

# NORTH WAIKATO SWAMP **AERIAL** **BOVINE TB CONTROL** **OPERATION**

## 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 our eradication goals. 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.

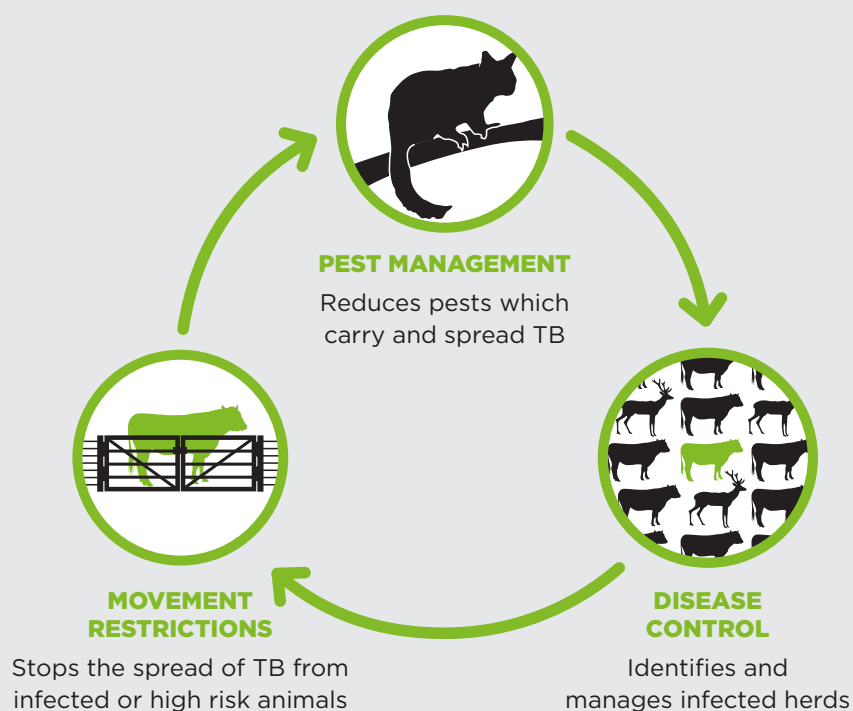


## **TARGETING** **POSSUMS**

We're running a possum control operation in the North Waikato area (please see map provided for the operation area). It covers approximately 3000 hectares.

To eradicate bovine TB, possum numbers need to be kept extremely low – around one to two animals every 10 hectares. Monitoring has shown that control work is needed in

## HOW WE CONTROL TB



the Waikato Swamp area to reduce the 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 Waikato region and this operation is possibly the last major TB control to be done in the North Waikato.



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## WHAT TO EXPECT

The operation will begin with the distribution of non-toxic carrot baits by helicopter. This “pre-feed” gives possums a taste for the bait and overcomes bait shyness. Approximately ten days later, toxic, green carrot baits – each containing 0.15 percent biodegradable sodium fluoroacetate (also known as 1080) – will be applied by helicopter at a rate of up to two kilograms per hectare. That’s about one bait to every 60 square metres. The Waikato Swamp 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.



Non-toxic pre-feed bait is undyed carrot while toxic baits are coated with a green dye.

## THE METHOD

A 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 Tutaekuri 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](http://pce.parliament.nz) to read this report.

## WHAT HAPPENS NOW

This operation will commence once consultation is completed – control will start in October 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

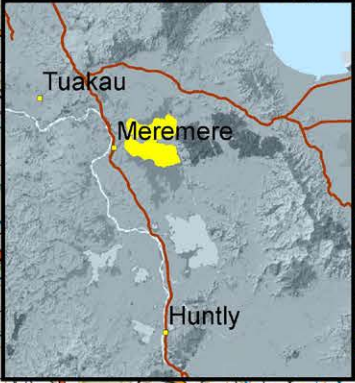
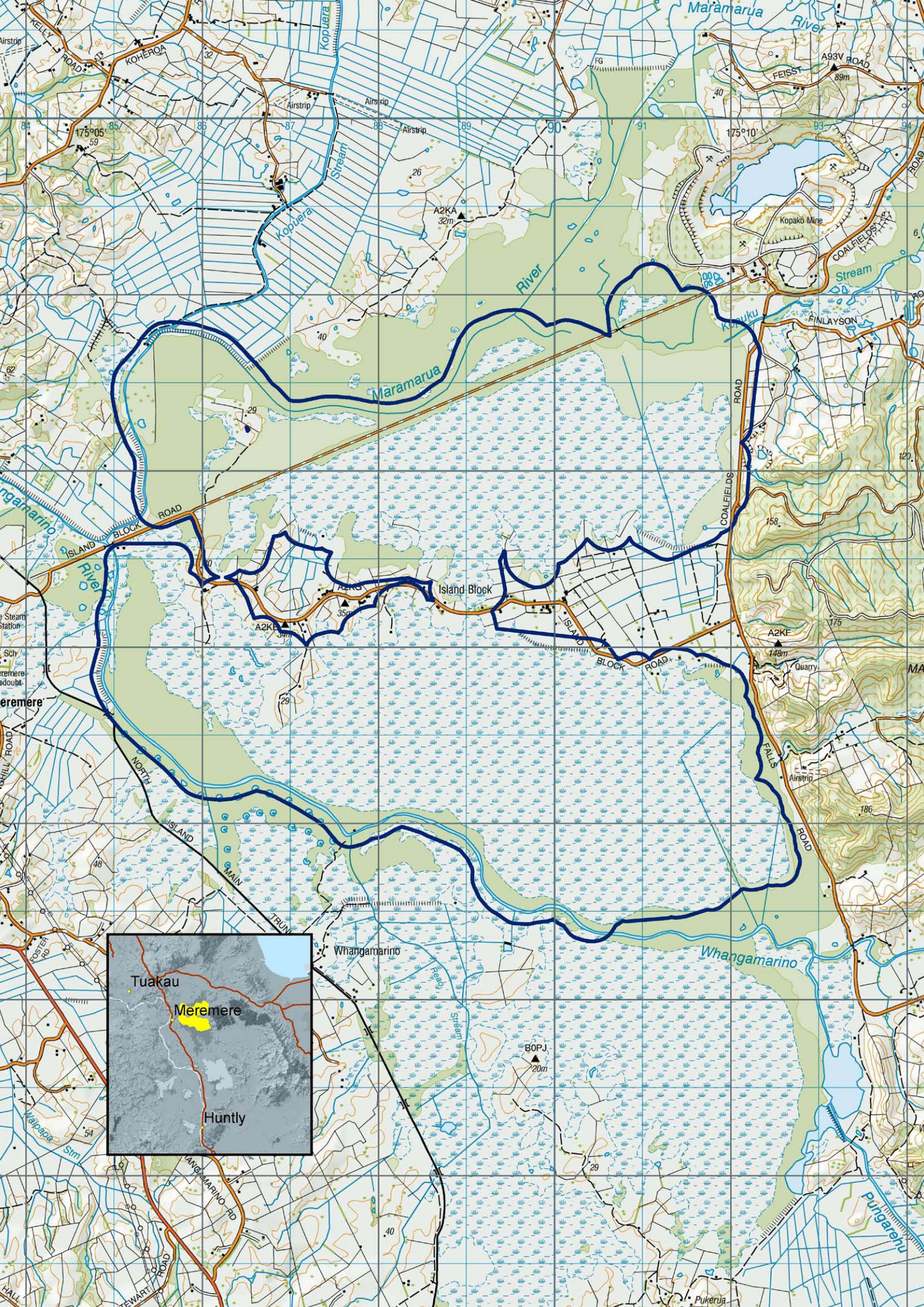
safety and the management of any risks to dogs and livestock. Consents from the Department of Conservation and the Waikato Public Health Unit are required for this operation. Affected landowners and occupiers will be contacted again before the operation starts, notices will be published in local newspapers and warning signs will be placed at all likely access points to the operational area.

## BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS

The operation will have additional conservation benefits for native birds and bush. Possums eat the wetland vegetation and prey on native birdlife, including eggs and chicks. Biodegradable 1080 is also extremely effective at controlling other introduced predators such as ship rats and stoats.



© Tomas Sobek



# 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, or after two months if 100mm of rain has fallen.

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 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.



## 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.



## 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

OSPRI Hamilton Office  
**P** 07 849 8915  
**E** [vector.sni@ospri.co.nz](mailto:vector.sni@ospri.co.nz)  
[ospri.co.nz](http://ospri.co.nz)

### Contractor

EcoFX,  
Operational controller  
**P** 07 873 8130  
**E** [KevinC@ecofx.co.nz](mailto:KevinC@ecofx.co.nz)

**For more information on controlling bovine TB and why 1080 is used in New Zealand, visit [1080facts.co.nz](http://1080facts.co.nz)**