5.5. PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR GORSE

Description of the Pest
Gorse *(Ulex spp*) is a deep rooted, woody perennial shrub which can grow to 3 - 4 metres tall. Its stems are covered in sharp spines. The plant produces many deep yellow flowers.

Distribution of the Pest
Gorse is very widespread throughout the Region. Infestations range from isolated scattered plants to hillsides totally covered in the plant.

Problems Caused
Being a legume and a pioneer plant, gorse has the ability to occupy a wide range of soil types. It very quickly colonises new areas, forming dense thickets. The plant invades pasture land and roadsides as well as low growing or regenerating native vegetation. It harbours other pests, for example rabbits, and restricts the movement of stock and people. It has a biological success rating of 15 out of 21 and scores 19 out of 24 for weediness on the Esler Liefting and Champion index.

Parties Affected
The main parties affected are land owners, especially farmers and those responsible for roads and reserves.

Impacts Evaluation

Impact	Current	Potential
Cultural	Medium	High
Ecological	Medium	High
Human Health	Low	Low
Soil & Water	-	-
Production	High	High
Public Infrastructure	Low	Medium
Public Safety	Low	Low
Recreation	Low	Low
Trade (International)	-	-
Overall Regional	High	High

Regional Effects
Gorse is a major pest plant of Northland affecting large areas of land. It suppresses pasture growth, prevents stock grazing and considerably reduces returns per hectare. The plant also affects returns from wool. It is a fire hazard and detracts from the use of recreational areas.

The plant is expensive to control on farms and along roadsides. An estimated $2.0 million is spent annually in Northland on gorse control.

Need to Intervene
Northland's economy is largely based on agricultural production, forestry and tourism. The continuing spread of gorse into farmland affects the Region from both an economic and environmental perspective. Intervention is considered necessary to ensure that land that is clear or being cleared of gorse is not infested from

neighbouring land. A Regional overview of biological control programmes and other initiatives is also seen as important.

Goal (Long Term)

- To limit the spread of gorse onto productive land and land with high recreational and scenic values.

Objectives (Five Year)

- To prevent major infestations spreading to clean productive land and land of high recreational and scenic value.
- To establish successful biological control programmes and double the number of release sites.
- To have cleared Gorse from 2/3 of the Regions roadsides.

Tactics and Technical Methods to be Used

Education — Advice to landowners and other interested parties.
Community meetings and field days.
Media releases and publicity brochures.

Regulation

Rule 6.4.2.1	Clearance of Broom, Gorse and Ragwort Inside All Property Boundaries
Rule 6.4.2.2	Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas Grass, Privet and Wild Ginger Inside Roadside Property Boundaries
Rule 6.4.2.3	Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas grass and Ragwort from Quarries, Mines and Other Sites
Rule 6.4.2.6	Clearance Along Roadsides of Gorse, Pampas Grass, Privet and Wild Ginger by Roading Authorities
Rule 6.4.2.9	Prohibition on Distribution and Sale of Pest Plants

Failure to comply with these rules creates an offence under section 154 (r) of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Services — Biological control programmes.

Tactics and Technical Methods Rejected

Economic — Subsidies on herbicides (not effective).

Regulation — Rules on total control by landholders (plant too widespread).

Effects of the Strategy

Beneficial — Enhanced productivity of pasture land.
Enhanced indigenous ecosystems.

Detrimental — Possible contamination of non-target plant species from spraying.
Possibility of erosion in some areas if land is not revegetated.
Loss of food source for bees.

Cost of Strategy

The Strategy is estimated to cost the Regional Council approximately $20,000 each year.

Funding
The advisory, regulatory and service delivery components of the Strategy is funded from a Land Management Rate. The cost of controlling gorse on individual properties will be borne by the land owners.

Management Agency
The Northland Regional Council is responsible for managing the Strategy.

Relationship of Strategy to Other Pest Management Strategies
The Auckland Regional Council has a similar Strategy for Gorse in that Region.

Monitoring And Reporting
The Northland Regional Council will maintain a database of properties as they are inspected, recording inspection dates and details of work undertaken and compliance with requirements. Periodic surveys will also be carried out to record progress on control programmes. Progress towards objectives set in the Strategy will be reported in the Regional Council's Annual Plan or LTCCP as appropriate.

Term of Strategy **5 years**

Rules

6.4.2.1 Clearance of Broom, Gorse and Ragwort Inside All Property Boundaries

Every occupier shall maintain a strip of land inside each property boundary free of broom, gorse and ragwort where such land adjoins other land or a road which is free of the said Pest Plants or is being actively controlled by adjoining occupiers.

The pest free strip of land shall be of the following dimensions:

i) Broom and gorse - 10 metres inside each boundary
ii) Ragwort - 50 metres inside each boundary

6.4.2.2 Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas Grass, Privet and Wild Ginger Inside Roadside Property Boundaries

Every occupier shall maintain a 10 metre wide strip of land free of broom, gorse, pampas, privet and wild ginger, inside each property boundary which adjoins a road, where the road controlling authority is controlling the said plants on the adjacent roadside.

6.4.2.3 Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas grass and Ragwort From Quarries, Mines, Limeworks and Stockpile Areas

Every occupier and operator of a quarry, mine or stockpile of natural overburden or other similar material shall maintain the work area and a 50 metre strip of land around the work area or stockpile free of broom, gorse, pampas grass and ragwort.

6.4.2.6 Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas Grass, Privet and Wild Ginger from Roadsides by Road Controlling Authorities

Every road controlling authority shall implement a control programme aimed at controlling and progressively eradicating Broom, Gorse and

Wild Ginger from the Regions road reserves and controlling and eradicating Pampas and Privet from areas of light or sparsely infested road reserves under their jurisdiction in accordance with a five year management plan which shall be negotiated with and agreed to by the Northland Regional Council.

6.4.2.9 Prohibition on Distribution and Sale of Pest Plants

(i) No person shall distribute to other persons or offer for sale, or hold in a premises where plants are offered for sale, any pest plant which is subject to a Northland Regional Council Pest Management Strategy or included in the National Accord List of Plants Banned from Sale & Distribution.

(ii) No person shall distribute or offer for sale to other persons any agricultural lime, roading aggregate, sand or fill material which contains the seeds or any other vegetative material capable of propagation from a pest plant subject of a Northland Regional Council Pest Management Strategy or included in the National Accord List of Plants Banned from Sale & Distribution.

(iii) No person shall transport or use any equipment, machinery or product which contains the seeds or any other vegetative material capable of propagation from a pest plant subject of a Pest Management Strategy or included in the National Accord List of Plants Banned from Sale & Distribution.

(iv) No person shall plant, transplant or re-distribute any pest plant subject of a Pest Management Strategy or included in the National Accord List of Plants Banned from Sale & Distribution.