

Predator response Paparoa Range



© DOC, Ian Gill.

A joint approach

OSPRI and the Department of Conservation (DOC) are collaborating on predator control operations in the Paparoa Range Area in 2023. This collaboration will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of achieving their respective objectives: OSPRI, to eradicate TB and DOC, to protect native plants and wildlife.

Before operations start, both agencies will jointly seek the views of Iwi and key stakeholders. Affected parties will also be consulted by Vector Control Services (VCS) who are the contractors undertaking the operations on DOC and OSPRI's behalf.

Goal 1: Protecting native species through predator control

The Paparoa Range consists of podocarp and beech forest as well as alpine tussock. It is home to vulnerable native species including great spotted kiwi.

Predator control will increase the survival rate of vulnerable native species in the region.

Introduced predators, rats, stoats and possums eat the adults, chick and eggs of these species. Rats also eat a large amount of seed which reduces the amount available for forest regeneration

and possums have devastating impacts on forest health by browsing foliage and fruit.

Without predator control these already vulnerable populations are at serious risk.

Key goals of DOC's predator control:

- Maintain and improve the health of natural areas of public conservation land
- Protect and enhance native wildlife in those areas.

Continued over page...



Roroa/great spotted kiwi

There are great spotted kiwi populations throughout the West Coast.

Without predator control:

- 9 out of every 10 kiwi chicks die before they reach breeding age.
- A 2017 study in the Northern Paparoa Range found that 100% of roroa chicks were predated by stoats.

With predator control:

A study of chick kiwi survival in Kahurangi National Park has shown that aerial 1080 operations significantly increase kiwi chick survival up to 70%. Subsequently there is higher kiwi chick survival for two seasons after 1080 use.

Verifying results

DOC undertakes predator population assessments before and after operations are completed. This provides greater knowledge about the effectiveness of the operation and whether improvements or changes need to be made on future work.

The results of rodent and stoat predator control are measured using tracking tunnels to assess predator numbers before and after control operations. The status of vulnerable species and natural areas are assessed by a range of methods, including bird counts, kiwi call counting and checking nesting success.



Goal 2: Targeting possums to eradicate TB

There is a long history of TB infection in cattle herds and wildlife in the Paparoa Range TB Management Area.

Reducing and keeping the possum population low reduces the risk of TB being spread.

OSPRI's TBfree programme uses possum control, along with regular herd testing and movement restrictions to achieve bovine TB eradication goals. Information from wild animal surveys, recent and historic findings of TB in wild animals, herd testing results and the operational history of the region are used when planning operations.

TBfree eradication goals are:

- TB freedom in cattle and deer herds by 2026
- TB freedom in possums by 2040
- TB freedom in all wildlife by 2055.

Our goals



2026

TB freedom in cattle and deer herds



2040

TB freedom in possums

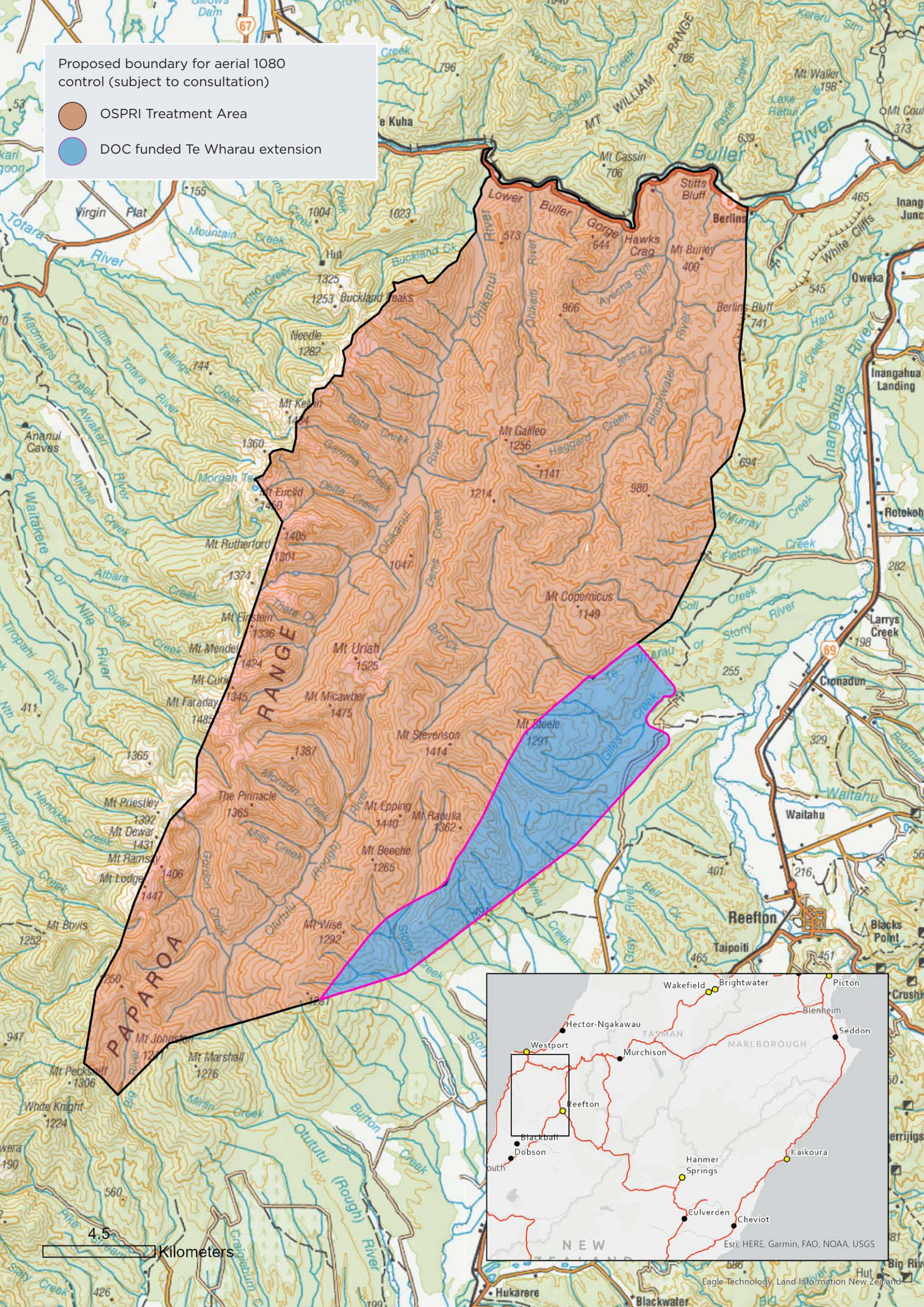


2055

Biological eradication

Proposed boundary for aerial 1080 control (subject to consultation)

- OSPRI Treatment Area
- DOC funded Te Wharau extension





Aerial control

Aerial control using 1080 means large areas can be effectively treated in a short time frame. It is often used in rugged and remote areas that are otherwise difficult to treat. It supports current ground control in the surrounding farmland areas and limits reinvasion.

Application rates are low, usually 2kg of bait per hectare with each bait containing 0.15% 1080. This is the equivalent of dropping 4-6 baits in the area the size of a tennis court.

✓ Biodegradable

1080 is biodegradable which means it is broken down by micro-organisms in water and soil into harmless elements. It does not leave permanent residues in water, soil, plants or animals.

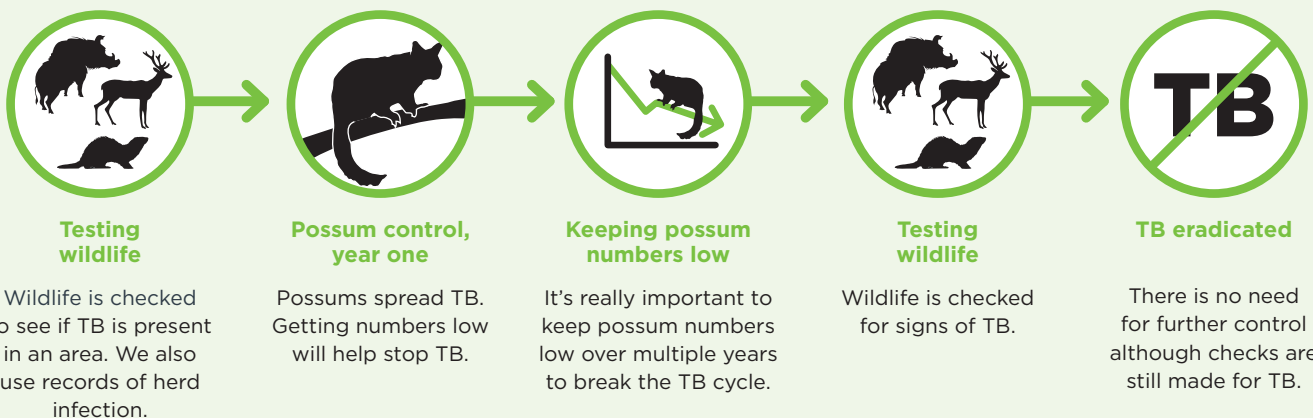
✓ Naturally occurring

The active component occurs naturally in many plants in Australia, South America and Africa as a defence against browsing animals.



The road to TB eradication

OSPRI's operations are time-limited. First, the possum population is reduced to low numbers, sometimes through an aerial operation. It is then maintained at a low level over several years to break the disease cycle. After control operations, checks are made to see if any TB can still be found in wildlife. If there is none, the area is declared TB free.





Timeframe

The aerial operations will begin in July 2023. There will be a pre-feed application of non-toxic cereal baits to prime the possums and rodents to eat the toxic baits which are applied 1-2 weeks afterwards. Toxic cereal pellets contain 0.15% of 1080 and are dyed green. The pre-feed cereal baits are sandy coloured (not-dyed). Dates will be weather dependant.

Planning

Before the operation, Vector Control Services (VCS) will visit the affected landowners and occupiers to consult on effects. They will discuss boundary issues, water supply safety, the management of any risks to dogs and livestock and how to reduce any effects of the operation.

Consents from Iwi, affected landowners, the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Health are required for this operation.



Notification

Affected landowners and occupiers will be contacted again before operations start, notices will be published in local newspapers and warning signs will be placed at all likely access points to the operational area.



TBfree

TBfree is an OSPRI programme



ospri.co.nz



0800 482 463

Important information

Warning signs will be placed at all main access points to the operational area. 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 is an offence

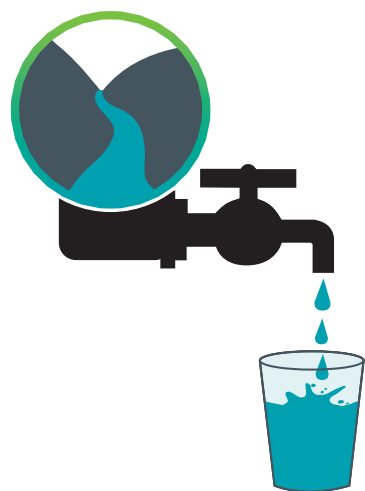
to sell meat products that have been exposed to 1080. Hunting can resume approximately four months following the control work.

Please observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about the pesticide. These signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in the baits or carcasses. When the signs are officially removed, you can resume normal activities in the area.



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 into the treatment area whilst it is under caution.



Drinking water recommendations

1080 is water soluble and quickly dilutes to unmeasurable, non-toxic concentrations before it biodegrades. Tests on several thousand water samples taken after aerial 1080 operations over many years have shown no threat to water supplies.

Local health authorities apply strict conditions to aerial operations so that drinking water supplies are not affected, and mitigations can be put in place where necessary.



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

Information and operational factsheets are available online at:

ospri.co.nz
doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme/operations

OSPRI

Upper South Island office
PO Box 8674, Riccarton,
Christchurch 8440
P 03 363 3090
E vectorsni@ospri.co.nz
W ospri.co.nz

Department of Conservation

Mawhera/Greymouth office
High street, Greymouth, 7805
P 03 768 0427
E Greymouth_office@doc.govt.nz

Contractor

Vector Control Services
P Free phone 0508 141 268
E info@vcs.net.nz
W wrc.govt.nz/environment/biosecurity/vector-control-services