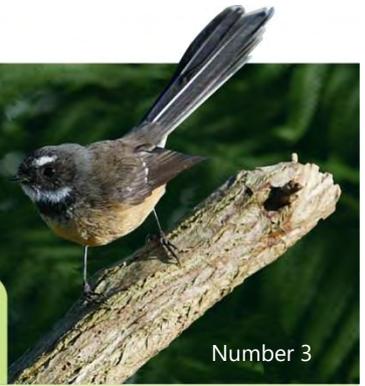


Biodiversity



Number 3

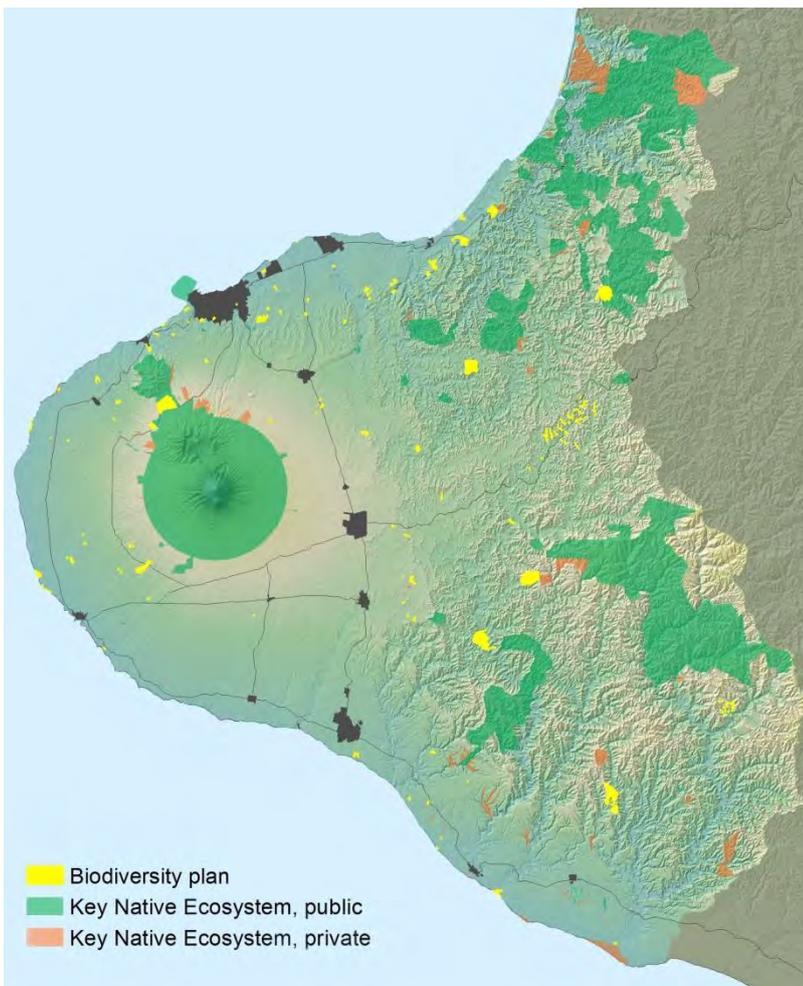
Biodiversity Plans

Taking action to protect the jewels in our biodiversity crown

The Taranaki Regional Council offers free site assessments, advice and support to all Taranaki landowners interested in managing natural areas on their properties. Each year the Council also prepares around 20 new Biodiversity Plans, usually covering special wetlands, indigenous forest and coastal sites that have been covenanted by landowners and are identified as 'Key Native Ecosystems'.

KEY NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS

While all remnant bush, wetlands and dune-lands are important, the Taranaki Regional Council has a voluntary process for identifying the 'jewels in our biodiversity crown'. These 'jewels' are called 'Key Native Ecosystems' and have been assessed as having indigenous biodiversity values of regional significance to Taranaki. At June 2018, 265 Key Native Ecosystems had been identified.



Map - Key Native Ecosystems – private and publicly managed.

WHAT MAKES KEY NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT?

Key Native Ecosystems are regionally significant because they are:

- home to threatened or regionally distinctive indigenous plant and animal species, or
- representative of originally rare ecosystems and indigenous vegetation now much reduced from its original extent (<10 or 20%), and/or
- connect or buffer other sites of value, or provide seasonal or core habitat for threatened species.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF I OWN A KEY NATIVE ECOSYSTEM?

Identification of your remnant bush, wetland or dune-land as a Key Native Ecosystem does not, in itself, impose any regulatory obligations on your use of the land. Rather it is a non-regulatory way for the Council to prioritise its support to land holders wishing to protect values associated with their site.



Goldstripe gecko: Largely endemic to Taranaki it is just one of our many threatened species urgently requiring habitat protection.



Taranaki Regional Council

Environmental Services

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WHAT ARE THE THREATS TO KEY NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS?

Without active management, values associated with Key Native Ecosystems may decline. Typical threats include:

- stock damage
- clearance of vegetation and drainage of wetlands
- invasive animals and weeds that prey on, or compete with, native species, or degrade their habitat.

WHAT IS THE COUNCIL DOING TO PROTECT KEY NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS?

It is widely recognised that the maintenance of biodiversity values associated with natural areas depends on the motivation and effort of the people who own the land. Without their commitment and ongoing management, these areas may continue to decline.

The Council is working with willing private landowners to identify and promote the protection of more Key Native Ecosystems. Each year the Council prepares new Biodiversity Plans for Key Native Ecosystems and targets assistance to landowners willing to actively manage their sites. Around 20 new plans are prepared each year, in line with available funding support. At June 2018, 117 Biodiversity Plans have been prepared for KNEs in the region.

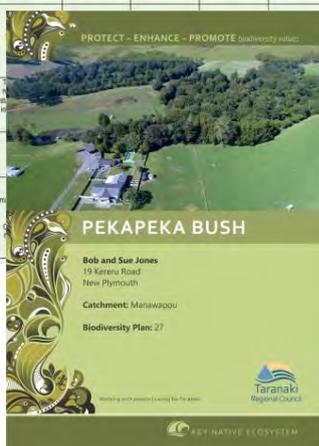
WHAT IS A BIODIVERSITY PLAN?

Planning of work at Key Native Ecosystems is important to ensure that achievable, site-specific management actions are identified. For example, it is no good just killing the predators if old man's beard is smothering the canopy.

Proposed Pekapeka Bush KNE Biodiversity Implementation Plan								
Action	Current Circumstances	Proposed Initiatives	Priority	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Legal Protection	Protected with a DOC covenant	No further protection required	L	-	-	-	-	-
Fencing	The fence is in poor condition and weeds appear. Stock and goats are accessing the forest	Fence repair and maintenance	H	Contribute to 1 st priority fence replacement - TRC, Landowner	Contribute to 2 nd priority fence repairs - TRC, Landowner	Monitor fence, clear fallen trees - Landowner	Monitor fence, clear fallen trees - Landowner	Monitor fence, clear fallen trees - Landowner
Invasive Weed Control	There are a few weeds that have the potential to spread throughout the bush if left uncontrolled. Removal of pest plants would be beneficial.	Control of Ivy, cardinalis, poppies, climbing ardisias and wild orange.	H					
Invasive Animal Control	Pest animals that threaten the bush and native fauna include possums, goats, musksheds, hedgehogs and rats.	Control possums, musksheds, rats and where required, cats.	H					
Banking/land & Erosion Management	Planting required on some banks to prevent erosion.	Plant 100 plants in open areas created by pest plant control.	M					
Management Advice and Monitoring	Site condition assessment carried out. Biodiversity Plan with management recommendations prepared.	Ongoing support and management advice to be identified to landowner. Conduct flora and fauna surveys and site condition monitoring.	M					

So the Council offers the support of Council staff, knowledgeable in biodiversity and biosecurity issues, to prepare a free Biodiversity Plan.

A Biodiversity Plan (pictured) is a magazine-style colour booklet that identifies objectives, ecological values and threats, and sets out an agreed programme of work for efficient management of the KNE site. Biodiversity Plans are customised to suit the site and land owners.



The Biodiversity Plan is developed in consultation with the landowner and provides them with a clear idea of what is required to sustainably manage the site for biodiversity purposes. It also shows landowners what tasks they can do, and what tasks Council staff, or other groups can do to assist landowners.

Biodiversity Plans may be used to access funds from various funding pools such as the Council's Environmental Enhancement Grant fund, QEII, district council heritage funds, and other community conservation funding.

HOW CAN THE COUNCIL HELP?

The Council is already working with interested landowners and care groups to implement Biodiversity Plans for Key Native Ecosystems.

For landowners interested in actively protecting their Key Native Ecosystem the Council is prepared to give ongoing support. The extent of this support will vary according to the site and landowner circumstances. However, it will largely depend on the landowner's commitment or contributions. For example, is the land covenanted, and what actions or activities will the landowner be willing to carry out now and in the future?

Council assistance will be specified in the Biodiversity Plan and may include any of the following:

- facilitation of the covenanting process
- the initial control of invasive weeds, such as old man's beard, tradescantia (wandering willie) and woolly nightshade
- the initial set up of pest animal control devices and initial control of pests such as possums, rats, stoats, and sometimes goats
- financial assistance with fencing and revegetation planting
- the supervision of contractors and/or staff where required to carry out initial works
- monitoring to identify new indigenous species and determine the effectiveness of management actions and improvements over time
- provision of ongoing advice and information on ecological restoration and invasive weed and animal control

WHO DO I CONTACT?

If you are interested in taking action to protect biodiversity on your land, please contact:

The Environment Services or Land Management Sections

Taranaki Regional Council

Private Bag 713, Stratford, 4352

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