

6 December 2023

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Hon Andrew Hoggard
Minister of Biosecurity
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Tēnā koe Minister

Briefing for Incoming Minister – Biosecurity

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Biosecurity. Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) shares your passion for safeguarding New Zealand's environment and enhancing access to public conservation land for our communities. We look forward to working with you.

We would like to bring **four** matters to your attention:

- 1. Harmonise treatment of feral ungulate (deer, pigs, goats) control in legislation:** We are keen to work with you to achieve a strategic approach to feral ungulate control that will meet the needs of hunters, assist landowners to prevent decimation of their land and crops, and protect our regional biodiversity. We would like to see that approach reflected in a review of the Wild Animal Control Act 1977, to address sections relating to powers of entry for control purposes, which undermine our control effectiveness and overall investment in biosecurity.

More broadly, because of feral ungulates' long-term impact on forest diversity and composition, Greater Wellington needs the ability to list them in our Regional Pest Management Plan.

- 2. Nationwide monitoring and control of Canada geese populations:** Uncontrolled populations of Canada geese are now consuming large quantities of grass and fouling wetlands, paddocks, sports fields, parks, and amenity areas in our region and beyond. For Canada geese control to work effectively, Government needs to step up, resource it properly and lead it out.
- 3. Progress a Cat Management Act to protect NZ's biodiversity and agriculture, and safeguard pet cats.** Cats are one of NZ's favourite pets, but poor cat management is leading to armies of stray and feral cats ripping through our native wildlife. Feral cats decimate rare species of birds and lizards, and transmit toxoplasmosis to sheep, humans, and native wildlife. Compulsory microchipping and de-sexing will help limit cat populations, support education programmes, and enable feral cat control in designated locations.

- 4. Continue to support Predator Free and expand in Wellington:** Predator Free Wellington is on a mission to make the world's first capital city predator free. Phase I (Miramar Peninsula) is now complete, resulting in 71% increase in native birdlife. The team is now moving into Island Bay to CBD (Phase 2). Through our wide-ranging partnership we are achieving world-first ecological outcomes through cost-effective control of possums, rats, and mustelids, and creating positive social impact. This amazing work merits our ongoing support.

Please find attached further information in the Appendix regarding our proposal for improving the biosecurity of the Wellington region, and thus enhancing our biodiversity and regional resilience.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss how we may work effectively together and with others for the benefit of New Zealand's environment.

Ngā mihi



Daran Ponter

Chair

CC: Minister for Hunting and Fishing, Minister of Conservation, Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Government Coalition Partners, Wellington Constituency Members of Parliament, Wellington Region Mayors: Wellington Region Chairs, Mana Whenua Iwi, Local Government New Zealand