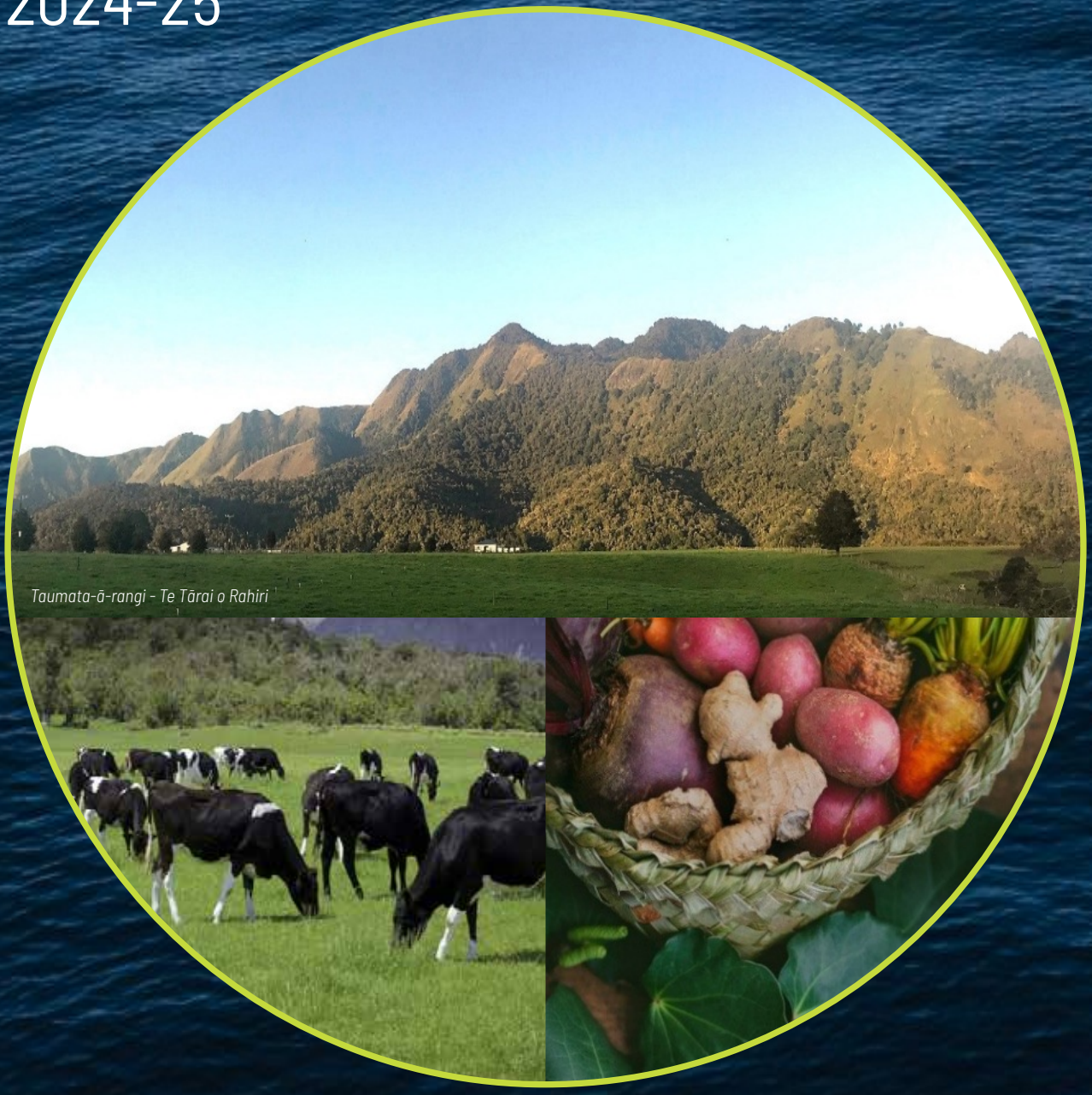
Annual Report

on the Biosecurity Operational Plan

He Pūrongo Mahi Haumaru Koiora

2024-25



Taumata-ā-rangi - Te Tārai o Rahiri

" Food Security and Flourishing Native Life "

Northland
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau

October 2025

Endorsement of Cover Image for NRC Biosecurity Annual Report 2024–2025

As an uri of Ngāti Whakamaunga, the opportunity must be stated in full support of the **Northland Regional Council [NRC]** for selecting the image of this significant and **auspicious maunga** to feature on the cover of the **Biosecurity Annual Report 2024–2025**.

The recognition of Taumata-ā-rangi - Te Tārai o Rahiri as a **tūpuna maunga** represents the ancestral presence and enduring relationship between uri and the whenua. The proposed inclusion at the forefront of this important publication acknowledges that **kaitiakitanga** - the guardianship of the environment - is inherent within the tātai markers of identity, and place.

This image aligns closely with the Biosecurity team's guiding values of **Food Security** and **Flourishing Native Life**. This symbolic gesture embodies resilience, sustenance, and balance, all of which are central to both **hapū environmental values** and the **regional biosecurity mission** to protect the inherent taonga species, productive land, and natural ecosystems of Te Tokerau as a region.

By choosing this image, NRC provides yet another opportunity to honour a **partnership with tangata whenua** in the quest to safeguard the mauri of our environment. It provides a powerful visual reminder that effective biosecurity is critically dependent on collaboration between tangata whenua and the Council - each contributing knowledge, commitment, and care for the taiao, particularly the *local narrative*.

NRC must be commended for acknowledging the significance of place in this way, and for reflecting a local and culturally grounded perspective in the presentation of its Biosecurity work.

Kāti mō tēnei wā.

Tame Te Rangi

Foreword

Welcome to the annual report on biosecurity for the Northland Regional Council

Kia ora koutou, Aotearoa is facing significant biosecurity challenges, and Te Taitokerau is particularly vulnerable due to our warm climate, high number of rare animals and plants and a regional economy which is dependent on the success of the primary sector.

Emerging threats like Fall armyworm, the invasive marine pest Caulerpa, the aggressive pasture weed Madagascar ragwort, and new discoveries of the coastal weed sea spurge are just the latest additions to the growing list of biosecurity challenges we face. As a region, we are constantly exposed to new pressures that impact our natural environment, our regional economy, and the way we live and enjoy Te Taitokerau.

Despite these pressures we are very proud of the wide range of biosecurity services council can provide and the positive feedback received from communities who are at the coal face of pest control and more than often leading the charge. Kiwi coast is an example of sustainable, region wide community action and last year data from these groups show that over 966,142 pest species have been eradicated. Numerous community-led conservation projects, many of which receive council funding, are effectively managing pest species across a total area of 276,351 hectares.

Iwi and hapū led taiao teams continue to build their skilled and locally based kaimahi capacity and leadership of responding to pest management challenges and taking an active role in freshwater, marine protection and forest restoration.

We are also grateful for the many relationships we have been able to grow and sustain with iwi and hapū and believe their unique and enduring connection with the land gives us all a better chance of ensuring effective biosecurity protection and food security into the future.

Our Northland – together we thrive

Jonathan Gibbard, Otāhūhū Rangapū - CEO
Northland Regional Council

Jack Craw - Chair
Biosecurity and Biodiversity Working Party

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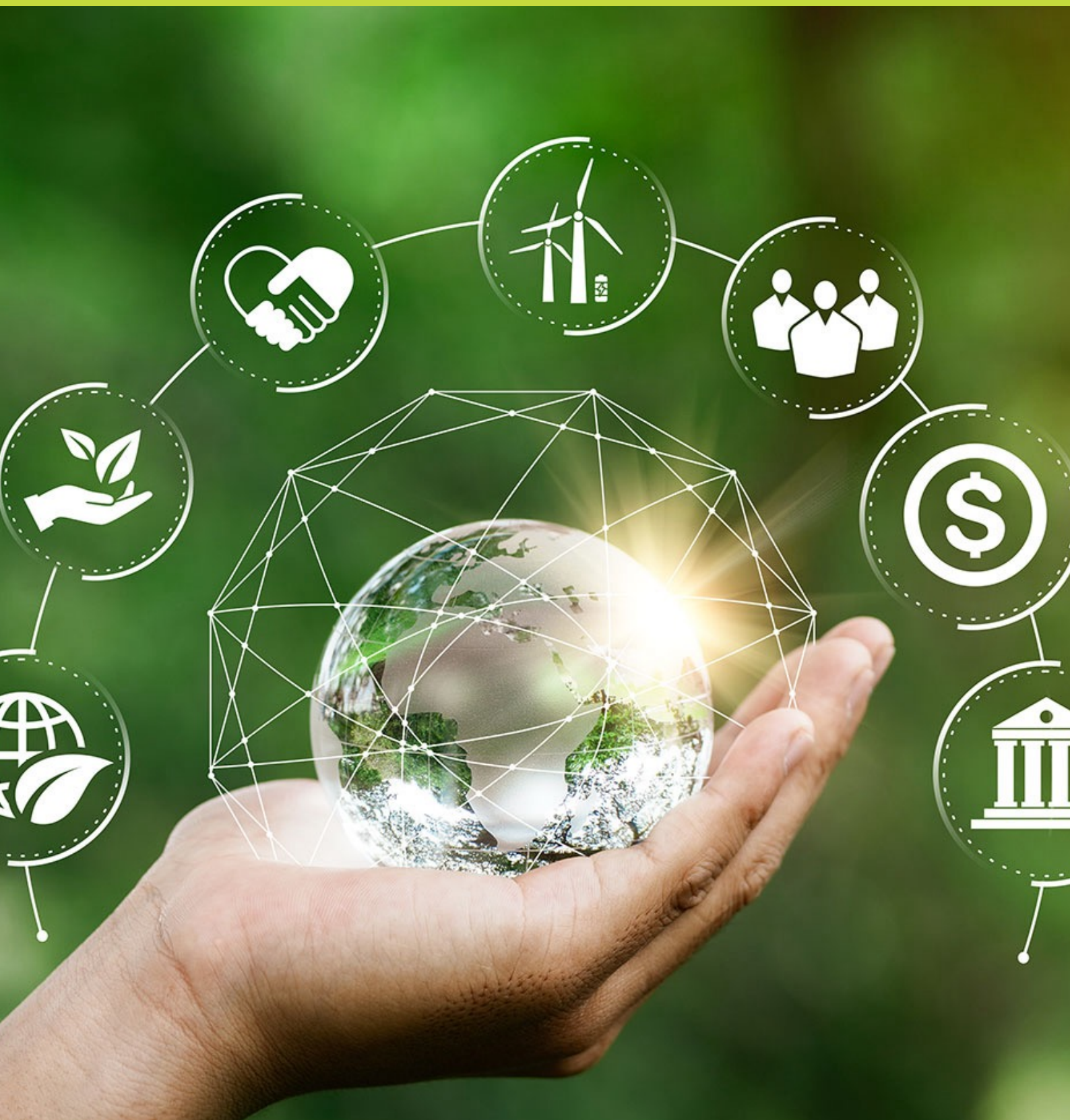
1. Introduction
Timatanga kōrero

Background

The Northland Regional Council (council) is the management agency responsible for developing and implementing the Northland Regional Pest and Marine Pathway Management Plan 2017-2027 in accordance with the Biosecurity Act 1993 (Pest Plan). The Pest Plan is a combination of the eradication or effective management of specified pests (or groups of pests), and a marine pathway plan designed to prevent and manage the spread of harmful marine organisms via boat hull fouling within Northland coastal waters. An Operational Plan is drafted annually, and this end of year report shows progress made against aims, objectives and performance measures contained in the Operational Plan.

Attached as an **Appendix 1** is a table of all performance measures and the results obtained. In summary 97% of all measures were met or partly met during the 2024-2025 year. Key areas where measures were not attained were due to insufficient resourcing or a lack of available data.

2. Financial Summary
Whakarāpopoto ā pūtea



Council's Long- Term Plan 2021- 2031 provides the necessary funding (via rates and user charges) for the operational and planning activities associated with biosecurity and pest management carried out by Northland Regional Council. Additional external funding grants have also been allocated to supplement council investment in pest management.

In total $5.7 M of revenue was received from external agencies to fund pest management activities during the year. These agencies and their contributions are listed below.

Funding was received from the following external agencies:

Ministry for Primary Industries:

Manchurian Wild rice control	$ 347,386
Wilding pine removal	$ 125,000
Kauri Protection	$ 200,000
Marine incursions	$ 2,922,457
Sea spurge	$ 80,000
Sub total MPI	$2,9232,209

Department of Conservation:

Wild Deer eradication Te Taitokerau	$1,176,000
Sub total DOC	$1,176,000

Whangārei District Council:

Urban pest control	$50,000
Sub total WDC	$50,000

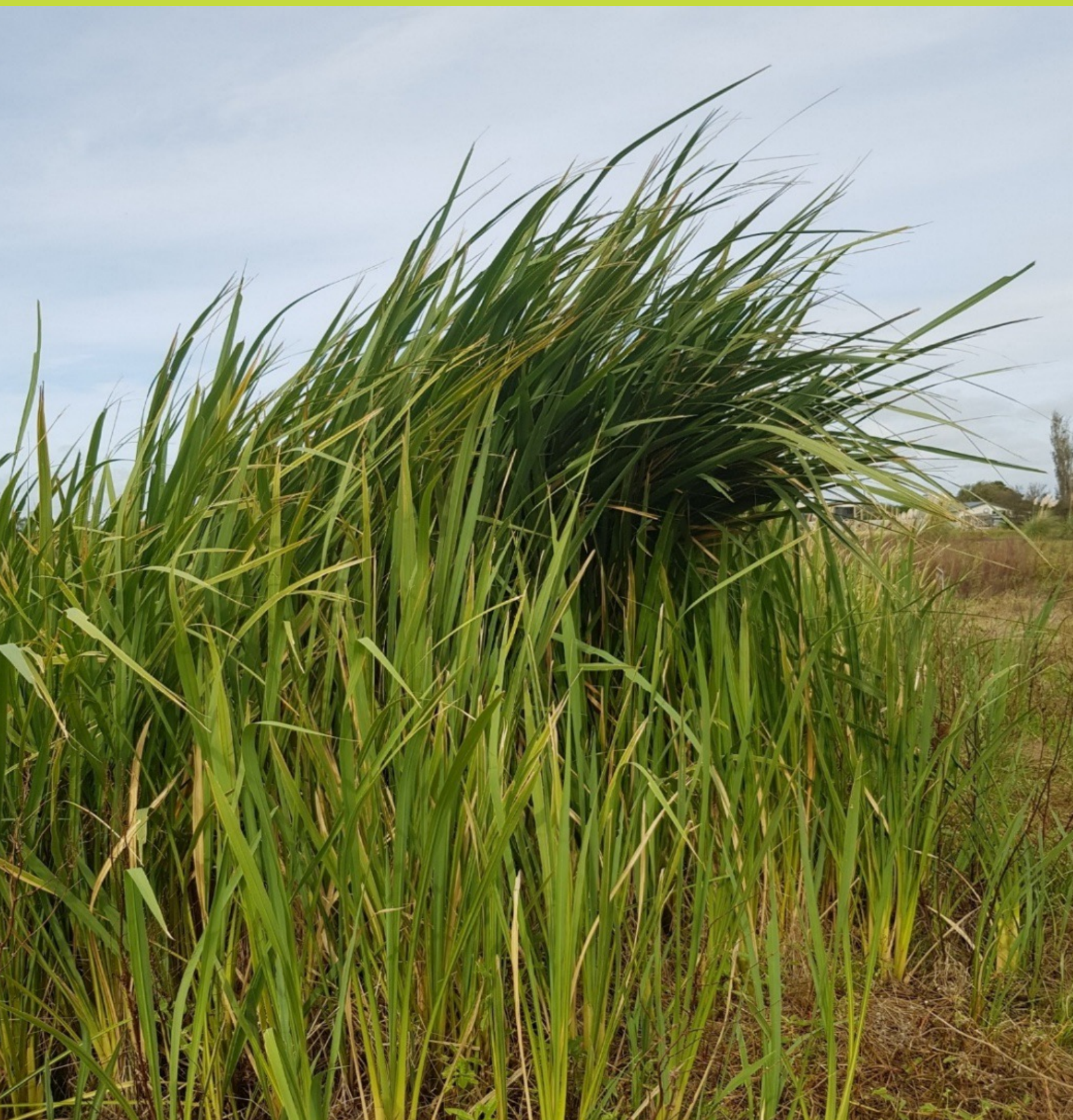
Predator Free 2050 ltd:

In addition, $ 1,588,601 of external funding was drawn down for Predator Free PF2050.

Grand Total **$5,737,810**

Biosecurity Activities 2024-25	Budget (revised)	Actual	Variance
Expenditure	$17,765,344.50	$19,269,322.25	-$1,503,977.75
Revenue	$14,924,623.58	$16,275,615.43	$1,350,991.85
Operational deficit(-)/surplus	**-$2,840,720.92**	**-$2,993,706.82**	**-$152,985.90**

3. Pest Plants
Riha otaota



Pest Plant Management

Sea Spurge

Foll owing the discovery of sea spurge (Euphorbia paralias) at two sites in Northland last year, surveillance along the west coast was a major focus for 2024-2025. With funding secured from the Ministry of Primary Industries, staff collaborated with local volunteers and iwi and hapū teams to survey over 175km of coastline, install signage and distribute flyers to beach goers. Five new locations (comprising 20 smaller sites) were identified, including the first site on the northern coastline, at Kapo Wairua, Spirits Bay, in June 2025

Most sites found were small (1 to 20 plants) and could be controlled by hand, however two large sites, totalling over 200 adult plants and thousands of seedlings were found at Mitimiti. Staff worked with the local hapū group Te Akau Roa Kaitiaki to develop a plan and implement the initial agrichemical control, with all follow up control of seedlings able to be done manually by local hapū members. All sites were inspected every four months to ensure any new seedlings were controlled

Local Taiao teams and hapū members from Ngāti Kuri, Te Aupōuri, and Te Rarawa iwi were trained and have been delivering the control and survey work. This locally delivered surveillance will be essential to manage the ongoing risk of new sites establishing from seed deposited on ocean currents from infestations on the Australian coast.

Sustained control programmes and rule enforcement

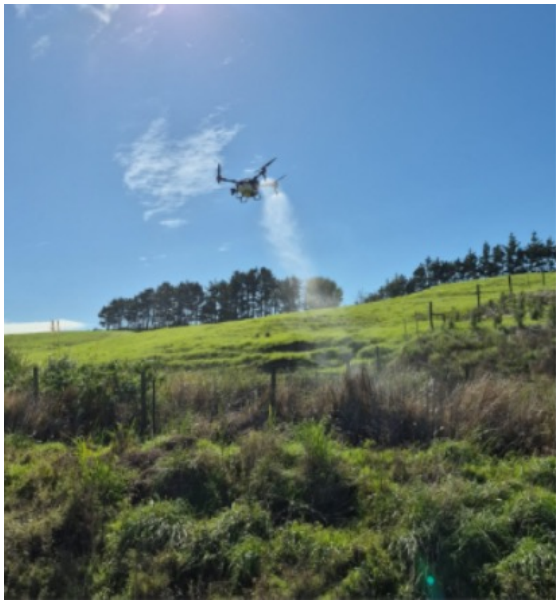
Madagascar ragwort

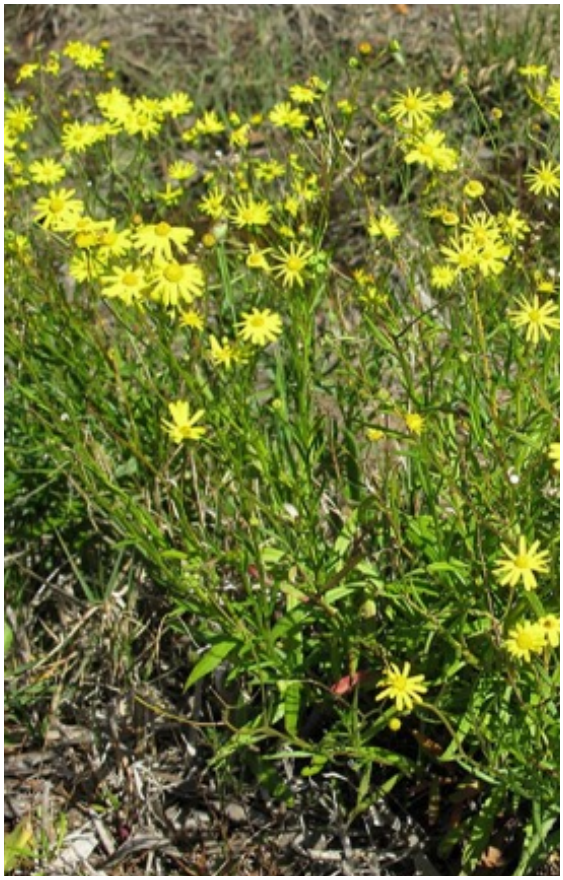
Inspections were carried out at all known nurseries and plant retail outlets for nationally and regionally banned pest species and, and a quarter of all commercial quarries were inspected for compliance with pest plant rules. Staff also undertook 17 enforcements for compliance with species specific sustained control rules.

Councillors and staff met with the Minister for Biosecurity to raise the issue of Madagascar ragwort (Senecio madagascariensis) and have been pursuing the establishment of a working group, in line with the Minister's view that the response should be a multi-agency response, co-led with industry. Key industry stakeholders have now agreed to cost share the development of an action plan that will evaluate the options and resources required for each. Through an Envirolink grant, AgResearch was commissioned to undertake a review of the current control methods for Madagascar ragwort and control research needs and opportunities, and this report will be used to inform the action plan.

In our other low-incidence pest plants programmes, under which Council undertakes search and control work for Exclusion, Eradication and Progressive Containment species, staff and contractors undertook more than 1000 survey and control inspections across 30 different species programmes. This included the delivery of the Ministry for Primary Industries' Manchurian Wild Rice National Interest Pest Response programme in Northland. As part of the surveillance and delimiting work for these programmes over 350 hectares of bush and over 1220 hectares of estuarine saltmarsh were searched. Drones were utilised to survey another 100 hectares to effectively identify and delimit sites in the spartina and royal fern programmes.

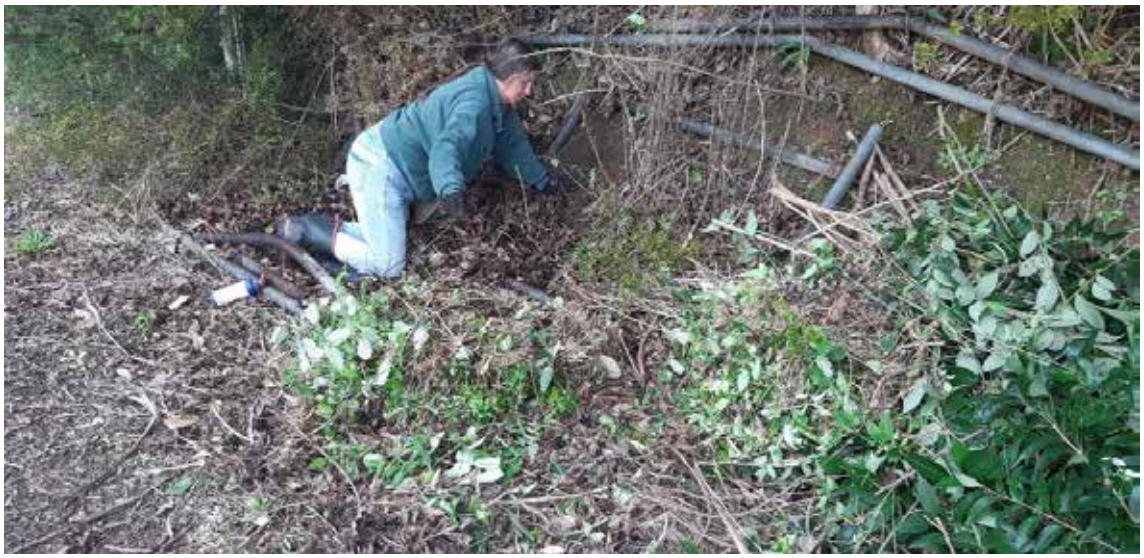
The Council also continued to work with the Ministry for Primary Industries deliver the National Wilding Conifer programme in Northland. Reduced funding for the National Programme has shifted the focus to completing the removal of seed sources and planned maintenance at existing management sites. Over 16,000 wildings were removed under the programme this year.





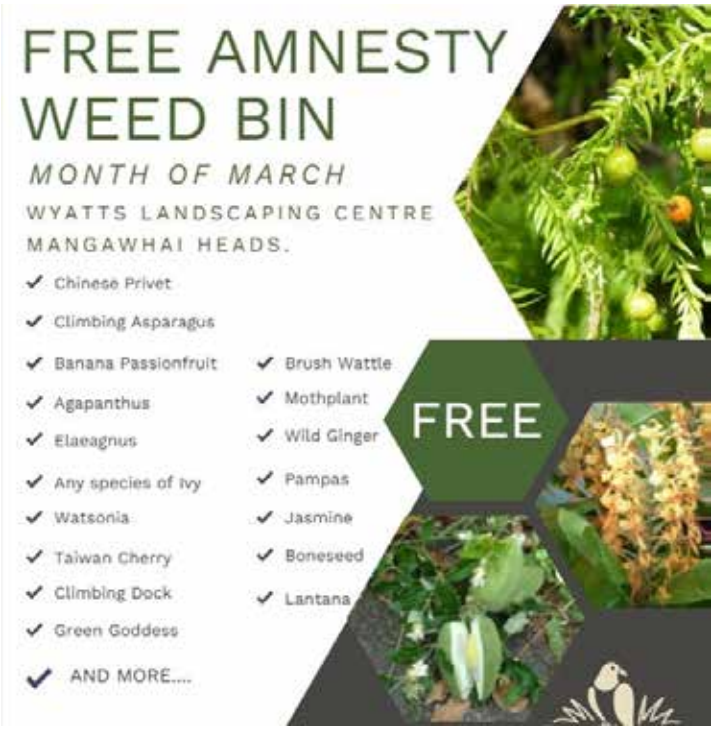
Education and community support and engagement

Eight public Weed Workshops were held around the region, with 146 people attending. Ten further workshops were held for specific groups including NorthTec students, community groups, primary and secondary schools, Far North City Care and the NZPCN conference, engaged a further 178 participants. Staff also supported the Biofund and Community Pest Control Area programmes and the pest plant groups working under the High Value Area programmes; these High Value Area projects contributed over 11,500 volunteer hours on pest plant focused initiatives.

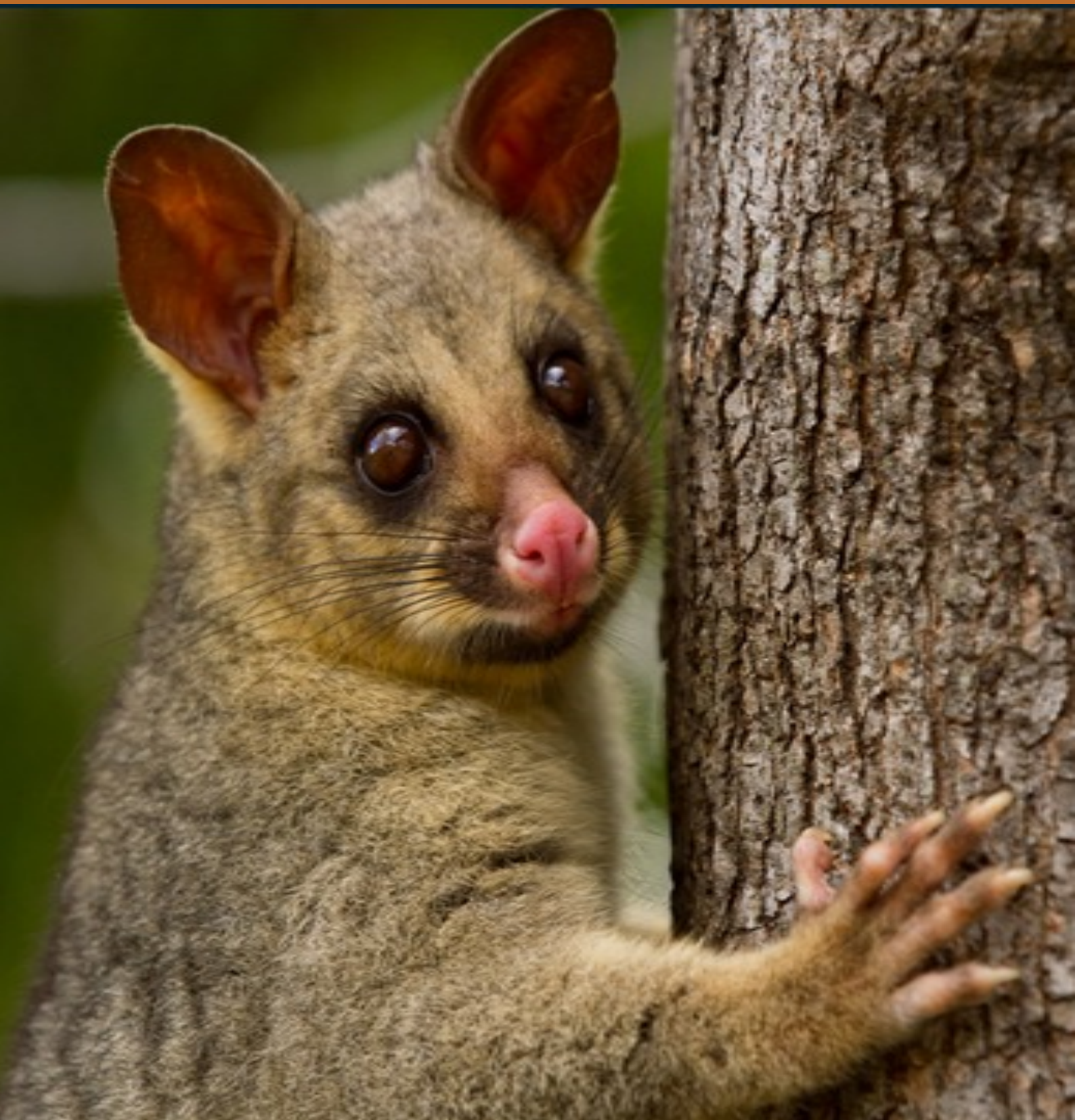


Community led weed action is an effective way of preventing weed spread.

Providing communities with the means to easily dispose of invasive weeds is another way to encourage weed action.

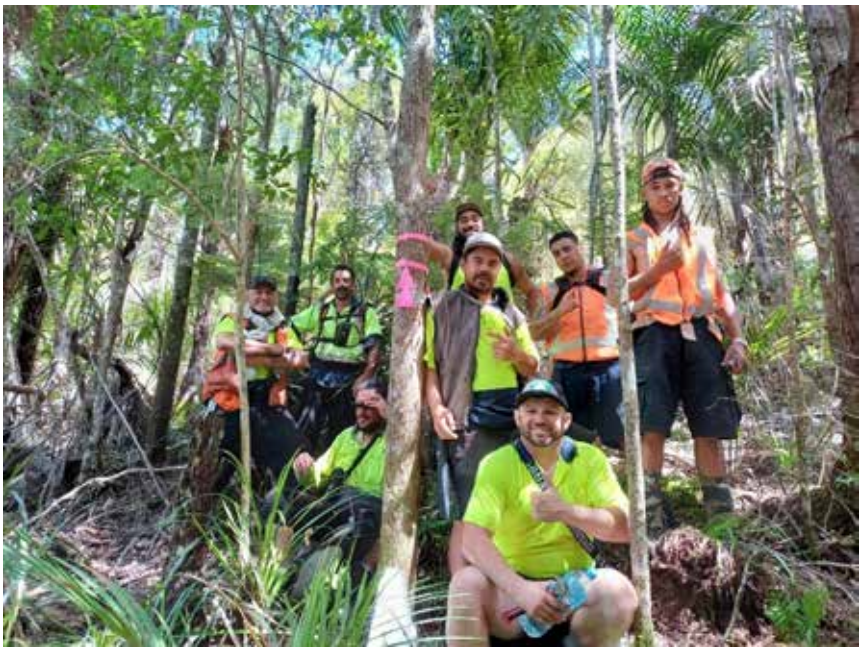


4. Pest Animals
Riha rawaho



Community led pest control

The Biosecurity Partnerships team collaborates with community led initiatives in reducing invasive species populations. With programmes like the Biofund, Community Pest Control Areas (CPCA), and High Value Areas (HVA, there are a number of flexible options available to support community-led pest control. These programmes enable participants to address biosecurity issues across various terrain sizes, from smaller areas up to 100 hectares (Biofund) to landscape-scale projects that encompass extensive regions over 20,000 hectares (HVA). During 2024-25, 41 Biofunds were awarded, which, despite an increase in the promotion of this programme at public events, was fewer than the number (71) awarded in the previous year. The reason(s) for this decline are unclear but may reflect that the number of Biofunds awarded each year since covid has been constantly high (c. 70/y). The Partnerships team will continue to promote this valuable programme to the community so that pest control on smaller blocks of land can be supported by council.



The CPCA programme continued to support 17 existing projects and saw the establishment of four new or renewed projects across Northland. These new projects made up a combined area 9,616 ha. Two of the new CPCA projects (Te Ohonga o Mahuri and Te Aupōuri Restoration) were resourced from a fund which was established through the 2024-25 Long Term Plan to support projects in the mid- and far north; areas where there has seen comparatively less investment from the NRC Biosecurity group in the past. Both are hapū-led, being delivered by local kaimahi, and have leveraged council funding to secure additional funding from other government agencies or philanthropic donors to fully resource their project.

Te Ohonga o Mahuri project is based in the Taheke/Punakitere and is a five-year initiative focused on reducing plant and animal pest populations across approximately 1,200 hectares of Maori land. This project, which as supported by the NRC, MSD, Foundation North, and Sky City in 2024-25, was driven by a community-led approach, drawing on local kaimahi with the capacity and matauranga Maori to restore the ecosystem health and protect native biodiversity. Over the year a total of 22 kaimahi were involved in the project for various periods of time but equating to 10 FTEs. During their time on the project, kaimahi received training in the safe use of both hand and motorised tools for project tasks, transferable skills, qualifications, and motivation to continue to protect the natural environment. In the ngahere, more than 350 bait stations were installed over approximately 300ha, and feral cat and possum traps were deployed and serviced. Along the awa, more that 3km of waterways were cleared of weeds that posed a flood risk with a 1km reach being completely cleared of willow. Finally, a BioBlitz (supported by NRC) was held where long-tailed bats were detected.

Te Aupōuri Restoration project aims to restore and enhance Kokota Sandspit and Te Ārai reserve to their pristine, pre-settlement and pre-farming landscapes. This project is being led by Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri and was financially supported by the NRC and Jobs for Nature. This project builds on the mahi being conducted by Te Rūnanga by increasing the amount of pest animal and plant control in the two project areas to protect and promote populations of native species. While this project is primarily focused on biosecurity mahi, it supports the wider restoration programmes the Te Rūnanga o Te Aupōuri, which include habitat enhancement, providing educational and training opportunities, and monitoring pest and animal populations to measure the impact of the mahi. Highlights from the year include the removal of over 2,600 pests over an area of 2,650 ha, nearly 700 wilding pines removed from an area of 312 ha, and Sydney golden wattle managed over 780 ha of the project area. Finally, Te Rūnanga Nui Te Aupōuri were also recognised at the 2025 NRC Environmental Awards with the Te Tohu Matua - Supreme Award.

Left: Te Rūnanga o Te Aupōuri receiving Te Tohu Matua - Supreme Award at the 2025 NRC Environmental awards.

Council has maintained its collaboration with Kiwi Coast (www.kiwicoast.org.nz), a collective initiative that connects 264 iwi and hapū. Since the establishment of Kiwi Coast in 2013, trap catch data from these groups indicate that over 966,142 pest species have been eradicated. Numerous community-led conservation projects, many of which receive council funding, are effectively managing pest species across a total area of 276,351 hectares. This work is positively influencing Northland's native flora and fauna.

Tiakina Whangārei is a council-funded urban conservation initiative that supports community-led pest animal and plant control efforts across Whangārei (www.tiakinawhangarei.co.nz). In 2024–2025, Tiakina Whangārei engaged with eight educational institutions, helped organise and participated in 11 community events—including one celebrating Tiakina Whangārei volunteer contributions—organised seven trap giveaways, distributed 734 pest control devices, and sponsored one local event. The project coordinated pest management activities across Parihaka Reserve on behalf of the Whangārei District Council and facilitated the formation of two new urban trapping groups and one new pest plant group. Tiakina Whangārei also provided planning and permissions support for three successful toxin operations across the wider Pukenui Reserve, including ground-based 1080 and cyanide operations in the Pukenui Forest and a brodifacoum operation in the Coronation Reserve, which Tiakina Whangārei also resourced.

Above: Kaimahi and NRC staff at Mahuri Marae during the 2025 BioBlitz.

Formal funding agreements were established with three Predator Free Onerahi groups, which has enabled these groups to grow their projects. In partnership with Tokotoko Solutions' Mahi Hapori Whānui work-ready programme, Tiakina Whangārei provided training, equipment, and PPE, enabling participants to gain valuable experience working alongside Tiakina Whangārei- supported volunteer groups on pest plant and animal control.

TREND STUDY: Animal pests removed through trapping across HVAs

	Mustelids trapped			Total pests trapped		
High Value Area outputs	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**
Mid-North	919	817	888	40,661	58,794	42,909
Tutukākā	212	260	187	2,361	3,231	3,461
Kiwi Link	195	250	341	8,086	11,957	10,387
Whangārei Heads	54	70	64	874	1,314	1,358
Piroa-Brynderwyn	282	352	498	3,541	4,599	6,768
Waipoua	N/A	391	210	N/A	3,753	2,527
Total	**1,662**	**2,140**	**2,188**	**55,523**	**83,648**	**67,410**

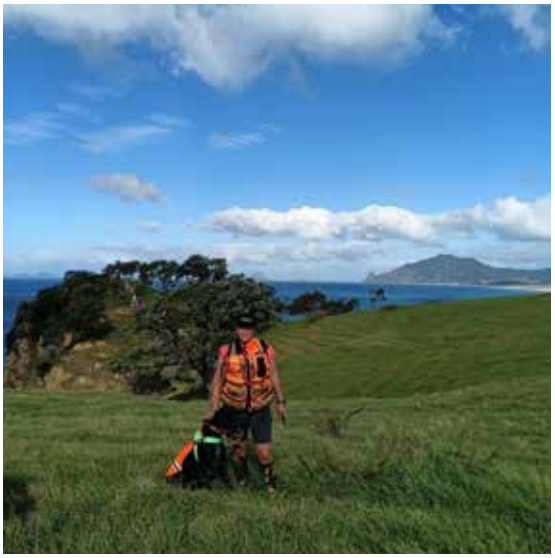
Number of new Council supported programmes		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Biofund grant approvals	**Achieved**	71	71	41

Predator Free 2050

Possum Free Whangārei Heads

Now in its fourth year, the Possum-Free Whangārei Heads project is making major strides toward eradication. An additional 1,000 hectares has entered the final detect-and-response phase, with full mop-up across the remaining 2,961 hectares targeted for completion by June 2026. A key milestone was the establishment of a defensive barrier between Parua Bay and the upper Pataua river

Work has expanded into the Kauri Mountain Reserve, a known possum hotspot, with strong support from local hapū. This effort is critical to preventing reinvasion into previously cleared areas like Manaia and Te Whara.



Staff undertake possum eradication using a trained detection dog as well as new trap devices

Community backing remains strong, with over 94% of landowners supporting the initiative. Eight community groups are actively involved in maintaining traps and cameras in elimination zones. Mana whenua engagement has deepened, with Pataua South uri leading elimination work across 175 hectares of Māori and general title land. Two hapū Kaimahi are also training to lead future predator control projects.

The project team has built strong relationships with local schools and kindergartens and continues to collaborate with conservation groups including Kiwi Coast, Kiwi Link, and Bream Heads Conservation Trust.

Innovative technology is playing a key role. The AT520AI trap uses AI to target possums specifically, while the Envico Spitfire delivers a possum-specific toxin with minimal servicing—both reducing labour and protecting non-target species. Nationally, the Predator Free Trust is amplifying advocacy and funding efforts, with Whangārei Heads wildlife featured in promotional campaigns.

Predator Free 2050

Pēwhairangi Whānui (Bay of Islands)

The Predator Free 2050 programme in the Bay of Islands continues to make strong progress across the Purerua-Mataroa, Rakaumangamanga, and Russell peninsulas. Currently, 5,745 hectares are in the final stages of elimination, with 13,555 hectares under active management and on track to reach elimination status by end of 2026.

In Russell, community support remains high. Public donations enabled expansion into Tikitikioure bush (711 ha), while Tapeka (225 ha) and Russell township (115 ha) show near-zero pest levels. The Old Russell peninsula (808 ha) is also nearing possum elimination.

On the Purerua-Mataroa peninsula, Kiwi Coast Trust has maintained near-zero possum numbers across 4,595 ha, aided by AI-enabled AT520 traps and real-time camera alerts for feral cats. Ngāti Rēhia has fully deployed devices across 485 ha of whenua Māori, strengthening buffer zone suppression.

The Rakaumangamanga project, led by Te Rawhiti 3B2 Ahu Whēnua on behalf of Ngāti Kuta and Patukeha, has achieved knockdown across 2,200 ha. Elimination efforts will focus on 1,100 ha, with the remainder supported by Ngā Whenua Rāhui funding. Two new trapper huts have been installed to support extended fieldwork.

This integrated, community-led approach—backed by advanced technology and strong iwi partnerships—is driving real progress toward a predator-free Bay of Islands.

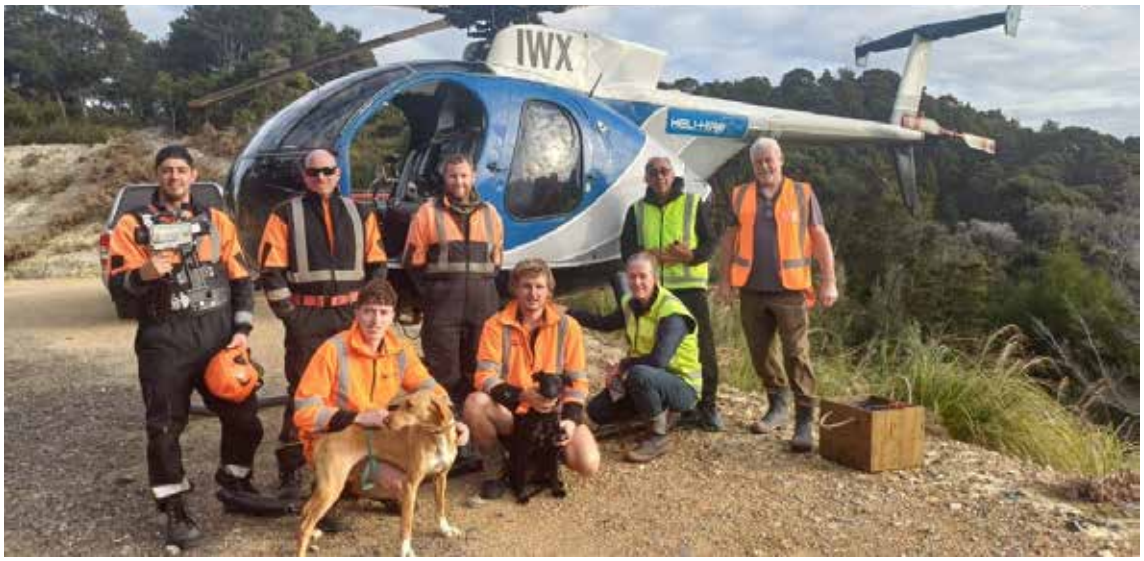
Above: Current active (red) and historic (green) deer management sites in 2024. This also shows deer farm locations and prohibited areas.

Pest Incursions and Response

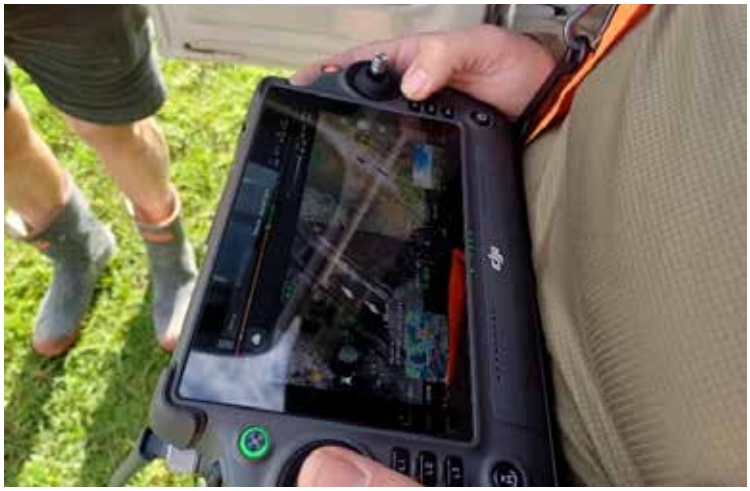
There are currently four species of deer known to be present in Northland; red deer (*Cervus elaphus scoticus*), fallow deer *(Dama dama*), sika deer *(Cervus nippon)* and wapiti- red hybrid which have arisen from past farm escapes. Red deer and fallow deer are farmed, and sika deer are present in one area of Northland as a result of illegal releases.

Northland's biosecurity efforts have made significant strides in 2024–2025, particularly under the Wild Deer Free Te Taitokerau programme. Since April 2024, 62 sika deer have been removed from Russell State Forest using a combination of thermal-assisted aerial shooting and drone-supported ground crews. With only a few deer remaining, DNA tracking is guiding the final push toward eradication.

The programme has expanded to Kai Iwi Lakes and five additional Northland sites, deploying Thermal Aerial Detection Systems (TADS). A new Communications and Engagement Advisor is enhancing stakeholder collaboration, especially with hapū and iwi.



Wild deer hunting crew on site with local kaumatua and staff

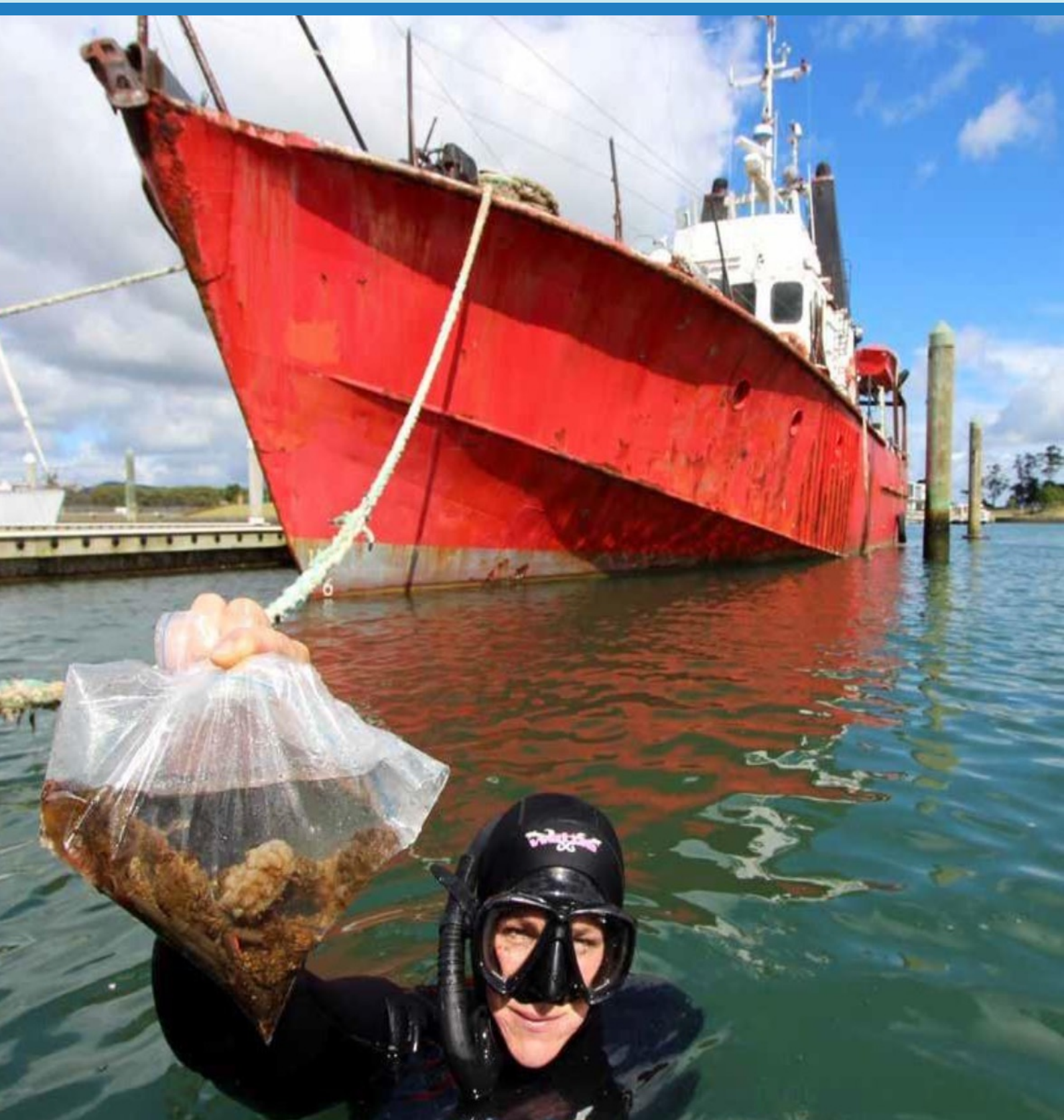


High tech drones, thermal imaging and night vision is some of the new technology being used in the eradication of wild deer throughout Northland.

Co-ordinated – Collaborative goat and pig control

Feral goat control has seen success near deer project sites, responding to increased community requests. Feral pig trapping has also yielded positive results. This integrated, community-led approach—backed by advanced technology and strong iwi partnerships—is driving real progress toward a predator-free Bay of Islands.

5. Marine Pests and Pathways
Riha tai me te huarahi ki mua



Exotic Caulerpa Response and Marine Pest Management

Northland Regional Council (NRC) has led a globally significant marine biosecurity initiative targeting the invasive seaweed Caulerpa.

An initial trial using equipment developed by a local engineering firm Johnson bros showed that it was possible to reduce Caulerpa biomass over 2,000 m^2 but faced spoil handling challenges.

From these results further improvements were made and Phase II of the suction dredging in Ōmakiwi Cove treated 22,295 m^2 of seafloor, the largest mechanical marine pest control operation internationally.

This led to the current proposal and NRC, in collaboration with Johnson Bros Ltd, Seaworks, NIWA, MPI, Cawthron, and local hapū are working together to develop a Submersible Dredge Planner (SDP) and scale up the removal. $6.2M was allocated by MPI for this initiative and the equipment is expected to be ready for deployment at Ōmakiwi in early 2026.

Surveillance and Detection

Over 100 km of seafloor was surveyed by NRC dive teams and contractors, focusing on high-use anchorages and public reports. Despite efforts, Caulerpa spread beyond the Controlled Area Notice (CAN) boundaries, likely due to anchoring and natural dispersal. In May 2025, NRC and NIWA deployed a Boxfish™ ROV with AI-enabled detection across seven high-risk areas from Whangārei to Rangaunu. The system provided real-time, georeferenced detection of Caulerpa, supporting future response planning.

Public Awareness and Engagement

A summer media campaign (Dec 2024–Feb 2025) reached 1 million+ digital impressions, with 85,800 ad plays across 12 marine venues. The campaign generated 4,603 ad clicks and 4,492 website sessions, with strong engagement via Meta platforms. Messaging focused on CAN boundaries and encouraged public reporting.

On-Water Engagement

Wai Knot ambassadors conducted 183 vessel surveys, engaging 380 individuals the data shows that 42% comprised Northland locals, 36% were from other NZ regions and 22% were international visitors. Most participants were aware of Caulerpa and CAN rules, with discussions often covering ecological impacts and rāhui.

Land-Based Outreach

The Conquer Caulerpa Charitable Trust (CCCT) reached 1,500+ people through school visits, hui, and events. Highlights included participation in the Ocean Film Festival (Kerikeri), school outreach, and the 2025 Ahuwhenua Farm Day at a Ngātiwai marae. Boat ramp-based engagement focused on Opua, Te Uenga, and Kororāreka.

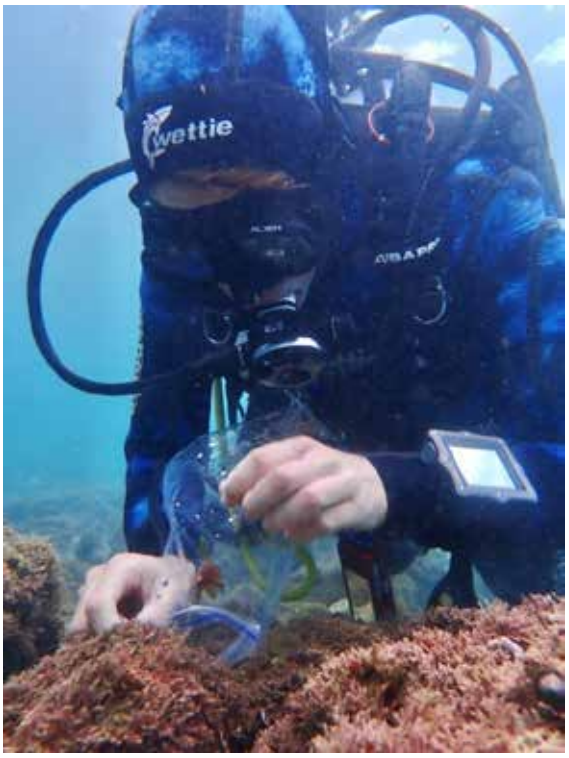
Hull Surveillance

NRC's annual hull surveillance programme resumed in December 2024, targeting 2,000 vessels (approx. half of Northland's recreational fleet). This target was exceeded this year with 2300 vessels surveyed.

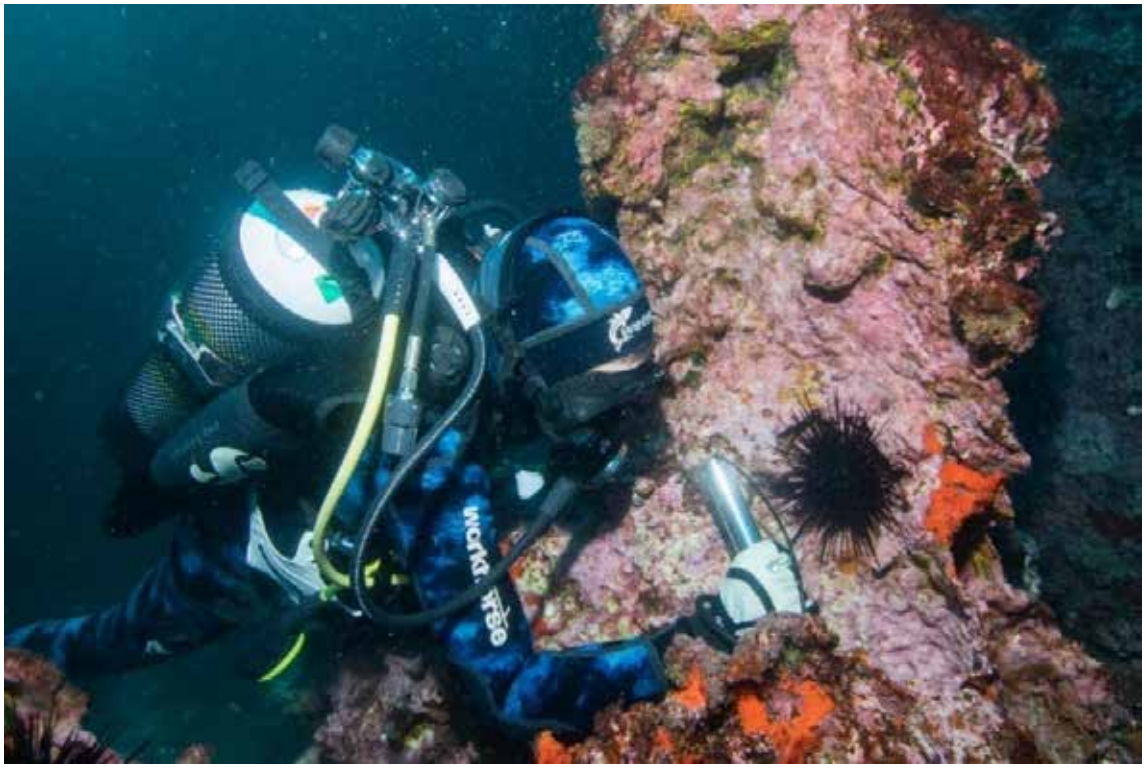
Anchored vessels are used as a proxy for higher-risk activity and over 80% complied with NRC biofouling rules.

Marine Incursion Responses

Incursions of Mediterranean fanworm and Undaria continued to be responded to with the aim of keeping harbours that have not been infected free of this marine pest. As part of these operations 345 Mediterranean fanworm (Sabella spallanzanii) were removed from Mangawhai estuary during an eight-day operation. In other work 1.1 tonnes of invasive Japanese kelp (Undaria pinnatifida) removed from Onepoto bay, Rawhiti and follow-up surveillance dives are planned to confirm eradication and prevent regrowth. Work to remove an invasive black urchin from Northlands Protected Areas was also progressed at the Poor Knights in a joint agency programme with Department of Conservation.



A scuba diver removes Mediterranean fanworm from the seafloor.

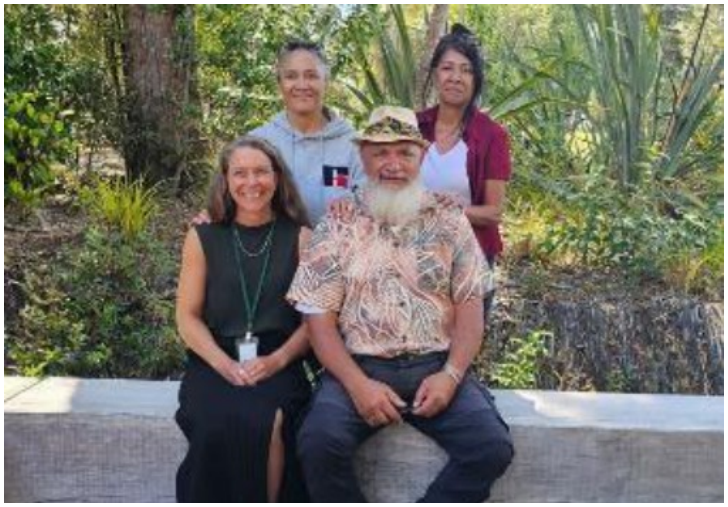


NRC diver removing the invasive Centrostephanus (black urchin) from Northlands coast.

Rāhui Tapu / Marine Protected Areas

Eighteen months into the implementation of the Rāhui Tapu / Marine Protection Rules, Northland Regional Council (NRC) continues to work closely with hapū to safeguard marine ecosystems. Guided by the Taiki ē Te Tiriti Strategy, the initiative is structured around three key workstreams: Communication and Public Engagement, Compliance Monitoring, and Ecological Monitoring.

Te Hā o Tangaroa Rāhui Tapu (Rākaumangamanga and Mimiwhangata Rāhui Tapu)



NRC staff member Nicola Hartwell (front left) with Te Uri Hikihiki – Ngā Wai Tiaki o Tangaroa.

A robust communications plan launched in August 2024 has driven public awareness through diverse channels—magazines, radio, social media, signage, and school programmes. Highlights include the Enviroschools "Healthy Marine Environments" initiative and targeted outreach at Oke Bay and local kura.

To support enforcement, NRC recruited eight locally based, hapū-connected RMA warranted officers in October 2024. These officers, alongside vessels sourced through hapū-preferred suppliers and agency partnerships, maintained a strong on-water presence through summer and public holidays.

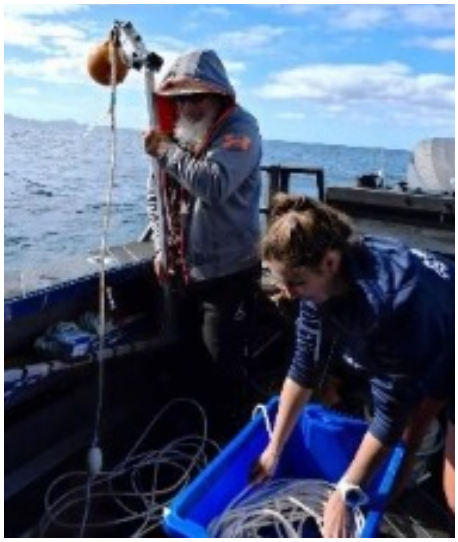
While the focus has been on education, enforcement has begun:

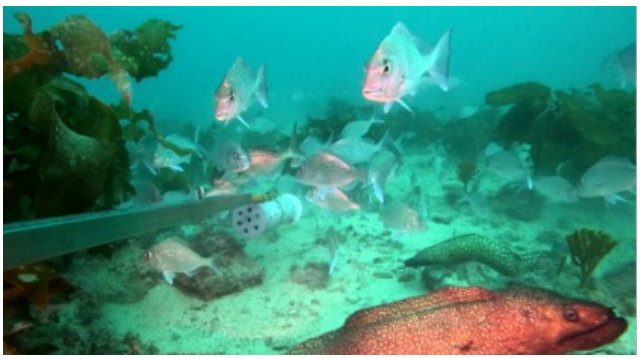
- 422 vessels approached

- 1 infringement notice, 1 abatement notice, and 24 direction notices issued

Baseline ecological surveys are underway, focusing on key species like tāmure (snapper) and kōura (crayfish). These are being conducted with marine scientists and hapū kaitiaki. NRC is also supporting hapū-led kina management and developing a geospatial database to guide long-term ecological monitoring.

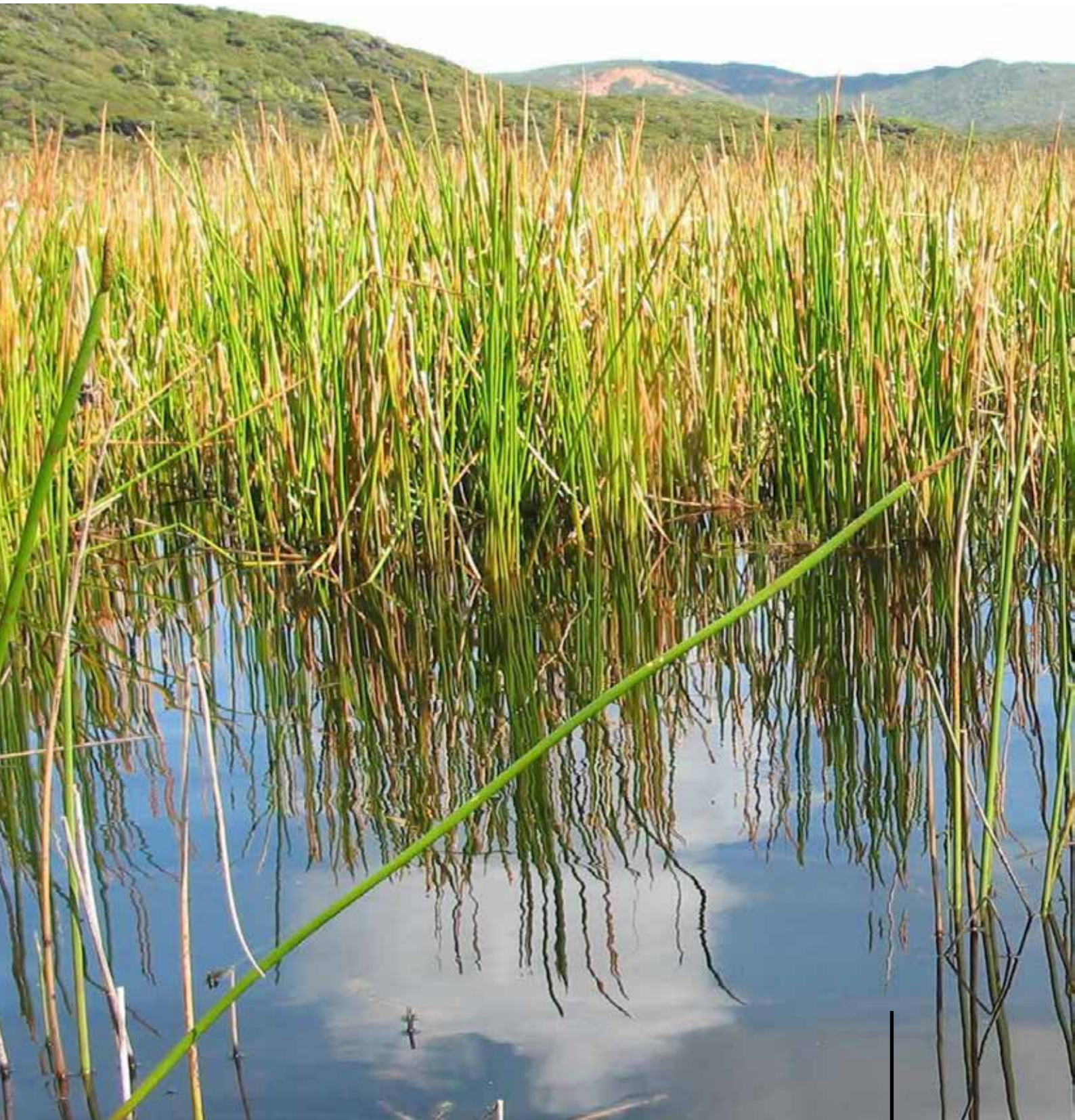
This collaborative approach blends science, regulation, and cultural stewardship—laying a strong foundation for the future of marine protection in Northland.





Above: Hapū kaitiaki and marine biologist retrieve a BUV during species onitoring at Mimiwhangata

6. Freshwater Pests
Riha wai māori



Freshwater Fish Eradication

In freshwater ecosystems, pestfish surveillance and eradication efforts have intensified.
Key operations include:

- 147 koi carp removed from Pahi Farm Dam
- New rudd population confirmed at Mangapai Dam
- Rudd and goldfish detected at Lake Parawanui via eDNA
- Koi carp confirmed in Whakanekeneke River

Collaborative planning with DOC and iwi is also underway for rotenone treatments at high-risk sites aimed at eradicating pest fish. Sustained control at Lake Rototuna has led to a pest-free status after four years of monitoring.

Partnerships with iwi such as Te Uri o Hau, Ngai Takoto, Ngati Kuri, and Te Roroa have been central, with joint training and ecological monitoring. Technological advancements include a Pestfish Field App, GIS integration, and a shared ArcViewer map with DOC, aligning efforts with the Regional Pest Management Plan. These integrated, community-driven strategies are delivering tangible outcomes in protecting Northland's biodiversity.

Other Incursion Species

Northland's biosecurity vigilance extended to a range of potential pest incursions this year, with a strong focus on early detection, community engagement, and inter-agency collaboration.

Wallabies

Nine wallaby sightings were reported, but none were confirmed. Investigations using trail cameras, detection dogs, and thermal drones at six sites—including Matawaia and Waipapa—yielded no evidence. One case was confirmed as dog scat through DNA testing.

Birds and Lizards

Three sightings of Indian ring-necked parakeets were investigated. Two were isolated incidents, while a flock of six in Kaiwaka prompted a site visit and leaflet drop to confirm nesting activity for future control.

Red-Eared Slider Turtles

Three turtles were captured in a private Kerikeri lake using basking traps. Research into effective capture methods is ongoing.

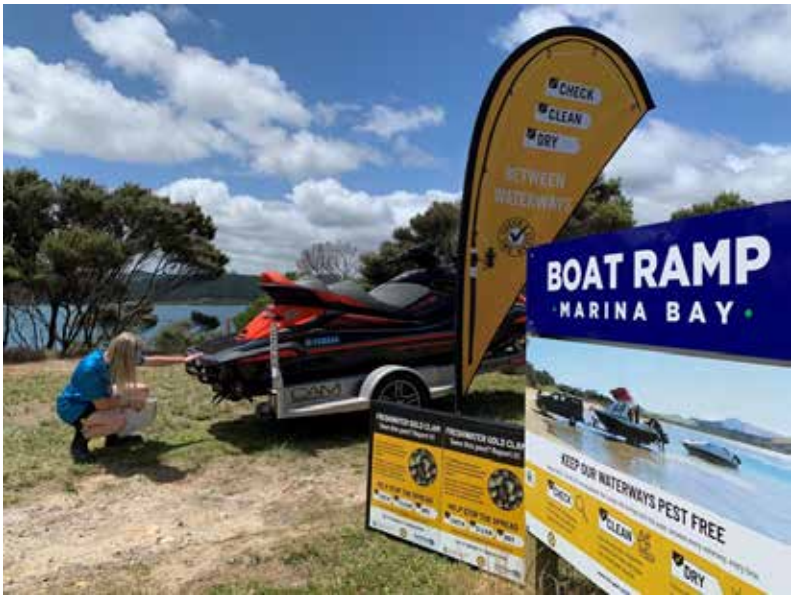
Freshwater Gold Clam and Check, Clean, Dry

A major focus was preventing the spread of the invasive freshwater gold clam. A biosecurity checkpoint at Kai Iwi Lakes (Dec 2024–Feb 2025) involved iwi, council, and community partners. 826 surveys were completed, down from 1,190 in 2023–24, reflecting fewer visitor numbers and watercraft users. Visitor data confirmed travel links between Northland and Waikato, reinforcing the risk of potential pest transfer.

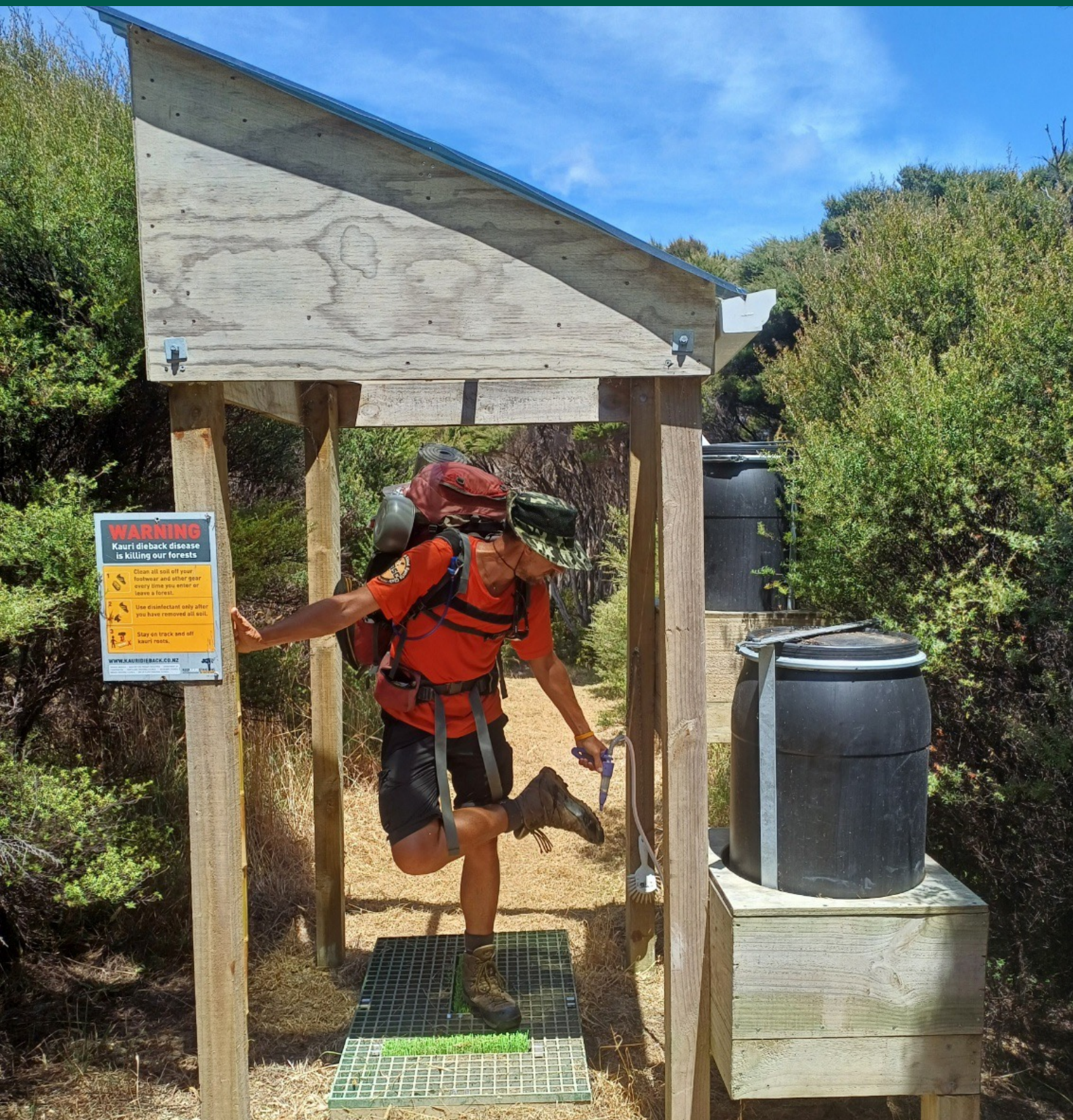
Surveillance for gold clam using eDNA was conducted across nine lakes, with iwi-led post-summer monitoring in the Far North. Community outreach at events like Waitangi Day and Northland Field Days boosted awareness.

Regulatory efforts included a request to close the Lake Taharoa boat ramp, and a formal request has been sent to MPI seeking a Controlled Area Notice to restrict motorised watercraft.

These efforts reflect a proactive, collaborative approach to protecting Northland's ecosystems from emerging pest threats.



7. Kauri Protection



Kauri Protection

The 2024/25 achievements of the NRC Kauri Protection Programme were made possible through the support from a $200k funding grant from the Ministry for Primary Industries who have contributed $1.5 M to the programme since 2022.

This investment combined with council funding has enabled the development of a custom-designed Kauri Engagement Trailer—a mobile hub for education, training, and awareness—through a strategic partnership between DOC, MPI, NRC, and Kauri Ora, an entity formed to deliver iwi and hapū led kauri protection. Field operations using contractors and council staff have completed 447 kauri health surveys and collected 86 soil samples with 363 collected since 2022. From the recent soil samples a new site of Phytophthora agathidicida was detected at Marunui Conservation area prompting updates to management plans. Ten other management plans were begun during the year and one completed.

In other activities the aerial imagery company Biospatial Ltd refined its deep learning model to map kauri distribution using 2023 imagery, with a full dataset expected later in 2025. This work will help understand where kauri is located and examine trends in kauri health over time.

In other projects 720m of fencing has been completed in the last year which has protected kauri stands from wandering stock, along with of track upgrades to protect kauri. In addition, the team have installed 13 barrel and grate hygiene stations and attended 10 public events including school visits promoting awareness and education. The team engaged and collaborated with 15 Iwi groups this year, an increase of 25% up from the previous year.

These outcomes demonstrate the tangible impact of the funding in strengthening kauri protection and biosecurity efforts across Northland.

Left: Staff from the contracting firm Biosense assess the health of kauri and collect soil samples for testing. Right: Kauri Collective Training.

Appendix

Table of Key Performance measures and results

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
PEST PLANTS	Community Engagement	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year.	1	1						The team participated in multiple community engagement events across Northland Field days/AP shows /Garden safaris 7 Community events and presentations 9 School visits/activities/workshops 6 Pest workshops 16
	Bicultural Collaboration	All permanent staff will have achieved competency level 1 in council's Te Whāriki workshops.	1	1						Reported at Group level. Three new work streams were initiated with Te Uri O Hau, with kaimahi working in a contract capacity alongside staff on the Spartina and Manchurian wild rice programs, and sea spurge training undertaken to enable them to take on the Department of Conservation contract for surveillance work in their rohe. Taiao teams from Ngāti Kuri and Te Aupouri and two Te Rarawa hapū were also trained and set up to undertake the control and surveillance work for sea spurge in their rohe.
	Bicultural Capability	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year.	1	1						Reported at Group level. Completed for pest plant staff
	Exclusion Plants	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance.	1	1						New sites detected for sea spurge; 21 sites found (new sites defined as being at least 200m apart), in 5 locations. Extensive surveillance was undertaken by staff, volunteers and iwi Taiao teams and hapū members. One houttuynia site reported and confirmed in vicinity of an existing known site. One old man's beard report found to be native clematis.
		Exclusion incident investigation: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of exclusion species undertaken within 5 working days.	1	1						Initial investigations into all reports completed withing 5 working days

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
		Exclusion incident response: An initial response plan developed and implemented for any new incursion of an exclusion species within 20 working days of confirmation of species.	1	1						**Sea spurge** All small sites controlled manually when found by staff or iwi/hapū or on inspection visit to confirm public reports. Hukatere site - Following site confirmation agrichemical control planned and implemented with Te Aupouri Taiao team within 7 days. Mitimiti - As an initial response a joint working bee with hapū members, DOC and Biosecurity staff organised and undertaken within 10 days of discovery to deadhead adult plants to prevent seeding undertaken and to fully delimit the large site. Undertook consultation and joint planning with hapū representatives to develop treatment and monitoring plans, to address concerns around herbicide use. Once the treatment plan was agreed the spraying was undertaken by staff and hapū representatives and the site fully treated within 1 month. One further report investigated and found to be a different species of Euphorbia. Houttuynia Reported site confirmed on follow up visit (no foliage present when initially reported. Once confirmed site treated on two subsequent inspections and no foliage found at the third inspection.
	Eradication Plants	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1	1						New sites found across multiple programmes; Akebia (3) Balloon vine (1), bat-wing passion flower, Evergreen buckthorn (2), Firethorn (16), Mexican feather grass (2), Mickey Mouse plant, monkey musk (1), nutgrass (1), yellow flag (2), and spartina (7) (some numbers still to be compiled). Significant effort put into extend surveillance in both bush, estuary and urban areas. Over 350 hectares of bush and over 1220 hectares of estuarine saltmarsh were searched. Drones were utilised to survey another 630 hectares to effectively identify and delimit sites in the spartina and royal fern programmes.
		Eradication incident investigation and response: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of eradication species undertaken within 10 working days and control actions completed within 20 working days.	1		1					Of the 87 incident reports, not all control actions were completed within 20 working days. KPI measure to be modified next year as, depending on size, accessibility, regulatory requirements for herbicide use and landowner sensitives, control actions cannot always be completed within 20 working days.
	Progressive Containment Plants	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1	1						New sites detected for Manchurian wild rice, Mile-a minute, and Lantana programmes (numbers still to be compiled)

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
		Progressive containment incident investigation and response: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of Progressive Containment species (outside of containment zones) undertaken within 10 working days and decisions documented within 20 working days.	1		1					Met for Manchurian wild rice, and mile-a minute. Not met for lantana programme.
	Sustained Control Plants	Request response time: Response to requests from the public on sustained controlled pests will be responded to within 20 working days	1					1		The pest plant team received over 500 enquiries and requests. The council database reporting system is not currently able to report on request and response times and requires modification to capture response data (rather than close date) for this performance measure.
		Plant retail outlet compliance: All known plant outlets in Northland are inspected annually for exclusion, eradication, progressive containment and sustained control species, and species banned under the National Pest Plant Accord	1	1						All known nurseries and plant retail outlets were inspected to check for nationally and regionally banned pest species and remind nurseries of their obligations. Three nurseries or plant outlets had a total of 54 specimens of Sexton's bride (Rhaphiolepis umbellata) removed from sale, which is banned from sale in the Northland region.
	Exclusion Plants	Best Practice Management All management sites visited on scheduled best practice rotation (based on biological characteristics of each species and defined in the species programme record in the council's IRIS database).	1		1					The pest plant team delivered search and control work across 21 different species programmes. Best practice achieved for 15 species programmes; Akebia, Balloon vine, Cathedral bells, Chilean rhubarb (one property in search area unable to be treated due to safety concerns). Evergreen buckthorn, Field horsetail, Firethorn, Lesser knotweed, Mexican feathergrass, Monkey musk, Nassella tussock, nutgrass, Sengal tea, nardoo (Freshwater pests in the Plan), and Yellow flag Iris (one site unable to be treated due to safety concerns).

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
										The pest plant team delivered search and control work across 21 different species programmes. Best practice achieved for 15 species programmes; Akebia, Balloon vine, Cathedral bells, Chilean rhubarb (one property in search area unable to be treated due to safety concerns). Evergreen buckthorn, Field horsetail, Firethorn, Lesser knotweed, Mexican feathergrass, Monkey musk, Nassella tussock, nutgrass, Sengal tea, nardoo (Freshwater pests in the Plan), and Yellow flag Iris (one site unable to be treated due to safety concerns). Not achieved for 5 programmes; Royal fern, Spartina, Gypsywort, Bat-wing passion flower, Mickey Mouse plant and wilding kiwifruit Royal fern - Staff worked with Department of Conservation staff to continue to progressively confirm and delimit reports from the review of historic herbarium & DOC records, and iNaturalist reports. Due to the number and scale of these sites, effort is being focused on delimiting the new sites to assess if eradication is feasible and confirming the most effective control method for larger sites. Staff undertook surveillance/ delimitation at 10 sites over approximately 550 hectares of wetland and control was undertaken at 5 sites. Spartina - insufficient resources to treat all sites annually, especially given the accessibility of the sites and the limited treatment windows that meet the combination of suitable tide and weather. An additional FTE is due to be added in 2025 2026 to the mid north area which will double the spartina treatment that can be undertaken, as well as support delivery of other species programs. Accessibility of both the Aquatic strand qualification and the Registered Chemical Applicators certificate remain a major barrier to growing both staff and local contractor capacity. Staff have been working with Muka Tangata, the People, Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council, Growsafe and Connexis who are the gatekeepers for these qualifications to identify the barriers and how these might be able to be resolved or mitigated. Gypsywort - The herbicide formulation approved by the EPA that is required for effective and safe drone treatment of infestations on floating raupo mats is no longer available in New Zealand. Bat-wing passion flower and Mickey mouse - The extended surveillance work undertaken over the last few years has expanded the known sites in these programs to a scale where the search and control work required to achieve eradication is no longer feasible, even if there was to be a massive increase in investment. Smaller programs where eradication is possible were prioritised for inspection and control. Wilding kiwifruit - Not all existing active sites able to be prioritised for inspection within existing resources

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
		Progress towards eradication Annual decrease in number of adult plants observed or the infestation area at existing management sites	1		1					Not achieved for all species programmes. Manual data analysis still underway
	Progressive Containment Plants	Best practice management 100% of council managed sites visited on scheduled best practice rotation (based on biological characteristics of each species and defined in the species programme record in the council's IRIS database).	1		1					Achieved for mile-a-minute and pultenaea programmes. Not achieved for Manchurian wild rice programme, African feather grass, lantana. Manchurian wild rice programme - Very good year for the programme, with the highest proportion of sites receiving at least one treatment, and the highest proportion of sites receiving the best practice two treatments (as compared to the data from the last 5 years of the programme). Drone treatment was also trialed for the first time to treat several sites that are unable to be treated by ground control methods. The effectiveness of this method will be reviewed once the rates of re-growth have been assessed. The drought conditions did affect some round two treatments as control was delayed until the drought broke (control is largely ineffective during drought), and the subsequent extreme rainfall levels made a number of sites inaccessible for their planned second round of treatment. There are also five sites in the programme that cannot currently be controlled due to a lack of approved approach from MPI (e.g. organic properties), and one that cannot be accessed for safety reasons. As well as delivering the standard control program, a second excavation trial was undertaken, and the 'research by management' trial that was started in 2023 to investigate herbicide application frequency and timing continued to provide valuable insights into the control methods and impact on root biomass. This learnings from this trial work have been used to develop a research project with MPI to investigate potential refinements to best practice control recommendations and improve the understanding of the plants biology and physiology to aid in targeting effective control. African feather grass - one large site not able to be treated due to drone limitations identified during site mapping prior to treatment. Helicopter work contracted instead but subsequent weather and contractor availability delayed treatment. For the lantana programme - Control is undertaken by occupiers, and the programme currently has no set targets for follow-up contact with landowners where control or management plans have previously been enforced. New sites are identified, and control enforced, or control undertaken with permission, but given the current resources available for the low incidence programme, other eradication work is taking precedence over inspection of previous sites for continued compliance.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
		Progress towards eradication Annual decrease in number of adult plants or the infestation area at existing council managed sites.	1		1					Not achieved for all species programmes. Manual data analysis still underway
	Sustained Control Plants	Road and rail five year weed management plans All road and rail authorities have five year weed management plans or prioritised annual plans approved and implemented.	1			1				As was reported last year, despite multiple informal and formal attempts to engage with the now disbanded Northern Transport Alliance, District Council and NZTA representatives to progress the issue of weed management in the road corridor and the requirement to develop five year weed management plans, there has been very limited response. Based on the continued lack of response it is apparent that the issue of weed management continues to struggle to gain traction, in terms of focus and funding, against the competing priorities for roading authorities. As part of the Regional Pest Management Plan review that is now underway, Council officers will be considering the inclusion of rules that will enable an enforcement-based approach when required, rather than the more pragmatic and strategic approach in the current plan. The current rules were designed to enable roading authorities to plan and prioritise weed control actions based on a number of criteria, rather than being based only on the enforcement of species-specific rules. However, without engagement from the roading authorities and buy-in to this approach a more direct approach may be required.
		Best practice guide Best practice guide developed for all road and rail authorities	1	1						A guide for road and rail authorities for developing the Five-year Weed Management Plans required under rule 6.4.2.2 in the Northland Regional Pest and Marine Pathways Management Plan 2017-27, was developed and sent to all road and rail authorities in 2022-23. It was re-sent in 2023-24 as an attachment to the letter sent to Mayors of all District Councils. KPI to be removed for 2025 2026 as it has been completed.
		Quarry Inspection: 15% of all operating commercial quarries are inspected annually to determine compliance with Rule "6.4.5, Rule 6.4.7, and Rule 6.4.15"		1						More than 25% of commercial quarries inspected for compliance with pest plant rules. Of these 4 had minor breaches of pest plant rules and remediated these.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
PEST ANIMALS	Community Engagement	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year.	1	1						This was equivalent to the previous year of 4.
	Bicultural Collaboration	All permanent staff will have achieved competency level 1 in council's Te Whāriki workshops.	1	1						Staff increased the number of iwi/hapu projects by 3 over the year.
	Bicultural Capability	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year.	1	1						All permanent staff have retained competency level in councils Te Whāriki workshops
	Exclusion animals	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1	1						Nine wallaby incursion reports have been received over the past year. Two were assessed, however following discussions with the reporters, they were considered to be possum or hare sightings, and genetic testing at one site confirmed the scat to be from a dog. Three Indian ring-necked parakeet sightings were also investigated. Two involved individual birds that were not seen again. The third report described a flock of approximately six birds in the Kaiwaka area, and this site has undergone previous removal activities. Although no birds were recovered further survey of this area will be maintained. Testing of our basking trap for turtles is ongoing on a private Kerikeri lake and three Red Eared Slider turtles have been captured using the trap. Research and trials of capture methods is ongoing for this species.
		Exclusion incident investigation: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of exclusion species undertaken within 5 working days.	1	1						As above
		Exclusion incident response: An initial response plan developed and implemented for any new incursion of an exclusion species within 20 working days of confirmation of species.	1	1						As above

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
	Eradication animals	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1	1						See Eradication Animals Deer
	Sustained control animals	Request response time: Response to requests from the public on sustained controlled pests will be responded to within 20 working days.	1	1						Achieved
	Eradication animals (deer)	Deer incident response and investigation 100% of deer incidents are responded to within 48 hours. Deer location records Known deer populations are surveyed and mapped across Northland. "No wild Deer in Te Taitokerau" NRC and DOC design a joint advocacy campaign, involving other stakeholders as necessary (e.g.: iwi, hapu, Game Animal Council), to promote the Strategy Vision of "No wild populations of deer in Northland"	3	2	1					Surveillance for wild deer has been carried out across five additional project areas in Northland. These operations utilized helicopters and Thermal Aerial Detection Systems (TADS) and staff are developing a joint Wild Deer Free Te Tai Tokerau Communications and Engagement Strategy which is expected by the end of the year.
		Best practice management. NRC maintains at least annual contact with Northland deer farmers to support the industry in best practice. Reducing the number of farm deer escapes annually.	1	1						NRC works in partnership with the Department of Conservation to support farm inspections. A significant drop in reported deer escapes this year since the new North Island Deer Coordinator was appointed in DOC.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
	Sustained control animals	Land area in CPCAs. Increase in hectares of land under CPCAs per annum (increase by 5000 ha).	1	1						Four new or renewed CPCA projects totaling 9,616ha.
		Council supported programmes. Measure annual outputs of council supported programmes – may include: • Number of traps issued. • Number of kills recorded or post control pest densities, where known. • Number of Biofund projects approved. • Number of Community Pest Control Areas approved. • Trends in indicator species (e.g. kiwi call counts and pateke flock surveys).	5	5						- Traps issued = 4,620 -Pest control devices issued (traps plus bait stations) = 7,828 - Kills recorded... 120,520 - 41 Biofunds awarded - 4 new CPCAs The 2025 kiwi listening survey has now been completed, and while the data is still being analysed at the time of writing, early indications are encouraging. Across Northland, areas with sustained integrated pest management are showing positive trends. For example, at Whangārei Heads, kiwi numbers have continued to rise, with the population increasing from 1,185 in 2024 to 1,330 in 2025. Analysis of the 2025 Pāteke Flock Count data shows that the endangered, endemic nocturnal ducks continue to thrive along Northland's east coast, where sustained predator control is occurring. However, this year's flock count totalled 532, which is slightly lower than last year. This change will be closely monitored to ensure it does not signal the beginning of a downward population trend.
		Contractors specifically engaged by council for possum control will meet a target of 5% residual trap catch index or 15% wax tag index in council led operations. Council supported programmes undertaking possum control are achieving agreed targets set in community pest control area agreements.	2	1	1					There were no NRC funded performance-based contracts for possum knockdowns in 2024-25; however, possum monitoring has been completed in some of the projects where sustained possum control was carried out using the Waxtag Index (WTI) or Residual Trap Catch (RTC) methods. For example: Possum monitoring at Maunganui Bluff in May reported a mean RTC of 11.4%, while WaxTag monitoring Te Arai reported a mean WTI of 11%.
	Predator free Whangarei & Pēwhairangi Whānui BOI	Possum eradication Percentage of project area in knockdown / removal phase.	0							54%
		Possum eradication surveillance Percentage of project area in surveillance phase (detection and response).	0							40%

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
FRESH WATER PESTS	Community Engagement	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year. Attend at least 2 community events (annually) to advocate and promote public awareness and biosecurity best practice around pestfish	1	1						The team participated in multiple community engagement events across Northland—including Field Days, the Scouts Regatta, two Enviroschools events, and various community days—to promote awareness of freshwater biosecurity, best practice hygiene, and the Check Clean Dry message.
	Bicultural Collaboration	Number of relationships and collaborative projects that are underway with hapū / whanau / iwi increases by a minimum of 5% annually	1	1						The team participated in multiple community engagement events across Northland—including Field Days, the Scouts Regatta, two Enviroschools events, and various community days—to promote awareness of freshwater biosecurity, best practice hygiene, and the Check Clean Dry message.
	Bicultural Capability	All permanent staff will have achieved competency level 1 in council's Te Whāriki workshops.	1	1						All staff have completed Level 1 and over half have completed Level 2
	Exclusion freshwater pests	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1						1	No new sites reported
		Exclusion incident investigation: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of exclusion species undertaken within 5 working days.	1						1	No new sites reported
		Exclusion incident response: An initial response plan developed and implemented for any new incursion of an exclusion species within 20 working days of confirmation of species.	1						1	No new sites reported

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
	Eradication freshwater pests	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1	1						Two new turtle sites investigated Te Waiere Falls and a Ruakaka Dune lake
		Eradication incident investigation and response: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of eradication species undertaken within 10 working days and control actions completed within 20 working days of report being confirmed	1	1						A landowner on Puketotara Road in Kamo handed (NRC) a red-eared slider turtle, which was sent to Bay Water Vets for euthanasia. Two new sightings of red-eared slider turtles have been reported in the region: one is still at large at Te Waiere Falls in Kerikeri, and another sighting in a Dune Lake in Ruakaka is currently being investigated. The Ruakaka turtle's situation will be further assessed in September 2025 after its winter Brumation. An additional eastern water dragon was captured at a Paihia Engineering Company by a business owner who handed it to NRC. The EWD was already euthanised and is currently being taxidermed as an educational display.
	Progressive containment freshwater pests	Identify new sites: Identify new sites of exclusion, eradication, and progressive containment pest through passive and active surveillance by council staff, the public, or through regional surveillance	1	1						Three new koi carp river sites—Waitangi, Poyner Road (Paparoa), and Adams Road (Glenbervie)—were reported outside the Containment Zone, along with one new tench site at Mangatoetoe Creek. All sites were visited, and eDNA water samples were collected at Mangatoetoe and Waitangi. Follow-up netting operations are planned for spring 2025 at Waitangi and Mangatoetoe. At the Adams Road bridge site, electrofishing confirmed the presence of goldfish rather than koi carp. Downstream, a nearby farm also reported goldfish following a flooding event that washed fish onto a paddock. No further action is required at this site. Similarly, electrofishing confirmed that the observed orange fish was a goldfish at Poyner Road bridge site near Paparoa. With goldfish confirmed at the location no further action is being considered at this stage.
		Progressive containment incident investigation and response: Initial investigations for all reported sightings and/or discoveries of Progressive Containment species (outside of containment zones) undertaken within 10 working days and decisions documented within 20 working days.	1	1						All sites were visited, and eDNA water samples were collected at Mangatoetoe and Waitangi. Follow-up netting operations are planned for spring 2025 at Waitangi and Mangatoetoe. At the Adams Road bridge site, electrofishing confirmed the presence of goldfish rather than koi carp. Downstream, a nearby farm also reported goldfish following a flooding event that washed fish onto a paddock. No further action is required at this site. Similarly, electrofishing confirmed that the observed orange fish was a goldfish at Poyner Road bridge site near Paparoa. With goldfish confirmed at the location no further action is being considered at this stage.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
	Sustained control freshwater pests	Request response time: Response to requests from the public on sustained controlled pests will be responded to within 20 working days.	1	1						
	Exclusion freshwater pests	Incursion Response Plans Develop surveillance and incursion response plan for at least one vulnerable high value biodiversity and/or culturally significant site annually.	1		1					Response Plan development continues for Kai Iwi Lakes with Te Roroa, Te Kuihi, Kaipara District Council and the Department of Conservation and with Ngati Kuiri for Lake Ngakeketo. The planned incursion response training for pest fish at Lake Ngakeketo, scheduled for June 2025 in partnership with Ngāti Kuri, was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. The training has been rescheduled and is now planned for delivery in November 2025. In partnership with Te Uri o Hau the team undertook operations at Lake Parawanui. This historical site has had multiple pest fish reports over the years (Rudd/Koi) and is noted as a historical Orfe site. No Orfe were detected in either eDNA or netting efforts.
	Eradication freshwater pests	Management site visits 100% of council freshwater pest fish management sites visited on scheduled best practice rotation (based on biological characteristics of each species and defined in the species programme record in the council's IRIS database).	1		1					Due to the number of sites across Northland the team prioritises those reports outside of the containment zones. For Lake Rototuna, this pen-ultimate (4 years) netting operation was delivered alongside eDNA sampling confirming rudd absence. A final year of sampling is planned for Sept 2025. If no rudd are captured, then the sampling threshold for no rudd captures (over 5 years) is met and the status of rudd at the site can be changed to ERADICATED.
	Progressive containment freshwater pests	Distribution record Maintain a distribution record of progressive containment pest fish species.	1	1						See narrative above
		Annual status reports Training, surveillance, control, and eradication actions attempted for progressive containment pest fish species will be reported annually.	1	1						The team has delivered multiple training operations with iwi partners (Te Uri o Hau) for progressive Containment Species (Koi carp and Grass Carp) and Te Roroa at Kai Iwi Lake. The planned activities with Ngāti Kuri were postponed due to bad weather but have been rescheduled for November this year.
		Management tools and technology Investigate the use of new management tools and technology around pestfish detection or control	1	1						A new underwater drone has been acquired to enhance the pest fish team's surveillance capabilities and is currently undergoing trials at Lake Taharoa as of 24 June 2025. Recent technological advancements include the deployment of a new Pest Fish Field App for improved data collection, and a shared ArcViewer Layer Map with the Department of Conservation to strengthen pest fish tracking. Integration of GIS tools and ongoing methodological refinements are helping to better align operational delivery with the objectives of the Regional Pest Management Plan.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
DISEASES & PATHOGENS Kauri disease	Community Engagement	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year.	1	1						10 x Public Engagement events completed: Field days, Dargaville school education day, Paparore school day, Bay of Islands college education day, Matariki Puketi evening, Wild kai night with DOC, Pig hunting comp and education event, Kaitaia AMP show, Northland forestry event, Ngati Kahu education event.
	Bicultural Collaboration	Number of relationships and collaborative projects that are underway with hapū / whanau / iwi increases by a minimum of 5% annually	1	1						Last year the NRC kauri protection engaged with 12 iwi groups and this year we collaborated with 15, a 25% increase
	Bicultural Capability	All permanent staff will have achieved competency level 1 in council's Te Whāriki workshops.	1	1						All permanent staff have retained competency level in councils Te Whāriki workshops
	Sustained Control	Soil sampling 100% of remaining aerial survey sites on private land will be sampled and a minimum of 50% of high-risk sites will have management plans. Follow-Up Soil Sampling Sample five previously sampled sites to reconfirm the status of the site regarding the presence of P. agathidicida. Hygiene stations A minimum of 5 hygiene stations installed at priority sites P. agathidicida distribution Maintain a record of distribution of P. agathidicida disease across Northland.	4	4						Soil Sampling & Management Plan Follow Up : Aerial survey has been completed and drone imagery used to identify (4) sites (1)Wilsons dam have had (12) soil samples taken with results pending (2) Kauri mountain area has had (7) samples taken also waiting on results (3)Whau valley area also with (7) samples, results were 5 nil infection and 2 with P.cinnamomi (4) Taika forest has (17) samples showing 8 no infection and 9 with P.cinnamomi - From work completed in the previous financial year nine sites were identified as needing further risk assessments - Of these sites identified (6) have had management plans completed - (1) Taika forest - (2) Shrewsbury - (3) Marunui conservation - (4) Stoney creek- (5) Paparoa surveillance - (6) Finlayson brook Waipu. Hygiene Station: achieved: Barrel and grate hygiene station installs (13) MK111 hygiene station installs (2) P. agathidicida distribution: Data collected on internal NRC database; Secondary collection of sampling results and surveys are on the Tiakina Kauri platform "Kete Aronui".
		Incident response times All incidents are recorded, and a response plan is developed within 20 working days.	1	1						Staff have had 43 enquiries regarding kauri protection and all but one have had response times of under the 20-day set-point - The one enquiry that did not make the set time was due to customer never replying to our 2 phone calls and one site visit in Waipu/Mangawhai area. Enquiry information and details are kept in NRC internal data files.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
MARINE PATHWAYS MANAGEMENT PLAN	Community Engagement	Total number of engagement events and other social media interactions is maintained or is greater than the previous year.	1	1						Over summer 2024–2025, a council-backed Caulerpa awareness campaign reached over one million people through digital and out-of-home ads, with strong engagement from boaties and marine users, while Wai Knot ambassadors conducted 183 vessel surveys, revealing high public awareness of CAN rules. Complementing this, the Conquer Caulerpa Charitable Trust engaged over 1,500 people through school visits, community events, and ramp-side outreach, including participation in the Ocean Film Festival and Ahuwhenua Farm Day.
	Bicultural Collaboration	Number of relationships and collaborative projects that are underway with hapū / whanau / iwi increases by a minimum of 5% annually	1	1						The team continues to strengthen and grow our partnerships with hapū, whānau, and iwi, reflecting our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Collaborative projects and relationships have increased by at least 5% annually, demonstrating meaningful engagement and shared progress.
	Bicultural Capability	All permanent staff will have achieved competency level 1 in council's Te Whāriki workshops.	1		1					One new staff member who is enrolled for the next available course.
		Vessel compliance reporting Compliance with the marine pest and pathway plan is recorded and trends over the duration of the plan are analysed.	1	1						Compliance with the marine pest and pathway plan continues to be closely monitored, with trends analysed across the duration of the plan to inform adaptive management. Notably, over 80% of vessels surveyed while at anchor—used as a proxy for mobile, higher-risk vessels—were found to be compliant with NRC's biofouling rules, indicating strong adherence within the active fleet and effective uptake of biosecurity expectations.
		Hull survey The vessel hull surveillance programme will inspect a minimum of 2000 vessel hulls annually	1	1						This financial year, NRC staff and contractors successfully surveyed 2315 hulls.
		New marine pests Introductions of new marine pests to Northland and spread of established pests to new designated areas within Northland are recorded and trends over the duration of the plan are analysed	1	1						Introductions of new marine pests and the spread of established species within Northland are actively recorded and analysed over the duration of the plan to identify trends and inform response strategies. Of note, Bonnemaisonia hamifera (a non-indigenous red algae) was detected in Opua, as well as in other locations including Wairoa and Mokohinau Island; however, MPI has assessed it as a low biosecurity risk due to its widespread presence and the lack of effective control options.

Pest Type	Programme/ Activity	KPI Measurement	Count	Achieved	Achieved in part	Not Achieved	Modified measure	Response time data not available	Not Applicable	Notes
TEAM TOTALS										
			72	56	10	2	0	1	3	
				66	97%	(excludes not applicable, not achieved, modified measures and data not available)				
				2	3%	Percentage not achieved				

Trend Information Table; Progress in achieving aims

PEST ANIMALS	Performance Measure	RESULT	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Details
	Engagement events: attended is maintained or greater than the previous year	Achieved	2	4	4	Field Days / A&P
	Identify new sites: New incursion sites of exclusion animals are identified	Achieved	3	21		Shows/ Community
	Land area in CPCAs: Increase in land under CPCA protection by 5,000 ha per annum	Achieved	1568	8693	9616	Events
	Response to reports from public: Reports on sustained control pests will be responded to within 20 working days	Achieved	2020	2471		Incident reports

Northland
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau