

## 5.10. PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR PAMPAS GRASS



### Description of the Pest

Pampas is a perennial, tussock-like grass. Two species are present in Northland (*Cortaderia selloana* and *Cortaderia jubata*). Both have coarse abrasive leaves and grow 2-3 metres high. The plant's flowering stems, which can be up to 5 metres high, have distinctive, erect, fluffy white or pinky-purple flower heads. They flower from January to March (*C. jubata*) and March to May (*C. selloana*). The plants should not be confused with the three native toe toe species

which have more creamy-yellow flower heads. The pampas species also have dead leaf bases which spiral, resembling wood shavings.

### Distribution of the Pest

The plant is found throughout Northland. It inhabits a range of areas including dunelands, plantation forests, quarries, roadsides, and disturbed native forests.

### Problems Caused

Pampas grass is a very invasive plant, forming dense, often impenetrable, stands. As it spreads, other desirable vegetation is excluded and it makes access very difficult. It poses a fire risk in summer, harbours vermin and affects visibility on roads. It also reduces the biodiversity of native ecosystems and their associated scenic, cultural and recreational values. The seeds of the plant can also affect the quality of exported products like kiwifruit.

### Parties Affected

A range of landowners are affected including forest owners and authorities responsible for managing conservation areas, reserves and roadsides.

### Impact Evaluation

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

### Regional Effects

Pampas grass is becoming an increasingly significant pest plant in Northland. It is invading both productive exotic forests and valuable native plant communities, particularly in coastal areas. The costs of maintaining access, roadside, visibility and firebreaks are increasing.

### Need to Intervene

The wide range of economic, environmental and cultural problems caused by pampas grass and the large area of potential habitat not yet infested, mean that

steps need to be taken to halt its spread. Attention also needs to be focused on reclaiming land lost to the plant. A variety of measures are needed with Regional intervention and direction required. Control works need to be based around both herbicide application and physical removal, and subsequent revegetation of cleared sites to prevent re-infestation by Pampas grass.

**Goal (Long Term)**

- To restrict the spread of pampas grass to areas not yet infested and to maintain those areas not yet infested clear of the pest plant.

**Objectives (Five Year)**

- To increase public awareness of the threat that Pampas grass poses to the Region.
- To achieve clearance of sparse or light infestations from the Region's roadsides and private land.
- To achieve clearance of Pampas grass from all operating quarries, metal stockpiles and limeworks.

**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	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Rule 6.4.2.2</td> <td>Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas Grass, Privet and Wild Ginger Inside Roadside Property Boundaries</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rule 6.4.2.3</td> <td>Clearance of Broom, Gorse, Pampas grass and Ragwort from Quarries, Mines and Other Sites</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rule 6.4.2.6</td> <td>Clearance Along Roadsides of Gorse, Pampas Grass, Privet and Wild Ginger by Roading Authorities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rule 6.4.2.9</td> <td>Prohibition on Distribution and Sale of Pest Plants</td> </tr> </table> <p>Failure to comply with these rules creates an offence under section 154 (r) of the Biosecurity Act 1993.</p>	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
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Services	Roadside control programmes (District Councils and Transit N.Z).								

**Tactics and Technical Methods Rejected**

Economic	Subsidies on herbicides (no control over what they are used on).
Regulation	Rules on total control (plant too widespread).
Services	Regional Council eradication service (plant too widespread).

**Effects of the Strategy**

Beneficial	Enhanced cultural, ecological and recreational values of conservation areas. Reduced fire risk. Safer driving conditions.
Detrimental	Possible damage to non-target species and waterways from herbicides. Possible loss in sales from some plant nurseries.

### **Cost of Strategy**

The Strategy is estimated to cost the Regional Council approximately \$10,000 each year.

### **Funding**

The Council's costs in implementing the Strategy are funded from a Land Management Rate. Land occupiers and roading authorities will be expected to bear the costs of all control work on their land.

### **Management Agency**

The Northland Regional Council is responsible for managing the Strategy.

### **Relationship of Strategy to Other Pest Management Strategies**

The Auckland Regional Council lists pampas grass as a Regional surveillance plant only.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The education and publicity measures will be monitored by survey. Progress towards objectives in the Strategy will be reported in the Regional Council's Annual Plan or LTCCP as appropriate.

### **Term of Strategy**

**5 years**

### **Rules**

#### 6.4.2.2 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 grass, 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.