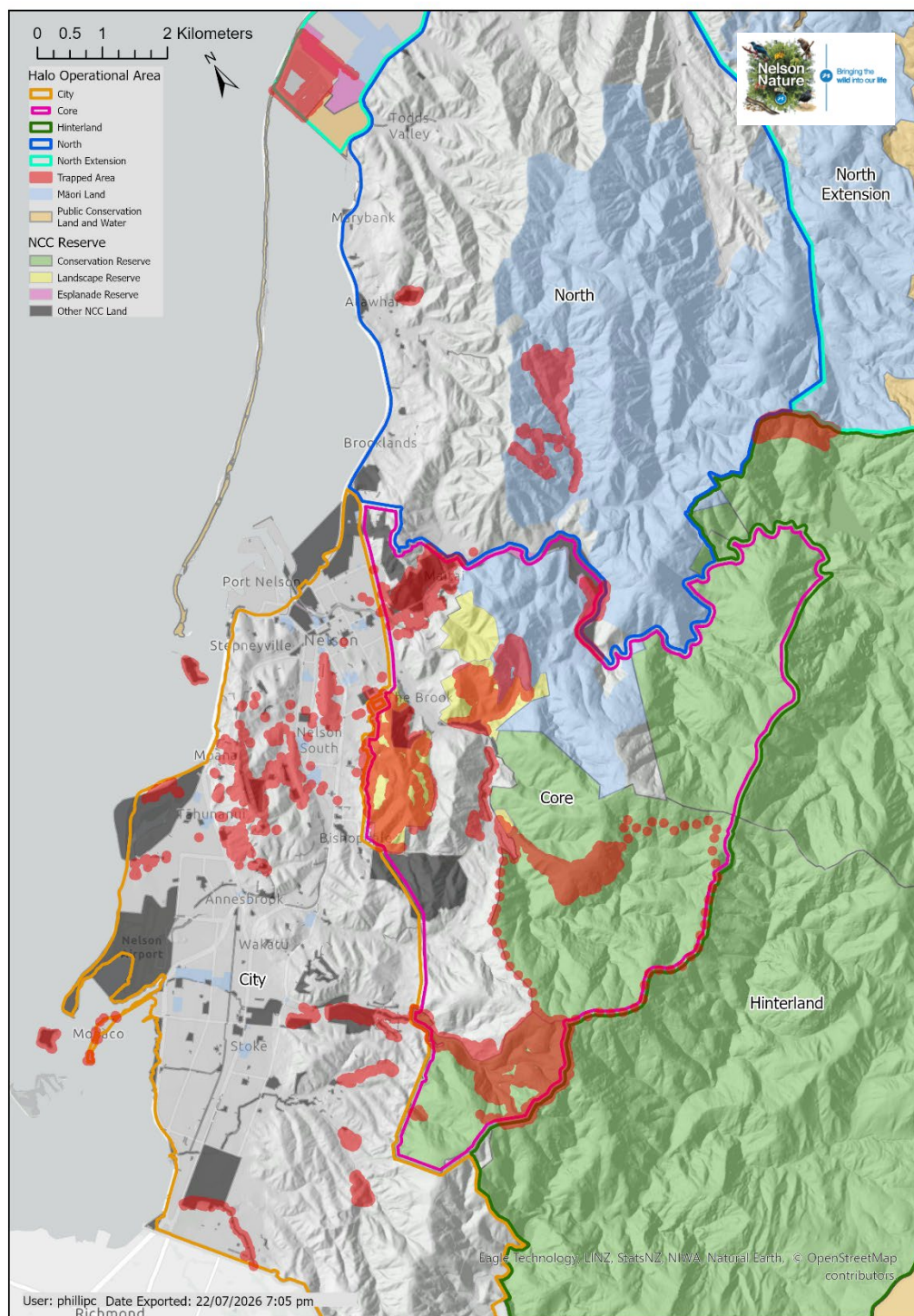


Nelson Halo Programme Review 2019-2026



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Nelson Halo Programme Review 2026

Summary

The Halo programme plays an important role within the Nelson Nature programme, contributing to biodiversity outcomes through predator control and habitat management across Nelson/Whakatū. Since the 2019 Halo Operational Plan came into effect, the programme has expanded its reach through a broad network of Council, community, iwi, partner and externally funded activity. Delivery occurs through Halo initiatives, other Council biodiversity programmes, community trapping groups, partner organisations such as Te Tauihu Environment Trust (TET), externally funded projects such as Jobs for Nature, and collaborative relationships including KMTT.

Halo provides coordination, technical guidance and operational consistency, helping sustain effort across sites where ecological priorities, community participation and available resources align.

Monitoring indicates positive trends in bird activity across Nelson. These trends are likely to reflect the combined influence of predator control, habitat condition and wider land management activity rather than Halo activity alone.

Progress is strongest where local participation, Council support and complementary biodiversity programmes have worked together over time. Across the wider Halo landscape, delivery varies according to site conditions, land tenure, volunteer capacity and the scale of intervention required. Consequently, biodiversity outcomes reflect the combined efforts of community groups, Council programmes, landowners, iwi and partner organisations, with Halo contributing through coordination and support.

Key achievements

- Increased the area under predator control, with more than 4,000 traps deployed across approximately 3,500 hectares of public, private and iwi land.
- Strong community participation, with around 500 Nelson residents involved, supported by the expansion of backyard trapping.
- Sustained predator control and habitat protection at priority sites, including Marsden Valley, Brook Valley, Grampians Hill and Maitai Valley.

- Integrated delivery across Council programmes, community groups and partners, extending activity beyond the Halo programme itself.

Overall, Halo delivery is broadly consistent with the intent of the Operational Plan, with progress most evident where sustained participation, coordination and ecological opportunity align. However, limitations in monitoring design mean some ecological outcomes cannot yet be assessed directly.

Future improvements should focus on stronger integration across programmes, clearer links between actions and outcomes, and targeting effort where sustained biodiversity gains are most likely.

Delivery status and progress against the 2019 Halo Operational Plan

Primary ecological outcomes

"To increase the long-term abundance and diversity of native birds and improve ecological integrityⁱ (Lee et al. 2005ⁱⁱ) within the Nelson City boundaries"

Introduction

This 2026 review summarises current Halo delivery and progress against the objectives and deliverables in the [2019 Halo Operational Plan](#). It provides a delivery-focused view of what is working well, where progress has been partial or uneven, and where future effort may need to be clarified.

The review draws on existing programme documentation, monitoring information, and examples of on-the-ground delivery. It does not reassess individual projects or community groups, nor does it attempt a formal evaluation of ecological outcomes at programme scale.

Background

The 2019 Halo Operational Plan describes a coordinated approach to predator control and habitat enhancement across a network of sites within the Nelson City boundaries to improve habitats for indigenous wildlife, particularly forest birds.

The Halo concept extends pest control and habitat protection beyond core Maitai and Roding Water Reserves, Marsden Valley Reserve and the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary into Nelson's wider urban and peri-urban environment, including isolated yet ecologically valuable areas. By reducing predator pressure, improving habitat condition, and strengthening connectivity, it supports biodiversity outcomes across the broader landscape.

Halo provides strategic guidance, technical advice and support for community-led and Council-supported predator control and habitat enhancement. Delivery varies by site, depending on ecological priority, community involvement, land tenure and available resources.

¹ ¹Ecological integrity refers to ecological processes being shaped primarily by indigenous species that naturally occur across a site in concert with regional environmental gradients derived from climate, soils and geology.

¹ Lee, W., McGlone, M., Wright, E. 2005. Biodiversity inventory and monitoring: a review of national and international systems and a proposed framework for future biodiversity monitoring by the Department of Conservation. Landcare Research Contract Report LC0405/122.

The Halo programme within Nelson Nature

The Halo programme operates as one component of the wider [Nelson Nature programme](#), which provides Council's overarching framework for protecting and restoring indigenous biodiversity across Nelson/Whakatū. Nelson Nature sets long-term outcomes and strategic direction for biodiversity protection, while individual programmes and initiatives contribute to those outcomes through different roles and delivery mechanisms. Programmes include, Coastal, Ecological Connectivity, Significant Natural Areas (SNA) and Halo. Council's regulatory biosecurity programme runs alongside Nelson Nature and is delivered within the Biodiversity and Biosecurity Team.

Within this framework, Halo helps align predator control and habitat enhancement across public and private land by working with community groups, households, partner organisations and other Council programmes. Its role is primarily to support consistent practice and continuity of effort.

The 2019 Halo Operational Plan positions Halo as a mechanism for coordinated action within Nelson Nature. Relevant activity is delivered through a mix of Halo-led work, Council programmes, partner initiatives and time-limited projects, including Jobs for Nature and Project Mahitahi.

This approach reflects the intent of Nelson Nature to achieve biodiversity gains through collective effort across programmes, partners, and landowners, not through single isolated programmes.

Progress against Operational Plan objectives

Overall, the Halo programme has made meaningful progress in expanding predator control, supporting priority sites and enabling community-led action. The objectives below summarise where available evidence indicates achievement, partial achievement, progress, or insufficient information to assess the objective conclusively.

2019 Halo Operational Plan Objectives

Objective	Name	Envisaged change	Achieved change	Status
1	Bird abundance	↑	↑	Partially achieved
2	Managed area under predator control	↑	↑↑	Achieved
3	Ecological connectivity	↑	↑	Progress evident
4	Predator management outcomes	↓ predators	↓ predators, localised / effort evident	Unable to assess
5	Best practice pest control	↑ best practice	↑ best practice	Achieved
6	Habitat suitable for breeding and foraging	↑	↑	Progress evident
7	Technology to support native birds	↑	↗	Partially achieved
8	Support community trapping groups	↑	↑	Achieved
9	Engagement and cooperation	↑	↑, but capacity constrained	Partially achieved
10	Landowner participation in restoration and predator control	↑	↑	Partially achieved
11	Bird abundance and forest health monitoring	↑	↗ bird monitoring only	Partially achieved

Table 1. Summary of progress against 2019 Halo Operational Plan objectives. Symbols indicate the direction and magnitude of change relative to the intended outcome: ↑ = increase or improvement achieved; ↑↑ = substantial increase; ↗ = some improvement, but less than envisaged or incomplete; ↓ predators = reduction in predator abundance or impacts.

Table 2. Description of Status

Status	Description
Achieved	Objective substantially achieved based on available evidence
Progress evident	Clear progress demonstrated but objective not fully achieved or cannot be conclusively assessed
Partially achieved	Some components achieved but significant gaps remain
Not achieved	Objective not achieved based on available evidence
Unable to assess	Monitoring or evidence insufficient to determine status

1. Native bird abundance

Objective

Statistically significant increase in the overall abundance of most native bird species within the built area of Nelson by 2025 (with the understanding that some native bird species abundance may decline due to increased competition (Miskelly 2018) and species such as lizards and invertebrates are likely to also benefit from mammalian pest control).

Status: Partially achieved

Monitoring indicates an overall increase in bird activity across Nelson (Figure 1). Endemic species, however, remain more strongly associated with higher-value habitats outside the urban core, consistent with expected ecological patterns in a modified landscape (Figure 2) (See [2018-2023 SoE report](#)).

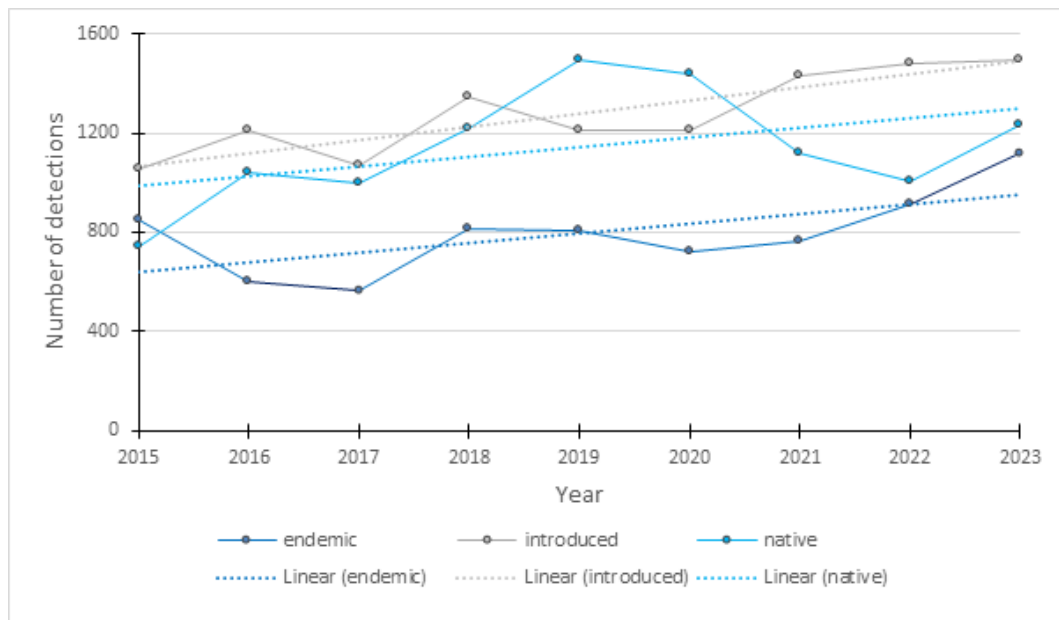


Figure 1. Temporal trends in the numbers of detections of native, endemic, and introduced bird species at six monitoring transects in Nelson's Conservation and Landscape Reserves, 2015 to 2023. SoE Report 2018-2023

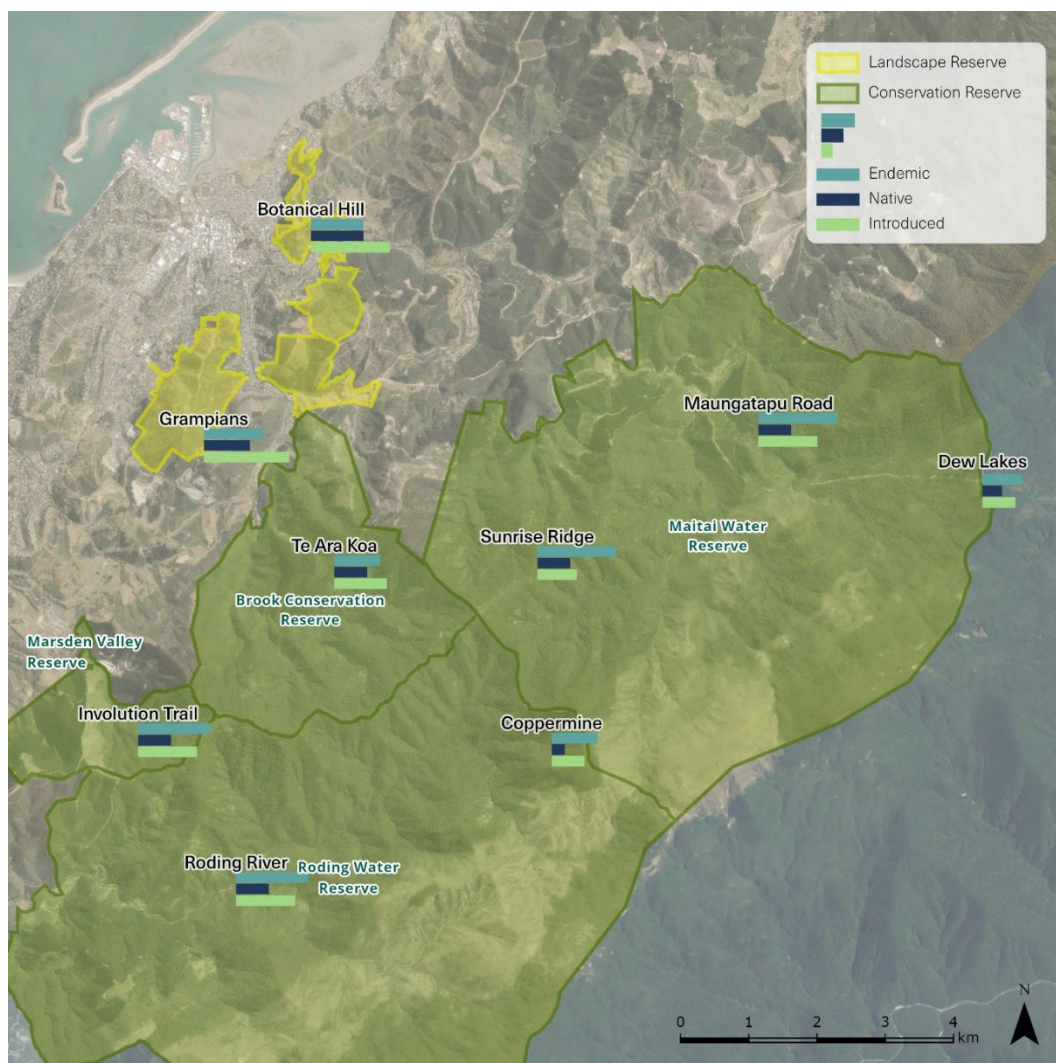


Figure 2. Locations of bird count transects in Nelson. Bars classify counts into endemic, native or introduced. SoE Report 2018-2023.

Comment on variance:

The objective was framed as a statistically significant increase in abundance by 2025. While positive trends are evident, monitoring was not specifically designed to assess achievement of the target as originally stated, and ecological outcomes reflect multiple interacting factors including predator control, habitat condition and wider land management activity.

2. Expansion of managed area

Objective

Increase the area within the Halo that has habitat enhancement and mammalian predator control being undertaken for native birds by 25% by 2025.

Status: Achieved

The programme has successfully increased the area under predator control and habitat management, with key gains in locations such as Codgers, Teal Saddle, Tekateka, and the Brook Valley (Figure 2). Using data from Trap.NZ the managed area has increased from ~750 hectares 2019 to ~3000 hectares in 2026.

Existing sites (e.g. Marsden, Paremata and Grampians) have been reviewed and strengthened to align with best practice and improve coverage. Additional contributions from aligned programmes, including Nelson Nature's Coastal and Significant Natural Area Programmes, Project Mahi Tahi and Jobs for Nature have further expanded the overall footprint of management activity across Nelson's Halo landscape.

Comment on achievement:

Expansion has occurred through a combination of Halo activity, community participation, Council programmes and externally funded projects.

3. Improved connectivity between sites

Objective

Expand the area of mammalian pest control to include areas between and linking initial treatment sites.

Status: Progress evident

Predator control has expanded beyond the original core sites and now occurs across additional reserves, private land and community-led projects. These activities have strengthened linkages around Brook Waimārama Sanctuary and the wider Halo landscape.

These expansions support the long-term intent of creating a more connected network of managed habitats across the Halo.

Comment on variance:

Connectivity is a long-term ecological objective, influenced by habitat condition, participation and sustained predator management across multiple land tenures. Progress is evident, but full ecological connectivity remains a longer-term outcome.

4. Meet predator management outcomes

Objective

Attain stated reductions in abundance of invasive mammalian predator numbers at treatment sites within the Halo to a level by 2025.

Status: Unable to assess

Targeted predator control is being undertaken across key sites, and trapping effort has increased substantially. This demonstrates delivery effort, but does not by itself demonstrate that the stated reductions in predator abundance have been achieved.

Predator management is being delivered broadly consistent with the intent of the Operational Plan, with sustained trapping across priority sites and the wider Halo network. However, the objective cannot be fully assessed without residual pest density monitoring or equivalent measures of predator abundance.

Comment on variance:

While predator control effort has increased, the lack of monitoring framework means we cannot provide information on residual pest densities. As a result, delivery effort can be demonstrated, but achievement of predator reduction targets cannot be consistently assessed across the programme. Monitoring and reporting would be strengthened by greater integration between predator monitoring and ecological outcome monitoring.

5. Best practice pest control

Objective

Follow best practice in the use of pest control tools to ensure the humane treatment of target animals and to avoid non-target by-catch.

Status: Achieved

Pest control activities are delivered in accordance with recognised best-practice approaches, including compliance with National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) guidelines and the use of established trapping and pest management methods. Operational delivery has continued to evolve, with improvements in trap construction, deployment, quality assurance and network management across Halo sites.

The Halo programme has maintained a strong focus on safe, humane and effective pest management. Best-practice approaches are applied

through community trapping groups, Council-supported activities, contractors and partner initiatives. Technical guidance, operational support and oversight have helped promote consistency across a growing network of trapping projects.

Comment on achievement:

This objective has been achieved. Best-practice pest control methods are embedded within programme delivery and have been supported through ongoing technical advice, trap network review, quality assurance and continuous improvement. As the programme has expanded, maintaining consistent operational standards across multiple delivery partners has become increasingly important and remains an ongoing focus.

6. Habitat enhancement

Objective

Increase habitat suitable for native birds to breed and forage within the Halo, through:

- a. Weed control to protect existing native vegetation and enable natural regeneration*
- b. Restoration planting of native vegetation*
- c. Additional planting of non-invasive exotic trees and shrubs sought by native birds.*

Status: Progress evident

Habitat enhancement has occurred across the Halo landscape through a combination of weed control, ecological restoration, habitat protection and planting programmes. While Halo has primarily focused on predator and browser control, habitat enhancement outcomes have also been supported through Nelson Nature programmes including Ecological Connectivity, Significant Natural Areas (SNA), Coastal, and wider restoration initiatives. These activities have contributed to improving habitat condition and availability across a range of sites.

Progress towards this objective is evident through ongoing habitat protection, weed management, restoration planting and natural regeneration occurring across Council reserves, community-led restoration sites and partner-supported projects. Habitat enhancement has typically been delivered alongside predator control, reflecting the integrated approach adopted through Nelson Nature.

Comment on variance:

The objective has progressed, but delivery has not occurred through the Halo programme alone. Habitat enhancement activities have largely been implemented through a combination of community groups, partner organisations and complementary Nelson Nature programmes. Consequently, while habitat suitable for native birds has increased in many locations, the contribution of Halo is best viewed as one part of a broader programme of biodiversity protection and restoration across Nelson/Whakatū.

7. Innovation and tools**Objective**

Develop and use technology to encourage native birds to use and breeding in native forest, exotic forest and suburban back yards in the Halo (e.g. predator proof nest boxes).

Status: Partially achieved

The Halo programme has incorporated a range of operational tools and technologies to support biodiversity outcomes. Self-resetting traps have recently been deployed in selected locations, while trail cameras and other monitoring tools have been used to improve understanding of species presence and inform management decisions.

Innovation has occurred primarily through the adoption of improved pest-control and monitoring technologies rather than through the development and widespread deployment of bird-specific technologies such as predator-proof nest boxes. New tools have generally been introduced where they support operational delivery, improve efficiency, or enhance monitoring capability.

Comment on variance:

The Operational Plan anticipated the development and use of technologies specifically designed to encourage native birds to use and breed within the Halo, such as predator-proof nest boxes. While technological innovation has occurred, implementation has largely focused on predator management and monitoring technologies.

Wider application of bird-specific technologies across the urban landscape has been constrained by the scale of the Halo area and considerations of cost, practicality and benefit relative to other biodiversity investments. As a result, technology has been adopted

where it provides the greatest operational value, rather than being implemented extensively across the wider urban environment.

8. Support for community trapping groups

Objective

Empower, energise and support community trapping groups (CTG) to undertake habitat enhancement and mammalian predator control for native birds within the Halo.

Status: Achieved

Community trapping groups have become a central component of Halo delivery and undertake a substantial proportion of mammalian predator control across the Halo landscape. Community groups operate across multiple Halo blocks and priority sites, with activity supported through programme coordination, technical advice, monitoring support, trap network development, funding assistance and volunteer engagement. Approximately 500 people are associated with projects on Trap.NZ (this will include duplication and inactivity so the real number will be lower), with predator control occurring across public reserve land, private land and residential areas.

This objective has been substantially achieved. Community trapping groups are active across much of the Halo landscape and have made a significant contribution to predator control and habitat protection. The programme has supported these groups through technical guidance, coordination, training, monitoring support and integration with wider biodiversity initiatives. The Backyard Trapping initiative has further extended participation into residential areas, with at least 850 subsidised traps distributed to households since 2020.

Comment on achievement:

Community participation has become one of the defining strengths of the Halo programme and aligns strongly with the intent of the Operational Plan. The establishment and ongoing support of community trapping groups has enabled sustained predator control effort across a large and geographically dispersed area that would be difficult to achieve through Council-led delivery alone. Participation and activity levels vary between sites, but a strong and enduring community network has been established and continues to support biodiversity outcomes across Nelson/Whakatū.

9. Engagement and collaboration

Objective

Engage and encourage cooperation between the public, CTG and interested parties to progress the goal of the Halo.

Status: Partially achieved

The Halo programme has established relationships with community trapping groups, landowners, iwi, partner organisations and Council biodiversity programmes. Community participation has grown significantly since the Operational Plan was adopted.

The growth of community participation demonstrates strong public support for Halo objectives and reflects the success of earlier engagement efforts.

Comment on variance:

While engagement and collaboration have increased substantially, community interest and expectations now exceed the capacity available to support ongoing engagement, coordination and relationship management across all groups and stakeholders. As the number of participants and projects has grown, maintaining regular communication, networking opportunities and programme support has become increasingly challenging. As a result, the objective has been only partially achieved, with strong levels of participation and cooperation established, but insufficient capacity available to fully support and sustain engagement across the expanding network.

10. Private land action

Objective

Encourage and support landowners to establish or restore native forest and habitat for native birds and undertake mammalian predator control for native birds on their land, including within urban and suburban areas.

Status: Partially achieved

Predator control and habitat restoration are now occurring across a range of private properties within the Halo landscape, including urban, suburban and rural areas. Community trapping groups, backyard trapping initiatives, iwi landowners and private landowners all contribute to predator control and habitat enhancement activities beyond Council-managed reserves. At least 850 subsidised traps have been distributed to households through Council-supported channels, extending predator control into residential areas.

Comment on variance:

While many landowners are actively participating in predator control and habitat restoration, participation remains voluntary and varies considerably across the Halo landscape. Delivery has generally focused on areas where landowner interest, community support and programme resources align. Although private land engagement has expanded significantly since 2019, there remains considerable opportunity to increase participation, particularly in suburban and rural areas where habitat restoration and predator control could further strengthen ecological connectivity and biodiversity outcomes.

11. Monitoring and learning**Objective**

Monitor changes in bird abundance and forest health within the Halo to inform stakeholders and direction of planning.

Status: Partially achieved

Monitoring of bird abundance has continued through State of the Environment reporting, providing information on long-term trends in bird activity across Nelson/Whakatū. Monitoring data has informed programme planning, reporting and communication, and demonstrates changes in bird activity over time.

The objective has been partially achieved. Bird monitoring has occurred and provides useful information on ecological trends; however, forest health monitoring has not been implemented as part of the Halo programme. While annual monitoring indicates positive trends in bird activity, these patterns are influenced by multiple interacting factors, including habitat condition, climate, site protection and predator control operating at different scales.

The current monitoring approach does not directly link management actions to ecological outcomes, making it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of individual interventions within a distributed, multi-partner programme. Future monitoring would be strengthened through a more integrated framework that links management activities, ecological outcomes and programme evaluation.

Comment on variance:

Implementation focused primarily on bird monitoring rather than the broader monitoring framework envisaged in the Operational Plan. As a

result, information is available on changes in bird activity, but not on changes in forest health.

Description of Halo by operational block

Core Block (Ops Plan Section 6.1)

Projects

Birdlife on Codgers¹, Birdlife on Grampians¹, Birdlife Centre of New Zealand¹, Brook Conservation Reserve^{1*}, Brook Valley Holiday Park¹, Brook Waimārama Sanctuary Fenceline², Marsden Valley Trapping Group¹, Nelson Christian Academy³.

* Jobs for Nature	3	NCC Environmental Grants
** Significant Natural Area Programme	4	Ngāti Koata
1 Halo Programme	&	Coastal Programme
2 External		

The Core Block was identified in the 2019 Halo Operational Plan as the initial focus for native bird recovery, reflecting its proximity to the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary, the presence of remnant mature forest, and the expectation that dispersal from the sanctuary would support recovery at nearby sites.

The Plan set staged expectations, with common forest birds anticipated to respond in the short term where predator control and habitat condition are sufficient, and less common species expected to establish more gradually over longer timeframes, dependent on sustained predator suppression, habitat quality, and connectivity.

Current delivery broadly aligns with this intent. Effort is concentrated at priority Core sites where community participation, Council support and continuity of predator control can be maintained. Progress varies between sites depending on local conditions and capacity.

Core Block outcomes remain staged and directional. Early gains are evident at some sites, but longer ecological timeframes are expected where habitat extent, reinvasion pressure and connectivity remain limiting factors.

City Block (Ops Plan Section 6.2)

Projects (see Table 2 for summary statistics)

Pikimai and Surrounds¹, Friends of Haulashore^{1&}, Friends of Monaco^{1&}, Maire Stream³, Nelson Boulder Bank², Pipers Reserve and Halo¹, Saxton's Creek¹

The City Block comprises small reserves near residential areas, with a focus on increasing common native bird abundance over time. The Plan acknowledges practical constraints to predator control in these settings

and anticipates a strong role for backyard trapping alongside reserve-based management.

Current delivery aligns with this approach, with community-led predator control across key reserve sites and backyard trapping extending effort into surrounding residential areas.

City Block outcomes are expected to develop incrementally, depending on sustained local participation, adjacent landowner involvement and the practicality of maintaining predator control in urban settings.

Hinterland Block (Ops Plan Section 6.3)

Project

Teal Saddle^{1*}

The Hinterland Block is identified as a longer-term focus, reflecting the scale, terrain, and level of investment required to achieve meaningful ecological outcomes. The Plan anticipates that recovery will be gradual and dependent on sustained, large-scale predator control over extended timeframes.

Current Hinterland delivery is limited and long term in nature, with activity largely focused on Teal Saddle, ungulate management, site protection and preparatory work. Halo contributes through coordination, planning and alignment with priority Core sites.

Hinterland outcomes depend on scale, resourcing and sequencing, and are likely to require broader system-level investment over longer timeframes.

North Block (Ops Plan Section 6.4)

Projects

Tekateka^{*4}, Titoki Trapping Group¹

The North Block is characterised by fragmented habitats and a strong reliance on landowner participation, with delivery expected to progress incrementally over time. The Plan recognises that extent, reinvasion pressure, and land use constraints influence achievable outcomes.

Current delivery aligns with this approach, with activity focused on Titoki Reserve and selected adjacent areas where trapping and site protection or community participation can be sustained. Pest control at Tekateka, located on Ngāti Koata whenua, was established through the Jobs for Nature programme and is supported by Halo through coordination and alignment with wider initiatives, including ungulate management.

Effort has focused on maintaining existing gains and supporting delivery where participation and site conditions allow.

In this context, North Block objectives are best understood as opportunity-led and long term, with progress influenced by landowner engagement, connectivity gains, and sustained participation.

North Extension Block (post-2019)

Glen Community³, Cable Bay Adventure park^{3**}, Glenduan Bush³, Paremata Trapping project^{1&}, Wakapuaka Mouri³, Wakapuaka Sandflats^{1&}, Wakapuaka Treatment Plant[&]

In 2020, the Halo area was extended to include remaining northern areas. Activity within this extension has built on existing landowner investment and external funding, including MfE-supported projects at Wakapuaka Mouri and Cable Bay Adventure Park with possum control as part of the Restoring Flora Jobs for Nature Programme.

To protect coastal bird species, remnant forest and habitat restoration, local Forest and Bird members undertake pest control at Paremata Reserve, Māori Pa Road and Paremata Uri.

Halo has supported these initiatives through planning, coordination, and integration with wider programmes, including Jobs for Nature. This has enabled early delivery at selected sites and strengthened alignment across programmes.

Table 3. Summary of effort throughout Halo areas (blocks)

Halo Block	Number of Projects	Hectares	Block Area (ha)	% Block	Number of Traps
City	7	448	4385	10%	444
Core	9	1379	4193	33%	2406
Hinterland	1	100	8070	1%	222
North	3	246	5479	4%	312
North Extension	6	1369	19934	7%	882
Totals	26	3543	42060	8%	4266

- Some overlap with Nelson Nature Coastal Programme and other private initiatives. Area extracted from Trap NZ may be greater than trap coverage.

What Halo is doing well

Sustained delivery at priority sites

Halo has helped maintain predator control and habitat protection at priority sites where local participation, existing investment and Council support are in place. Core sites identified in the 2019 Operational Plan have remained an important focus of delivery.

As the programme has matured, delivery has consolidated around locations where volunteer capacity, technical support and monitoring are consistently available.

Strong community participation

The current level of community participation and delivery of predator control aligns with the intent of the 2019 Halo Operational Plan, which anticipated a strong role for community participation, particularly where ongoing local effort is required to maintain predator control and protect habitat.

Community participation remains a central strength of the programme. Community Trapping Groups undertake much of the on-the-ground predator control on Council reserve land, supported by Nelson Nature and Halo, NCC's Adopt a Spot Programme, and Te Tauihu Environment Trust through funding, coordination, guidance and technical advice.

Data extracted from Trap.NZ indicates about 30 projects and about 500 associated members. These figures are a high estimate because some people belong to multiple projects and some accounts may be inactive. Between community and contractor effort, more than 4,000 traps and more than 3,500 hectares of reserve, iwi and private land are managed for predator control (Table 2).

The Backyard Trapping initiative has extended predator control activity beyond formal reserve boundaries into residential areas. Since 2020, at least 850 subsidised traps have been distributed to Nelson households through Council-supported channels, with this initial uptake providing a strong foundation for expanding participation over time.

Several community-initiated neighbourhood backyard trapping initiatives are supported and include Mount Street, The Glen and Cable Bay. Additionally, projects initiated as Adopt a Spot projects at Pipers Reserve and Centre of New Zealand have their own residential 'halo' surrounding core trapping areas. Murphy Street Trappers, for example are an off-shoot from Pipers Reserve and have secured grant funding from Predator-Free Trust.

In 2026, Halo collaborated with Natureland to install traps to protect indigenous species at their beach location, alongside a reciprocal agreement for Natureland to coordinate trapping across Tāhunanui Beach (Coastal Programme). Similarly, Centre of New Zealand volunteers continue to extend their trapping network to protect translocated skinks as part of consent requirements associated with nearby flood management works.

This activity reflects an integrated approach across Halo, Coastal and Ecological Connectivity work, contributing to site-specific delivery that supports biodiversity protection and wider environmental outcomes.

Alignment across programmes and partners

In addition to community participation, a large proportion of activity contributing to Halo objectives is delivered through other Council programmes, partner organisations such as TET, and time-limited funding initiatives such as Jobs for Nature. Halo supports this activity by promoting coordination, technical consistency and alignment with shared biodiversity outcomes.

This arrangement has brought additional capacity to priority areas while retaining a shared focus on indigenous habitat protection and predator suppression.

Status update of Halo-aligned activity (internal and external)

Internal: Halo-coordinated and Council-led activity

Activity coordinated or directly supported through the Halo programme includes:

- Community Trapping Groups operating across public reserve land, including trap network establishment, maintenance, volunteer coordination, and data capture.
- The Backyard Trapping initiative, providing subsidised traps and basic guidance to households.
- Programme coordination, technical review, technical advice, consistency of practice, and support for monitoring at selected sites.
- Integration of indigenous habitat and species considerations into Council land management and operational decisions through ecological advice (e.g., ungulate management).

Delivery is undertaken through Council staff coordination, volunteer effort, and contractor support where specialist capability or scale is required.

External: Externally delivered and partner-led activity

Externally delivered activity that contributes to Halo objectives includes:

- Jobs for Nature projects undertaken between 2021 and 2025, which accelerated predator control, restoration, and workforce development at sites relevant to Halo objectives.
- Contractor-delivered ecological monitoring and ungulate management through other Nelson Nature programmes.
- Partner and iwi-led initiatives operating on Council, private, and iwi land, aligned with shared biodiversity outcomes. Examples include Cable Bay Adventure Park and Wakapuaka Mauri. Recently, Te Tauihu Environment Trust (TET) has played an important role in linking local activities with Predator Free NZ Trust's vision.

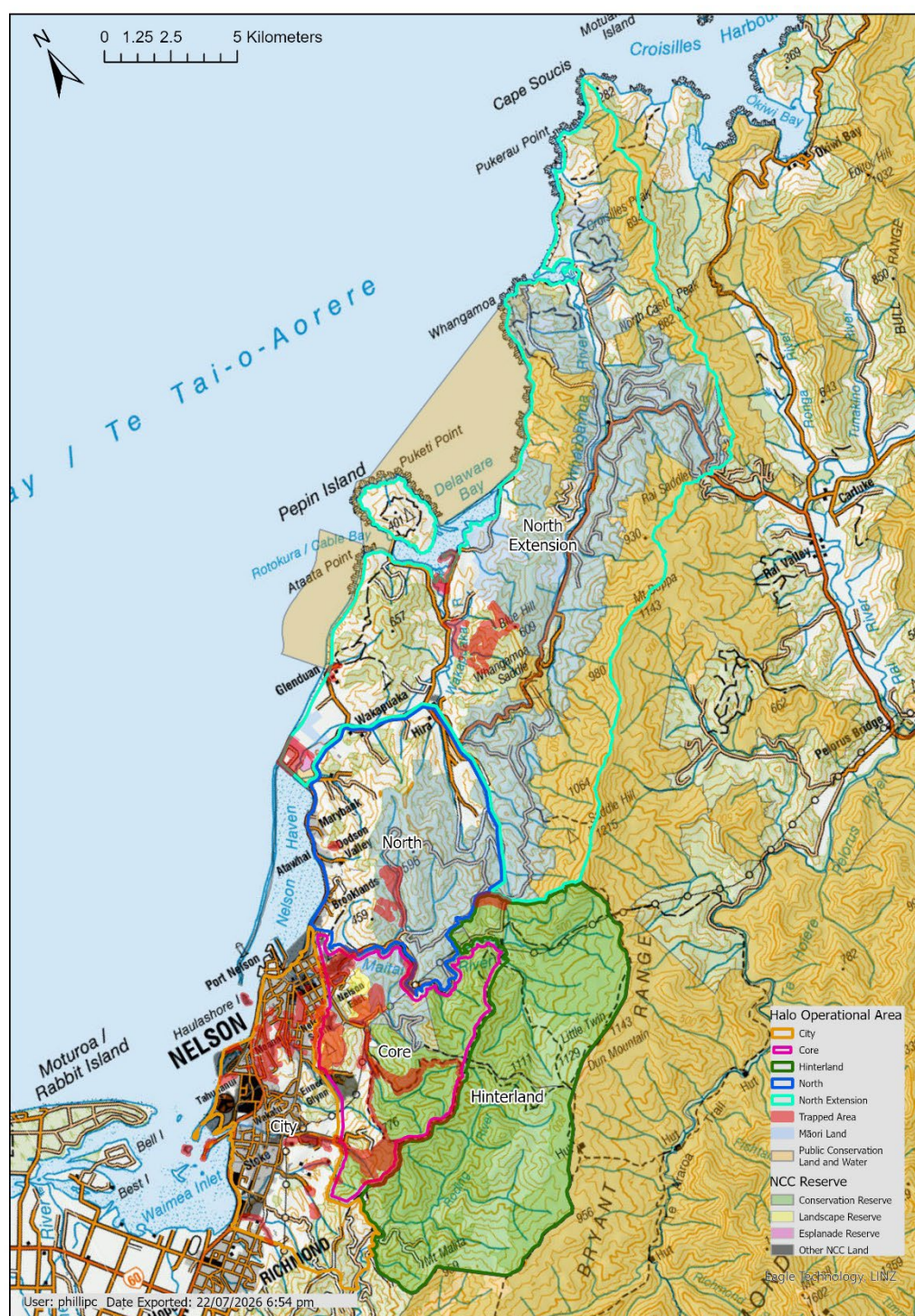
These activities operated under separate funding arrangements and reporting requirements. While often coordinated alongside Halo activity in practice, they were not part of a single programme-wide delivery model.

Why some things are challenging

Several factors influence the pace, consistency and demonstrability of progress:

- A high level of reliance on volunteer and partner effort introduces variability across sites.
- Monitoring does not cover all Halo objectives, limiting the ability to assess programme-wide outcomes.
- Many outcomes depend on activities and land-use decisions led through other programmes or organisations.
- Short-term funding initiatives (e.g., Jobs for Nature and Project Mahitahi) contributed additional capacity but have been difficult to integrate into a sustained delivery model.

These constraints reflect the conditions of delivery across a distributed programme, rather than a lack of effort or intent.



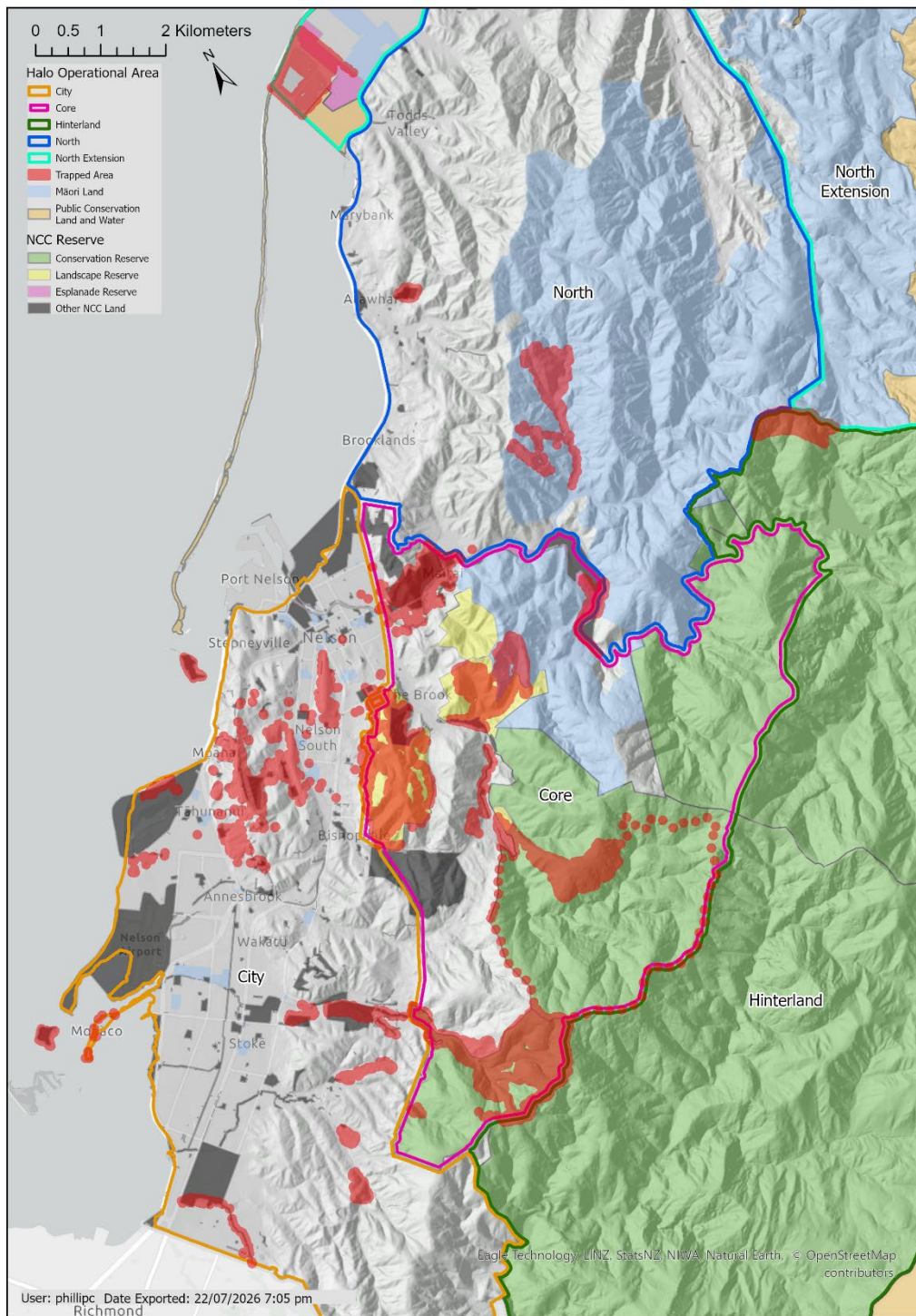


Figure 4. Nelson Urban area, showing buffered trap locations (red 50m buffer). Note trapping project on Boulder Bank is missing from this map.

Conclusion

This review provides a clearer picture of progress against the 2019 Halo Operational Plan in 2026 and identifies where delivery has been strongest, where progress has been partial, and where further coordination, monitoring or resourcing may be required.

Overall, delivery of the Halo programme has been broadly consistent with the intent of the Operational Plan. Progress is most evident where community participation, Council support and complementary biodiversity programmes have been sustained over time. Community participation remains a major component of delivery, supporting predator control across reserves, private land and residential areas.

Monitoring indicates positive trends in native bird activity. However, the current monitoring approach does not allow ecological outcomes to be attributed directly to specific interventions, including community-led trapping. Implementation reflects the distributed and collaborative delivery model anticipated in the Operational Plan, with outcomes influenced by multiple interacting factors across sites, programmes and land tenures.

What happens next

Future improvements should focus on stronger integration across programmes, improved links between management actions and ecological outcomes, and a monitoring framework that better supports evaluation and learning. Decisions about governance, scope and future programme direction should be considered separately with Council managers, partners and key stakeholders.

Appendices

Appendix A: Trap.NZ data - June 2021 - June 2026

Row Labels	Bird	Cat	Ferret	Hedgehog	Mouse	Other	Possum	Rabbit	Rat	Rat - Kiore	Rat - Norw	Rat - Ship	Stoat	Unspecific	Weasel	Weka	Grand Total
586 Brook St	5	1	0	0	218	0	53	0	123	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	413
Birdlife on Codgers	20	11	14	57	747	2	567	7	1156	63	2	26	39	2	27	0	2740
Birdlife on Gramplans	39	1	1	47	587	2	562	11	491	0	28	385	2	1	8	2	2187
Birdlife, Centre of New Zealand	52	1	0	103	2356	98	162	2	1348	0	14	157	6	95	12	0	4406
Bringing Back Birds in the Glen-BBBiG	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	14	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	30
Brook Conservation Reserve Halo Predator Traj	0	1	3	19	585	2	304	0	228	1	14	227	10	45	4	0	1443
Brook Valley Holiday Park	6	0	0	39	230	0	0	0	138	0	0	6	2	5	1	0	427
Brook Waimarama Sanctuary external fence tr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5
Cable Bay Adventure Park	0	1	2	12	63	2	439	0	147	2	0	33	11	2	4	0	718
Friends of Haulashore Island	14	0	0	0	401	1	0	0	358	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	777
Friends of Monaco	0	0	0	0	172	0	0	0	96	0	2	4	0	1	0	4	279
Grooms Creek Wetland Trapping	3	0	0	2	336	0	6	1	91	1	0	54	16	5	9	0	524
Havens Hole	0	0	0	0	288	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	8	0	0	301
Maire Stream	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Marsden Valley Trapping Group	12	7	0	49	4152	1	1059	0	2584	0	105	157	52	62	43	5	8288
Nelson Christian Academy Trapping	4	0	0	2	55	0	1	0	41	1	0	8	0	1	4	1	118
Paremata Trapping Project	159	8	7	125	5278	101	13	3	730	0	36	114	49	82	66	8	6779
Pipers reserve and halo	9	0	0	120	774	2	57	0	717	1	100	278	2	4	11	0	2075
Mount Street	1	0	0	7	40	0	0	0	14	0	6	29	0	0	0	0	97
Saxton's Creek	1	0	0	1	31	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42
Teal Saddle Trapping project	4	0	1	5	281	1	308	0	386	0	2	176	15	6	4	0	1189
Tekateka Restoration Project Predator Control	2	0	0	0	157	2	530	0	464	0	3	97	9	0	6	0	1270
Titoki Trapping Group	0	0	0	3	440	1	10	1	207	0	3	71	0	24	3	0	763
TNC - Gramplans Havic Block Possum Traps	0	0	0	0	0	0	85	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
Upper Brook Biodiversity Group	2	0	0	0	49	0	0	0	31	0	2	5	1	0	1	0	91
Wakapuka Mouri	0	0	0	3	30	0	8	0	62	0	0	0	2	1	6	0	112
Wakapuka Sandflats - Trapping Project	4	4	0	9	394	6	1	1	120	1	5	17	7	0	70	0	639
Wakapuka Sandflats Wastewater Treatment f	6	16	0	7	211	2	0	1	199	0	0	1	2	3	25	0	473
Grand Total	343	51	28	610	17885	223	4180	27	9764	70	324	1855	226	363	304	20	36273

ⁱ 1Ecological integrity refers to ecological processes being shaped primarily by indigenous species that naturally occur across a site in concert with regional environmental gradients derived from climate, soils and geology.

ⁱⁱ Lee, W., McGlone, M., Wright, E. 2005. Biodiversity inventory and monitoring: a review of national and international systems and a proposed framework for future biodiversity monitoring by the Department of Conservation. Landcare Research Contract Report LC0405/122.