

PROJECT AORANGI – HAUMANU KIA HAUMAKO PEST CONTROL PROGRAMME

OSPRI, the Department of Conservation (DOC), Aorangi Recreational Hunters (ARH) Group and the Aorangi Restoration Trust (ART) are teaming up again for the next phase of Project Aorangi. The 10-year project aimed to provide a “triple hit” on pests by reducing the number of possums, stoats and rats over approximately 36,000 hectares of the Aorangi Forest Park – Recreational Hunting Area (RHA) – and surrounding private farmland. The next stage involves a repeat of the 2014 Aerial 1080 operation in May-June 2017.

TARGETING POSSUMS RATS AND STOATS

POSSUMS

In New Zealand’s TB risk areas, the main carriers and transmitters of the disease to livestock are possums. To eradicate bovine TB, possum numbers need to be kept extremely low – around one or two animals over 10 hectares

RATS

Rats are introduced pests which threaten the long-term survival of native species. There are three species of rat in New Zealand, the Pacific rat/kiore, ship or common rat and Norway or brown rat. Rats eat any small

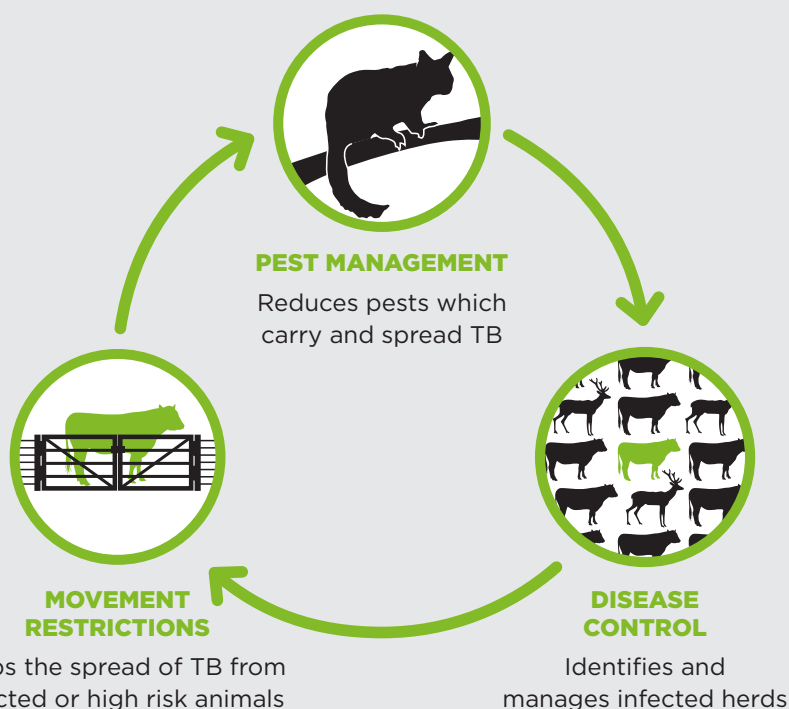
animals and plant material, including the adults, eggs and chicks of many rare, native birds.

STOATS

Stoats and other mustelids are known predators of native birds and also feed on reptiles and invertebrates. They are

implicated in the extinction of native bird species, including bush wren, laughing owl and the native thrush. Predation of young kiwi, chiefly by stoats, is currently the largest factor contributing to the continuing decline of mainland kiwi populations.

HOW WE CONTROL TB





SUCCESS OF THE 2014 OPERATION

Research undertaken by Victoria University showed a significant reduction of the possum and rat populations following the 2014 operation. Their research also showed that the bird song of most native bird species subsequently increased in the Aorangi's compared to a non-treated reference site. This research will continue to measure the long-term effects of 1080 control on the ecology of the Aorangi Forest Park (RHA).

ARH are reporting a noticeable and impressive rise in the native bird numbers they observe.

THE METHOD

The vast majority of possum control in the region is done by local



Baits covered in deer repellent. The non-toxic pre-feed pellets are brownish-tan while the toxic baits are green.

contractors using ground-based traps and hand-laid toxins. The remaining, far smaller area is controlled using aerially applied pellets containing biodegradable 1080.

Aerial control is efficient, cost effective and has been extremely successful at knocking possum numbers down to very low levels needed to eradicate TB while also reducing the rat and stoat populations. It is preferred in areas like the Aorangi Forest Park (RHA) due to the rugged nature of the terrain.

The Aorangi project will begin with the distribution of non-toxic, tan-coloured cereal pellets by helicopter. This "pre-feed" gives possums a taste for the pellets and overcomes bait shyness. One to two weeks later, toxic, green cereal pellets coated with deer repellent – each containing 0.15 percent biodegradable sodium fluoroacetate (also known as 1080) – will be applied by helicopter at a rate of 1.5 kilograms per hectare. That's about one bait to every 90 square metres.

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment also supports aerial control. The Commissioner completed an extensive review into the use of 1080, in which she strongly endorsed its continued use in New Zealand.

Please visit pce.parliament.nz to read this report.

THE COLLABORATION PARTNERS

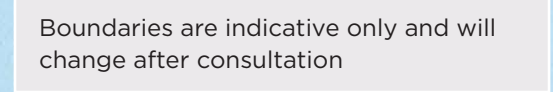
OSPRI'S TBFREE PROGRAMME

The TBfree programme aims to manage and eventually eradicate bovine tuberculosis (TB) from New Zealand's farmed cattle and deer and wild animal populations. Controlling disease prevents livestock production losses and protects the world leading reputation of New Zealand's dairy, beef and deer products. We use possum control, along with regular herd testing and movement restrictions, to achieve our eradication goals.



AORANGI RESTORATION TRUST

The Aorangi Restoration Trust is a community group, mostly volunteers, from a wide variety of backgrounds, who have joined to work together to restore the Aorangi range and adjoining land to its former glory. They are supported by many local landowners and organisations who also want to see that goal realised, including support from local hapu and recreational hunting groups.





Bellbird. © Richard Ashurst



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

The Department of Conservation seeks to maintain the natural values of the Aorangi Forest Park (RHA) and to preserve opportunities for future restoration work. Its key activities include eradicating feral goats, suppressing wild fires, stock fencing, weed control, delivery of recreational facilities and the issuing of recreational hunting permits.

AORANGI RECREATIONAL HUNTERS

The ARHs are a local deerstalkers group formed in 2005 to advocate for the inclusion of deer repellent (DR) to minimise deer loss in aerial 1080 operations, both in and around the Aorangi Forest Park (RHA) – New Zealand's largest Recreational Hunting Area.

Their faith in DR has been confirmed over three aerial 1080 operations to date, resulting in insignificant deer losses.

ARHs wish to demonstrate this successful and cost effective pest control method (aerial 1080 plus DR) as an example to the nation's sceptical hunting community.

Their vision is a collaborative approach towards ecological restoration and enhancement of wildlife providing

users with an accessible world-class wildlife and hunting experience.

To this end, hunters have committed funding towards this project's inaugural bird relocation plans.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE AORANGI FOREST PARK (RHA)

Over the years, the Aorangi Ranges have lost much to the impact of humans and pests. Historically, the area held colonies of nesting seabirds, such as petrels and shearwaters. Penguins were common on the coastal boundary. These species are now gone, or severely reduced in number. Kiwi, weka, kokako, whio and robin have also been lost. Animals such as kaka and lizards have been reduced to low levels. All of the parties involved in Project Aorangi share a vision to restore as many of these species as possible. Critical to this vision is the control of pests such as rats, mustelids and possums.

Possum control is also important for the retention of many plant species, including rare species like mistletoe and rata, which provide food for native animal species. Restoring the diversity of the forest will improve its resilience to disturbance of all kinds.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

This operation is planned for May-June 2017. A contractor will be doing the work on behalf of OSPRI's TBfree programme. Before the operation, affected landowners and occupiers will be contacted and visited by one of our contractors. They will discuss boundary issues, water supply safety and the management of any risks to dogs and livestock.

Consents from Greater Wellington Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Health are required for this operation. Affected landowners and occupiers will be contacted again before the operation starts, notices will be published in local newspapers and warning signs will be placed at all likely access points to the operational area.



North Island Kaka

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Warning signs will be placed at all main access points to the operational area and everyone must follow the cautions on the signs. There's no health risk when using this area as long you follow these instructions:

Do not handle any bait or allow children to wander unsupervised. Cereal baits containing 1080 are dyed green.

Do not hunt or take game from within a two kilometre radius of the operational area for human or pet consumption. It's an offence

to sell meat products that have been exposed to 1080. Hunting can resume approximately four months following the control work.

Please observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about the pesticide. Warning signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in baits or animals. When the signs are officially removed, you can resume normal activities in the area. Free dog muzzles will be provided on request. Please contact OSPRI's North Island office on 06 353 2710 to obtain a muzzle.



Do not bring dogs into the area until the warning signs have been officially removed.

Dogs are particularly susceptible to 1080. They must not be allowed access to bait or poisoned carcasses which remain toxic to dogs until they have fully decomposed.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT POISONING

Contact your local hospital or doctor, or **dial 111**

National Poisons Centre
0800 POISON (764 766)

If a domestic animal is poisoned, contact a local veterinarian.



FURTHER INFORMATION

OSPRI

North Island office,
Palmerston North

P 06 353 2710

E Vector.SNI@ospri.co.nz
tbfree.co.nz | ospri.co.nz

Contractor

Epro Ltd
Operations Controller

P 07 378 4852

E control@epro.co.nz

For more information on controlling bovine TB and why 1080 is used in New Zealand, visit 1080facts.co.nz



THERE IS NO RISK TO PUBLIC DRINKING WATER

Biodegradable 1080 is highly soluble and does not persist in water or soil. Local health authorities apply strict conditions to aerial operations so that drinking water supplies are not contaminated. Safety has been confirmed by tests on several thousand water samples taken after aerial 1080 operations over many years.