Post Completion

Upon completion of *Rhododendron ponticum* management, it is advised that the site is subject to a programme of ongoing monitoring by those commissioning the work. A post-works site assessment should be undertaken upon completion of every phase of work, to ensure the work has been completed to a satisfactory standard and as per the agreed methodology. It is advised that a written record is kept of each site assessment for future reference. This can be done using a simple monitoring form, or it can be recorded electronically on a database, spreadsheet, or a GIS layer.

Depending on the control method utilised, the site assessment can take place immediately after finishing the work (that is, if cutting or flailing *R. ponticum*), or it can be delayed for a pre-defined number of weeks, where the success of the work is not immediately visible (that is, if using chemical treatment). Table 7.1. gives an indication of when the post-works assessment should be carried out based on the method of control used.

(A)

(C)

(B)

Figure 7.1. *Examples of successful phases of R. ponticum foliar spraying (A), stem-treatment (B), and manual cutting (C).*

Table 7.1. *Advised period of time to be left before site monitoring for different methods of R. ponticum control.*

Method of control	Period until post-works assessment undertaken
Hand-weeding	Immediately after completion of works
Foliar spraying	**Summer:** 8-10 weeks after treatment applied **Winter:** can take up to 6 months for foliage to show clear signs of death
Manual cutting and burning/ chipping	Immediately after completion of works
Stem treatment	**Summer:** 8-10 weeks after treatment applied **Winter:** can take up to 6 months for foliage to show clear signs of death
Mechanical mulching/flailing	Immediately after completion of works

As mentioned in Section 6, there may be instances where further work is required after the implementation of the three phases of control. Long-term monitoring of treated sites is always recommended if possible, in order to ensure *R. ponticum* does not re-establish on the site, and to arrange further maintenance work in instances where it does. Ongoing monitoring after completing three phases of work is especially important on sites which had high *R. ponticum* density prior to treatment, or where viable *R. ponticum* seed sources remain on adjacent areas of land, as these are particularly vulnerable to re-invasion. In the case of any re-invasion, early intervention is key to limit the cost and complexity of the work. Post treatment monitoring of treated sites should continue for a period of at least 10 years after the final phase of treatment, in order to ensure, as best as possible, that total eradication has been achieved.

In some instances, you may wish to undertake fixed-point photo-monitoring, where a series of photos are taken from pre-defined locations on a site after each phase during a programme of work. This is an effective method of recording the quality of work undertaken, as well as providing a visual demonstration of the work to other audiences, such as funders or the general public. Continuation of photo-monitoring on a site beyond the three phases of control is also advisable, to monitor the regeneration of native habitats and spot any *R. ponticum* re-invasion early.