

# National Aerial Operations Plan 2024

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**This document outlines proposed TBfree aerial possum control operations in 2024.**

OSPRI, which manages the TBfree programme, is seeking specific feedback from people and organisations who may be affected by the proposed aerial disease control operations, including landowners and land users, farmers, hunters, and people involved in outdoor recreation.

Details about how to provide feedback are on the back cover, page 22. For further information, go to **[www.ospri.co.nz/have-your-say](http://www.ospri.co.nz/have-your-say)**.

Please note that specific details and operational boundaries proposed in this document are indicative only and may change as a result of further planning and feedback. Final details will be communicated directly to affected parties, and through letters, public notifications, media and at **[ospri.co.nz](http://ospri.co.nz)**.



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# The TBfree programme



## The TBfree programme

Possoms are the wildlife source of TB infection in cattle and deer in New Zealand, so possum control is a key activity for the TBfree programme, alongside livestock TB testing and movement control.

The TBfree programme aims to achieve the following:

- livestock is free of TB by 2026,
- possums are free of TB by 2040
- TB is eradicated from New Zealand by 2050.

These objectives require maintaining very low possum numbers for significant periods of time through

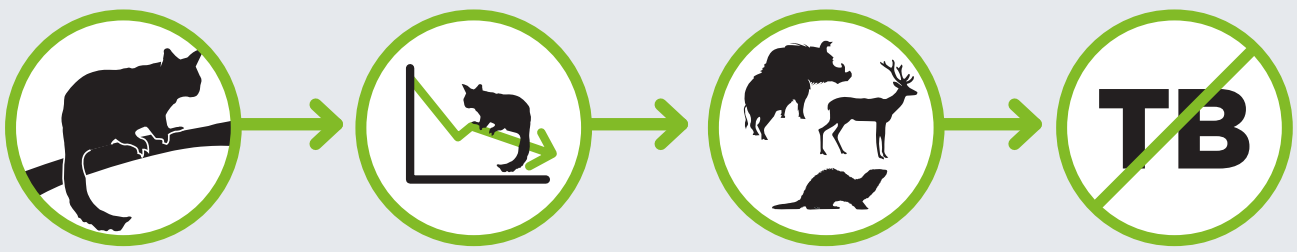
possum control. Most possum control work (more than 85%) is ground-based. In some areas, aerial 1080 operations are more cost-effective than other control methods, more efficient or the only effective method available.

As the TBfree programme progresses towards the eradication of TB from wildlife and livestock, possum control methods are constantly assessed and reprioritised to ensure the best use of resources to achieve eradication goals.

## 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.



### Possom control, year one

Possoms spread TB. Getting numbers low will help stop TB.

### Keeping possum numbers low

It's really important to keep possum numbers low over multiple years to break the TB cycle.

### Testing wildlife

Wildlife is checked for signs of TB.

### TB eradicated

There is no need for further control although checks are still made for TB.

## Using 1080 for possum control

The careful use of biodegradable 1080 to control possums has been a key tool in significantly reducing TB in cattle and deer herds.

Sodium fluoroacetate (1080) is one of the most widely researched pest control tools. There have been extensive investigations into its use in New Zealand by both the Environmental Protection Agency and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.

It has proven particularly effective in aerial baiting programmes to control possums over large

areas of land or forest, or where the terrain makes access on foot difficult or inefficient.

Conservation and farming leaders have voiced strong support for the continued use of 1080 in New Zealand.

### Success to date

TB eradicated from more than 3.76 million hectares.

Infected herds reduced to 19 as at 30 June 2023 (down from 695 in 2000).

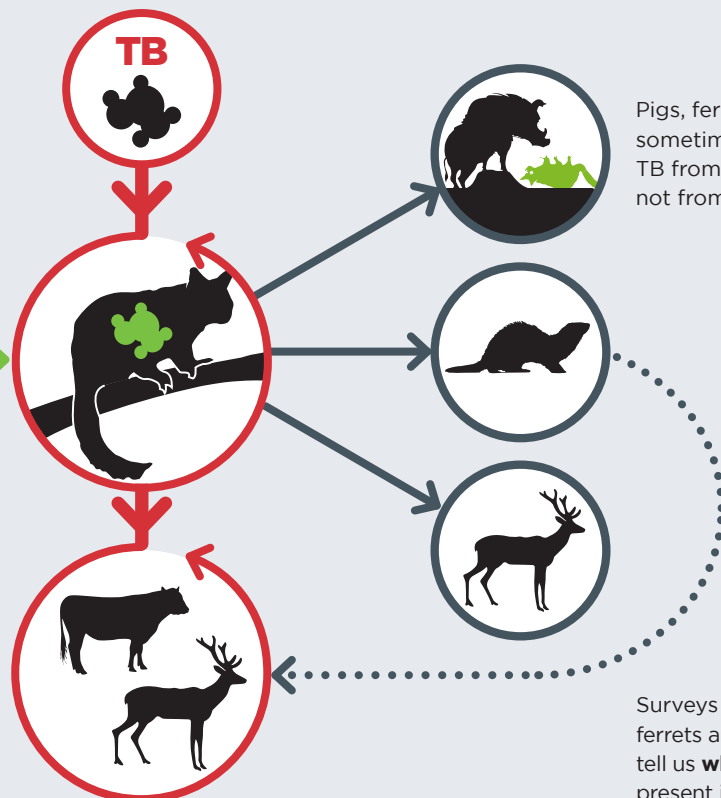
### How we use 1080

Aerial application of 1080 is the most efficient and cost-effective method for controlling introduced possums and other predators such as rats and stoats over large areas with difficult access. 1080 is the only toxin registered for aerial application that ensures possum numbers are kept low enough to eradicate TB.

## How we find and control the TB infection cycle

The **red line** tracks the path of TB infection within the possum population, circulating and infecting maintenance hosts, with a weak link between ferrets and livestock.

Possum control breaks the disease cycle in possums and stops them from infecting farmed cattle/deer.



Pigs, ferrets and sometimes deer get TB from possums but not from each other.

Possums can maintain TB within their own population and cause about 50% of herd infection cases.

Surveys of pigs, ferrets and deer help tell us **where** TB is still present in possums.

## Case study

# Forests do not fall silent from 1080, 10-year study shows

A 10-year study has found no significant negative impact of 1080 poison on bird and insect populations in the Wairarapa and instead points to the biodiversity benefits of widespread pest control.

The study was conducted by Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington with results published in the New Zealand Journal of Ecology and the international journal, Conservation Biology. It tracked the populations of 12 bird species in Remutaka and Aorangi before, during, and after three aerial 1080 operations were used for predator control in the area over a 10-year period. The results showed there was an overall positive response of native bird species' populations when pest mammals were controlled by aerial 1080.

Parallel monitoring of native beetles and wētā also found no negative effects of aerial 1080, and instead showed that when rodent populations were reduced the abundance of beetles and wētā increased.

Te Herenga Waka's Stephen Hartley, an associate professor

at the University's School of Biological Sciences, is one of the researchers and authors of the study. He says the motivation for the study was to see what the principal causes of changes in bird populations were – in the context of mammalian predators (rodents, stoats and possums), mast years and aerial operations.

"It was Dr Olivia Vergara's PhD that examined the responses of the insects in the area, and Dr Nyree Fea who demonstrated the positive response of native bird species' populations when pest mammals are controlled."

**“ Mast years, when trees produce abundant fruit and seed, benefit many forest birds, but only if pests are simultaneously controlled. This is something that can only currently be achieved effectively and at scale with aerial 1080.”**

Dr Hartley says the wider study has been a significant undertaking, involving committed teams of research assistants visiting seven sites on six occasions every year for ten years. The data collected, forming the basis of three MSc and two PhD students' theses.

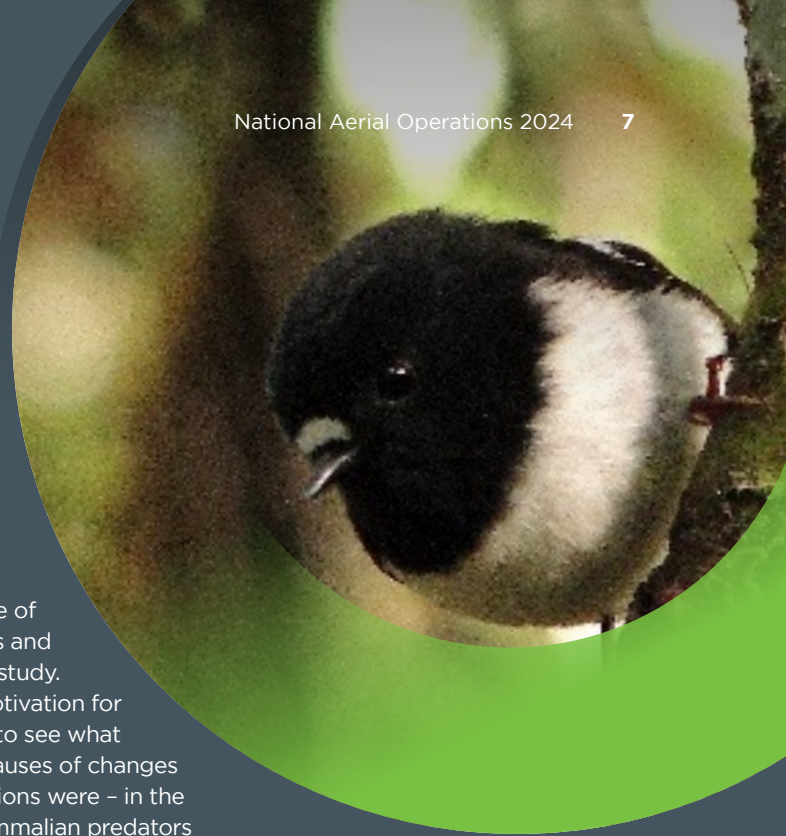
OSPRI's Research Manager, Richard Curtis, says the study proved that 1080 was an effective

tool for pest control and had a positive impact on native bird populations and insects. "We found that the forests did not "fall silent" following the use of 1080, on three separate occasions. The significance of this study is its duration and the consistency of the findings over 10 years."

The research was commissioned by OSPRI with the intention of looking into the effects of 1080 on the forest ecosystem, including birds and insects.

Dr Curtis says the results of these studies are 'reassuring', demonstrating that 1080 can be used to control pests without harming native birds.

"While our long-term research programmes continue to look for alternatives to 1080, with technology playing an ever-greater role in pest control, these studies show that 1080 is an effective tool for pest control, with flow-on benefits for native fauna. For now, it remains the only effective pest control option at scale, helping to eradicate TB from possums across millions of hectares of remote bush around the country. Moreover, as its use becomes ever more refined, it is important to continue to monitor the impact of 1080 on all mammalian predators and native biodiversity."



## Case study

# Coming up the home straight

Over the past decade OSPRI, has been edging closer to eliminating bovine TB from New Zealand.

Pest management is a major part of the TBfree programme with aerial and ground control the main form of control for possums, the main spreader. While much progress has been made, we are not there yet.

An example of how the eradication programme is working can be seen in the upper South Island high country of Molesworth Station and the neighbouring Muzzle and Bluff Stations. With the recent 1080 aerial operations farmers in the area are feeling positive that their properties may soon be clear of TB.

As a kid, Bluff Station's Hamish Murray remembers accompanying his father to sell cattle on their property. "TB has been an incredible part of our business all along. Just the annual testing, the pre-movement testing, the time that it takes to get around on a property the size of ours which is 35kms from the front to the back."

Hamish's father Richard has been on the property since 1976 and says it's been a slow, difficult process, but huge progress has been made over the years. "They originally told us we'd have to live with TB but we were determined to get through it. With the research and development that's been done

and the continual persistence, we've achieved the goal."

For Hamish, one of the keys to having a successful strategy is cooperation and unity with neighbouring farmers. "Ultimately there are no TB infected possum populations around the edges of our property, but if the leakage that comes from the far end of the Bluff or from the Muzzle or the Clarence Reserve comes this end, and if we neglect to manage those possum populations in this area then we run the risk of that exploding." Jim Ward of Molesworth couldn't agree more. As he explains, it wasn't that long ago prior to 2000 when it seemed like TB was beaten so they walked away, and then there was a massive explosion of herd breakdowns. "That is never going to happen again," muses Jim. "All the people who had knowledge of that period at OSPRI are not going to forget, and they won't let the country down."

**“ They originally told us we'd have to live with it [TB], but we were determined to get through it. ”**

OSPRI's senior veterinarian Kevin Crews who's been in the disease management game a long time says it's been a progressive strategy over the past 50 plus



**From left:** OSPRI regional partner Heather Alexander, Guy Redfern (Muzzle Station), OSPRI Senior Vet Kevin Crews, Colin Nimmo (Muzzle Station)

years of driving it back to where it's come from. "We're now in, what I like to describe as the home stretch. Getting TB out of the Clarence catchment is a critical part of the success not just of the strategy in this local area, but the TBfree plan nationally."

Another reason why this area is critical explains Crews, is because of the grand scale, and the fact that we're on the cusp of eradicating TB over literally half a million hectares, which is a very good indication that the national TBfree plan itself can be ultimately successful.

Muzzle station farmers Guy Redfern and Colin Nimmo, like their Bluff and Molesworth station neighbours have been dealing with TB for more than 30 years says one of the offshoot benefits of getting rid of possums in the area, is that the bird life has absolutely flourished.

For Colin, the continuing story of TB in New Zealand is that people need to realise it will spread if not controlled and the job needs to keep going. "If you take your foot off the hammer it'll just come back again. It will be easier to finish the job off now than let it come back."



## Proposed aerial operations for 2024

These maps outline the new aerial disease control activities proposed for 2024. Each region has a different disease control focus based on the status of infected herds and wildlife.

Aerial operations cover about 15% of proposed operational activity.

The majority of the remaining work involves ground-based pest control (50%) and making up the balance wildlife surveys (35%). For detail on the specific aerial operations proposed, please refer to the page numbers in the table of contents.

Specific details and operational boundaries are indicative only and may change as a result of further planning and feedback. Final details will be communicated directly to affected parties, and through letters, public notifications, media and at **ospri.co.nz**.



Northern Remutaka

### Control operations area coverage 2024

Proposed activity	North Island	Upper South Island	Lower South Island
Aerial operations	24,898 ha	187,908 ha	0 ha



## Regional overviews

### North Island

Aerial control proposed for the Northern Remutaka's extends from the northern edge of the Southern Remutaka and complements the aerial operation that was completed in 2022. It also leverages off recent ground control activity in the Southern Wairarapa and will coincide with ground control in the Mangaroa Kaitoke and Hutt Valley areas.

The Northern Remutaka's aerial is important because it will achieve large scale possum population reduction which in turn protects herds on neighbouring farmland from infected wildlife. It also compliments TBfree aerial operations in the Southern Remutaka's and Aorangi, and possum control by other regional groups in the Kaitoke water catchment. Working with our stakeholders ensures mutually beneficial outcomes including TB eradication and biodiversity improvements within the Wellington and Wairarapa regions.

We continue to work on the extensive possum control effort in the Hawke's Bay. Since 2019 when livestock TB cases were detected, the the numbers of livestock TB cases has reduced. We are also continuing to work in the Central North Island to protect herds. Due to the unique landscape within the Rangipo operational area, consultation continues to progress with the intention to complete within the next 18 months.

### Upper South Island

On the West Coast, aerial control is proposed for the Upper Ahaura Nancy block behind Haupiri and will complement DOC's Arthurs Pass West operation which was completed in 2022. Aerial treatment is also proposed for the Hohonu Range south of Lake Brunner and will provide further disease protection for

the Taramakau Valley following the Otira Taipo operation that was completed in 2022. Both the Upper Ahaura Nancy and Hohonu operations are critical for the TBfree programme due to their proximity to the Waiheke and Taramakau River, where disease in possums has been confirmed.

Aerial control in 2024 will leverage off recent aerial activity in the area to achieve large scale possum population reduction. There is also an opportunities to co-ordinate with the Predator Free Te Kinga project.

Buller South will have its final round of aerial treatment- an area where TB has been confirmed in possums. With DOC aerial operations to the south, treating Buller South will result in near complete coverage of the Buller Coast TB management area.

Finally, the Inangahua West operation will provide a final knock back of residual possum populations to support the TBfree programme.

In the North Canterbury and Marlborough high country, aerial operations are proposed to deal with TB infected possums in the Clarence, Puhū Puhū Valleys and Rainbow (initially planned for 2023). The Clarence Reserve North and Clarence West operations straddle the northern portions of the Clarence River and will complement the successful control operation across Molesworth Station and Clarence Reserve South in 2023. Low sow specifications (less 1080 per hectare) have proven successful in this habitat type and will be implemented across the aerial operations in the Clarence Reserve north and west in 2024.

Moving east towards the Kaikoura coast, the Mt Alexander aerial is a new addition to the TBfree control programme. Aerial control is critical to ensure disease does not impact herds south of the Clarence River mouth.

Kea mitigation as well as restrictions around the use of deer repellent remain high priority issues for the Upper South Island team in terms of aerial delivery. The team will continue to work closely with DOC and affected stakeholders to ensure planned operations are delivered responsibly.

### Lower South Island

There are no aerial operations being proposed for 2024.

For more information on the 2023 aerals that were proposed in 2022 but delayed to 2024 please refer to last year's *National Aerial Operations Plan* and the *Response Summary*.

## Feedback from communities

This summary of OSPRI's proposed aerial pest management programme for 2024 has been prepared to give interested and affected parties an opportunity to provide feedback about the parameters of the operations, such as the possibility of using deer repellent, boundaries and the timing of the operation from a seasonal perspective.

OSPRI makes informed decisions by assessing feedback about the parameters of the operations, not the methodology or the use of 1080. While OSPRI is not responsible for regulation of 1080 all its operations are subject to regulations administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

## Opportunities for feedback

We are keen to listen to the views of all communities interested in the proposed aerial programme across New Zealand. The areas of operation are detailed in the next section of this document, and we input is encouraged on the form at the back of this document.

# North Island Aerial Operations 2024



# Northern Remutaka

## Terrain and operational area

The Northern Remutaka Aerial project extends north to south along the Remutaka Range. OSPRI's proposed operational area adjoins the northern boundary of the Southern Remutaka aerial operation carried out in 2022, while the northern boundary follows the Remutaka Hill road at State Highway 2 (SH2). The eastern boundary runs along the bush margin of the Remutaka range, from SH2 just outside Featherston down to the Papatahi crossing track. The western boundary runs along the edge of the Reservoir Road, past the Wainuiomata Water Treatment Plant, parallel to the Mt Climie road and the Tunnel Gully track and crosses the Remutaka Rail Trail walkway before meeting up with SH2.

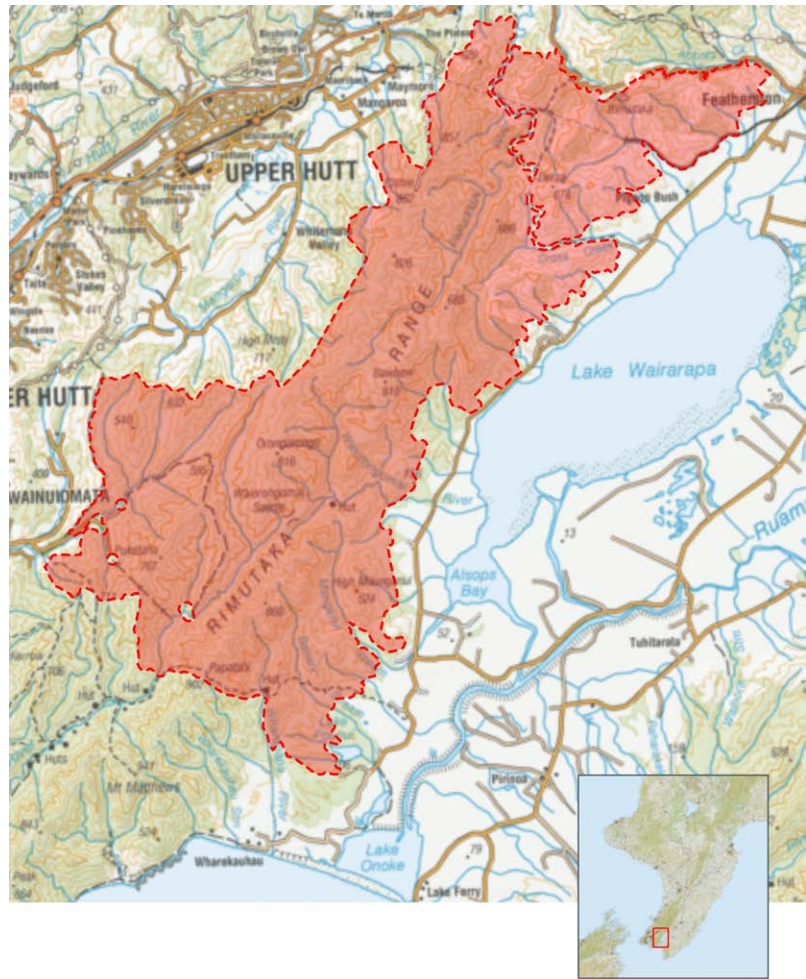
The area consists of public conservation land administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC) as well as Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) reserve and private land.

## TB management area

This operation falls entirely within the Remutaka Hutt TMA.

## Consultation and collaboration

OSPRI has already collaborated closely with affected stakeholders, such as Wellington Water, Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Ministry of Health, to identify areas that will need to be excluded and/or have buffers applied for this aerial control. This includes the Wainuiomata Water Treatment Plant and water intakes,



Remutaka Rail Trail, Remutaka crossing lookout and trig, and the airstrip and rifle range at the North-Western edge of the aerial. Ongoing collaboration with Wellington Water to determine safety and sampling protocols for the treatment plant are also occurring.

Pre-consultation surveys have been sent to any landowners whose land is identified as being within and/or directly adjoining the proposed aerial treatment area.

Additional consultation with Mana Whenua, private landowners, DOC, local councils and recreational groups, such as NZDA and NZ Scouts, are ongoing to ensure planned operations are delivered responsibly.

## Recent TB infection history

The Remutaka Hutt area has a long history of TB infection, with

the most recent infected wildlife sources identified in 2010, 2011, and 2012. Once TB infection has been confirmed in wildlife, we do not continue to spend resources looking for more, instead we carry out control to decrease possum populations to densities that that cannot sustain the disease.

## Operational control method preferred

With the long history of TB in the area, thorough coverage of possum habitat is required to ensure a high level of confidence of effective control throughout the operational area. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease cycle in wildlife and achieve disease management objectives. In addition, due to the rugged nature of the terrain, size and the inaccessibility of this block, aerial control is the preferred method.

**South Island  
Aerial Operations  
2024**



# Upper South Island

## Buller South (West Coast)

### Terrain and operational area

The Buller South aerial boundary extends south of Charleston and moves northeast to the Buller Gorge, encompassing the Awakiri and the Totara River valleys. The block extends inland by some 10km to its eastern boundary in the Paparoa Ranges just west of Mt Euclid including Buckland Peaks. The northern boundary is bounded by thick bush and the SH6 Westport to Greymouth highway.

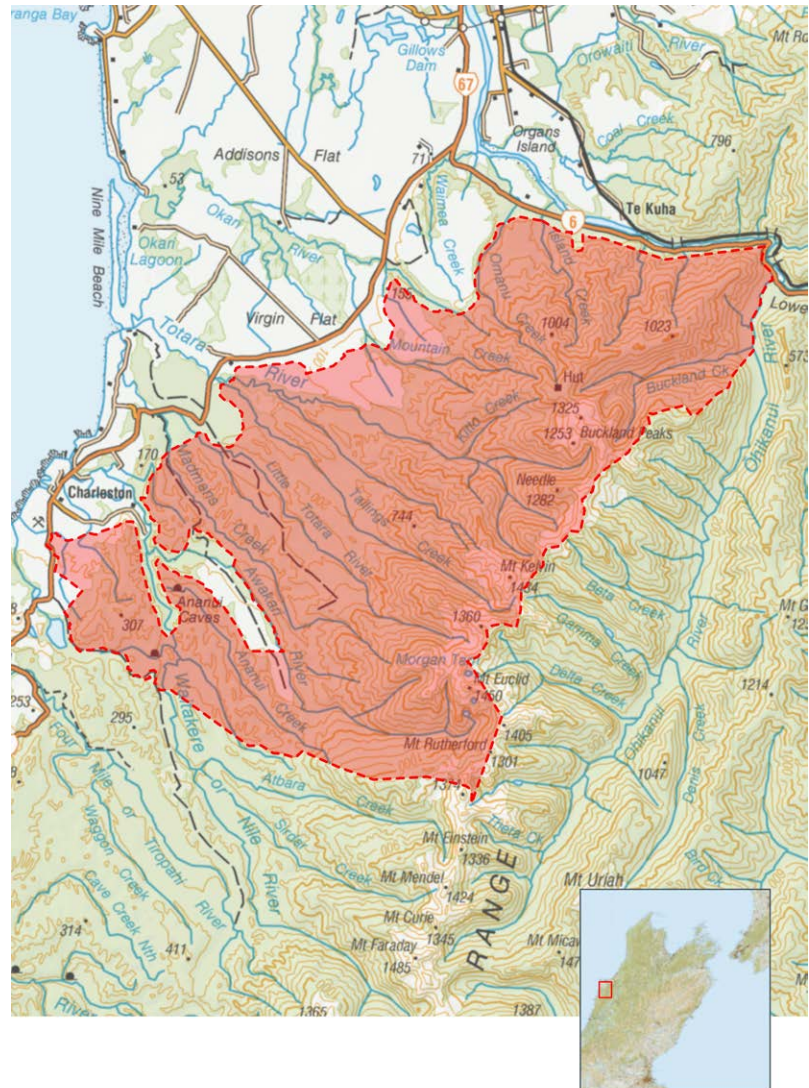
### TB management area

The planned operational area is within the Buller Coast TMA.

### Consultation and collaboration

OSPRI's proposed operational area is bounded along its southern boundary by DOC's Punakaiki aerial operation. OSPRI is in contact with DOC to ensure boundaries meet effectively to avoid gaps in operational treatment.

The Buller South aerial operation falls within 'remote' kea habitat. Because the block has been treated in the last five years (2020), completion by August 2025 complies with Kea Code of Practice (COP) requirements. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to ensure impacts on Kea are minimised.



### Recent TB infection history

Wildlife related herd infection was discovered in 2015 followed by the confirmation of TB in possums up the Awakiri and Nile Rivers in 2017/18. Two aerals (planned for 2020 and 2024) were required to ensure OSPRI achieves herd TB freedom before 2026.

### Operational control method preferred

With TB proven to be present in the area it is imperative that complete coverage of possum habitat is achieved. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease

cycle in wildlife and achieve disease management objectives. Kea Code of Practice requirements mean deer repellent is not permitted for application in Kea habitat.

## Inangahua West (West Coast)

### Terrain and operational area

The southern boundary of the operational area is State Highway 7 at Maimai, this area includes the small tributaries on the true left of the Little Grey River. The Northern boundary is the White Cliffs and Buller Gorge near Berlins. The operation covers the Giles Stream, Stony River, the Perseverance area, Pell and Hard Creeks plus the Heaphy mine area. Habitat is mostly DOC managed beech forest.

### TB management area

The planned operational area is within the Buller TMA.

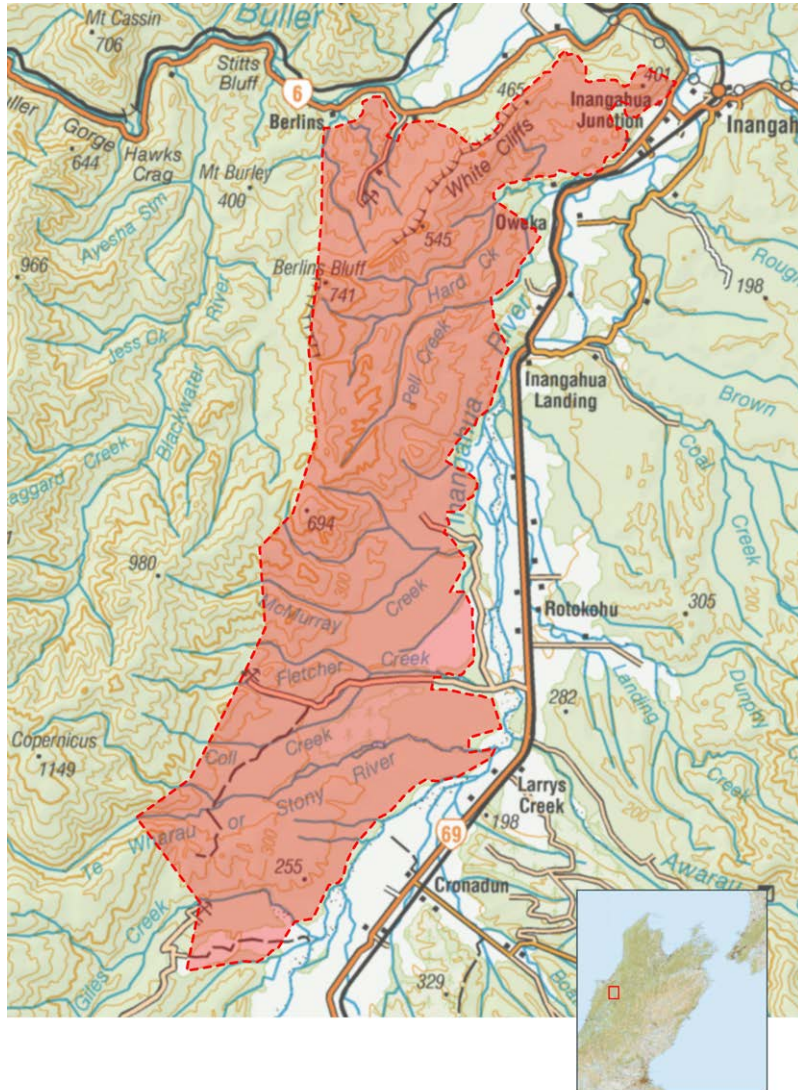
### Consultation and collaboration

OSPRI's proposed operational area overlaps slightly with one of DOC's research areas. In the past, OSPRI has made amendments to proposed boundaries to ensure research outcomes are not negatively impacted. OSPRI is in contact with DOC to ensure boundaries are appropriate.

The Inangahua West aerial operation falls within 'remote' kea habitat. Because the block has been treated in the last five years (2019), completion by August 2024 complies with Kea Code of Practice requirements. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to ensure the impacts on Kea are minimised.

### Recent TB infection history

Previously infected herds grazing close to Fletchers Creek



(Perseverance) are closed. There have been no potential movement links to explain the introduction of TB infection in the area. Three herds have been infected in this area since 2012 with wildlife determined as the cause of infection. This operation will provide confidence that residual disease from the 2019 aerial treatment has been eliminated. Treating Inangahua following completion of the adjacent Paparoa Range aerial will achieve almost complete coverage of the Paparoa National

Park - furthering progress towards TB freedom of the Buller TMA.

### Operational control method preferred

With TB proven to be present in the area it is imperative that complete coverage of possum habitat is achieved. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease cycle in wildlife and achieve disease management objectives.



## Upper Ahaura Nancy (West Coast)

### Terrain and operational area

This operation is situated approximately 25km northeast of Lake Brunner and some 70km east of Greymouth. It encompasses the catchments of the Trent and Waikiti river catchments. The Nancy aerial is a backcountry operation approximately 40km southeast of Ahaura and 100km east of Greymouth. It encompasses the catchments of the Nancy and Waiheke rivers. Western faces of the Alexander Range are proposed for inclusion in this operation to support the progression of TB freedom alongside the Predator Free Te Kinga programme.

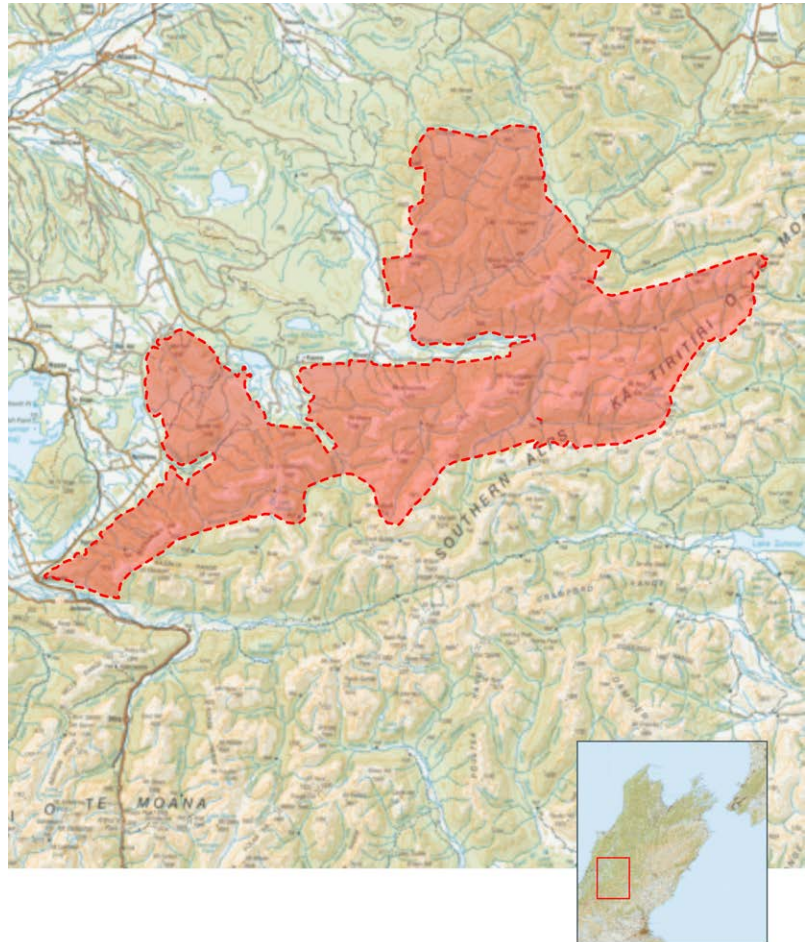
### TB management area

The planned operational area is within the West Coast Divide TMA.

### Consultation and collaboration

The Alexander Range section of the proposed operational area overlaps with portions of Predator Free's Te Kinga project. OSPRI is acting as an in-kind funder with TB control work co-ordinated efficiently to maximise predator reduction in the Lake Brunner area.

The Upper Ahaura Nancy aerial operation falls within 'scrounge' kea habitat. Operational delivery is dependent on exemption to the Code of Practice from DOC or a mast seed year. Mast years are when trees produce abundant fruit and seed which benefit many forest birds, but only if pests are simultaneously controlled. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to monitor the likelihood of an upcoming mast event. Operational delivery will be timed to ensure impacts on Kea are minimised.



### Recent TB infection history

TB possums have been found around the Waiheke River as recently as 2016 with wildlife determined to be the source of infection for a handful of herds in the area. Herd infection has historically been associated with the Haupiri and Waiheke River area. While infected herds have cleared since the 2017 operation, the 2024 planned aerial will ensure the disease cycle in residual possums is broken.

The Alexander Range is particularly important with information monitoring proving the possum population to be at a level capable of maintaining disease. Treating

the wider area is imperative to ensure disease management objectives are achieved.

### Operational control method preferred

Due to the rugged nature of the terrain and the inaccessibility of this block, aerial application is the preferred option for treatment. To protect herds through the Grey Valley, the potential source of infection from Waiheke and Haupiri needs to be controlled. Aerial 1080 is the most cost-effective and quickest method to achieve the required level of possum control in this TMA.

## Hohonu (West Coast)

### Terrain and operational area

The Hohonu Range is made up of 12 peaks in a circular shape around the eastern or Big Hohonu River; the highest three are over 1300 meters. The Taramakau River makes up the southern boundary while Lake Brunner and the Kumara-Inchbonnie road makes up the north. The block is surrounded on two sides by the farming areas of Inchbonnie to the east and the Taramakau Settlement to the southwest. Both farming areas have a long history of TB infection in herds. The eastern faces of the Hohonu Range fall within Predator Free's Te Kinga project and there is scope for significant collaboration here.

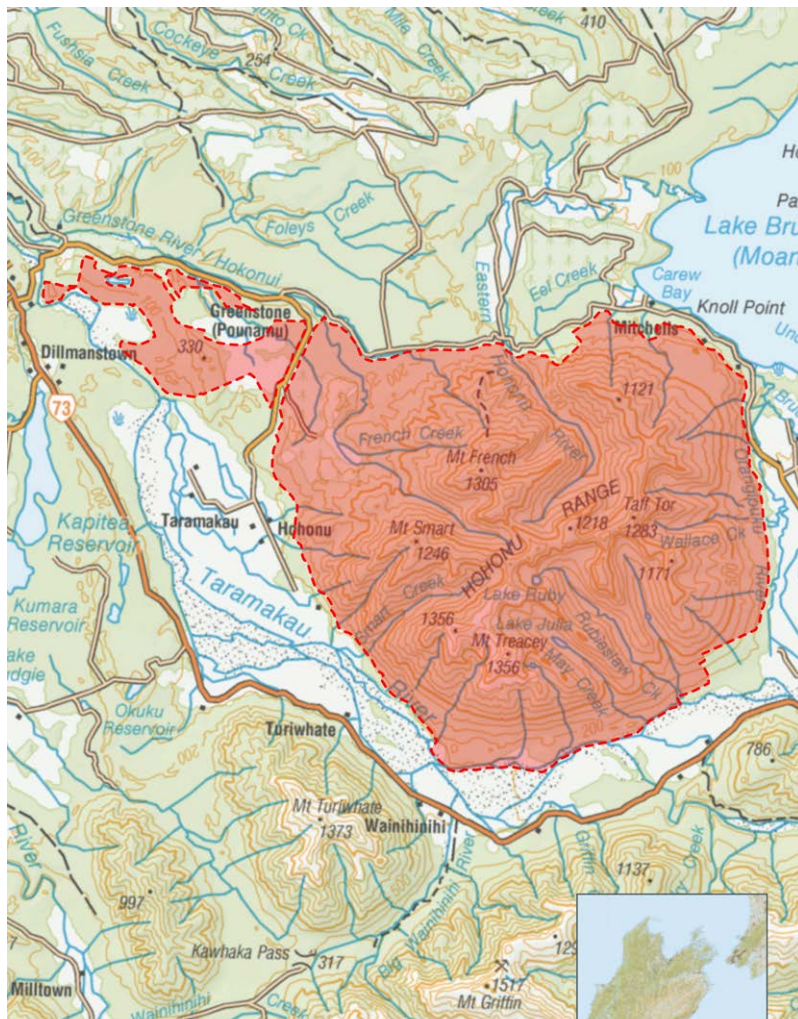
### TB management area

The planned operational area is within the Grey TMA.

### Consultation and collaboration

OSPRI's proposed operational area overlaps with portions of Predator Free's Te Kinga project. OSPRI is acting as an in-kind funder here with TB control work co-ordinated efficiently to maximise predator reduction in the Lake Brunner area.

The Hohonu aerial operation falls within 'scrounge' kea habitat. Operational delivery is dependent on exemption to the Kea Code of Practice from DOC or a mast seed year. Mast years are when trees produce abundant fruit and seed which benefit many forest birds, but only if pests are simultaneously controlled. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to monitor the likelihood of an upcoming mast event.



Operational delivery will be timed to ensure impacts on Kea are minimised.

### Recent TB infection history

The Hohonu Range is met by the Taramakau River on its eastern side. TB has been found in wildlife through the Taramakau Valley resulting in numerous herd breakdowns either side of the river corridor. The confirmation of disease through the Taramakau Valley in 2014 and herd breakdowns that followed means there is a need to treat the Hohonu Ranges and river conduits. While consistent ground control along

the bush edge has protected herds to date, the aerial block must now receive treatment as the TMA moves towards TB freedom.

### Operational control method preferred

With TB proven to be present in the wider area it is imperative that complete coverage is achieved. It would not be viable to conduct this aerial as a ground control operation due to the steep terrain. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease cycle in wildlife and achieve eradication.

Map boundaries are indicative only and are subject to change after consultation.  
 NZ Topographic Series Maps sourced from the LINZ Data Service and licensed by LINZ for re-use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand license.

## Clarence Reserve North (North Canterbury)

### Terrain and operational area

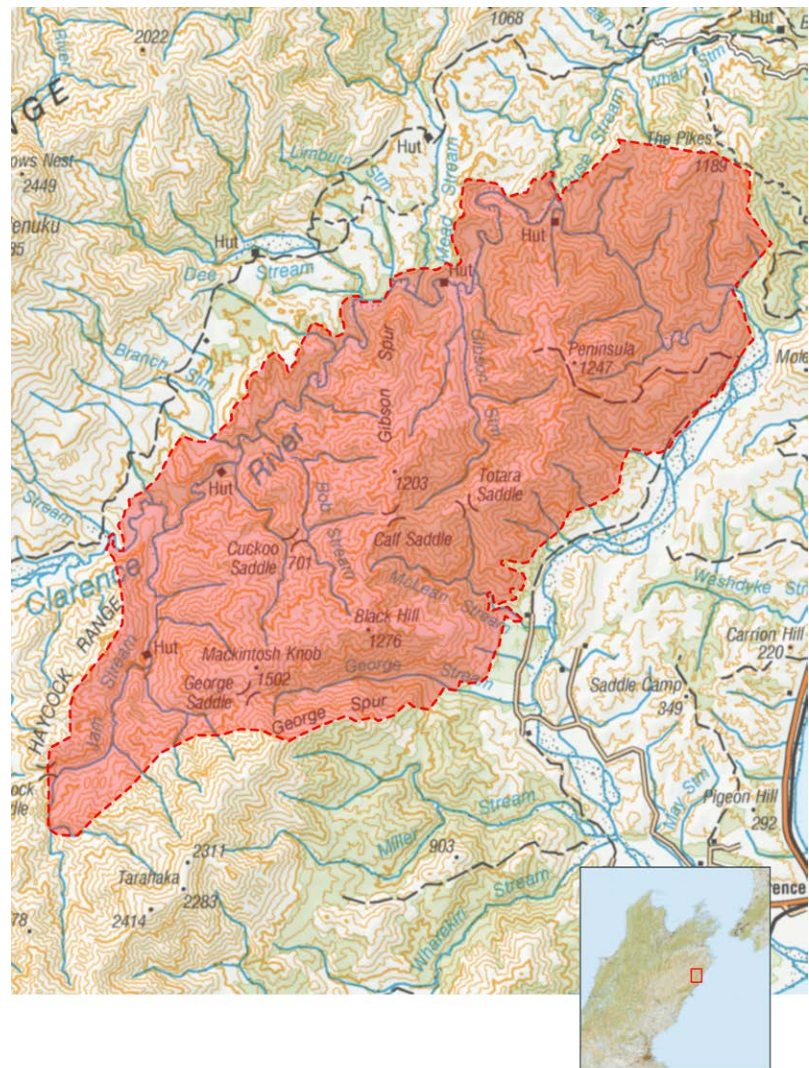
The Clarence Reserve North block encompasses the eastern slopes of the Haycock Range in the north and the steep terrain between the Seaward Kaikoura ranges and the Clarence River. The southern boundary is at Haycock Saddle which then runs north towards the Sawtooth Range. The habitat type is predominantly tussock, with native grasses, scrub and bush isolated to patches and gullies.

### TB management area

The planned operational area is within the Clarence Reserve TMA

### Consultation and collaboration

Affected station owners have been consulted with operational timing determined by stock requirements. There is on-going consultation with New Zealand Deerstalkers Association (NZDA) and the Game Animal Council (GAC). OSPRI has successfully applied a low sow and deer repellent treatment formulation and Clarence Reserve North is planned to be treated with these specifications. There has been early notification of this operation to local iwi and DOC as well as private landowners. There are sections of Kea habitat within the Clarence Reserve North operational area. Kea Code of Practise requirements mean deer repellent is not permitted for application in Kea habitat. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to ensure the impacts on Kea are minimised.



### Recent TB infection history

TB has been confirmed in wildlife in high numbers along the western edge of the Clarence North block. The Clarence River is a suspected disease conduit from the Molesworth source area with TB confirmed in pigs within the Waiautoa portion of the aerial block in 2017. TB pigs found on Mt Alexander are suspected to have been migrants from the Clarence Reserve TB risk area suggesting that disease is still present and has moved beyond the Kaikoura ranges. The proximity of the Clarence Reserve to Molesworth Station leads to this aerial operation being high priority if disease management objectives are to be achieved.

### Operational control method preferred

With TB proven to be present in the wider area it is imperative that complete coverage is achieved. It would not be viable to conduct this aerial as a ground control operation due to the steep terrain. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease cycle in wildlife and achieve eradication.

## Clarence West (North Canterbury)

### Terrain and operational area

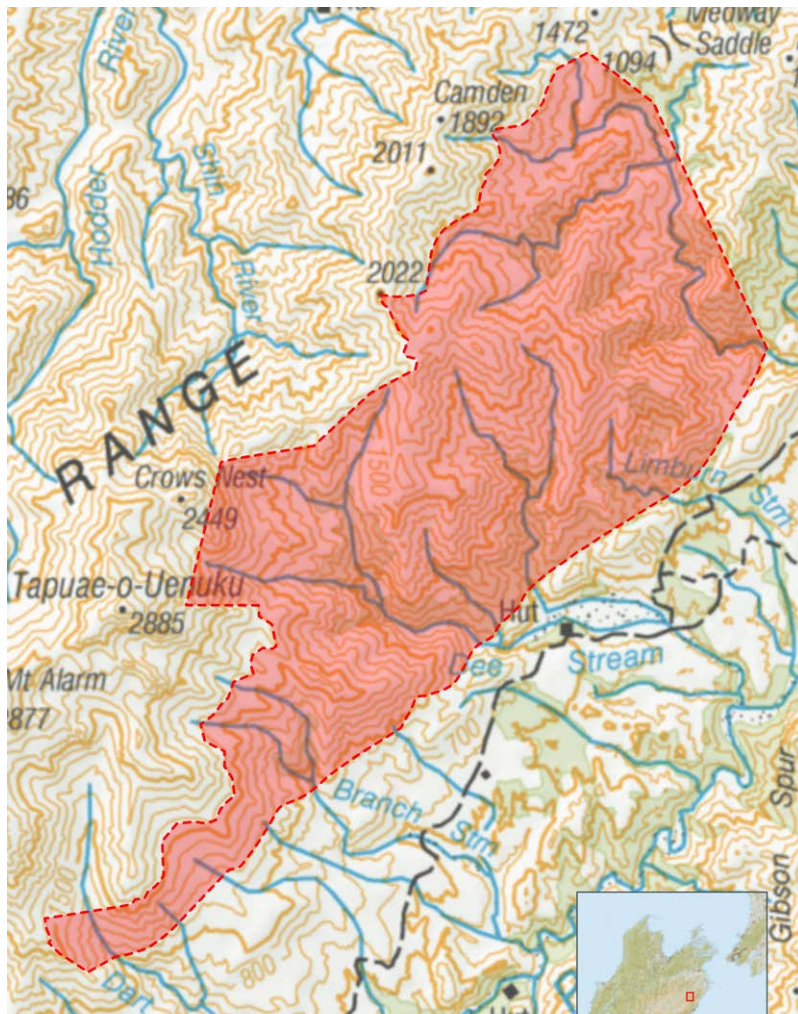
The Clarence West block forms the western portion of the Clarence Reserve Vector (transmitters of TB) Control Zone. The western boundary follows the ridgeline from Mount Tape over to Medway Saddle. The eastern boundary follows the grazing areas along the Clarence River. The habitat type is predominantly tussock, with native grasses, scrub and bush isolated to patches and gullies.

### TB management area

The planned operational area is within the Clarence Reserve TMA.

### Consultation and collaboration

Affected station owners have already been consulted with operational timing determined by stock requirements. There is on-going consultation with NZDA and GAC. OSPRI has successfully applied a low sow and deer repellent treatment formulation and Clarence West is planned to be treated with these specifications. There has been early notification of this operation to local iwi and DOC as well as private landowners. There are sections of Kea



habitat within the Clarence West operational area. Kea Code of Practise requirements mean deer repellent is not permitted for application in Kea habitat. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to ensure impacts on Kea are minimised.

### Recent TB infection history

TB has been confirmed in wildlife in high numbers along the eastern edge of the Clarence West block. The Clarence River forms the eastern boundary of the Clarence West operation and is a suspected disease conduit from the Molesworth TB source area. The proximity of Clarence West to known wildlife TB infection

leads to this aerial operation being high priority to act as a buffer for the Awatere Catchment TMA to the north where many areas have already been declared 'TB Free'.

### Operational control method preferred

With TB proven to be present in the wider area it is imperative that complete coverage is achieved. It would not be viable to conduct this aerial as a ground control operation due to the steep terrain. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease cycle in wildlife and achieve eradication.

## Mt Alexander (North Canterbury)

### Terrain and operational area

The Mt Alexander aerial operation is located on the Kaikoura coastline around the Puhi Puhi Valley. The Clarence River, where it meets the coastline, forms the northern boundary and the Seaward Kaikoura Ranges make up the western edge. The operational area is bordered at the south by the confluence of the Parapara Stream and Puhi Puhi River.

### TB management area

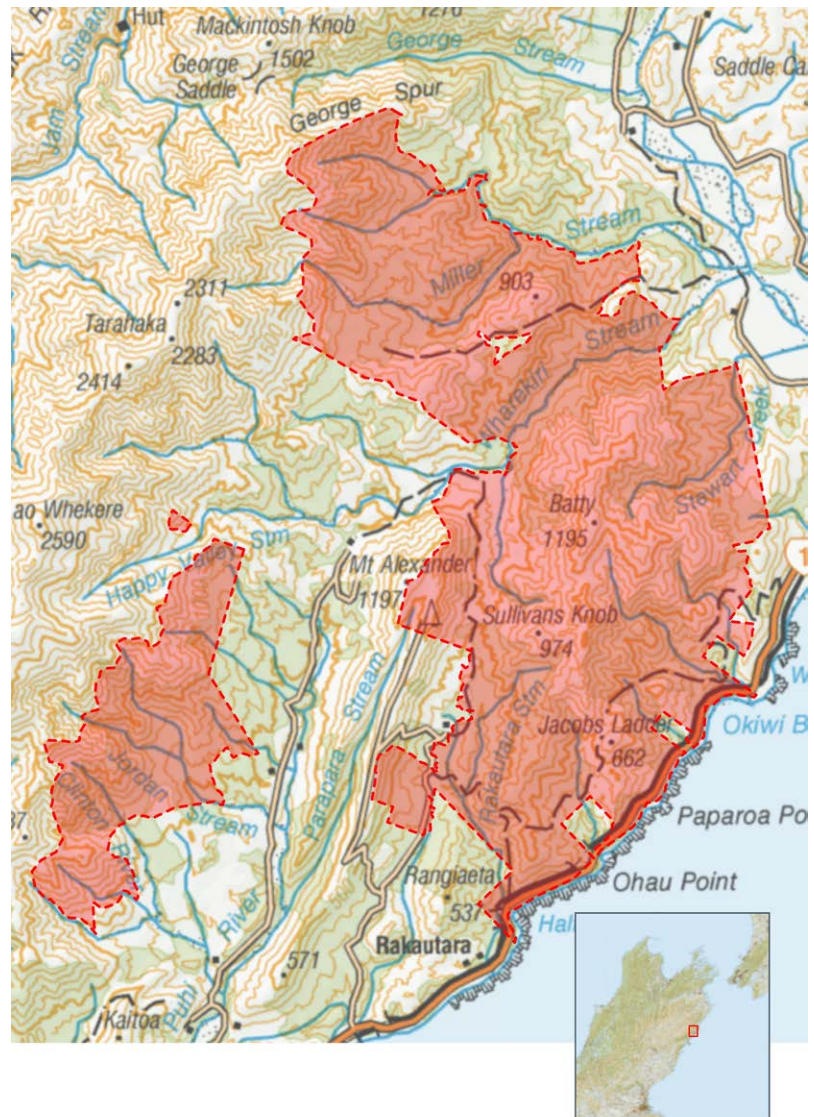
The planned operational area is within the Kaikoura TMA.

### Consultation and collaboration

There has been early notification of this operation to local iwi and DOC as well as private landowners. OSPRI's ground control contractors are currently undertaking control where accessible to provide some protection for local herds. Conversations regarding the upcoming aerial are occurring during these interactions. There are sections of Kea habitat within the Mt Alexander operational area. Kea Code of Practise requirements mean deer repellent is not permitted for application in Kea habitat. OSPRI is working closely with technical advisors at DOC to ensure impacts on Kea are minimised.

### Recent TB infection history

Aerial control is required through Mt Alexander to protect herds through the Kaikoura farmland. TB pigs have recently been confirmed through the Mt Alexander Vector Risk Area suggesting TB infection from the Molesworth Clarence source area has migrated into



these uncontrolled populations south of the Clarence River. In order to maximise disease elimination, the Mt Alexander aerial will benefit from coinciding with the neighbouring Clarence Reserve operation to minimise the risk of disease migration.

### Operational control method preferred

With TB proven to be present in the wider area it is imperative that complete coverage is achieved. It would not be viable to conduct this aerial as a ground

control operation due to the steep terrain. Aerial treatment is considered the most effective way to break the disease cycle in wildlife and achieve eradication.

# Have your say

We invite feedback on our 2024 national plan for TBfree pest control operations. We are seeking feedback specifically on the nature, boundaries and timing of proposed operations.

**We are not seeking feedback on wider issues such as the purposes of the TBfree programme or the use of 1080 for pest control in New Zealand.**

OSPRI encourages engagement with interested communities and those affected by proposed TBfree operations, and invites input on this document until **30 September 2023** through several channels:

- By email to [consultation@ospri.co.nz](mailto:consultation@ospri.co.nz)
- By post to National TBfree Operations Consultation, PO Box 3412, Wellington 6140
- By phone on 0800 482 463
- By completing the form at [www.ospri.co.nz/have-your-say](http://www.ospri.co.nz/have-your-say) website.

Please use the form below to submit your feedback on any of the proposed pest control operations outlined in this document. Threatening or abusive submissions will not be responded to and where necessary will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

Your feedback 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 will be considered under the Official Information Act 1982 and the Privacy Act 1993.

Your feedback will be used to help inform the final proposals. Thank you.

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**Name**

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**Position and organisation**

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**Area of interest (farmer, hunter, etc)**

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**Phone**

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**Email**

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**Postal address**

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**1. What is the proposed aerial operation/s you are commenting on?**

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**2. What is the primary subject of your feedback?**

Timings of proposed operation  Other (please state):

Boundaries

Impact on business or commercial activity

General operational concerns

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**3. Please outline your feedback**