone is busy but should be able to achieve small things. Helps to raise profile of BAG too.</p>	Gary Foster	Gary to put together email with suggestions and send it out, asking if anyone is interested in assisting.
3.8	<p><b><u>General Business</u></b></p> <p>No general business.</p>	All	
4.	<p><b><u>Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>November – looking at a meeting with all groups, if members are keen. Meeting could be potentially combined with Chilean Needle Grass field day on 30 November 2021 (North Canterbury). Will send out email to gauge interest.</p>	Rich Langley	Rich to send out email re all group meeting, members to express interest.
5.	<p><b><u>Meeting Close</u></b></p> <p>Cllr. Mckenzie closed meeting with Karakia. 4:10pm.</p>	Cllr. Mckenzie	