

Constitution Hill Bovine TB Control Operation



Ospri's TBfree programme

OSPRI manages the TBfree programme through the National Pest Management Plan under the Biosecurity Act 1993. Controlling disease protects the international reputation of New Zealand's dairy, beef and deer products, prevents livestock production losses and protects our ability to safely consume wild meat caught while hunting. The TBfree programme aims to manage and eradicate bovine tuberculosis (TB) from New Zealand's domestic cattle and deer and wild animal populations. Possums are identified as the main carrier and transmitter (vector) of

TB resulting in infected farmed cattle and deer herds across New Zealand if not controlled. We use vector 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 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

There is a long history of TB infection in cattle herds and wildlife in the Clarence Area. Monitoring has shown that further aerial control work is needed in this area to reduce the possum population and minimise the risk of the disease spreading through wild animal populations and into farmed cattle and deer.

OSPRI is planning an aerial possum control operation in the Constitution Hill area (see map over page). It will cover 9,500 hectares and aim to effectively reduce possum numbers to a level where TB cannot be sustained in the wildlife population.

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Our goals



2026

TB freedom in cattle and deer herds



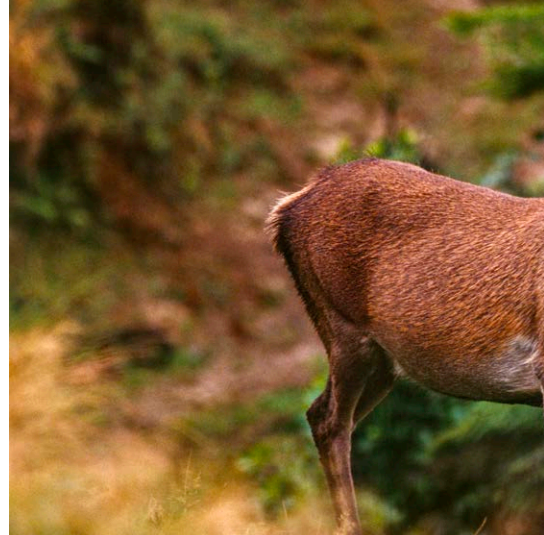
2040

TB freedom in possums



2055

Biological eradication



What to expect from the operation

Aerial control effectively treats large areas in a short timeframe. 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.

The Constitution Hill aerial 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.

Possums are the main target of this operation, deer repellent is used to mitigate other non-target species by kill.

Deer repellent

In recent years there has been significant investment into research for a deer repellent suited to the open nature of dryland habitat found in this high country region.

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

Methodology

A standard aerial operation uses the Broadcast Method to disperse bait. For the Constitution Hill Aerial, the intention is to use the Strip Sow Method of application.

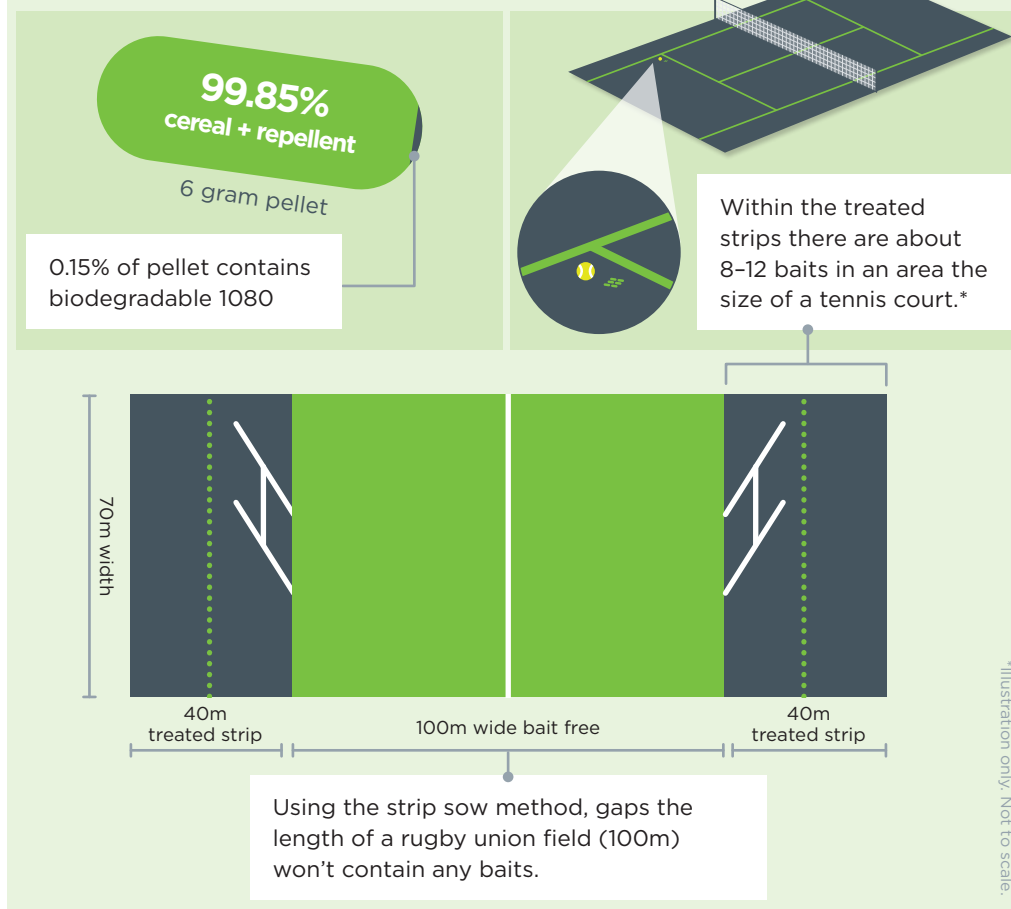
In this terrain, the possums forage more widely and have greater home ranges than possums in forested habitats. This allows the use of untreated zones, knowing that possums within the untreated zones will forage into

the treated strip areas during the toxic period. This behaviour has been reported in the Northern South Island High Country and allows OSPRI to achieve disease management outcomes with lower bait densities and is unique to this habitat type.

Timeframe

The aerial operation will begin in August 2021 with the distribution by helicopter of non-toxic, tan-coloured cereal pellets

Minimal amounts of 1080 in bait





containing deer repellent. This “prefeed” gives possums a taste for the pellets and overcomes bait shyness. At the same time, the repellent component of the bait assists in mitigating the interest of non-target species such as deer.

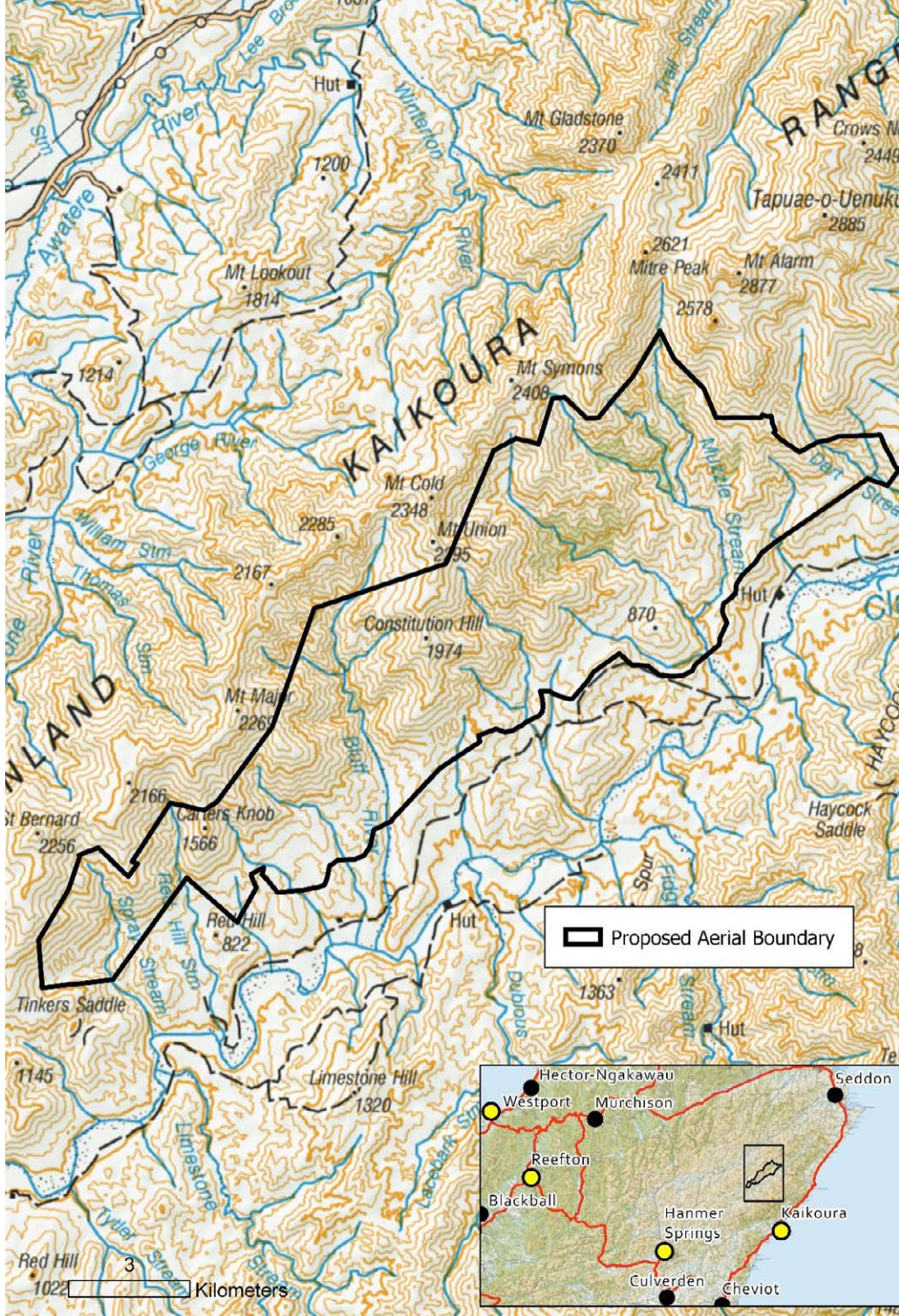
One to two weeks later (weather dependant), toxic, green cereal pellets containing repellent are applied via helicopter.

What happens now

This operation is planned for August 2021. A contractor will be doing the control on behalf of OSPRI’s TBfree Programme. Before the operation, affected landowners and occupiers will be visited by the contractor. They will discuss boundary concerns, 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 as well as interested parties 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.



ospri.co.nz



0800 482 463

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 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.

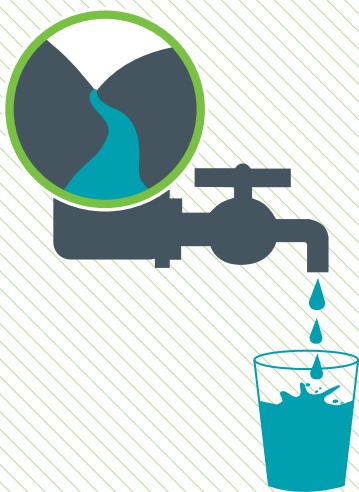
Please observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about the pesticide. Warning signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in the baits or carcasses. When the signs are officially removed, you can resume normal activities in the area.



Please note that dogs are prohibited on Constitution Hill.

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.

Dogs must not be brought into treatment areas until the warning signs have been officially removed.



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.

Where provided at huts and campsites, use alternative water supplies or bring in your own supply.

Local health authorities apply strict conditions to aerial operations so that public drinking water supplies are not contaminated, and testing of 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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For more information on controlling bovine TB and how and why 1080 is used in New Zealand, visit 1080facts.co.nz

For guidance on recreational hunting see our factsheet 'TB Information for Hunters' at ospri.co.nz

For guidance on commercial hunting see the Ministry for Primary Industries and Department of Conservation websites.