

WORKING TOGETHER TO MANAGE PESTS

ACROSS TE HAKAPUPU PLEASANT RIVER

A shared approach

A pest management strategy for the Te Hikapupu Pleasant River catchment has been developed collaboratively by the East Otago Catchment Group in partnership with Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, landowners, forestry representatives, hunters and the wider community.

It sets out a coordinated, community-led approach to managing pest plants and animals across the catchment over the next five years, bringing together the knowledge, priorities and experience of local landowners, forestry, and Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki.

Why it matters

Pests are having a real impact across the catchment, including:

- reduced pasture and forestry productivity
- damage to restoration planting and pockets of native bush
- effects on waterways, the estuary and mahika kai
- added cost, time and stress for landowners



Pests tend to move across boundaries. Managing them individually is harder, more expensive, and less effective.

Working together gives us a better chance of keeping pest populations at manageable levels across the catchment.

More than 100,000 native plants have already been established across the catchment through the Te Hikapupu Project, plantings at Tumai subdivision and on private property.

This strategy is shaped by the people who live and work in the catchment. It's a practical, living document that can evolve over time as pest issues change and the community responds to new challenges and priorities.



Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki



East Otago
Catchment Group

Our catchment

Te Hākapupu Pleasant River catchment covers around 13,000 hectares in coastal East Otago, from the hills to the sea. Land use is a mix of farming and forestry, with three main tributaries feeding into the main stem of the river and then into the estuary.

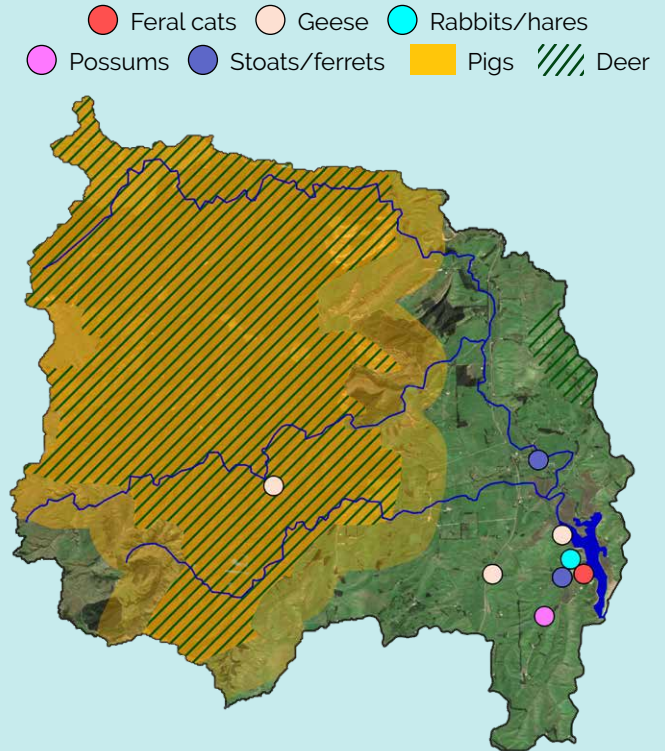
Our vision

In our catchment, we manage pests together to protect productive land, healthy ecosystems and our connection to this place.

How we'll work together

- **Work across boundaries** – coordinated action is more effective than going it alone
- **Keep communication simple and regular** – share what's happening and where
- **Focus on what's practical** – use proven methods at the right time
- **Build knowledge over time** – monitor impacts, share observations and adapt
- **Aim for manageable pest levels agreed on by the community** – rather than eradication

This strategy is built around practical, community-led action using local knowledge, relationships and volunteer effort. Your time, commitment and goodwill are greatly appreciated.



What we're aiming to achieve

- Reduce the impact of pests on productive land, native biodiversity, waterways, and culturally significant sites through coordinated community action
- Protect and enhance restoration investment across the catchment, including wetlands, riparian areas and native habitats
- Support kaitiakitaka, mātauraka Māori and the role of mahika kai as both a cultural value and a practical pest management tool
- Improve how pest activity is monitored, recorded and shared so the community can track what's improving and where action is needed
- Build a practical, community-led approach to pest management that reduces reliance on isolated individual effort over time
- Work towards agreed, manageable pest levels that reflect community priorities and changing conditions across the catchment

Hunting, harvest and connection

The strategy recognises that some pest species also provide value through hunting and harvest. Deer and pigs can contribute food for whānau and local communities, while hunting also creates opportunities for connection to whenua, knowledge sharing, and iwi youth engagement.

The goal is coordinated management that protects productive land, biodiversity, waterways and mahika kai values.

Priority pests

These are the species the community identified as the biggest issues right now:



Animal pests

*pigs, rabbits and hares,
deer, possums, mustelids,
rats and feral cats*



Plant pests

*gorse, broom
and willows*



Freshwater pest

monkey musk

Year One actions – at a glance

Actions across all pests		
Communication	Tracking	Monitoring
Set up a simple communication system with community members keen to be involved	Agree how information is shared	Develop systems to record pest activity and control work undertaken

Pest action matrix		
Pest		Year one focus
Pigs		• Electric fence trials • Connect farmers and hunters • Pig trap funding • Forestry coordination • Monitor impacts on wetlands and mahika kai • Strengthen hunter connections
Rabbits and hares		• Share ORC trend reporting • ORC rabbit workshop • Contractor details shared • Monitor routes • Regular updates
Gorse & broom		• Protect native plantings • 10m boundary buffers • Coordinated spraying and bulk-buying • Shared monitoring
Willows		• DOC willow brew method • Willow mapping • Protect native plantings • ORC guidance clarity
Deer		• Hunter and farmer reporting • Remove roaming groups • Strengthen communication • Support hunting, harvest and mahika kai connections
Possums		• Get trapping networks ready ahead of OSPRI concluding • Distribute traps • Possum workshop • Baseline monitoring
Mustelids, rats and feral cats		• Develop action plan with the community • Coordinate with Mt Watkins Hikaroroa Conservation Group
Monkey musk		• Infestation mapping • Upstream removal • Align with willow and riparian work • Safe disposal guidance

*Like all good community effort, this will be built one step at a time,
led by volunteers and shaped by what's achievable.*

Watch-and-respond species

Wallabies, rooks and goats are not currently widespread in the catchment, but early reporting is important. If you see any of these species, please report sightings to ORC immediately. Do not attempt independent control.



How you can get involved

This strategy relies on community knowledge, participation and ongoing collaboration across the catchment.

You can get involved by:

- sharing what you're seeing on your property or when you're hunting
- taking part in coordinated control, including providing access where possible
- recording pest activity and control work
- joining the Te Hākapupu Pleasant River subgroup (contact details below)

What happens next

The focus for Year One is to:

- build a clear picture of pest pressure across the catchment and develop more targeted action plans
- strengthen coordination between landowners, stakeholders and the Hikaroroa Mt Watkin Conservation Group
- begin practical, targeted action across priority areas
- run workshops on possums, rabbits, and potentially monkey musk.

Future work will build on what we learn and where support or funding becomes available.

Stay connected

Get in touch to stay updated or get involved.

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- 📘 Follow East Otago Catchment Group on Facebook for project updates, events and community news
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