

Community Weed Strategy

– A template for collaborative planning

1. Waitakere Weed Management Strategy Objectives

1. **Eradicate or contain specific weed species** wherever they occur, where this is practical and affordable.
2. **Protect priority (high value) areas** from the impacts of weeds.
3. **Address legal responsibilities** under the Regional Plant Pest Management Strategy (RPPMS).
4. **Minimise future costs** by adopting Best Practice guidelines (Section 8) and undertaking surveillance to detect new weed problems at valuable sites before they become unmanageable and expensive.
5. **Support and facilitate community understanding and involvement** in the management of weed impacts.

Laingholm Community

- Q1) Who are we / What are our strengths & capabilities?
What are our weaknesses?

2. Discussion of Objectives & Roles

2.1 Objective 1: Eradicate or contain weeds that aren't well established - via "weed-led" programmes.

The objective of a "weed-led" control programme is to **eradicate** or **contain** the distribution of a particular, new invasive weed species in order to minimise future problems. Controlling a weed infestation early will minimise the ecological damage wrought by the weed and significantly reduce future control costs. LWF can contribute to weed-led strategies co-ordinated by WCC or ARC, such as containment of smilax in the Waitakere Ranges.

To be effective, the target weed species in a weed-led programme must be controlled wherever it occurs. Weed-led control should only begin on a species that has not yet become a serious weed but has the potential to do so.

Where eradication is feasible and practical, it should be viewed as a priority over site-led control of more widespread species.

Q2) What environmental weeds do we have in, or may threaten Laingholm? – see Weed list.

Q3) What weeds in Laingholm are suitable for weed-led control?

For each weed on the weed list, indicate the weeds distribution (just this area(s), spread through the whole area, etc); and the weeds frequency (in the part of the village/city that it occupies, is it low, medium or high frequency? Use 0 for areas where it is absent.)

2.2 Objective 2: Protect priority (high value) areas from the impacts of weeds- via "site-led" programmes.

Site-led control of environmental weeds is undertaken to protect significant native vegetation and fauna habitat from weed impacts. **Site-led control is an *ongoing* activity** requiring a long-term commitment of management effort and resources.

Site led weed control programmes are undertaken to produce a specific **outcome**, such as:

- Increase native seedling regeneration.
- Protect and improve vegetation health by preventing weed species from smothering native vegetation.
- Protect and improve species and habitat diversity at the site by removing dense swards of weeds.

Killing a proportion or quantity of weeds is not the aim of site-led weed control! We should always keep in mind the actual ecological benefit we want to achieve.

SUMMARY OF SITE LED APPROACH

1. **Define the site.**
2. **Plan weed control within the site:**
 - i. Consider which weeds are priorities for control work at each site.
 - ii. Delineate boundaries of the control area, including buffer areas that should be incorporated into the site's weed control programme.
 - iv. Choose and record control objectives (what, where, when and why).
 - v. Plan a monitoring programme to assess whether control objectives are being met.
3. **Implement weed control:**
 - i. Monitor before control.
 - ii. Undertake control.
 - iii. Report on effectiveness - what methods were used? Did they work?
 - iv. Monitor and compare with pre-control data to assess programme effectiveness.

Q4) What are the sites we feel to be 'special' in Laingholm? For what reason do we feel they are 'special' (ecological, water quality benefits, social, spiritual, historic, other)?

Indicate priorities.

2.3 Objective 4: Surveillance

The aim of surveillance is to enable **detection of potential future problems** early in the invasion process. Targets include detection of weeds that are new or uncommon in Laingholm and /or Waitakere City, as well as infestations of species that are generally widespread but were hitherto unknown from the particular site.

Key actions for surveillance that LWF can undertake include the following:

1. Keep an up to date **record** of weed infestations within your 'management area'.
2. Establish a system for **reporting** weed sightings, and publicise the need to report new weed incursions.
3. Where new species are detected that you're not sure about, **check** with the Council and other agencies (Auckland herbarium, ARC, Department of Conservation) to determine whether they might be a problem. Also use other resources (e.g. the internet) to see if the species is a pest in other countries.
4. Where a species is identified as a problem, or exhibits signs of being an aggressive invader, **removal of the infestation** should be made a priority, and a **survey** of the surrounding area should be undertaken to see if it occurs elsewhere in the vicinity.

Q5) What resources and/or systems need to be developed in order to undertake such work?

2.4 Objective 5: Support and facilitate community understanding and involvement in the management of weed impacts.

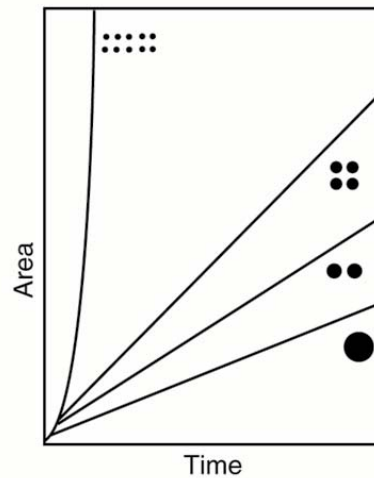
Weed management initiatives are more likely to succeed if they have the support of the local community alongside all agencies with an interest in the area. Understanding and awareness are essential to ensure that environmental weeds are regarded as a priority issue that can and must be addressed. Better information and improved public and landowner awareness are fundamental to preventing and controlling the establishment and spread of weeds. The outcomes sought need to be clearly articulated and widely supported.

- **Education of the local community is a key role for LWF.** Target groups include:
 - General public.
 - Private landowners.
 - Schools.
 - Relevant industries and retailers (e.g., landscape gardeners, plant nurseries, developers).
- An effective communication and **system of information exchange** is also needed between LWF and Waitakere City Council. A strategy can clarify the relationship and identify common goals and responsibilities.

Q6) What relationships need to be further developed between LWF and public agencies? Explain particular needs.

Q7) What relationships and communication need to be maintained or established by LWF and the agencies with the local community?
Suggest particular mechanisms for achieving these.

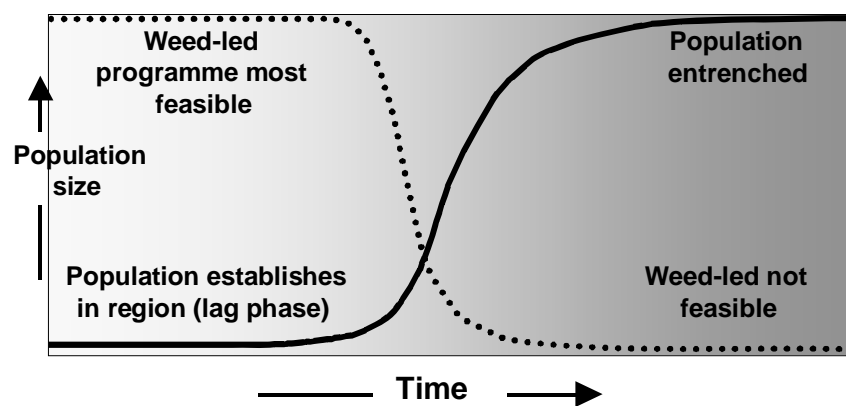
Assessing Threat by Distribution Dynamics



Multiple small infestations have a faster rate of new range occupation than fewer, larger infestations, even if the total area initially occupied and rates of spread are the same.

All trajectories in this diagram start with weeds occupying the same area, and assume the same rate of spread (after Mack 1985).

Assessing Threat by Population Size



Relationship between population growth and the feasibility of a weed-led programme (adapted from Williams 1997).