

MOKIHINUI AERIAL BOVINE TB CONTROL OPERATION 2016

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. To achieve this objective OSPRI uses possum control, along with regular herd testing and movement restrictions. Information gathered from wild animal surveys, recent and historic findings of TB in wild animals, herd testing results and the operational history of the region is used when planning operations.

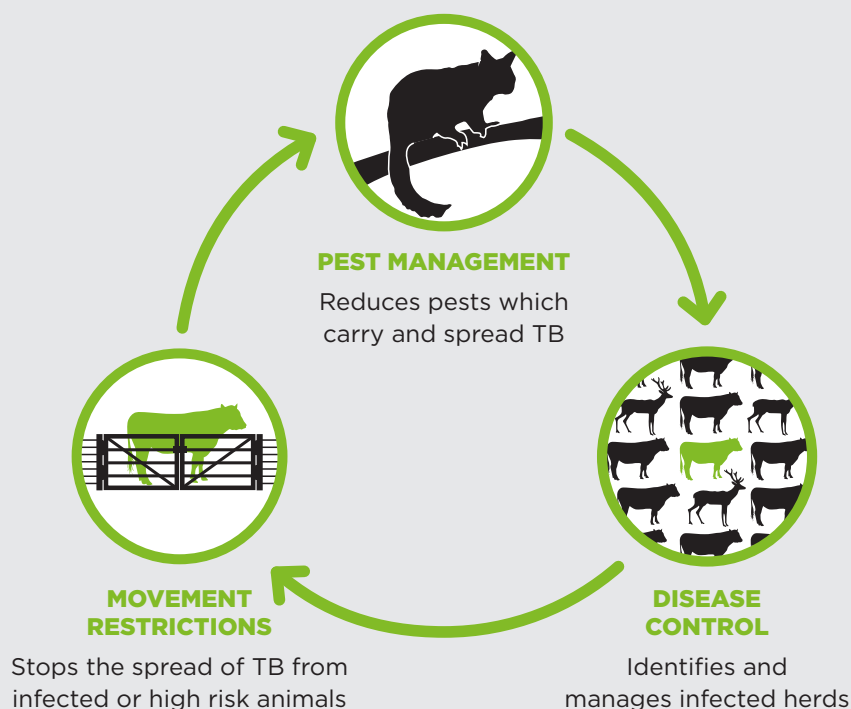


TARGETING POSSUMS

We're running a possum control operation in the Mokihinui area (please see map provided for the operation area). It will cover approximately 46,070 hectares.

To eradicate bovine TB, possum numbers need to be kept extremely low – around one to two animals every 10 hectares. Control work in the Mokihinui area will reduce the

HOW WE CONTROL TB



possum population and minimise the risk of the disease spreading through wild animal populations and onto farmed cattle and deer. Possum control has dramatically reduced

the number of infected herds in the West Coast region. This area was last treated in 2014.

Part of the Mokihinui aerial operation includes land which forms part of the



Department of Conservation's 2016 Battle for our Birds predator control programme. Further information about the conservation benefits of this operation are outlined under the 'Biodiversity Benefits' section.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE OPERATION

The operation 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 – each containing 0.15% biodegradable sodium fluoroacetate (also known as 1080) – will be applied in 12 gram baits at a rate of 2 kilograms per hectare in the TBfree funded area, while 6 gram baits will be applied at a rate of 1.5 kilograms per hectare in the area funded by DOC. The Mokihinui aerial operation will be subject to strict safety, quality-assurance and monitoring requirements.

Advanced GPS navigational equipment will be used to ensure the pellets are accurately placed and exclusion zones avoided.

THE METHOD



The vast majority of possum control in the region is done by local 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 in the past. It is preferred in areas like Mokihinui due to the rugged nature of the terrain. 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.

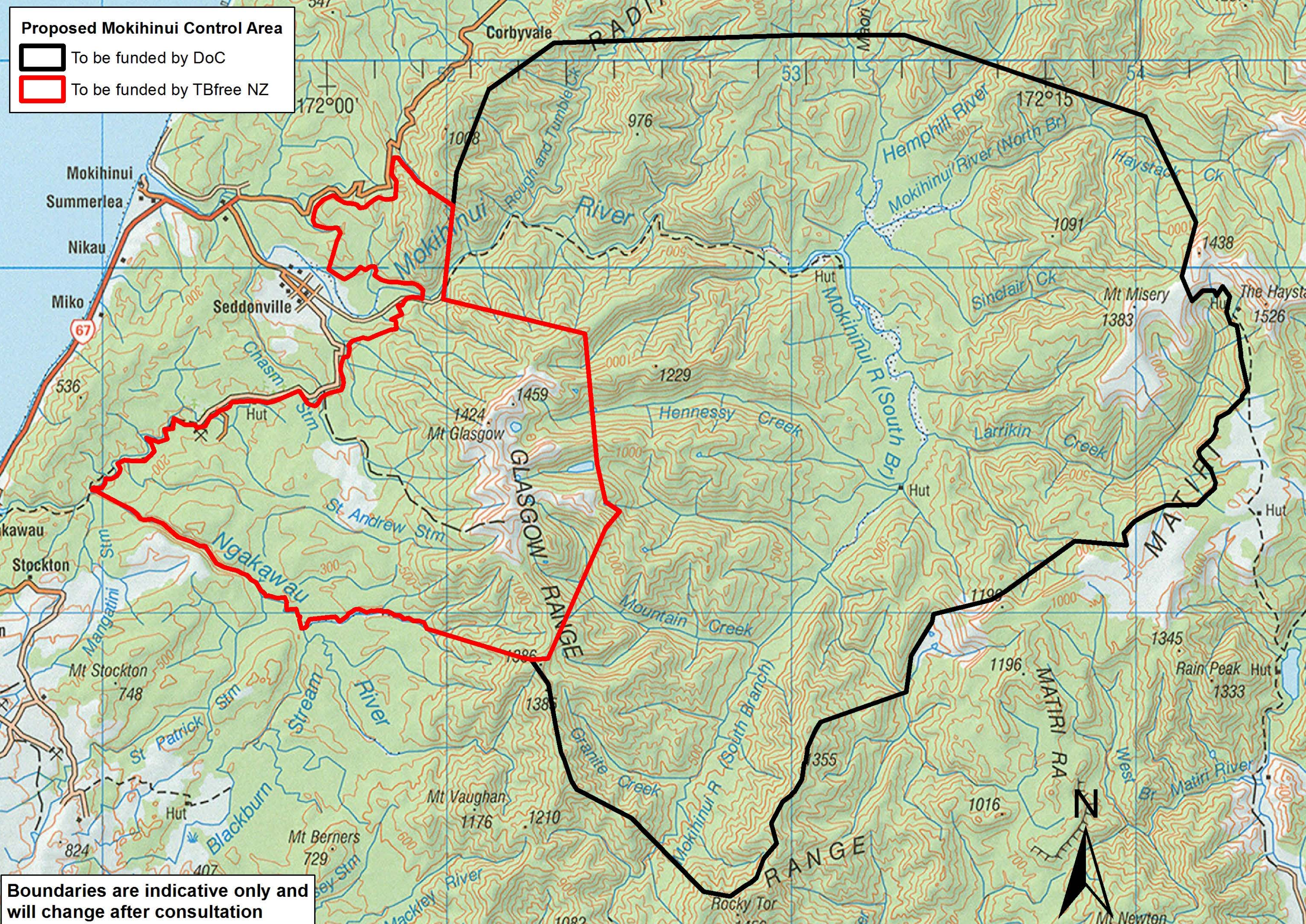
Please visit pce.parliament.nz to read this report.



Toxic baits

Proposed Mokihinui Control Area

-  To be funded by DoC
-  To be funded by TBfree NZ





WHAT HAPPENS NOW

This operation is planned for winter/spring 2016. 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 the West Coast 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.

BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS

The Mokihiui operation will have conservation benefits for native flora and fauna. Threatened species are struggling to breed under normal predator pressures but this year they will struggle even more due to a beech mast in many areas resulting in higher predator numbers.

Mammalian pests are the greatest threat to ecosystem functioning and species conservation in New Zealand. Possums, ship rats and stoats are all implicated in the incremental and sometimes catastrophic degrading of forest ecosystem condition and species loss. Possums eat the forest canopy and are a major predator

of forest birds, preying on eggs and chicks.

Biodegradable 1080 is also very effective at controlling the other two major forest predators: ship rats and stoats, both of which are a major source of predation on forest birds and eggs. Reducing these predators will enable a higher nesting success for a range of forest bird species found in the Mokihiui area such as blue duck (whio), great spotted kiwi, kea, kaka and kakariki. The control work will also protect populations of threatened long-tailed bats and snail species found in the area.

To learn more about the Department of Conservation's Battle for our Birds predator control programme visit www.doc.govt.nz/battleforourbirds



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



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 as 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 Greymouth office on 03 769 9098 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

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Greymouth

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Contractor

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Operational Coordinator

P 07 378 4852

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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.