

Central Clarence 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. Possums are identified as the main carrier and transmitter (vector) of TB to stock, resulting in infected farmed cattle and deer herds across New Zealand if not controlled. Controlling disease prevents livestock production losses and protects the international reputation of New Zealand's dairy, beef and deer products. OSPRI uses possum control, along with regular herd testing and movement restrictions, to achieve 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

OSPRI is planning a possum control operation over approximately 5,000 hectares in the Central Clarence area. The operational area is located 15 kilometres downstream of Quail Flat, between the Clarence River and the Seaward Kaikoura Range (see map overleaf) and aims to effectively reduce possum numbers to a level where TB cannot be sustained in the wildlife population.

What to expect from the operation

Aerial control effectively treats large areas in a short time-frame. It is often used in rugged and remote areas that are otherwise difficult and expensive to treat.

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 once broken down.

Deer repellent will be used in all prefeed and toxic bait across the entire treatment area to support deer population survival rates and reduce by-kill.

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 will be applied by helicopter.

The repellent component of the bait assists in reducing its attractiveness to deer as a non-target species.

The Central Clarence operation is 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.

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The method

Broadcast methods will be used for all bait applications in the Central Clarence operation with an application rate of 1kg/ha. This lower sowing rate is supported by recent trials in the area which showed a successful reduction of possum numbers to low levels.

Research has shown that the home range of possums in the high country terrain is larger than that of forest dwelling possums, so they are still likely to encounter and consume a lethal dose of poison even with the reduced application rate. This behaviour has been noted in high country areas of the northern South Island and allows OSPRI to achieve disease management outcomes with lower bait densities.

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 the Clarence 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

Our goals



2026

TB freedom in cattle and deer herds



2040

TB freedom in possums



2055

Biological eradication

1080, in which she strongly endorsed its continued use in New Zealand. Please visit pce.parliament.nz to read this report.

What happens now?

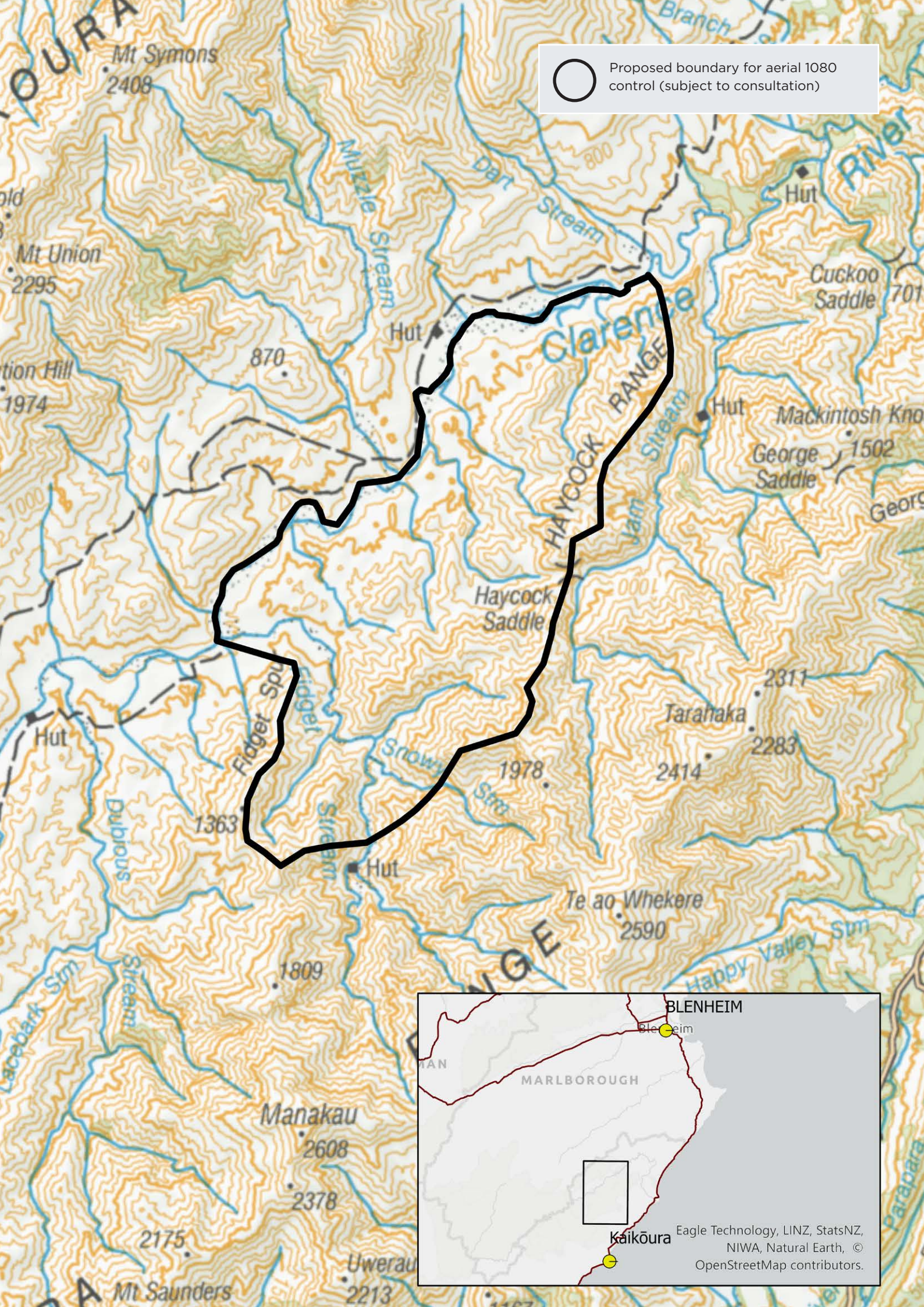
This operation will commence from May 2022. A contractor will be doing the work on behalf of OSPRI's TBfree programme.

Before the operation, affected landowners and occupiers will be contacted and visited by one of our contractors. They will discuss any boundary issues, water supply safety and the management of any risks to dogs and livestock. Consents from the Department of Conservation and

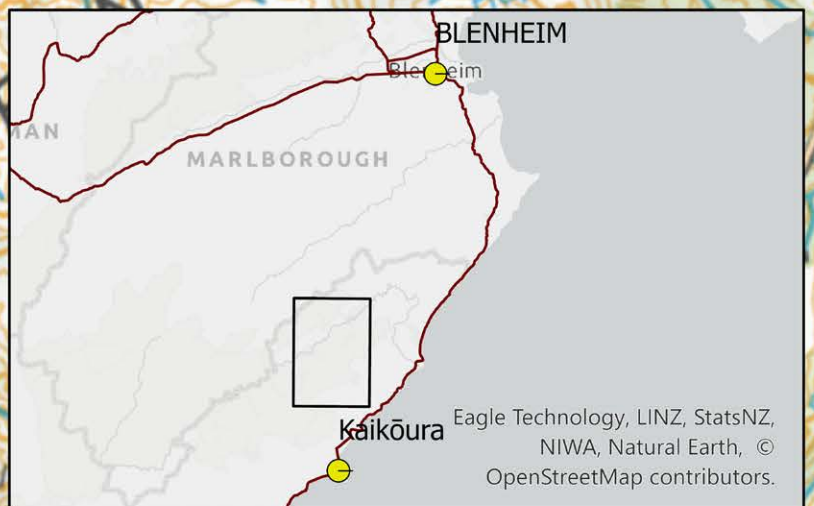
the Ministry of Health are required for this operation. Affected landowners and occupiers will be contacted again before the operation starts, notices will be published in local newspapers and warning signs will be placed at all likely access points to the operational area.

Biodiversity benefits

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



Proposed boundary for aerial 1080 control (subject to consultation)



Eagle Technology, LINZ, StatsNZ,
NIWA, Natural Earth, ©
OpenStreetMap contributors.

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

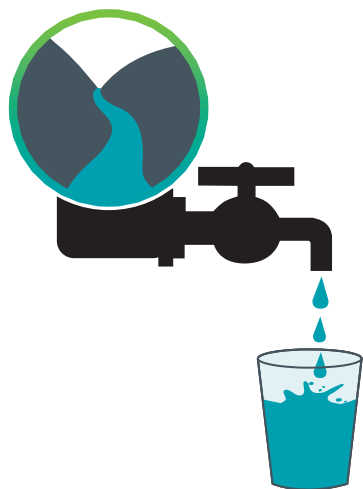
the operational area for human or pet consumption. It's an offence to sell meat products that have been exposed to 1080. Hunting can resume approximately four months following the control work.

Please observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about the pesticide. Warning signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in 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 to bait or poisoned carcasses which remain toxic to dogs until they have fully decomposed.



Drinking water recommendations

While toxin application takes place, and for 72 hours afterward, avoid taking water for drinking and cooking purposes from streams, lakes and tarns.

Local authorities apply strict conditions to aerial operations so that public drinking water supplies are not contaminated, and testing of any public supply is undertaken.



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

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Contractor

Excell Biosecurity

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Links to further information

- Controlling bovine TB and how and why 1080 is used in New Zealand: 1080facts.co.nz
- Recreational hunting, 'TB Information for Hunters' factsheet: ospri.co.nz
- Commercial hunting: Ministry for Primary Industries and Department of Conservation websites.