

# Taking action in forest and scrub

## Assess needs/plan

Do this before anything else! Seek professional advice if you need to identify the management issues for your site. Write up a plan of action. Get a copy of the Bush Restoration Plan template from the Department of Conservation or 0800 BIODIV (246348)

## Seek funding

Determine what actions are needed and how much each will cost before you apply for funding. You may need to obtain funding before you can start on the work. Call 0800 BIODIV for advice on funding sources.

## Legal protection

If a site is not legally protected as a reserve or private covenant, it's generally best to seek legal protection when the site is in good condition. However, if you plan to protect the site and you need to fence it, contact QEII National Trust first, as they usually pay a share of the fencing costs.

## Monitoring

Take site photos **before you start** and regularly during your work. Record which plants survived. Keep records (e.g. possum capture rates). Use the Forest Monitoring and Assessment Kit (FORMAK) on [www.formak.co.nz](http://www.formak.co.nz). If the project is large and needs a lot of funding use a professional monitoring programme to justify your application for the next round of grants.

## Fencing

Uncontrolled grazing animals will trample soil, eat plants, and pollute the site with dung and urine. The larger the animal the greater the damage. A hot wire is a good start to keep cattle out but more robust fencing is needed to keep out deer, pigs and goats.



## Control weeds

Be ready to tackle weeds as soon as all stock are out. Deal with weeds you are legally obliged to (see [waikatoregion.govt.nz/pests](http://waikatoregion.govt.nz/pests)). Be vigilant for weeds in nearby sites that are not in your native forest - yet!



## Control pests

Pests in forests can include deer, pigs, goats, rodents, possums, stoats, ferrets, weasels, rabbits, hares and feral cats.



Target large animals first. They are easier to find and, if the site is well-fenced, may be eliminated. Use a trained hunter to shoot deer, goats and pigs. Other pests will need on-going control.

Contact your local DOC office or Waikato Regional Council for advice. In some situations other pests will be more important, for instance dogs in kiwi zones.

## Planting

Look at planting the edges of native forest first. If the site has unnaturally low diversity, and is isolated from natural seed sources, consider enhancement plantings. If you have to remove a lot of weeds consider replanting with natives as soon as possible to reduce the chance of another weed filling the space.



If your site is isolated from other natural areas consider planting corridors of vegetation to encourage birds to move between them. Weed thoroughly until the plants are well-established. Protect from rabbits, hares and stock.

Use species characteristic of the area you are planting i.e. natural plant populations are placed back in their natural range. Check nearby areas for clues to the appropriate vegetation of the area.

## Encourage native animals

If the site is very depleted of native animals, monitor the situation for a few years to see what turns up naturally. If you want to re-introduce wildlife you will need a permit from DOC.

