



Restoring our natural heritage

A guide to Greater Wellington's biodiversity assistance for private landowners

Quality for life



greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL



Your land may be special

As a landowner, you will know how special our natural environment is, but did you realise that certain natural features of your land could form an important and unique part of this natural heritage?

Certain natural areas (even relatively small ones), if protected, can form important links or “corridors” for native species, enhancing the entire region’s environment.

So, if you are fortunate enough to have a block of bush, a stream, wetland or some other natural feature of value on your land, why not protect it? To help landowners protect special areas of land, Greater Wellington offers advice and, in some cases, assistance to landowners to help manage and protect natural features.



This brochure explains:

- what are the special features we want to help protect and why this is important
- how Greater Wellington can help
- how to apply for help.

If you are unsure about whether your natural feature is important give us a ring. We are happy to help assess its value and offer advice on the best management options, and in some cases you may even qualify for financial assistance.

What is a special feature?

A special feature is something that contains important natural values. Often these areas are rich in biodiversity (they have a diversity of plants, animals and insects), create links through the natural landscape, or represent unique qualities found only in the Wellington region.

The features that are significant in our region include:

- bush remnants
- wetlands
- dunelands
- streamsides
- coastal escarpments.

Many of these special features are under threat due to introduced plants and animals, fragmentation and other human influences over time.

If we work together to control pest plants and animals, protect special areas from stock by fencing, manage wetlands, and replant stream margins we will give native plants and animals a better chance of survival. The way we see it is, the more special features that are protected and managed, the higher the chance of restoring biodiversity to the region and creating a better environment for us all.



What can we achieve together?

Greater Wellington believes we have a real opportunity to undo some of the damage of the past and create a future where the Wellington region can be held up as example of people and the environment existing sustainably together.

There are a number of practical ways we can achieve this together. We can begin by protecting and better managing the biodiversity we have left.



How can Greater Wellington help?

We recognise that remaining special areas exist because of the work of private landowners. As a result Greater Wellington has designed a number of programmes to help landowners protect and manage these areas.

- **Covenanted programme** - onsite management and restoration advice
 - help with covenanting and fencing costs
 - help with pest plant and animal control
- **Advisory programme** - onsite management and restoration advice
 - traps/toxins at cost price
- **Streamside programme** - onsite management and restoration advice
 - free plants and weed control in priority areas
- **Wetland programme** - onsite management and restoration advice
 - help with fencing, pest plant and pest animal control, and monitoring water levels

What is a covenant?

Greater Wellington supports the legal protection of our special ecosystems and habitats by way of covenants. A covenant is a legally binding agreement that means that the landowner and subsequent landowners have to protect and manage the area

concerned. This ensures that the feature cannot be destroyed. Greater Wellington works in partnership with QEII National Trust to offer assistance with costs associated with a covenant and can give landowners advice on the covenanting procedure. Covenanted land may also be eligible for assistance with pest plant and animal control.



What is a Key Native Ecosystem?

A Key Native Ecosystem (or KNE) describes a natural feature on private land that is exceptionally important in terms of its ecological value and/or biodiversity. This is the highest “ranking” available and means that the area is eligible for a higher level of assistance (for example pest control). An area only becomes a Key Native Ecosystem if the landowner agrees.



Normally, eligibility for the Key Native Ecosystems programme is dependent on the area being legally protected by covenant, although there can be rare exceptions.



How does this work?

Ring us on 0800 496 734 or fill in the attached form. You will be put in contact with a specialist who can help with your enquiry.

Depending on how special your feature is, Greater Wellington can offer a range of assistance. This assistance can range from information brochures and advice on the best ways to manage the land right up to legal protection (covenanting), or even in exceptional circumstances becoming part of the Key Native Ecosystem Programme (see above).

Whatever assistance you are eligible for, Greater Wellington recognises that you are the landowner and the final decision on how you manage your special feature is yours – we are here to help you.

If you are interested in talking to a Greater Wellington Biodiversity Officer about the management and/or protection of a special area on your land – please fill out this form then fold where indicated, tape closed and post.

Name:

Address:

Fold 1

Telephone – Home: ()

Work: ()

Mobile: ()

Email:

Give a brief description of the feature including type, size and location:

Fold 2

FREEPOST AUTHORITY 65687



Greater Wellington
Biodiversity Programmes
P O Box 40847
Upper Hutt

Tape here.

Case Study

Birds return to Jacobson's bush

After decades of silence, calls of tui and bellbird (korimako) can be heard again at Jacobson's Bush in Moonshine Valley, Porirua, thanks to the hard work and vision of Christine and Mike Jacobson. As well as the flocks of tui and a pair of bellbirds which have joined the large numbers of kereru and other birdlife in the ten hectares of fenced bush, there is an impressive range of regenerating understorey and forest trees including rata, rimu, tawa and totara.

Mike and Christine have been actively managing the area for 15 years and originally contacted Greater Wellington for support when they realised that possum numbers had got out of control. After an initial operation by Greater Wellington to reduce possum numbers in the area, Mike has maintained bait stations throughout the property himself. The couple has had good success, keeping possum numbers at a minimum and is happy with Greater Wellington's help. "We have had really good support from the pest animal team," said Christine.

Jacobson's Bush, first fenced by the family in the early 70s and QE II covenanted in the mid-1980s, is now also categorised by Greater Wellington as a Key Native Ecosystem (KNE).

While there are still many challenges ahead including controlling possum reinvasion, keeping an eye on other pests such as rabbits and stoats and removing pest plants such as banana passionfruit and Japanese honeysuckle, the future of the area is an exciting one. The Jacobsons are now restoring the stream on their property and are about to extend the QE II covenant to this also, creating a link between the stream and the bush.



"There are many benefits to protecting an area like this," said Mike Jacobson. "We not only get to enjoy native birds in our garden — fencing the bush has also made it easier to manage stock, and we have improved the overall general attractiveness and value of the property. Planting and restoring the stream has created pools to bathe in during summer, and has resulted in an increase in eels and fish life."

Can we help you?

If you are interested in talking to us about the management and/or protection of a special area on your land fill out the form on the page opposite and send it to us. You can also phone 0800 496 734 or email us at biodiversity@gw.govt.nz

Water, air, earth and energy: elements in Greater Wellington's logo combine to create and sustain life. Greater Wellington promotes **Quality for Life** by ensuring our environment is protected while meeting the economic, cultural and social needs of the community.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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