

2017 TBFREE PEST CONTROL OPERATIONS CONSULTATION

This document outlines the national plan for TBfree aerial 1080 and ground-based pest control operations for 2017.

It presents the approach taken by OSPRI in relation to engagement for the TB management and eradication programme and describes the key features of proposed pest control operations in support of the National Pest Management Plan.

It is provided to support consultation and community liaison with people and organisations interested in or affected by operations, including landowners and land users, farmers, hunters and recreational land users.

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THE TBFFREE PROGRAMME

THE BOVINE TB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Bovine TB is a serious infectious disease with a wide host range, including humans. In New Zealand, possums are a major cause of TB in cattle and deer herds. Without effective control, the incidence of TB in cattle and deer would eventually rise to the point of causing major production losses for our dairy, beef and deer industries, along with risks to valuable export markets.

The TB Plan has been developed as a partnership between government and the affected livestock industries, and has been formalised as a National Pest Management Plan under the Biosecurity Act 1993. TBfree NZ – a wholly owned subsidiary of OSPRI NZ – is the approved Management Agency responsible for delivering the plan.

Aerial 1080 application is subject to strict controls under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, administered by the Environmental Protection Agency. This includes a requirement for consent from local public health authorities for each operation.

The TB plan aims to achieve biological eradication of TB from New Zealand by 2055, with TB freedom in livestock by 2026 and statistical freedom from disease in possums by 2040.

Those objectives require maintaining very low possum numbers for significant periods of time through possum control. Most possum control work is ground-based but, in some areas, aerial 1080 operations are more effective and efficient.

As the TBfree programme progresses towards the eradication of TB from wildlife and livestock, methods are being constantly refined to ensure most efficient use of resources in achieving the results required.

In planning operations we seek to strike the best balance between the needs for cost-effective TB control, and managing any impacts of our operations. Our aim is always to carry out safe, effective operations which meet TB control goals without adverse effects for the environment or the wider community. OSPRI invests more than \$2.5 million per year on research and development towards pest management and TB control methodologies.

TBFREE OPERATIONS CONSULTATION PROCESS

For all operations OSPRI aims to ensure that affected parties, land occupiers and land users are advised well in advance and are able to submit feedback about any possible risks or problems that need to be managed. This includes sharing plans with consent authorities, the Department of Conservation, local government and iwi, along with hunting and outdoor recreation groups.

Land occupiers within and adjacent to operations receive specific notification and personal visits. General public notification includes newspaper notices and clear signposting at all likely access points. Community meetings may be held where operations are likely to be of wide or significant community interest.

AERIAL 1080 POSSUM CONTROL

Scientific field-based research and the requirement to control possum numbers across large areas of possum habitat, often in steep or difficult-to-access terrain, has led to the adoption of aerially distributed biodegradable 1080 poison baits, supported by extensive ground-based control as the best and most resource-efficient solution in many situations.

Research has also enabled constant refinements to operational practice, with contractors for aerial operations adopting updated best practice, and incorporating the latest research findings.

GROUND CONTROL AND SURVEY ACTIVITY

Ground-based control of pests is planned according to the level of TB risk to cattle and deer herds, the history of control operations and the eradication goals for the area.

For the 2016/2017 year, 143 ground-based pest control projects using a mix of ground-laid toxins, bait stations and traps are planned across the country, along with 117 pig survey projects nationally and 57 ferret surveys in the South Island. Pigs and ferrets are surveyed because they are good indicators of TB in possums, which are the main wildlife host and transmitter of TB.

Ground-based trapping or poison baiting is demonstrated to be an effective method for possum control in accessible areas, and a good method of maintaining low possum densities once their numbers have been reduced.

There are many different types of traps, baits and placement methods which can be varied according to animal welfare considerations, ease of access, set-up and maintenance time, and the potential risks to livestock, dogs and native animals. Trapping is labour intensive and costly work as most traps need to be checked daily.

WHY AND HOW 1080 IS USED

A range of pest control methods are employed depending on the scale and severity of the problem for land surrounding the target area, the accessibility of the area being treated, and the location's history of control and target dates for TB eradication.

Aerial drops of 1080 are demonstrated to be a cost effective and efficient means of controlling extensive possum habitat. In many areas where the habitat is remote or difficult, ground control is much less efficient and up to three times more expensive.

The aerial distribution of toxic baits is permitted via consent application by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Commissioner for the Environment for reasons including:

- Extremely effective at controlling possum numbers to very low levels in hard-to-reach areas
- Biodegradable and does not persist in soil or water
- Does not persist in animals that consume a non-lethal dose
- Does not accumulate in the food chain
- Significant biodiversity benefits.

The operations are carefully planned and guided by GPS technology in accordance with the provisions of consent and boundaries of the proposed operation applying to any particular area. Constant measurement, and improvements in the effectiveness of aerial 1080 operations, means that two operations in an area might be sufficient to prevent TB from persisting.

Aerial pest control also delivers biodiversity benefits that include the by-kill of rats and stoats and other pests that threaten native bird populations.

Public safety is always a top priority and consents must be issued by district Medical Officers of Health or Public Health Officials for all aerial 1080 operations.

For more information please read the factsheet **Using 1080 for Pest Control** at the website tbfree.org.nz.

CONSULTATION WITH AFFECTED GROUPS

This summary of OSPRI's planned pest management programme for 2016/2017 has been prepared to support engagement with the community and parties affected by TB management operations. The consultation process involves inviting affected parties to express their views, providing advice or addressing their concerns, and giving genuine consideration to what they have to say. Consultation does not necessarily mean agreement with every aspect of other parties' views. It does, however, enable informed decision-making by considering different views.

The consultation process OSPRI follows to ensure input from all affected parties

Operations can be modified where our consultation with the community identifies the need to do so. We encourage land occupiers and land users to advise us how they may be affected by our plans, to ensure that any possible problems or risk are identified well in advance and are properly managed.

OSPRI's consultation process involves a range of steps through every stage of a proposed operations from planning and operational design to post-operative reporting.

The first step, once research has demonstrated an operation is necessary, is the presentation of the proposed activity, communications with landowners and affected groups via direct mail outlining the proposed operations. Community meetings and broad input from all interested and affected groups

is invited, and all feedback will be considered without prejudice or obligation to amend the proposal.

OSPRI has sought to amend its operations where our consultation with the community has identified the need to do so. Land occupiers and users can advise us how they may be affected by our plans, to ensure that any possible problems or risk are identified well in advance and are properly managed.

The consultation process OSPRI follows to ensure input from all affected parties is illustrated opposite.

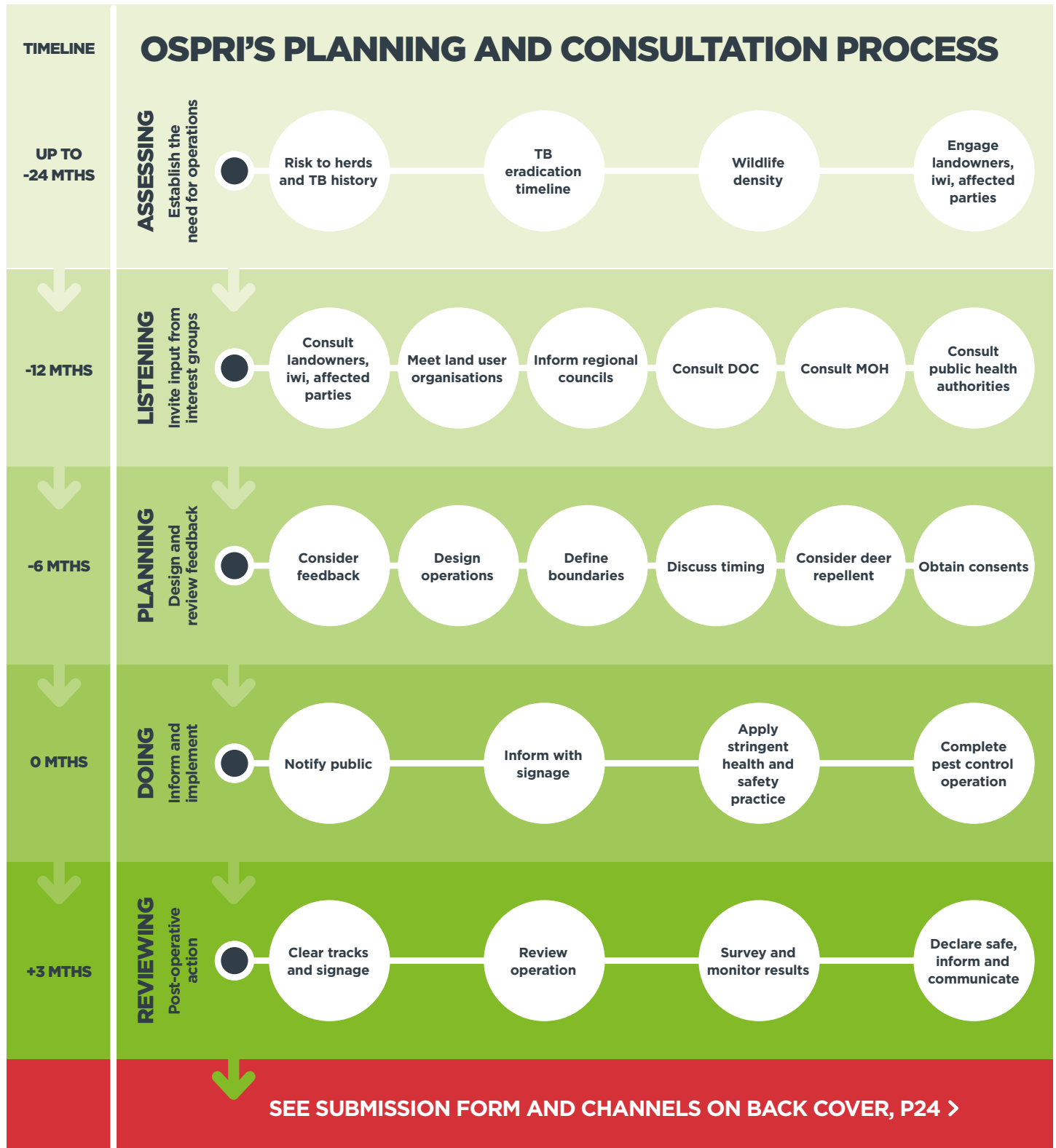
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION

As manager of the TBfree programme, OSPRI seeks to engage with communities interested in proposed operations. The areas of proposed operation are detailed in the next section of this document, and input is encouraged via the form on page 22 at the back of this document.

This document presents the proposed operations for the year 2017 involving both ground and aerial pest control methods.

CONTROL OPERATIONS AREA COVERAGE

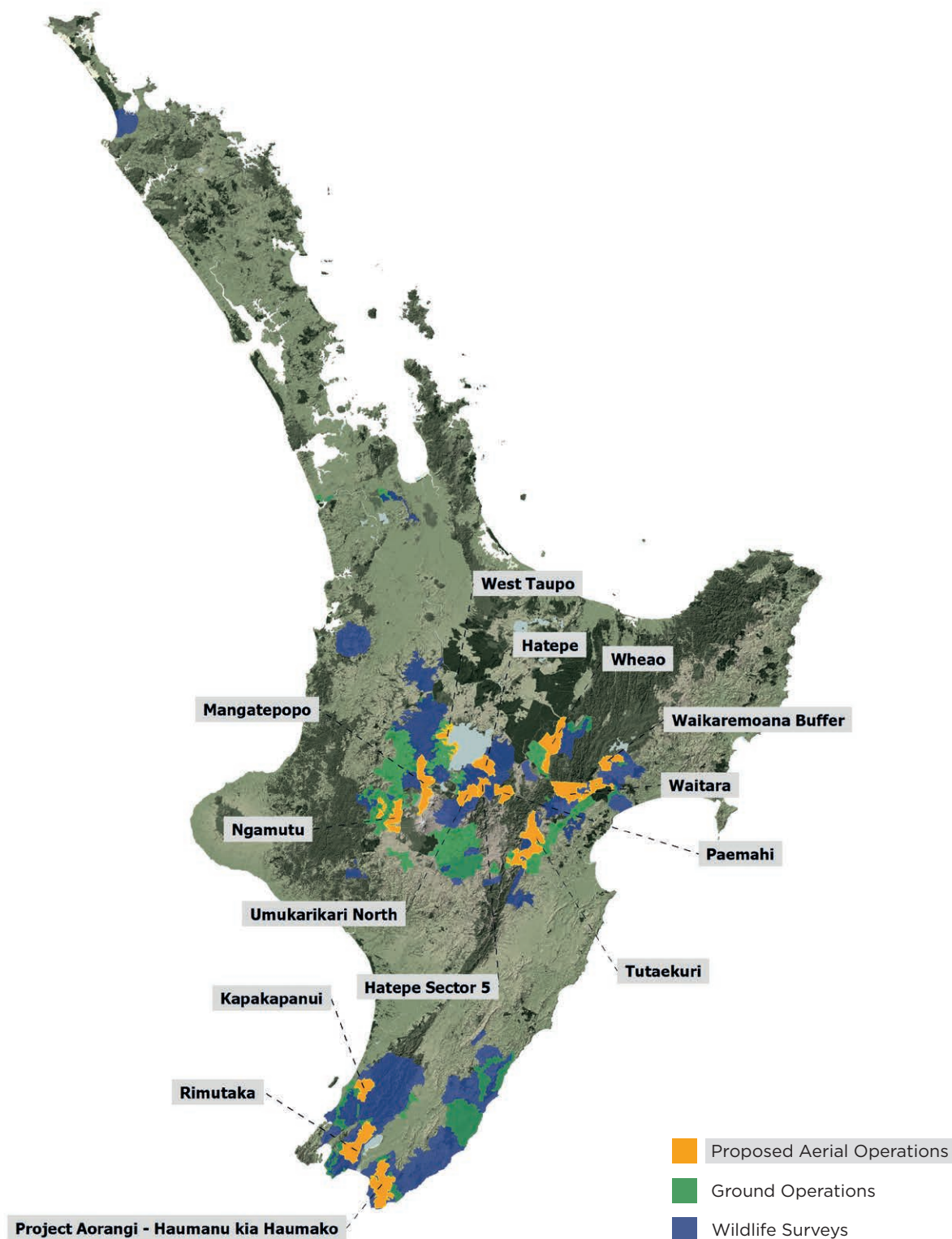
PROPOSED ACTIVITY	NORTH ISLAND	NORTHERN SOUTH ISLAND	SOUTHERN SOUTH ISLAND
Aerial operations	235,430ha	234,990ha	21,303ha
Ground operations	483,102ha	159,349ha	647,439ha
Survey operations	1,860,066ha	1,356,814ha	906,739ha
Total	2,578,598ha	1,751,153ha	1,575,481ha



OPERATIONS AHEAD

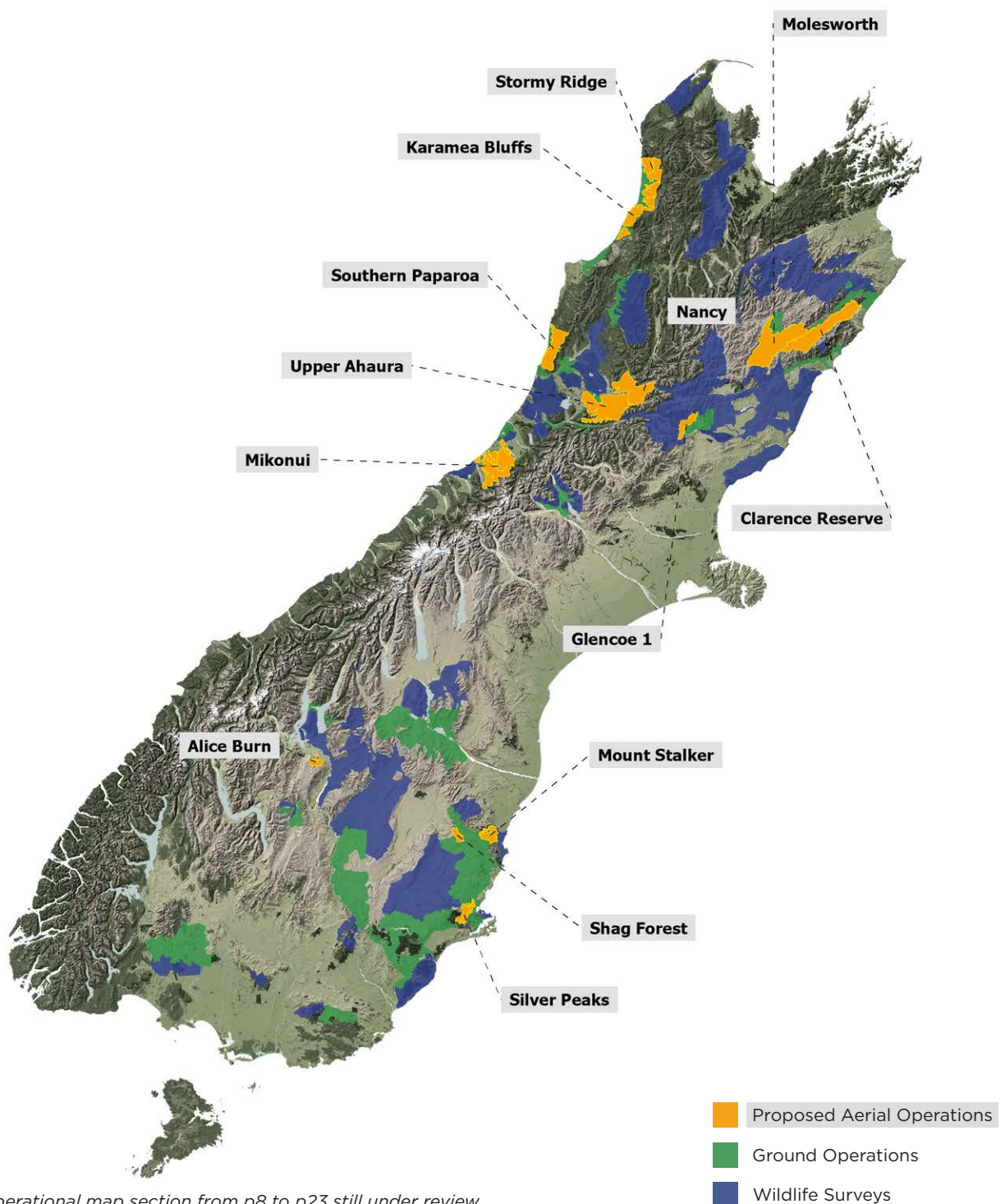
Aerial TBfree possum control operations are proposed for several areas of the central and lower North Island and coastal and high country areas of the South Island. Specific details and operational boundaries are indicative only and may change as a result

of consultation. Changes will be communicated directly to affected parties, and through appropriate channels including public notifications, media and the website tbfree.org.nz.



Specific details of operations are confirmed closer to the operation dates, and will be communicated directly to affected parties, and through appropriate channels including public notifications, media and OSPRI's website, ospri.co.nz.

Aerial TBfree operations in the South Island for 2017 are proposed for several areas of the West Coast, Marlborough and the eastern Otago. Ground control and wildlife survey areas are also shown.



NB: Operational map section from p8 to p23 still under review

NORTH ISLAND AERIAL OPERATIONS 2017

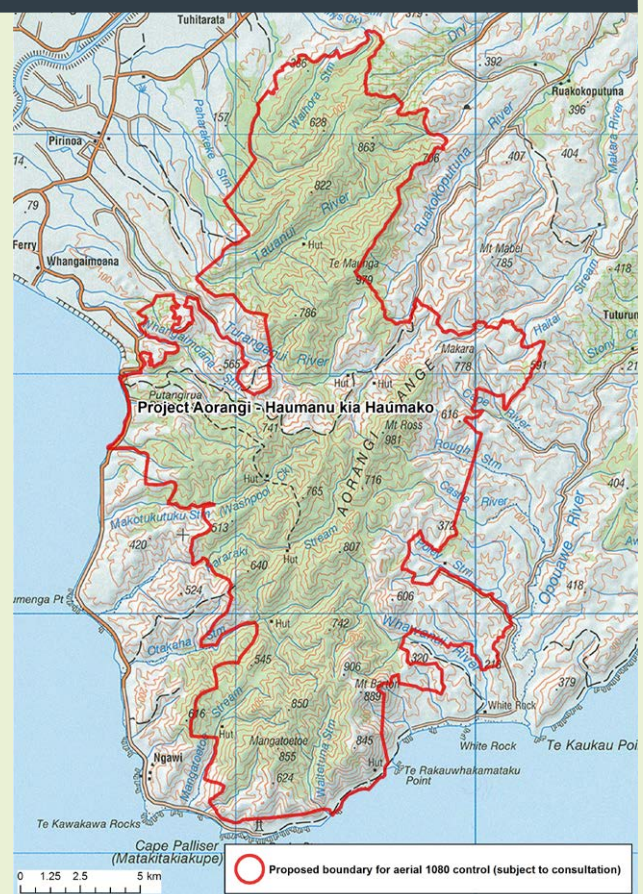
AORANGI – HAUMANU KIA HAUMAKO

This planned operation covers approximately 30,000ha of forest – including very rugged country – and some surrounding land.

This is a collaborative project between the TBfree programme, Department of Conservation (DOC), Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), the Aorangi Restoration Trust (ART) and Victoria University of Wellington.

The 10-year project aims to provide a “triple hit” on pests by reducing the number of possums, stoats and rats in the Aorangi Forest Park and surrounding private farmland. Control will continue in future years under this partnership.

The area last received control in 2014, and 2017 is the second of three aerial operations planned towards the goal of TB Freedom in the possum population by 2025.



HATEPE

Hatepe is 11,390ha of production pine forest on flat to moderate hill country with a similar area of native forest cut by steep gorges. This operation is scheduled to fly during January 2017.

The Hinemaiaia Stream on the northern boundary is a popular location with fishermen all year round.

TB was found in possums and wild pigs between 2012 and 2015, and the most recent aerial control took place in February 2013.

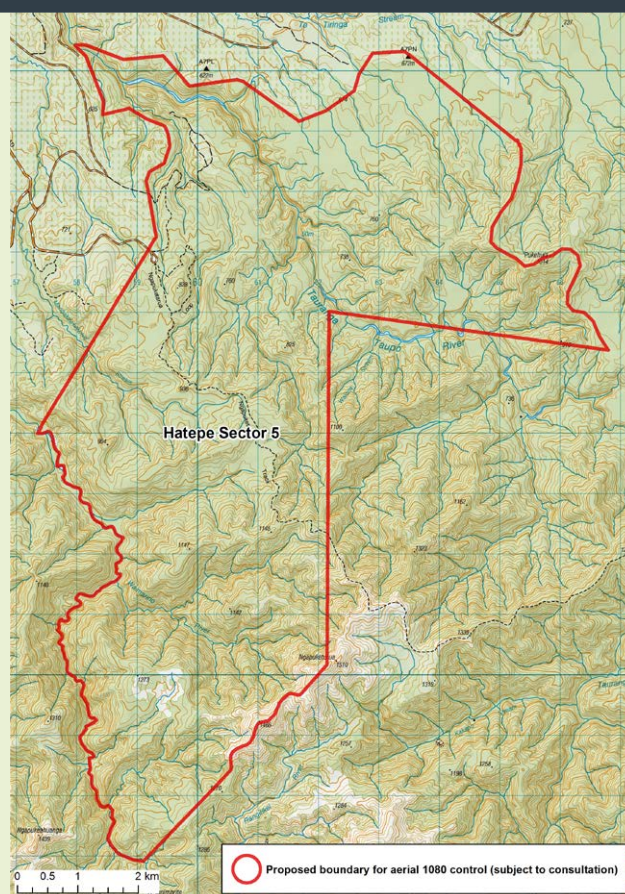


HATEPE SECTOR 5

This area covers 5682ha of native forest and forms part of the Kaimanawa Forest Park.

The area lies south-east of Taupo and extends from the Waimarino River in the west to the Hinemaiaia Stream in the east.

The Hatepe 5 block was most recently aerially controlled in 2012. TB-infected possums and wild pigs have been found nearby between 2012 and 2015.



MANGATEPOPO

The planned Mangatepopo aerial operation is located in the Central North Island between Waituhi Saddle on State Highway 41 in the north, and just beyond the Whakapapa Village on the slopes of Mt Ruapehu in the south. The total area of the project is 21,800ha.

A large portion of the area is DOC-managed land, including Tongariro National Park, Tongariro Conservation Area and Pukepoto Ecological Area.

This area has had significant control in past years and it is possible that this could be the final TB control operation required, although the southern end of the operation may need further control.

Parts of the area are extensively used for hunting, fishing and tramping.



KAPAKAPANUI

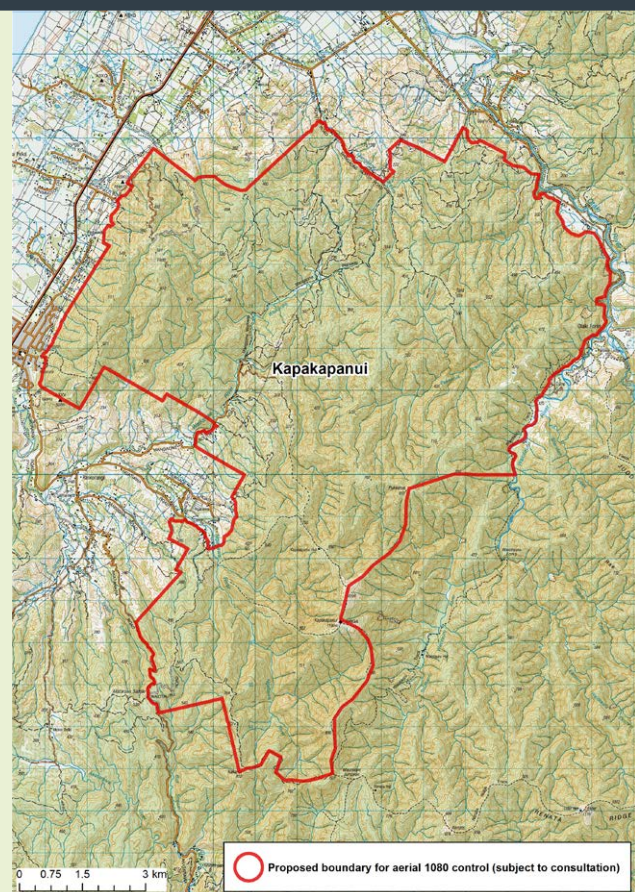
The planned Kapakapanui aerial operation is located inland from the Kapiti Coast in the lower North Island and runs along the foothills of the Tararua Ranges from the Akatawara Road in the south to the Otaki River in the north.

The total area is 11,099ha with 1300 ha under DOC management.

The Hemi Matenga Memorial Park above Waikanae already receives significant control from DOC and the community, so this possum control operation will complement work already done.

This public conservation land is well used by mountain bikers, hunters and trampers.

This is the first time this area has been treated under the TB programme.

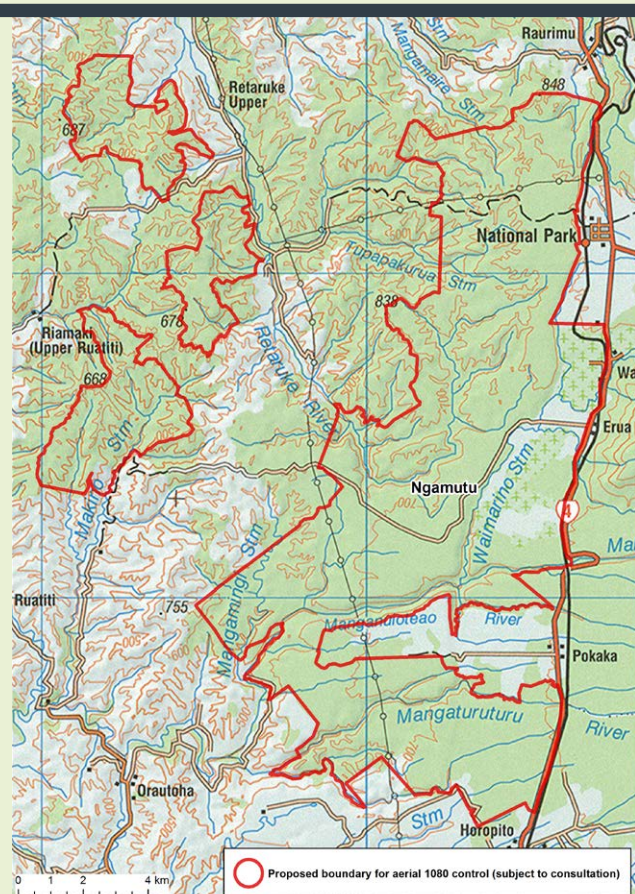


NGAMUTU

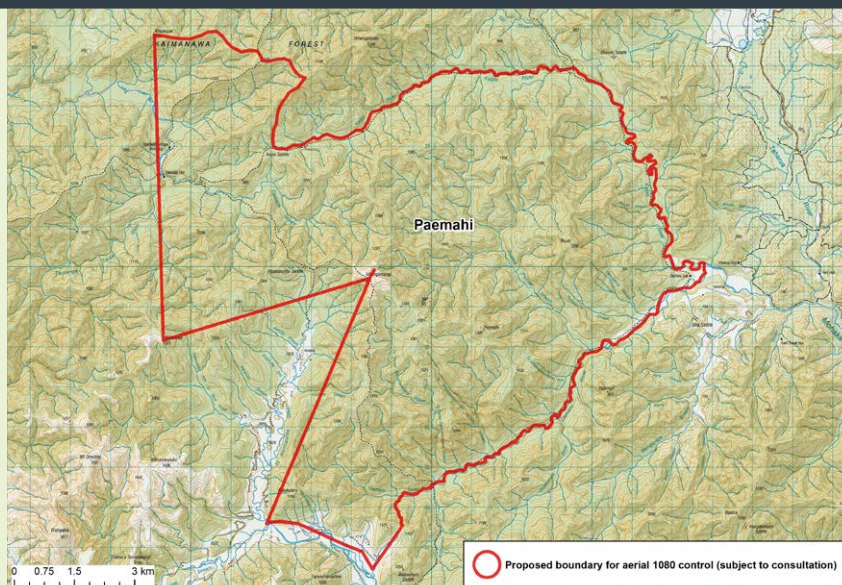
This 16,372ha block is mostly DOC-managed land, with dense native bush and some wetlands. It lies west of National Park and State Highway 4.

The North Island's main trunk railway line forms approximately 14km of the eastern boundary.

This area was most recently treated in 2012 using aerial 1080.



PAEMAHI



This 10,045ha of land is a mixture of DOC-managed land and iwi trust land. This area is extensively hunted by the public and by clients of commercial hunting businesses.

The operational area sits close to where TB-infected animals have been found.

Some parts of this area will be receiving their first treatment under the TBfree programme.

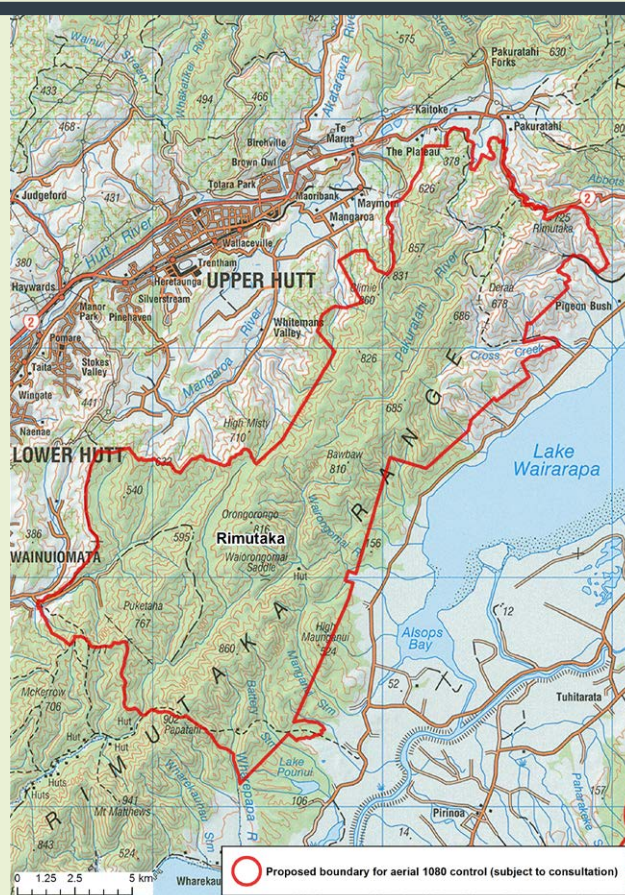
NORTHERN RIMUTAKA

The planned 24,080ha Northern Rimutaka aerial operation extends along the Rimutaka Range from Wainuiomata in the south to the Rimutaka Hill Road, State Highway 2, in the north.

The area consists of public conservation land, administered by the Department of Conservation and the Greater Wellington Regional Council plus reserves and private land.

This area lies north of the area treated in the 2016 Southern Rimutaka aerial operation, an area that contained TB-infected possums.

The Northern Rimutaka area will probably require further operations.



TUTAOKURI

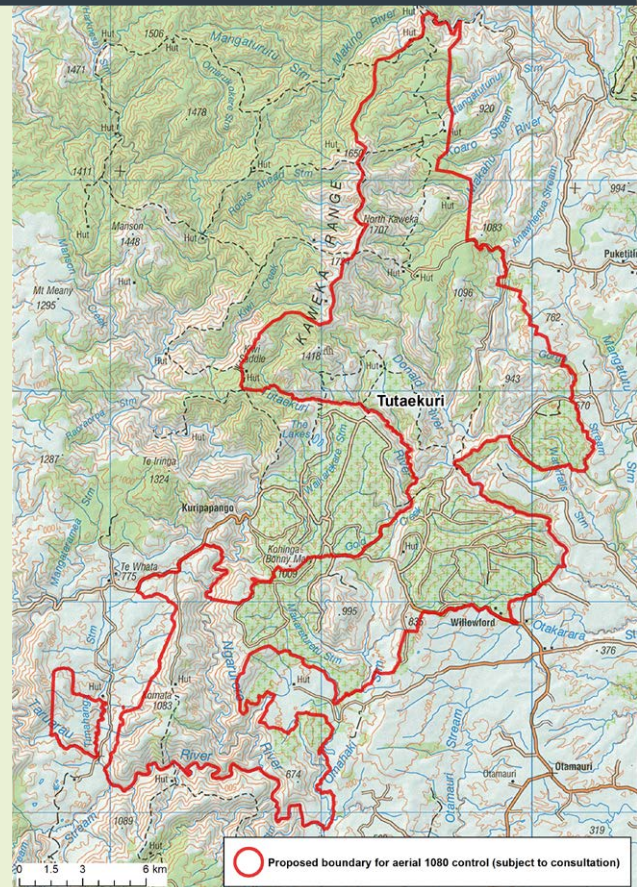
The planned Tutaokuri aerial operation is adjacent to the southern end of the Kaweka Range and north of the Ruahine Range.

The total area of the block is 29,914ha with the cover being a mix of regenerating scrub, native forest and exotic forestry.

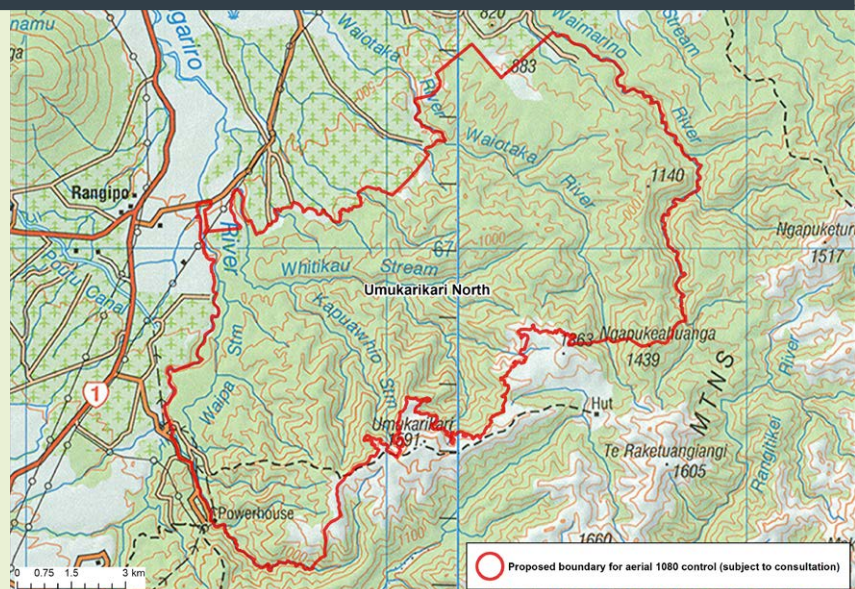
There is a mixture of land administered by the Department of Conservation, commercial forestry and private land.

The area is popular with hunters and hikers, with numerous popular DOC tracks. Some fishing is also undertaken on the rivers.

This operation will be repeated in future years, and includes areas of the Kaweka East aerial operation deferred in 2016.



UMUKARIKARI NORTH



The Umukarikari North Aerial operation includes the Umukarikari range in the Kaimanawa Forest Park.

The total area is 11,200ha, with the majority of the area made up of steep hill country with thick native bush cover, and is managed by the Department of Conservation.

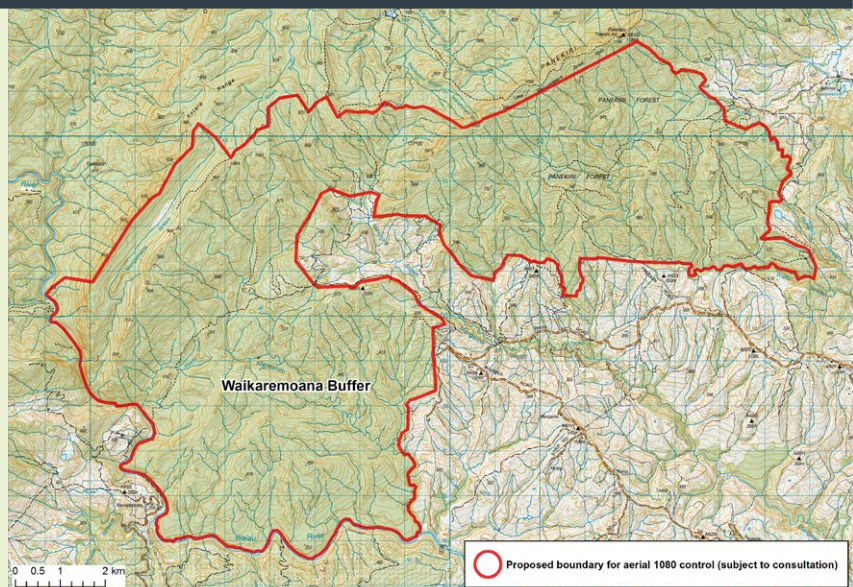
The project area is bounded by the Tongariro River and Rangipo prison on the western edge, an area

of commercial forestry on the northern edge, the Waimarino River in the east and the Umukarikari Range on the southern edge.

The area is mainly used by hunting parties and trappers using Umukarikari track.

This area has been controlled previously and needs further control before eradication can be declared.

WAIKAREMOANA BUFFER



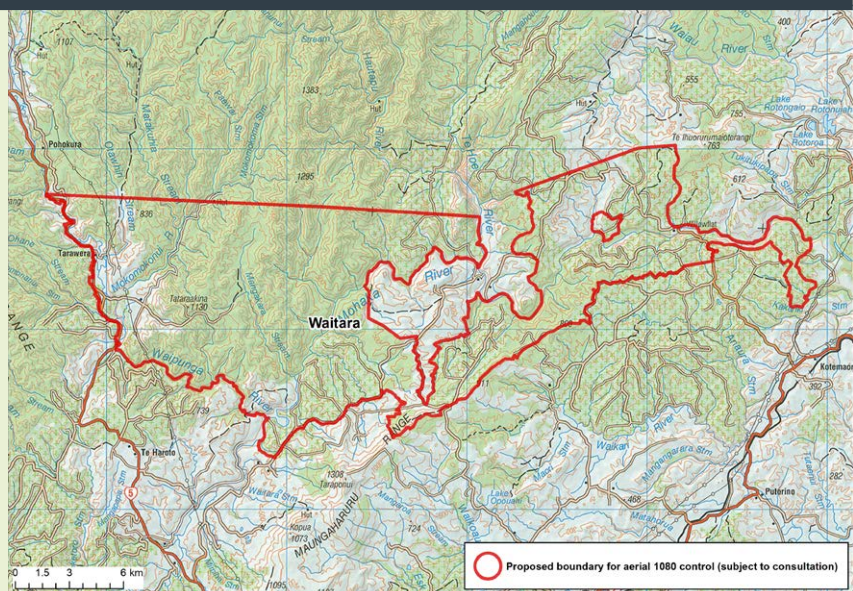
The planned Waikaremoana Buffer aerial operation is located in Northern Hawke's Bay at the southern end of Te Urewera.

The project covers 8700 ha of regenerating and mature native forest. A portion of the area is under Tūhoe and Crown co-management while the remainder is managed by the Department of Conservation.

The project area is popular with recreational users and borders an area with very high recreational values. Hunting in the Te Urewera portion of the area is controlled by the Te Urewera Board.

This operation is likely to be the last required to prove eradication of TB from the area.

WAITARA



The Waitara area in Northern Hawke's Bay covers 25,000ha. There is an area of primarily native forest at Waipunga, while in the Waitara Valley there is a mix of commercial forestry and regenerating native vegetation.

The Eastern portion, Willowflat, is almost completely commercial forestry of various ages.

Along with the commercial forestry there is also land managed by the Department of Conservation and a small number of private land owners.

The main recreational activity in the project area is deer and pig hunting but there is also fishing undertaken on the Mohaka River.

WEST TAUPO

The planned operation is bounded by the western side of Lake Taupo. Topography features steep cliff faces and bays adjacent to the lake.

There are a number of steep gorges from which various rivers and streams flow into the lake.

Habitat consists of native bush and planted exotic pines.

The West Taupo areas were most recently completed in May 2012.

This is likely to be the last time control is done here. Control of this area complements recent control in the Hauhungaroa Ranges where work has now been completed.



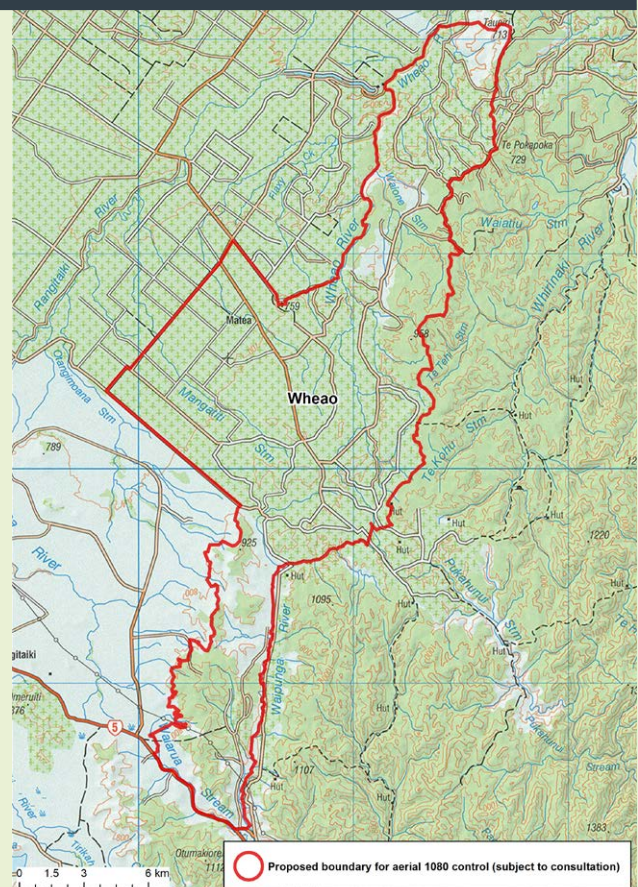
WHEAO

The 23,848ha Wheao aerial operation is located along the eastern edge of the Waipunga Forest and Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park.

The centre of the block extends into the Kaingaroa Forest and is primarily commercial exotic forest. The southern section of the area is mostly administered by DOC and is regenerating native vegetation.

The northern portion of the block is a mix of native and exotic forest.

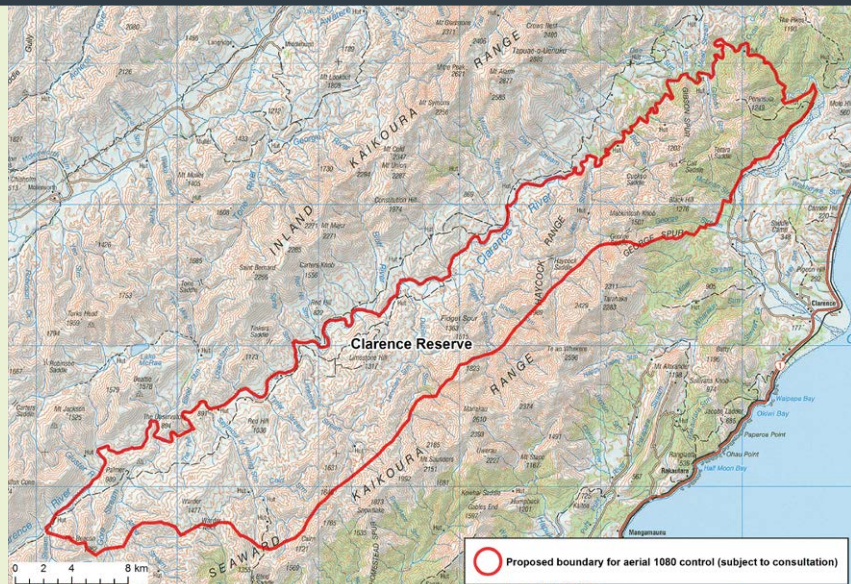
This operation is likely to be the last for the Ngapuketurua and Waione parts of this project.



SOUTH ISLAND AERIAL OPERATIONS 2017

CLARENCE RESERVE

Marlborough



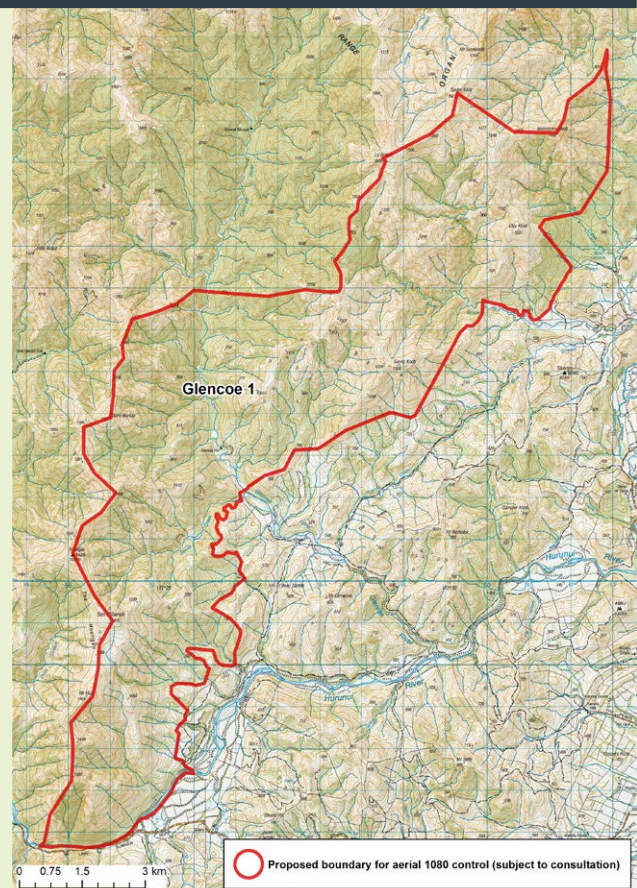
The Clarence Reserve aerial covering approximately 44,707ha is planned for winter 2017. The project area encompasses the land from the Seaward Kaikoura Range to the Inland Kaikoura Range.

This block has not been aerially controlled before. The Clarence Reserve area has a long history of

TB infection in wild animals. It falls under the Clarence Reserve TB Management Area in which control is expected to achieve TB eradication in possums by 2026.

GLENCOE 1

Canterbury



The Glencoe 1 aerial covering approximately 12,543ha is planned for winter 2017.

The project area is approximately 7km west of the Balmoral Forest in Canterbury. It encompasses parts of the Glynn Wye Range and includes the catchment of the Glenrae River. The eastern part of this block includes the Clay Knob and Sunny Knob mountains.

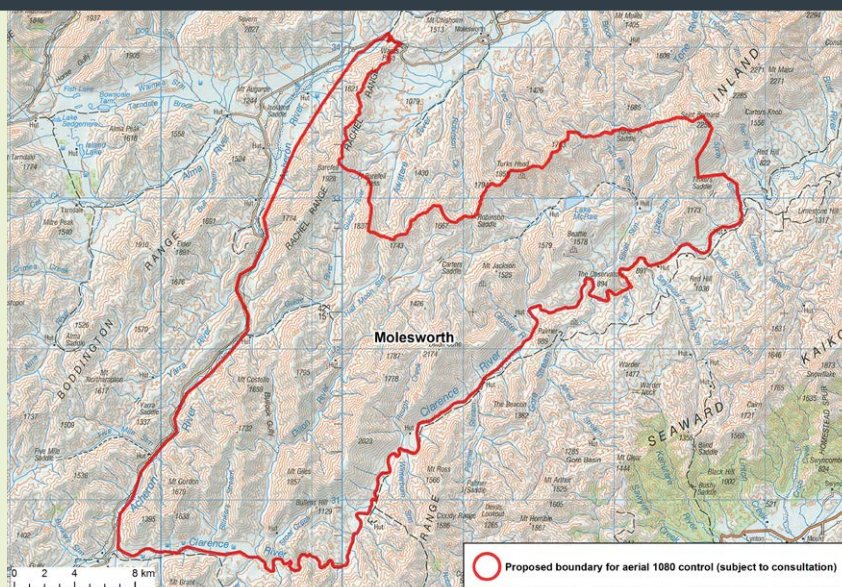
TB is present in the wildlife within this block and a TB-infected deer was found in 2015.

The Glencoe 1 aerial was last completed in 2007.

Eradication of TB in possums in this area is expected by 2024.

MOLESWORTH

Marlborough



The Molesworth area has extensive herd and wildlife infection. The entire Molesworth property will have an intensive possum control programme over the next 10 years including both aerial and ground control.

The aerial component of this work will begin in winter 2017. Each year approximately 30,000ha

will be completed and will be repeated twice, throughout the life of the programme.

The boundaries of this work have yet to be determined, and these will be determined in consultation with the land occupier.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2033.

STORMY RIDGE

Buller



The Stormy Ridge aerial is planned for winter 2017. The project area of approximately 16,500ha, begins north at the Kohaihai river and runs south encompassing the foothills below Oparara. At the Oparara River the back boundary goes east and follows the Fenian Range and Stormy Ridge. The southernmost boundary is at the Blue Duck Creek.

The Stormy Ridge aerial was last flown in 2008. The Karamea area has a long history of TB infection with many herds still infected.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2023.

KARAMEA BLUFFS /SOUTHERN

Buller

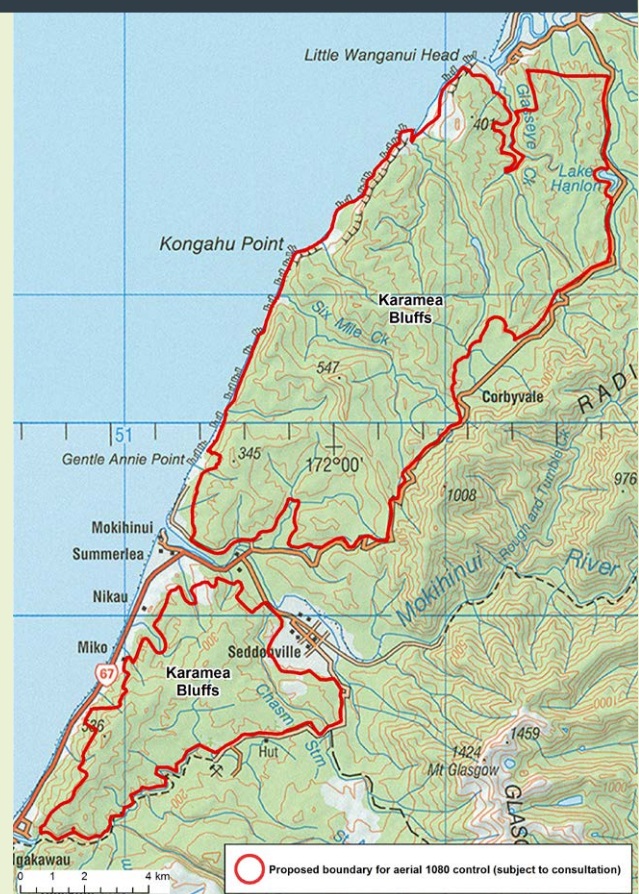
The Karamea Bluffs/southern aerial covers approximately 13,235ha and is planned for winter 2017.

This operation is made up of two distinct blocks. The northern most point begins at the Little Wanganui Head and goes south encompassing the deep bush along the coastal strip on the western side of the main highway and ends at Mokihinui. The second block is south of Seddonville and encompasses the land between Seddonville and Ngakawau.

The Karamea Bluffs section of this operation has not received control before while the southern block was last flown in 2008.

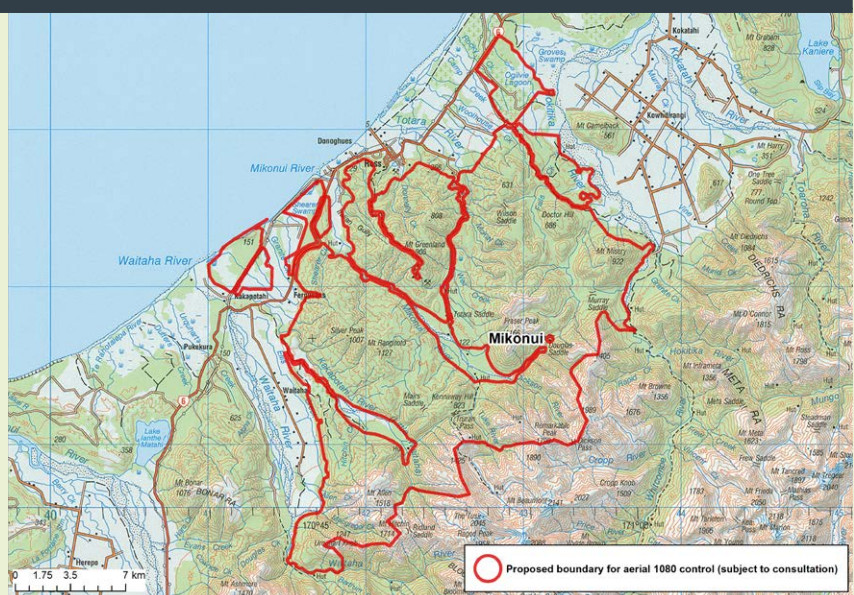
There are a number of historic TB infections in herds adjoining these blocks.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2023.



MIKONUUI

Westland



The Mikonui aerial covering approximately 38,417ha is planned for winter 2017.

The northern part of this block lies just south of Ross township. It is bounded by the Hokitika River to the north-east, the Mikonui River to the south-west and back country ranges to the east.

The southern section of this block lies north of the Waitaha farming community, and is some 19km south of Ross. It is bounded by the Mikonui River to the north, the Waitaha Valley to the south and backcountry to the east.

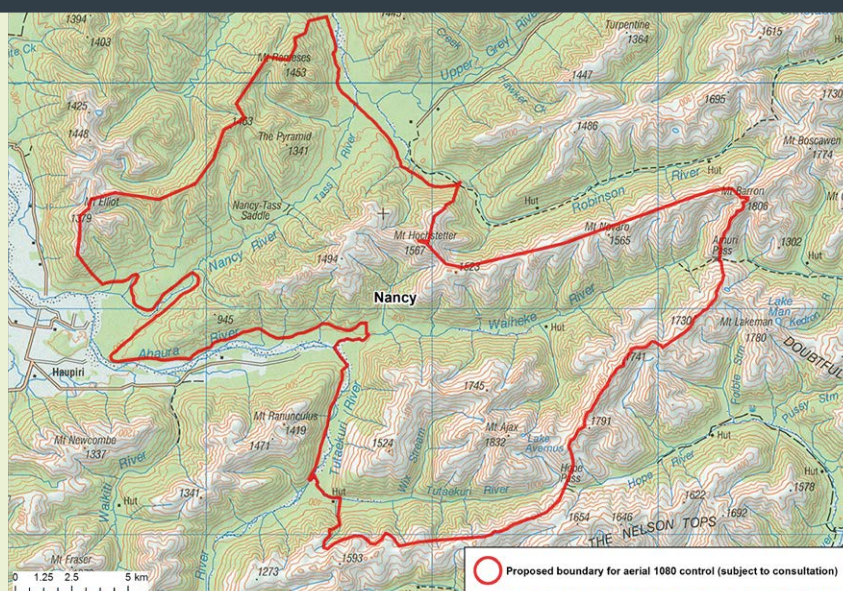
This block is extremely rugged, incorporating the Rangitoto Range that rises to 1127m and Bald Head Range at 1145m.

These aerial operations were last flown in 2010. There is a history of TB infection in local herds with one herd infected with the same TB strain as found in a possum caught within the aerial block.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2022.

NANCY

Grey District



The Nancy aerial covering approximately 22,691ha is planned for winter 2017. The project area is a back country block approximately 40km south east of Ahaura and 100km east of Greymouth. It encompasses the catchments of the Nancy and Waiheke rivers and is made up entirely of public conservation land.

Parts of this aerial operation were last completed in 2009; however it has not had aerial 1080 control before.

Three infected possums were caught in a survey carried out on the Upper Ahaura River area in 2015.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2021.

SOUTHERN PAPAROA

Buller/Grey Districts



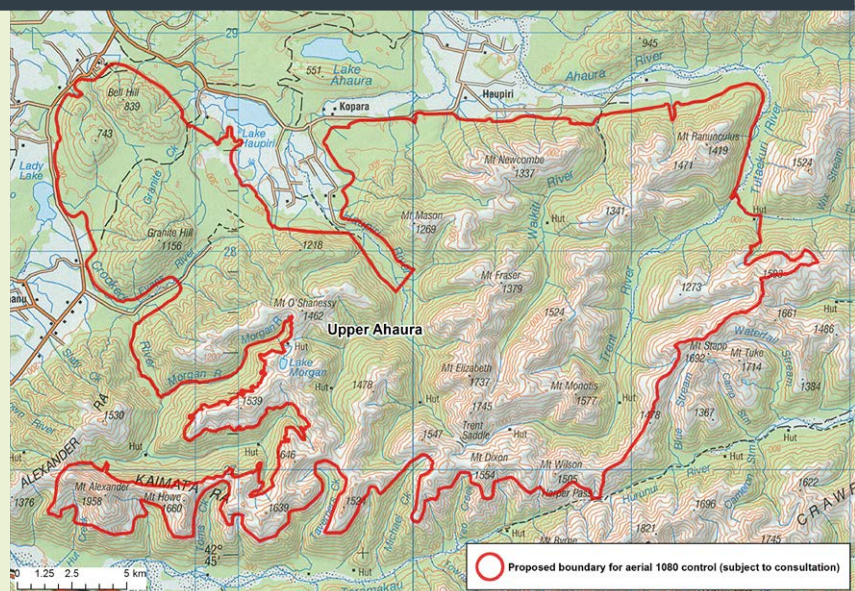
The Southern Paparoa aerial block covering approximately 26,979ha is planned for autumn/winter 2017.

The project area extends south from the true left of the Punakaiki River, to slightly north of Rapahoe. The back boundary runs along the top of the Paparoa Range.

Historic herd infection has occurred in this aerial block. TB eradication in possums is expected by 2023.

UPPER AHAURA

Grey District



The Upper Ahaura aerial covering approximately 29,918ha is planned for winter 2017. This block is situated approximately 25km north east of Lake Brunner and some 70km east of Greymouth. It encompasses the catchments of the Trent and Waikiti river catchments.

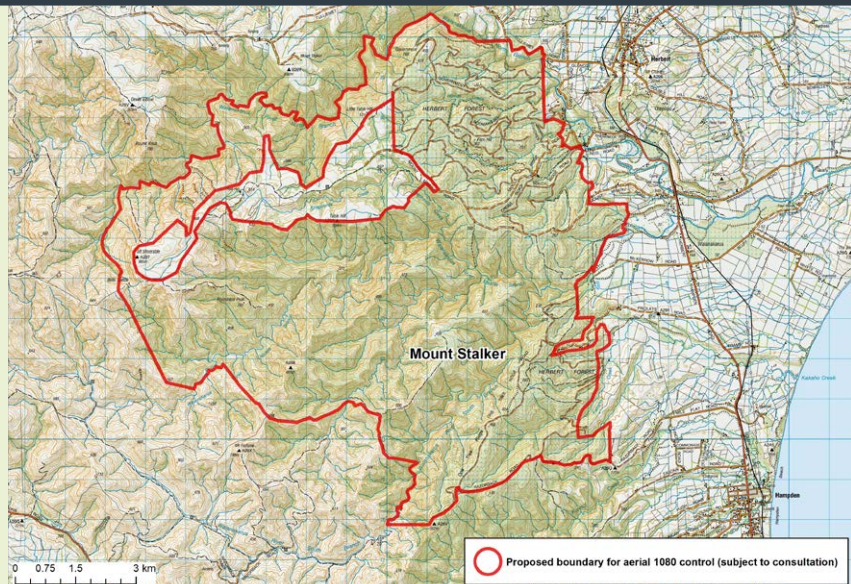
Parts of this aerial operation were last completed in 2009; however the southern half has not had aerial

1080 control before. There is a recent history of TB infection in nearby herds and infected possums were caught in a survey carried out in the Upper Haupiri River area in 2015.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2027.

MOUNT STALKER

Otago



The Mount Stalker aerial operation covering approximately 8865ha is scheduled to begin after the deer roar season in autumn 2017.

The project area comprises land between the Waianakarua River North Branch in the north, and One Tree Ridge directly south of the Waianakarua River South Branch. The area encompasses native forest from Mount Fortune and Bell Saddle in the west through to privately owned plantation forest in the east.

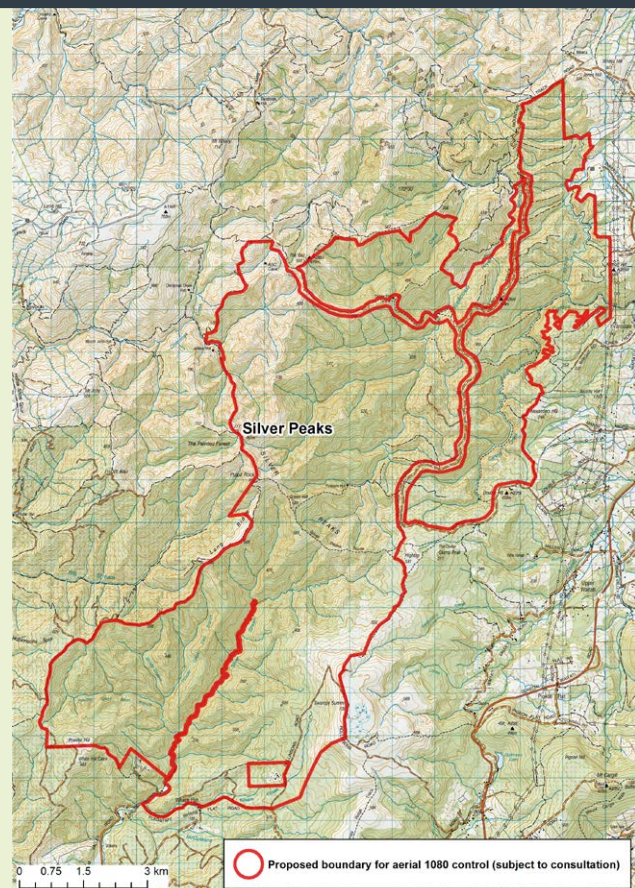
The Mount Stalker block was last controlled in winter 2008.

Mount Stalker and surrounding areas of Hamden and Pigroot have a significant history of TB infection in herds.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2026.

SILVER PEAKS

Otago



The Silver Peaks aerial operation covering approximately 8581ha is planned for autumn 2017.

The area includes a large public conservation reserve (Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve) and Silver Peaks forest. Also included are Whare Flat, Swampy Summit and the Silver Stream water catchment area. The block also includes a small number of private woodlots and plantation forest.

The Silver Peaks block was last flown in winter 2011, whilst the Upper Waitati-Silver Stream area has never received aerial control.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2035.

SHAG FOREST

Otago

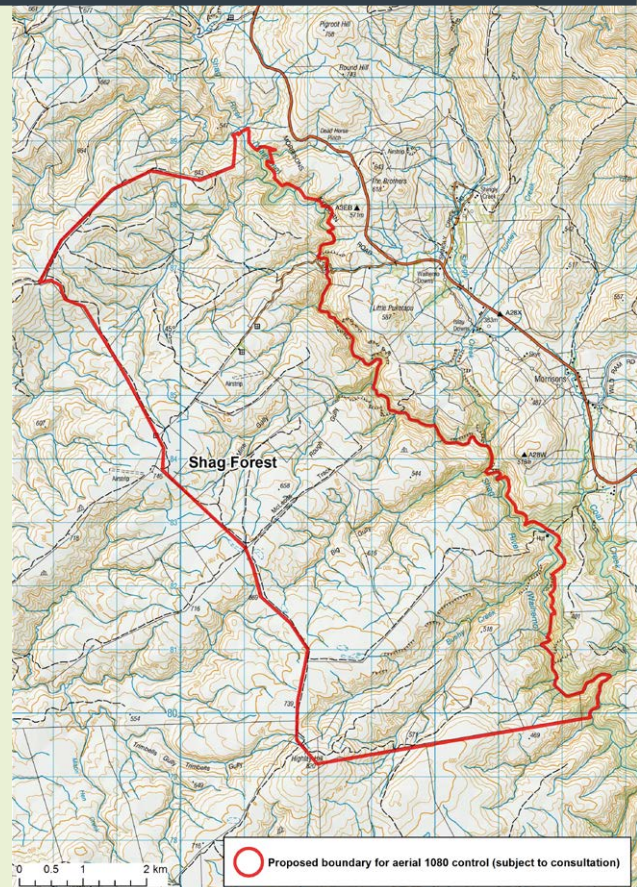
The Shag Forest aerial covering approximately 3857ha is scheduled for autumn/winter 2017.

The area extends west from State Highway 85 (The Pigroot) and includes cultivated farmland, extensive areas of tussock with scrubby gullies, and steep rocky bluffs adjacent to the Shag River, along with exotic forest and public land managed by the Department of Conservation.

The Shag Forest aerial was last flown in the 2010/11 financial year.

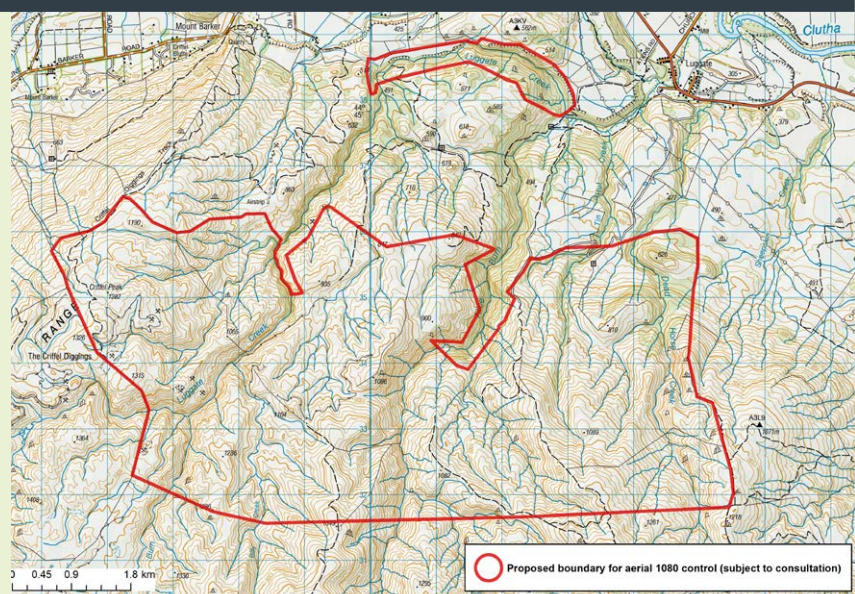
The Shag Forest and surrounding area of the Pigroot both have significant and recent histories of herd infection.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2035.



ALICE BURN

Otago



The Alice Burn aerial operation covering approximately 3912ha is planned for winter 2017.

The area comprises land between the Criffel and Pisa Ranges. It encompasses the high country throughout this area and from Criffel Peak in the west to the eastern side of Dead Horse Creek in the east. This area has a significant history of herd

infection. The block comprises extensive high country interspersed with tussock, scrub and bluffs.

The Alice Burn operation will be the first aerial and has been designed to support ground control in the surrounding area.

TB eradication in possums is expected by 2026.

HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

OSPRI encourages engagement with interested communities in the vicinity of proposed TBfree operations, and invites input before Friday 24 February 2017 through several channels:

- By email to **consultation@ospri.co.nz**
- By post to National TBfree Operations Consultation, PO Box 3412, Wellington 6140
- By phone on 0800 482 463
- Through attendance at our drop-in days and information events, dates for which are notified in local newspapers and online at **ospri.co.nz**
- By completing the form on the **tbfree.org.nz** website

Please use the form below to submit your feedback on any of the proposed possum control activities outlined in this document.

Your submission may become publicly available information. For this reason, please indicate clearly if your comments are commercially sensitive or if, for some other reason, you do not consider that they should be disclosed. Any request for non-disclosure would be considered under the Official Information Act 1982 and the Privacy Act 1993.

Once consultation closes, the submissions will be considered and any necessary response undertaken. Submissions will be used to inform the final proposals.

Name

Position and organisation

Area of interest (farmer, hunter, etc)

Phone

Email

Postal address

Please indicate your area of interest explain the reasons for your submission in the table below.

Operational area or activity	Feedback