

Our Plan 2016-17
Officers' Responses to
Submission Points Received Relating to
Biosecurity, Biodiversity & Land Management

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sub#	Name	Comment
28	Steffan Browning, Green Party MP	Requests that HBRC phase out the use of Glyphosate and other similar based herbicides

Staff Response to Submission 28

HBRC currently uses Glyphosate in accordance with regulations set down by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). HBRC staff responsible for spraying hold Grow safe certificates which includes approved handlers certificate to ensure spraying is carried out in accordance with requirements.

In addition HBRC follows a Code of Practice for river control and drainage works which includes best use methods and requires all spray machinery to be calibrated annually to ensure treatment uses only what is required. With more than 480 kilometers of drains, 190 km stopbanks, 100km pathways, many kms of river channels and adjacent land, HBRC always strive to use alternate methods for control of grasses, weeds and plant pests. Currently these include mowing, scrub baring, grazing, planting of scrubs/trees, weedboating, use of static weed bar as well as spraying.

Over the last 2 years HBRC have experimented with shading as an alternate method of weed control and are looking to expand this methodology to larger trials.

The majority of spraying is undertaken in the rural drains, and for plant pest control. Spraying in urban areas is mainly confined to drains.

HBRC has investigated and trialed other methods of controlling weedgrowth including organic sprays with varying results, e.g. burns off foliage but root systems continue to grow.

While HBRC acknowledges that that there is debate about spraying using chemicals, we point out that HBRC ratepayers wish to continue to maintain infrastructure to specific levels of service, cost effectively. Glyphosate remains an essential tool in the armoury to combat weeds generally, but more importantly is sometimes the only tool available to combat invasive plant pests. An example is *Glyceria maxima* which has a rhizomeal root system that left unchecked would quickly dominate all other aquatic plant/fish life and smother stream edge plantings as well as increasing flood risk.

Recommendation

*That Council considers the submission points received relating to **Submission 28**, and any comments and proposals made by staff.*

sub#	Name	Comment
68	Tim Gilbertson	feral cats / RWSS / HB Shared Services / Global warming

Staff Response to Submission 68

The submitter seeks the:

- Introduction of a system for cat registration based on dog registrations
- Removal of HBRC CEO as director of HBLASS
- Reintroduction of forestry grants scheme and building EV charging stations throughout Hawkes Bay

Mr Gilbertson is referred to a briefing paper on feral cats that was received by the Environment and Services Committee of Council at their March meeting. This paper discusses the current HBRC approach to feral cat management as one of the predators to be managed under wide scale predator control.

Dog registrations and dog control are managed by territorial authorities and it would be more appropriate for a cat ownership registration system to be operated by territorial authorities.

HB LASS has made progress in a number of areas of joint services and efficiencies. The presence of the CEOs enables decisions to be implemented more quickly. If HBRC wishes to appoint independent directors provisions for increase Board costs would need to be made in the Annual Plan.

The provision of a network of charging stations could be discussed as part of the Energy Strategy with public consultation and funding to be undertaken as part of the next Long Term Plan.

Recommendation

*That Council considers the submission points received relating to **Submission 68**, and any comments and proposals made by Council officers.*

sub#	Name	Comments
99	Neil Kirton	<p>Seeks additional wording within the service levels and performance targets of the annual plan specifically the addition of targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 hectares of significant wetlands are protected annually • At least 10km of riparian margin are enhanced annually • An EEP for the lower Taipo Stream is implemented establishing a new wetland. <p>"Putting More Fish in the Bay" campaign</p>

Staff Response to Submission 99

The Land Management team is currently preparing a Land Management Strategy and Operational Plan which will guide their work and set priorities for the 2016-17 year, for consideration by the Environment and Services Committee in August 2016. Currently the Land Management focus is on the implementation of Plan Change 6 and the associated performance targets to progress that will be set out in the Operational Plan.

The lower Taipo Stream will not fall within the focus of the Land Management team, however the performance targets suggested by Mr Kirton will be considered by the team when they develop their Operational Plan. Whether or not they are included will depend on whether or not these specific targets are appropriate for that focus.

Priorities for the Open Space team have been established through the Open Space Development Programme approved by Council during the 2015-16 financial year, and the Lower Taipo is not included as one of those.

The Asset Management team also has a programme for the enhancement of waterways across the Heretaunga Plains, and over the coming years this is likely to be focussed on implementing the outcomes from the Greater Heretaunga (Tutuaekuri – Ahuriri – Ngaruroro – Karamu) plan change process.

Mr Kirton requests that the HBRC urban possum control programme undertake pest control adjacent to the Ahuriri estuary.

The HBRC urban possum control programme already covers the areas of Poraiti and Taradale including the margins of the Ahuriri Estuary and shown on the attached map. Tenders for possum control covering the areas shown as Puketapu and Glengarry South have been called. The work will be undertaken in 2016-17.

Biodiversity is however also likely to also be impacted in that area by other predators including cats (possibly both feral and domestic) as well as mustelids and hedgehogs. HBRC is currently involved in the Cape to City project which is seeking to make the control of these predators practical and affordable on a wide scale. For further information on this project the submitter is referred to the project website www.capetocity.co.nz.

Mr Kirton requests HBRC to adopt the “putting more fish in the Bay” campaign and initiates a programme of work that addresses a perceived decline in the region’s marine fisheries. Staff support the focus on the marine environment and the growing public interest in this area.

HBRC has a role in managing the habitats of marine species, but not the species themselves. Fisheries have complex habitat requirements throughout their life histories. Understanding these requirements is important to inform the subsequent management of the habitats. Staff have been working over the past year on a collaborative project with MPI, the commercial and recreational fisheries interests, the Department of Conservation and iwi to bring together an understanding of the current knowledge base around our coastal resources. This information will then be used as a platform to inform the future workplans of the various contributing agencies to begin filling the ‘gaps’. It is intended that this would occur in time to inform the 2018-2028 Long Term Plan.

In the meantime, Council staff are engaged with central government in reform of the marine protection framework and in the Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge that is looking at how collaborative marine management can be undertaken in coastal environments. This work will guide the approach to be taken the Council in future marine planning and management.

In addition HBRC is collaborating with Napier City Council (NCC) on the production of an Estuary Management Plan for Ahuriri. This is aligned with the recent granting of a consent for the discharge of storm water to the estuary which requires NCC to make significant improvements to the quality of the discharge

In addition during the coming financial year HBRC will:

1. Undertake a review of the HBRC Strategic Plan. This will be done following the local body elections. It would be appropriate that the issue of the role of HBRC in the marine area off the regions coast is considered as part of this Strategic Plan development.
2. Commence a review of the Regional Pest Management Plan. Under the recent Biosecurity Act Amendments and the National Policy Direction developed under those amendments HBRC will need to consider the role it takes in biosecurity issues in the marine environment.

Both of these provide an ideal opportunity for HBRC to consider what role it should take with regard to this issue.

Where Council has received money as defined in section 5(3) of the Hawke's Bay Endowment Land Empowering Act 2002, an assessment is made by Council as to whether the expenditure of funds has been made as defined in that section of the Act. This assessment is carried out by an external consultant, and comments on the uses of the funds for the purposes as defined under the Act.

Recommendation

*That Council considers the submission points received relating to **Submission 99**, and any comments and proposals made by staff.*

sub#	Name	Comments
119	HB Federated Farmers	members are concerned that they are having to pay twice for animal pest control
112	Jean Martin	Speaking to above

Staff Response to Submissions 119 and 112

Under the HB Regional Pest Management Plan land occupiers within a possum control area are required to maintain low possum numbers at their cost. This cost is in addition to rates for animal pest control by land occupiers. Staff believe that this is the issue to which Jean Martin is referring as having to pay twice.

HBRC received a similar submission to its 2015-25 LTP from Jean Martin. The following response was sent to that submission.

The animal pest rate covers the cost of a range of activities identified in the Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP) including the control of rabbits and rooks, subsidising possum control bait, possum control area compliance monitoring and the possum control area programme. Under the RPMP where there is evidence that a landowner is not doing what is need to maintain low possum numbers on their property Council will require them to carry out work to protect the integrity of the programme. The breakdown of what the rate 'pays for' is provided following.

<i>Biosecurity Rate</i>	
<i>Rabbit monitoring, response to rabbit enquiry, and subsidy for rabbit control</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>Possum control area implementation, monitoring, and initial control</i>	<i>52%</i>
<i>Pest work on specific sites eg QE II</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>Widescale predator control</i>	<i>22%</i>
<i>Rook control</i>	<i>8%</i>
<i>Subsidy for possum control bait</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Research - aimed at improving control</i>	<i>1%</i>
<i>Hort and pip fruit sector and marine</i>	<i>1%</i>
<i>Rate collection</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

There are two possum control programmes covering almost all of the productive land in Hawke's Bay.

- The HBRC possum control programme undertaken under the Hawke's Bay Pest Management Plan, and
- The OSPRI (TbFree NZ) programme undertaken under the National Plan for Bovine Tb.

The HBRC Pest Management Plan requires that when OSPRI withdraws from an area, land occupiers are required to continue to maintain possum numbers at low levels at their cost.

It should be noted that until the targeted rate for Bovine Tb was withdrawn on 30 June 2015, the targeted rate that funded the HBRC share of the cost was levied across all properties in Hawke's Bay even though only a portion of the rateable properties were receiving direct benefit of this programme.

OSPRI withdrew from an area of approximately 50,000hectares at the end of the 2015-16 year and therefore the land occupiers in that area are now required to maintain low possum numbers. HBRC has spoken to all land owners and established a bait station network across the majority of properties to enable them to undertake ongoing maintenance cost effectively.

Recommendation

*That Council considers the submission points received relating to **Submissions 112 and 119**, and any comments and proposals made by staff.*

sub#	Name	Comment
120	Ewan McGregor	Pakowhai Park / Poplars for Soil Conservation

Staff response to Submission 120

Ewan McGregor suggests a mass planting of Cheery trees – Shimidsu at Pakowhai Regional Park.

Pakowhai Regional Park has proved to be a very hard site for the establishment of a range of tree species. An arboretum planted at the site achieve mixed success. Regional Open Spaces staff do however continue to trial a range of tree species at the Park, with additional trees planted annually. Staff will consider the tree species proposed by Mr McGregor for future planting, and depending on its success may consider further plantings in the future.

Mr McGregor suggests the development of a profitable exit programme for poplars used for soil conservation purposes as they reach the end of their useful life.

Staff are aware that there are large numbers of poplars planted for soil conservation purposes that are at the end of their useful life, and as they continue to be planted for that purpose, there will be an ongoing supply of mature trees into the future. However these trees are generally space planted on steep hill country and therefore the logistics of silviculture and then harvest are difficult and costly.

HBRC has initiated the development of an East Coast Hill Country Strategy with the objective of a more integrated approach to the management of hill country on the East Coast. Through this process options for improving the profitability of East Coast Hill Country land while reducing ongoing erosion and sedimentation of waterways. If improved management of poplars is considered as a toll to achieve these objectives, then it will be considered as an opportunity as part of this initiative.

Recommendation

*That Council considers the submission points received relating to **Submission 120**, and any comments and proposals made by staff.*

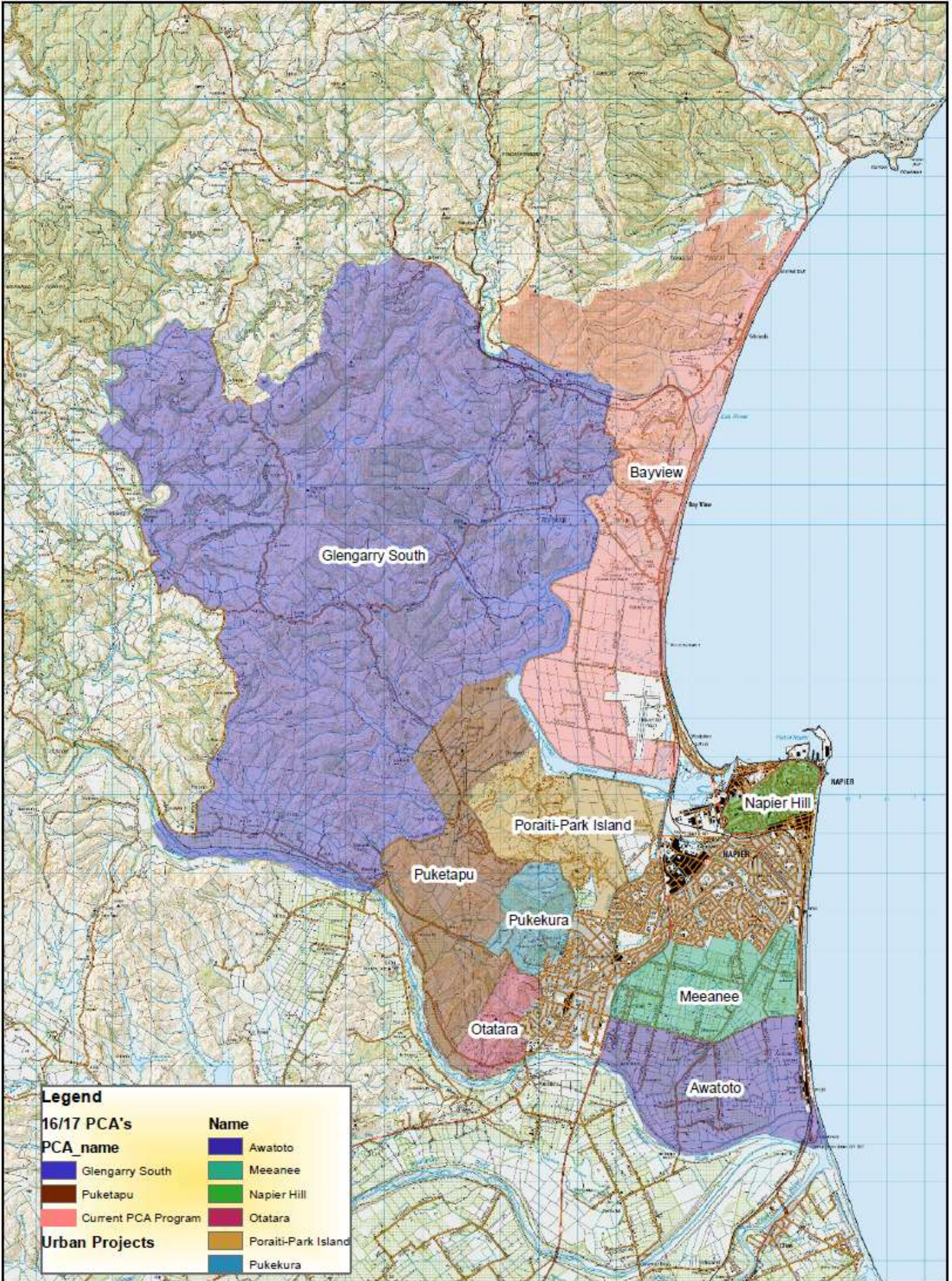
sub#	Name	Comments
155	Chris Ryan	<p>Concern amongst many horticulturalists and others with land management skills on some of the land utilisation attempts in recent years by HBRC, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purchase of land at Tutira for eucalyptus tree planting for making money from carbon credits • Purchase of land and planting of eucalyptus trees at Waipawa and Waipukurau • Ongoing problems with Lake Tutira 50 years after the first plans were drawn up to solve the problems • Rushing to plant 80+ha of manuka without consultation

Staff Response to Submission 155

All of the above plantings are now well established and the focus of staff is on their appropriate ongoing management for the future. There is significant research associated with the Waihapua forest and Manuka plantation at Tutira, which over time will provide valuable information on the suitability of tree crops for providing alternative income sources for land owners while reducing erosion from the Hawke's Bay hill country.

Recommendation

*That Council considers the submission points received relating to **Submission 155**, and any comments and proposals made by staff.*



HBRC's PCA Program



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