WAIMAKARIRI
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy Implementation Plan

July 2027–June 2030



Version 3, May 2026

About the Implementation Plan

This Implementation Plan is intended to give effect to the Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy (WNES). The Strategy is the Council's local response to the degradation of important natural ecosystems and species being reported across the world, including within our District.

Current global biodiversity loss is so large it is called the 'sixth extinction'. The biodiversity crisis and the climate crisis are acknowledged to be closely linked. Healthy and diverse ecosystems can adjust more effectively to climate threats. The contribution nature-based solutions can make to buffering climate impacts by sequestering carbon and protecting built up areas is also reflected in the strategy.

All aspects of life in Aotearoa New Zealand rely on a thriving natural environment including our physical and mental health, economy and culture. The strategy seeks to restore our connection to the natural world we are a part of so that we feel inspired to better protect it. We need to prioritise the protection and restoration of the natural environment not only for the ecosystem benefits it provides us and those who follow, but also for its own intrinsic worth. A world without dolphins, kiwi, tuatara and Kauri trees seems unimaginable but could become a possibility.

The strategy takes into account strategic directions outlined in the Local Government Act 2002 (4 wellbeings), National Adaptation Plan, National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, Aotearoa Biodiversity Strategy, Waitahi Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy and others. It also complements the work of other organisations such as Environment Canterbury's Zone Implementation Plan Addendum (ZIPA), Forest and Bird's 'Make Every Wetland Count' campaign, QEII Trust and the Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust.

The strategy currently consists of three documents plus a summary document which should be read in conjunction with one another.

Background documents





A Biodiversity SOE report describes the current state of indigenous biodiversity within the District and the challenges and opportunities foreseen over the next 30 years. It also provides an overview of biodiversity concepts and relevant legislation.

A Reserves SOE report includes a review of Council reserve provision and identifies opportunities for increasing natural values in reserves and streetscapes.

Strategy



Provides a high level strategic framework to guide Council's work in protecting and restoring the natural environment over the next 30 years. Roles range from developing plans and carrying out the work, to supporting the efforts of others, educating people about the issues and opportunities and advocating for change, both at a national and local level.

Second Action plan



Contains actions funded in the Council's current Long Term Plan (LTP) and others to be included in the 2027-37 LTP.

Key

Abbreviations used:

ABS – Aotearoa Biodiversity Strategy

ERP – Emissions Reduction Plan

NAP – National Adaptation Plan

NPS-FW – National Policy Statement for Fresh Water 2020

NPSIB – National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

WCBS – Waitaha Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy

WDCCO – Community Outcomes

WVMS – Waimakariri Visitor Marketing Strategy 2020-25

PF 2050 – Predator Free 2050

EWC – Forest & Bird Every Wetland Counts

The abbreviations are used to show the links between the above documents and the actions. Those highlighted in bold are mandatory, although this may change as the Government is currently undertaking natural environment legislative reform.

Actions are classified as:

✓✓✓ = legislative

✓✓ = very important

✓ = important

Implementation years:

Yrs 4-6 = July 2027–June 2030

Yrs 7-10 = July 2030–June 2034

Yrs 11-30 = July 2034 onwards

Asset symbols:

= Parks and Reserves

= Streetscapes

= Water Bodies

= Other Land

= Significant Natural Areas



Strategic Direction 1

Prioritise nature









Desired outcomes:

1. The District's natural environment is valued as critical infrastructure, essential to our wellbeing and the survival of other species we share Earth with.
2. Natural ecosystems are a significant feature of the Waimakariri District.
3. There is better integration of the natural and built environment.

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
1.1 Integrate planning								
1.1.1 Increase the circle of influence in infrastructure and district planning								
1.1.1.1	Ensure national and regional environmental policy direction is given effect to where required and considered for inclusion in Council's planning processes where discretionary (**NPSIB**, ABS, ERP and NAP).		Development Planning Unit, Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.1.2	Amend Council plans, strategies and policies as required to give effect to government legislation.		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, Strategy & Business	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.1.3	Require ecological protection or enhancement either via direct resource consent conditions, covenants, consent notices or bonds, where possible to do so, to manage the effects of an activity (NPSIB).		Development Planning Unit, landowners, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.1.4	Provide specialised biodiversity input to planning processes including resource consents, particularly where an ecological report is provided **(NPSIB)**.		Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, Utilities & Roading	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.1.5	Work with Council staff and developers to provide ecologically functional landscapes in urban areas as described in the Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy and Biodiversity State of Environment Report, including accounting for ephemeral wetlands at the head of catchments.		Greenspace, Strategy & Business, Development Planning Unit, land developers, Utilities & Roading	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.1.6	Provide specialised biodiversity input to engineering infrastructure design, including advocating for nature-based solutions (NPSIB).		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.1.7	Develop natural environment education resources and programmes for staff working across the Council (ABS, NPSIB).		Greenspace, Council staff	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
1.1.2 Advocate for a holistic approach								
1.1.2.1	Continue to administer and support the cross-council Biodiversity Co-ordination Group.		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, District Plan Admin, Utilities & Roading	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.2.2	Advocate for nature-centric policies, strategies, and plans both within the organisation and externally.		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, Utilities & Roading, external organisations	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.1.2.3	Promote the economic, social, cultural, and other ecosystem service benefits, such as climate change mitigation, provided by the natural environment.		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.2 Mainstream biodiversity								
1.2.1 Ensure biodiversity is prioritised as a key Council activity								
1.2.1.1	Continue to adopt and monitor parks levels of service, and biodiversity KPI's and targets that ensure biodiversity is prioritised and provide a mandate for an increased biodiversity funding share.		Strategy & Business, Greenspace	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.2.1.2	Maintain Council biodiversity capability and capacity.		Greenspace	✓✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $0.5m for existing staff members.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
1.2.2 Move from grey to green								
1.2.2.1	Advocate for nature-based engineering solutions to mitigate the effects of climate change (ERP, NAP,WCBS).		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, Utilities & Roading	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.2.2.2	Promote the use of indigenous flora, fauna and cultural icons on urban infrastructure such as signs, bridges, sculptures, street flags, toilets and hard surfaces etc.; and indigenous flora and fauna names for reserve and street names.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, Strategy & Business, Community Development, Waimakariri Arts Trust	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only. Project costs included in individual project budgets.	●	●	●
1.2.2.3	Review relevant Council documents as appropriate, to encourage and incentivise water sensitive urban design; and develop implementation guidelines (NPS-FW)		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, Strategy & Business	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.2.3 Create spaces for nature								
1.2.3.1	Promote the prioritisation of wetland protection over other proposed land uses (ERP, EWC).		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
1.2.3.2	Recommend sufficient buffer zones are provided when changing/intensifying land use for existing high value terrestrial and aquatic habitats and/ or flora/fauna species to continue be protected, including around ephemeral wetlands at the head of catchments. **(NPSIB)**		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers, landowners	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Strategic Direction 2

Connect people and nature

Desired outcomes:

1. Living in a healthy natural environment enriches our everyday life and we work together to achieve and maintain this.
2. People understand and value indigenous biodiversity and natural ecosystems.
3. Residents have a ‘sense of place’ or connectedness to the District’s natural landscape.
4. Our community understands how it can contribute to and become actively involved in protecting, restoring and recreating natural ecosystems.







Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
2.1 Make it easy to connect								
2.1.1 Provide opportunities to bring together people and biodiversity								
2.1.1.1	Continue to establish and maintain an online public portal for sharing knowledge, educational resources and successes (ABS, WCBS).		Greenspace, Communications & Engagement Team, Business & Technology Solutions, community groups, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only	●	●	●
2.1.1.2	Promote special/unique (often hidden) indigenous flora and fauna.		Greenspace, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, community members, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
2.1.2 Ensure education programmes, activities and resources are available								
2.1.2.1	Develop effective natural environment communications and educational resources to fill information gaps (ABS).		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, Communications & Engagement Team, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, community groups, landowners, other relevant local government entities	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
2.1.2.2	Run community educational and connection events, including fun learning and activation programmes, and those that empower students and support student-led action (ABS).		Greenspace, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, Waimakariri District Libraries, Enviro Schools, other schools, landowners, community groups, community members, other relevant local government entities	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $112k changing from approx. $8.5k pa to $12k pa over time.	●	●	●
2.1.2.3	Continue to support the Enviro Schools programme (ABS, WCBS).		Greenspace, Solid Waste, Utilities & Roading, Enviro Schools, other schools	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
2.1.3 Look for opportunities to partner with and support others								
2.1.3.1	Continue to seek to partner with Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga on natural environment issues including the management, protection and restoration of indigenous biodiversity, and ensure engagement is early, meaningful and in accordance with tikanga Māori (**NPSIB**, WCBS).		Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
2.1.3.2	Continue to support Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust as a Council CCO (LGA).		Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust, Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus existing annual grant of c.$250k pa.	●	●	●
2.1.3.3	Continue to provide resource and/or advisory support to groups running volunteer programmes in the District with proven environmental benefits.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, community groups	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only plus existing annual grants to groups.	●	●	●
2.1.3.4	Actively support/participate in environmentally focused activities delivered by local, regional, and national organisations (ERP, EWC, ABS).		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, community groups, community members	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
2.1.3.5	Provide a Waimakariri District community groups contestable fund to support the implementation of Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy objectives and actions (WCBS).		Greenspace, community groups	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $117k divided into $10k pa for 10 years.	●	●	●
2.1.3.6	Support Mainpower's Waimakariri community biodiversity fund (WCBS).		Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, Mainpower, Greenspace, community groups, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. $50k in total, divided into $5k every year if matched by an equal contribution from Mainpower.	●	●	●
2.1.4 Encourage people to physically connect with the natural environment								
2.1.4.1	Consider providing additional opportunities for the safe gathering of mahinga ka, rōngoa and perennial edibles when developing Council reserves (WCBS).		Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, community	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only and project costs.	●	●	●
2.1.4.2	Continue to promote the creation of community food forests, gardens, and perennial edibles on Council land where appropriate to support local food resilience.		Greenspace	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time and project budgets only.	●	●	●
2.1.4.3	Provide wayfinding and environmental interpretation in Council reserves and streetscapes.		Greenspace, Strategy & Business, Utilities & Roading	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $90k changing from approx. 6.5k pa to $9.6k pa over time.	●	●	●
2.1.4.4	Upgrade and provide additional walking tracks in the natural environment.		Greenspace, Business Centres, reserve advisory groups, Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $43k divided in half over 27/28 and 28/29.	●		

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
2.1.4.5	Provide and maintain access and services within natural environments where appropriate, for example, toilets and pathways, to enable people to enjoy the outdoors.		Greenspace	✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $400K. Between $53k and $60k available each year with specific projects to be determined.	●	●	●
2.1.4.6	Promote the uptake of compatible recreation opportunities in the District's natural areas.		Greenspace, Communications & Engagement Team, Department of Conservation	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
2.2 Rediscover and make our indigenous landscape visible								
2.2.1 Increase the proportion of indigenous planting on Council reserves and streetscapes (NPSIB)								
2.2.1.1	Continue to transition to the default position of prioritising the planting of indigenous over exotic vegetation on Council-owned land (NPSIB).		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time and existing renewal budgets.	●	●	●
2.2.1.2	Implement indigenous vegetation targets for Council reserves **(NPSIB, WCBS)**.		Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost.	●	●	●
2.2.1.3	Look for opportunities to showcase and increase indigenous biodiversity in urban streetscapes.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
2.2.2 Support the achievement of 10% indigenous biodiversity in the wider landscape (NPSIB)								
2.2.2.1	Ensure it is easy for residents to obtain ecologically sound planting advice (ABS).		Greenspace, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, community members	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.1.1.1	Continue to work in partnership with landowners to conserve and restore areas with high biodiversity values (NPSIB, **WCBS**).		Other relevant local government entities, Department of Conservation, Development Planning Unit, Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
2.2.2.3	Promote the planting of indigenous vegetation on privately-owned, urban, rural lifestyle and rural land (WCBS).		Greenspace, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
2.2.2.4	Identify significant indigenous and exotic trees on private and public land in the District and ensure they are protected where possible.		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus $40k provided in year 34/35.			●

Strategic Direction 3

Improve our knowledge








Desired outcomes:

1. Tangata Whenua knowledge and practices are recognised, respected and encouraged.
2. We have the knowledge to effectively protect and restore our natural ecosystems.

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
3.1 Know what we have								
3.1.1 Continue the assessment, monitoring and reporting of biodiversity values on public and private land (NPSIB)								
3.1.1.1	Discuss with Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga the development of a list of taonga species that can be mapped as agreed **(NPSIB)**.		Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, other relevant local government entities, Department of Conservation, Development Planning Unit, Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
3.1.1.2	Work with other relevant local government entities to complete the assessment and mapping of the District's indigenous biodiversity, especially highly mobile fauna (**NPSIB**, WCBS).		Other relevant local government entities, Department of Conservation, Greenspace, landowners	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
3.1.1.3	Develop an appropriate database for storing Council's indigenous biodiversity data; and partner with tangata whenua to develop systems for managing information provided by them, particularly with regard to taonga (NPSIB, WCBS).		Greenspace, Business & Technology Solutions, GIS, Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
3.1.1.4	Carry out a biological assessment of Council's property portfolio; and make recommendations for repurposing appropriate sites for natural environment enhancement projects (NPSIB, WCBS).		Greenspace, Property, Strategy & Business	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.1.1.5	Ascertain the extent and nature of the District's urban tree canopy.		Greenspace, landowners, consultant	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $22k in 27/28.	●		

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
3.1.1.6	Work with relevant local government entities to identify, monitor and publicly report on ecosystem health indicators for the Waimakariri District (NPSIB, WCBS).		Other relevant local government entities, Department of Conservation, Greenspace, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.2 Understand future challenges								
3.2.1 Carry out research and work with research partners, community groups and landowners to fill knowledge gaps and understand challenges								
3.2.1.1	Continue to carefully consider options for reductions in the use of chemicals as a precautionary principle, taking into account the effects on human health, and indigenous flora and fauna.		Greenspace, Water Services Unit, Utilities & Roading	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.2.1.2	Partner with and/or participate in relevant research carried out by other organisations.		Greenspace, other government ministries and agencies, Department of Conservation, universities	✓✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $117k. $10k each year to cover costs of employing summer students. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.2.1.3	Carry out an assessment of the economic value of ecosystem services to the District.		Greenspace, consultant	✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $43k to be spent in year 27/28 for specialist advice.	●		
3.2.1.4	Form mutually beneficial relationships with universities, including supporting student research projects.		Greenspace, universities	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.2.1.5	Partner with Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, and other tangata whenua as appropriate, to integrate Mātauranga Māori within conservation and restoration projects (ABS, NPSIB, WCBS).		Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Ngāi Tahu, Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $59k providing $5k each year for specialist advice.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
3.2.1.6	Build the capability of Council's biodiversity team through professional development and structured knowledge sharing with innovative research organisations and experts, ensuring ecological advice and practices remain current, evidence based, and forward focused.		Greenspace, other relevant local government entities, government agencies, environmental organisations, Helen Clark Foundation, Manaaki Whenua, universities, ASAP, EDS	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only	●	●	●
3.2.1.7	Engage with community, including diverse/ minority groups to determine their aspirations and requirements for connecting with nature.		Greenspace, Community Team, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, community organisations, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $11k for research project in 27/28.	●		
3.2.1.8	Investigate the feasibility of using indigenous tree species as street trees.		Greenspace	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
3.2.1.9	Research best practice pest and weed control and restoration practices.		Greenspace	✓✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $10k. $3k provided each year in 29/30 and 32/33.	●	●	
3.2.2 Identify the impacts of key trends on the natural environment								
3.2.2.1	Collaborate with others to identify, manage, and mitigate increased biosecurity risks.		Other relevant local government entities, Greenspace	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
3.2.2.2	Keep up to date and respond appropriately to key trends such as population growth, increased urbanisation, land use intensification, climate disruption, development of alternative energy sources, use of non-native carbon sinks, changes to government legislation and directives, Mātauranga Māori etc.		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, government agencies, Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Ngāi Tahu	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Strategic Direction 4

Sustain and create resilient ecosystems

Desired outcomes:

1. The District's natural ecosystems are self-sustaining, healthy, resilient and connected from the mountains to the sea.
2. A greater proportion of vegetation cover in the District is indigenous.
3. There is no further loss or degradation of high value indigenous biodiversity ecosystems.
4. Urban vegetation, including street trees, is valued by the community as making a significant contribution to urban resilience, human health, and environmental sustainability.







Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.1 Protect what we have								
4.1.1 Implement a climate change natural environment mitigation and adaptation programme (ERP, NAP)								
4.1.1.1	Provide specialised biodiversity input to the development of Council climate change strategies, plans and policies, including mitigation options, risk assessments and adaptation planning. (ERP, NAP, NPSIB, WCBS).		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.1.1.2	Implement natural environment actions identified in climate change strategies and plans (ERP, NAP).		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, Community Boards, reserve advisory groups, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $60,000 for project costs in year 33/34.	●	●	●
4.1.1.3	Integrate nature-based climate change solutions in policies, strategies and plans (NAP, NPSIB, WCBS).		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, Utilities & Roading, Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan Working Group	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.1.1.4	Lead the development of a regional blue-green spatial plan as provided for in the Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan and local implementation as appropriate (NAP, WCBS).		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, Utilities & Roading, Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan Working Group	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time. Project costs funded out of CCPP budget.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.1.2 Reduce the pressure in high value indigenous ecosystems by improving the wider environment								
4.1.2.1	Partner in and support integrated, landscape-wide pest, weed, and predator control programmes across the District (ABS, PF-2050).		Greenspace, other relevant local government entities, government agencies, reserve advisory groups, community groups, Pest Free Waimakariri, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $80,000 providing $10k each year from 27/28 for continued coordination.	●	●	●
4.1.2.2	Promote and assist with the development and enhancement of buffer zones around high value indigenous flora and fauna sites **(NPSIB)**.		Greenspace, landowners, QEII Trust, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time.	●	●	●
4.1.2.3	Continue to implement the Northern Pegasus Bay Bylaw Implementation Plan.		Greenspace, Strategy & Business, other relevant local government entities, Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust, Department of Conservation, Northern Pegasus Bay Advisory Group, community members	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus existing project costs of $21,530 pa.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.1.3 Support and incentivise protection for privately-owned areas of high biodiversity value								
4.1.3.1	Administer and promote the biodiversity contestable fund for individual landowners conserving land with high biodiversity values or working to restore these values (ABS, WCBS).		Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, landowners	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing funding of $480k over 10 years increasing by $10k pa from $55k pa in 27/28 to $95k in 31/32.	●	●	●
4.1.3.2	Maintain a monitoring programme, advice and relationships with all landowners conserving areas of high biodiversity value (NPSIB, WCBS).		Greenspace, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.1.3.3	Continue to implement the rates grant/rates relief scheme for landowners conserving areas of high biodiversity values, as verified by an ecologist using national standards (ABS, WCBS).		Development Planning Unit, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $500k over 10 years divided into $50k pa plus LGCI.	●	●	●
4.1.3.4	Continue to develop incentives for protecting and restoring areas with high biodiversity values (ABS, WCBS).		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2 Rebuild nature - more, bigger, better and joined								
4.2.1 MORE - Create new natural environment sites to provide for future wellbeing								
4.2.1.1	Identify and obtain land through subdivision and/or land purchase for future natural parks (WDCCO).		Greenspace, Property, landowners	✓✓	To be considered when the need or opportunity arises.	●	●	●
4.2.1.2	When seeking to acquire or develop new natural parks, prioritise rare ecosystems, for example drylands and wetlands, to ensure their future protection.		Greenspace, Property, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.2.1.3	Repurpose and maintain suitable Council land as areas for enhanced indigenous biodiversity and pocket forests. (ERP, NAP, NPSIB).		Greenspace, Property	✓✓	No additional cost. There could be opportunities for external funding including public/ private partnerships.	●	●	●
4.2.1.4	Look for opportunities to develop and enhance indigenous bird habitats including new wader and waterfowl habitats.		Greenspace, Birds NZ	✓✓	No additional costs, project funding available.	●	●	●
4.2.1.5	Investigate an indigenous vegetation carbon sink programme, exploring private/partnership opportunities to implement this (ERP, NAP, NPSIB, WCBS).		Strategy & Business, Greenspace, Property, private businesses	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.1.6	Develop Revells Road Reserve as a flagship eco-park (WVMS, WCBS).		Greenspace, Strategy & Business, Property, Utilities & Roading, Enterprise North Canterbury, community groups, Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, other relevant local government entities	✓✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $1.6m plus existing staff time.	●	●	●
4.2.2 BIGGER - Increase the size of existing indigenous flora and fauna sites								
4.2.2.1	Expand and maintain the area of indigenous planting at Silverstream Reserve (ERP, NPSIB).		Greenspace, Silverstream Reserve Advisory Group, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time and existing annual project budget of $12,244.	●	●	●
4.2.2.2	Enhance and maintain natural reserves in the Greenspace portfolio.		Greenspace, Advisory Groups, community members, Utilities & Roading	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $43k split over 27/28 and 28/29.	●		

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.2.2.3	Encourage landowners to increase the size of existing areas of high biodiversity value, including providing buffer zones of at least 20m (WCBS).		Other relevant local government entities, QEII Trust, Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.3 BETTER - Improve the quality of the natural environment by better habitat management and promoting fauna-friendly practices								
4.2.3.1	Use a range of management methods to increase the natural values of the Council's reserve portfolio.		Greenspace, reserve contractors, reserve advisory groups, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $200k divided into $15k each year plus $20k in 28/29 reallocated from deleted action 2.2.2.2.	●	●	●
4.2.3.2	Promote the 'urban wild' concept (Meurk).		Greenspace, landowners, community members	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $59k providing $5k pa.	●	●	●
4.2.3.3	Develop additional secondary growth ecosystems as required at natural reserves, to provide enhanced habitat value and encourage a wider natural variety of flora and fauna species.		Greenspace, reserve advisory groups, community members	✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $94k changing from approximately $8.5k pa to $9.5k pa over time.	●	●	●
4.2.3.4	Plant suitable plant species to provide more natural transitions from modified natural park environments to river and coastal environments.		Greenspace, other relevant local government entities, Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $118K changing from approximately $10k to $12k pa over time.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.2.3.5	Promote and create more effective buffer zones between land uses and water bodies.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, other relevant local government entities	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus project costs from existing Arohatia Te Awa budget of approximately $100k pa. (Refer to action 4.2.4.5).	●	●	●
4.2.3.6	Advocate for/protect ecosystems supporting mahinga kai and rōngoa.		Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Greenspace	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.3.7	Advocate for the coordinated management of the Ashley Rakahuri Estuary through the NPBB Implementation Plan.		Other relevant local government entities, Greenspace, Strategy & Business, Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
4.2.3.8	Advocate for relevant local government entities to develop long-term visions for each Freshwater Management Unit (or part FMU) and create achievable water catchment action plans (NPS- FM).		Other relevant local government entities, Utilities & Roading, Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
4.2.3.9	Continue to support the implementation of the ZIPA water catchment programme (PC 7, NPS-FM).		Other relevant local government entities, Utilities & Roading, Greenspace	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing funding in Utilities & Roading budget.	●	●	●
4.2.3.10	Advocate for Council's everyday operations to take into account the effects on surface water, groundwater and their ecosystems (PC 7, NPS-FM).		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.3.11	Encourage water sensitive design and blue-green network solutions in all new developments to support resilient ecosystem services (WCBS).		Greenspace, Development Planning Unit, Utilities & Roading, developers	✓✓	No additional cost.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.2.3.12	Work with WIL to ensure the protection of threatened habitats and species in water races where appropriate.		WIL, Utilities & Roading, Greenspace	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.3.13	Review reserve maintenance contracts to incorporate ecology-friendly best practice management techniques.		Greenspace, reserve contractors	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.3.14	Develop and promote indigenous vegetation eco-sourcing guidelines (WCBS).		Greenspace, other relevant local government entities, Department of Conservation, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
4.2.3.15	Implement a District fauna enhancement programme, for example, bee-friendly, lizard havens, beetle lodges etc.		Greenspace, landowners, schools	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $35k providing approximately $3k pa.	●	●	●
4.2.3.16	Partner with/encourage private landowners to engage in practices that enrich the natural environment and create functional landscapes (NPSIB, WCBS).		Other relevant local government entities, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.3.17	Plant new street trees in accordance with 'right tree, right place, right purpose' principles.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●
4.2.4 JOINED - Enhance connections between, or join up sites								
4.2.4.1	Promote the uptake of key biodiversity concepts such as landscape corridors from the 'mountains to the sea', linear corridors, stepping stone 'green dot' corridors, and the 'landscape matrix' to enhance the biodiversity values of fragmented landscapes'.		Greenspace, other relevant local government entities, reserve advisory groups, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, developers, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.2.4.2	Develop urban tree canopy targets and implement.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. LTP fund of $230k. Existing staff time and existing reserve and street tree budgets plus $20k pa for increased LOS (12,000 new specimen trees to be planted by 2033).	●	●	●
4.2.4.3	Increase the proportion of indigenous streetscape vegetation cover (NPSIB).		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers	✓✓✓	No additional costs. Existing landscaping and tree budgets.	●	●	●
4.2.4.4	Enhance fish passage where appropriate.		Utilities & Roading, other relevant local government entities, Greenspace, developers, landowners	✓✓	No additional costs. Existing staff time and LTP funding of $10k pa.	●	●	●
4.2.4.5	Continue to implement Arohatia Te Awa.		Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, landowners	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus project costs from existing Arohatia Te Awa budget of $100k pa.	●	●	●
4.2.4.6	Develop new pocket forests on suitable low-use urban reserves (ERP, NPSIB).		Greenspace, Community Boards, community members	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $42k providing approximately $6k pa from year 30/31.		●	
4.2.4.7	Promote backyard micro-bush gardens (Meurk, NPSIB).		Greenspace, Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, landowners	✓✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●	●	●

Action	What are we doing?	What assets does it impact?	Possible stakeholders	How important is it?	Funding	When are we doing it?		
						Years 4–6	Years 7–10	Years 11–30
4.2.4.8	Establish a strategic, district-wide approach to riparian management and ecological linkages to close gaps and prioritise the acquisition and maintenance of esplanades (WCBS).		Greenspace, other relevant local government entities, Development Planning Unit, developers, landowners	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only. Linked into Arohatia te Awa project.	●		
4.2.4.9	Develop Reserve Management Plans for Greenspace recreation and ecological linkages and natural parks.		Greenspace, reserve advisory groups, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		
4.2.4.10	Plant Council's undeveloped recreation and ecological linkages where these have the potential to contribute significant natural environment benefits.		Greenspace, community members	✓✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time plus LTP fund of $42k divided into approximately $6k pa starting from year 30/31.		●	
4.2.4.11	Review the landscaping rules in any engineering code of practice documentation to require predominantly indigenous plants to be used in carpark and other landscaping (WCBS).		Development Planning Unit, Greenspace, Utilities & Roading, developers	✓	No additional cost. Existing staff time only.	●		

Implementation

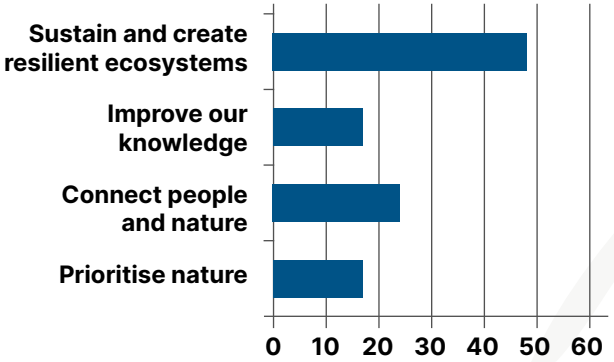
2027-37 Long Term Plan

The first Implementation Plan for the Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy was funded through the Council's 2024-2034 Long Term Plan (LTP) and contained 124 actions to be implemented over the next 30 years. This Implementation Plan has been refreshed in 2026 to inform the Council's 2027-2037 Long Term Plan.

106 actions remain, as some of the actions in the previous plan have been completed, and some have been amalgamated and generalised to allow them to cater for changing circumstances over time.

The graph below shows the distribution of actions across the four strategic priority areas and highlights the importance placed on achieving on-the-ground impact.

Number of actions by key themes





Implementation Plan actions have been prioritised as following:

1. Meeting Council's legislative requirements (protecting remaining indigenous priority ecosystems).
2. Very Important (restoring and managing natural ecosystems, education).
3. Important (educating residents in general).

Many of the actions are business as usual for the Council and have been captured to guide Greenspace biodiversity work programmes At least 82% are ongoing for the term of the strategy.

Key Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy implementation actions funded in the 2024-34 Long Term Plan included:

- Operational funding for the Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust and an annual contestable fund to support community-based environmental groups to implement strategy actions
- Funding and support for landowners protecting areas of high biodiversity value in the form of ecological advice, rates relief and a contestable fund
- New education and research programmes
- Increase in Council biodiversity capability and capacity to provide for increased legislative requirements
- New targets for additional tree planting and indigenous biodiversity on Council reserves
- Development of the 85ha Revells Road wetland and implementation of Arohaitia te Awa
- Projects that enhance access to the natural environment
- Partnering in an integrated landscape-wide pest and weed control programme.



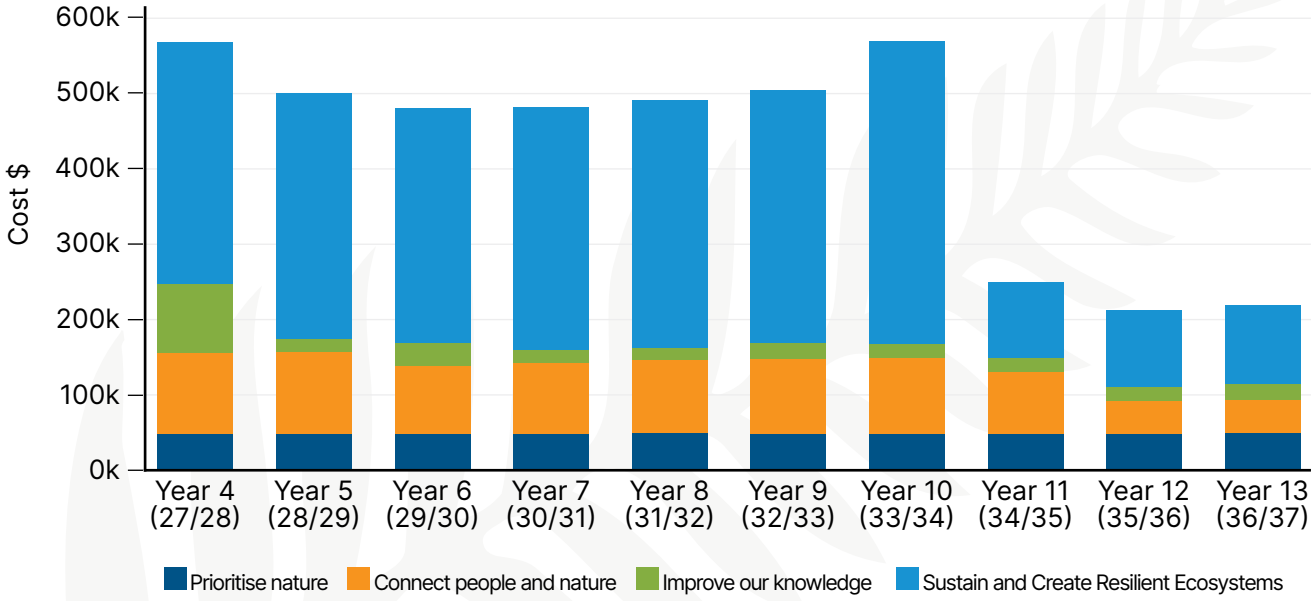
Highlights from implementation to date include:

- The development of a monitoring programme for reserves, restoration projects and areas with high biodiversity value
- Numerous community nature education events. These include reserve plantings, networking events, education within and outside of Council for nature-based activities and several important research projects aiming to fill data gaps
- The development of an online public portal showing the location of biodiversity enhancement projects within the district.
- Funding provided to local groups working to sustain and enhance the natural environment through direct works or through education and advocacy, such as the Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust, Ashley Rakahuri Rivercare Group, Comcol (North Canterbury Community College) and Pest Free Waimakariri.
- Council biodiversity staff working with over 35 landowners and funding granted for management and enhancement of at least 18 different areas containing high biodiversity value or ecological restoration potential.

The adjacent graph shows that the bulk of existing project funding from year four onwards has been allocated to achieving practical on-ground delivery of Strategic Direction 4—Sustain and create resilient ecosystems.

No additional funding for the implementation of this action plan is sought in the 2027 Long Term Plan due to fiscal constraints and capacity to deliver.

Strategy actions funded in the 2027-2037 Long Term Plan



Monitoring

Improving environmental outcomes takes time and the Waimakariri Natural Environment Strategy is intended to provide strategic direction for achieving this over the next 30 years. A key action is to identify, monitor and publicly report on biodiversity indicators for the Waimakariri District so progress can be tracked.

Review

The strategy document will be reviewed in seven years' time prior to the development of the Council's 2034 Long Term Plan.

The Implementation Plan needs to be flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances and priorities. This will therefore be reviewed every three years in line with LTP reviews to allow requests for funding to be considered by Council.

Vision	Our healthy and resilient natural environment sustains our ecosystems, our communities and our future.
Strategic Goal	We work together to ensure Waimakariri's natural environment is valued, protected, restored and celebrated.

Strategic Direction 1
Prioritise nature

Desired Outcomes

The District's natural environment is valued as critical infrastructure, essential to our wellbeing and the survival of other species we share Earth with.

Natural ecosystems are a significant feature of the Waimakariri District.

There is better integration of the natural and built environment.

Strategic Actions

Integrate planning

- Increase the circle of influence in infrastructure and district planning.
- Advocate for a holistic approach.

Mainstream biodiversity

- Ensure biodiversity is prioritised as a key Council activity.
- Move from grey to green.
- Create spaces for nature.

Strategic Direction 2
Connect people and nature

Desired Outcomes

Living in a healthy natural environment enriches our everyday life and we work together to achieve and maintain this.

People understand and value indigenous biodiversity and natural ecosystems.

Residents have a 'sense of place' or connectedness to the District's natural landscape.

Our community understands how it can contribute to and become actively involved in protecting, restoring, and recreating natural ecosystems.

Strategic Actions

Make it easy to connect

- Provide opportunities to bring together people and biodiversity.
- Ensure education programmes, activities, and resources are available.
- Look for opportunities to partner with and support others.
- Encourage people to physically connect with the natural environment.

Rediscover and make our indigenous landscape visible

- Increase the proportion of indigenous planting on Council reserves and streetscapes.
- Support the achievement of 10% indigenous biodiversity in the wider landscape.

Strategic Direction 3
Improve our knowledge

Desired Outcomes

Tangata Whenua knowledge and practices are recognised, respected and encouraged.

We have the knowledge to effectively protect and restore our natural ecosystems.

Strategic Actions

Know what we have

- Continue the assessment, monitoring and reporting of biodiversity values on public and private land.

Understand future challenges

- Carry out research, and work with research partners, community groups and landowners to fill knowledge gaps and understand challenges.
- Identify the impacts of key trends on the natural environment.

Strategic Direction 4
Sustain and create resilient ecosystems

Desired Outcomes

The District's natural ecosystems are self-sustaining, healthy, resilient, and connected from the mountains to the sea.

A greater proportion of vegetation cover in the District is indigenous.

There is no further loss or degradation of high value indigenous biodiversity ecosystems.

Urban vegetation, including street trees, is valued by the community as making a significant contribution to urban resilience, human health, and environmental sustainability.

Strategic Actions

Protect what we have

- Implement a climate change natural environment mitigation and adaptation programme.
- Reduce the pressure in high value indigenous ecosystems by improving the wider environment.
- Support and incentivise protection for privately-owned areas of high biodiversity value.

Rebuild nature - more, bigger, better, and joined

- MORE - Create new natural environment sites to provide for future wellbeing.
- BIGGER - Increase the size of existing indigenous flora and fauna sites.
- BETTER - Improve the quality of the natural environment by better habitat management and promoting fauna-friendly practices.
- JOINED - Enhance connections between, or join up sites.

Guiding Principles | Lead by example | Engage with others | Use best practice | Commit to action

WAIMAKARIRI
DISTRICT COUNCIL

215 High Street
Private Bag 1005
Rangiora 7440, New Zealand

Phone 0800 965 468

waimakairiri.govt.nz

260518117788