

South Westland/ Upper Wanganui bovine TB control operation

OSPRI are running a possum control operation in South Westland/Upper Wanganui area (please see map provided for the operation area). It will cover approximately 23,000 hectares. This area has not received possum control for TB purposes previously.

OSPRI's TBfree programme

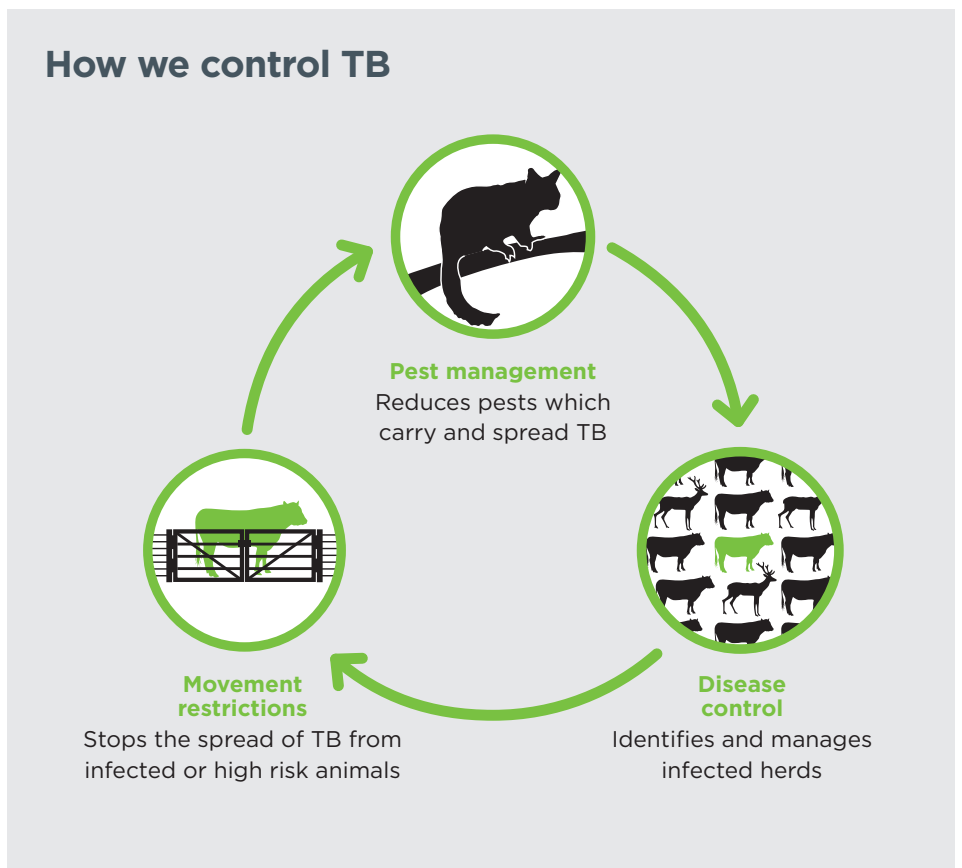
The TBfree programme aims to manage and eventually eradicate bovine tuberculosis (TB) from New Zealand's farmed cattle and deer and wild animal populations. Controlling disease prevents livestock production losses and protects the world leading reputation of New Zealand's dairy, beef and deer products. We use 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 are used when planning operations.

The local situation

The Hari Hari and Waitaha farming community has seen a significant increase in TB infected herds since July 2020.

The main cause of this rise in infected herds is contact with TB infected wildlife, mainly possums.

How we control TB



The source of the TB infected possums is believed to be the upper Wanganui catchment and potentially the Waitaha catchments, with the disease breaching the possum buffer control areas in the hills behind the farming community down the river corridors and infecting stock through close contact.

Targeting possums

OSPRI target possums as they carry bovine tuberculosis (TB) and pose a serious risk to cattle and deer herds. OSPRI's TBfree programme aim to achieve eradication of bovine Tb from livestock and wild animal populations across New Zealand. To do so, possum



numbers need to be kept extremely low for several years – around one possum to every two hectares.

Ongoing control work is needed to maintain a low possum population and minimise the risk of the disease spreading through the wild animal populations and on to farmed cattle and deer. Possum control has dramatically reduced the number of infected herds in the wider West Coast region.

What to expect from the operation

The operation will begin with the aerial application of non-toxic pre-feed bait by helicopter. Pre-feed baits will contain cinnamon to attract possums and



overcome bait shyness. Pre-feeding before applying toxin improves efficacy by conditioning possums to search for bait, which is a novel food-source that wouldn't normally be present. Pre-feed for this operation will be dyed green to deter bird species such as kea.

One to two weeks later (dependant on weather), toxic baits containing 0.15% biodegradable Sodium fluoroacetate (1080) will be aerially applied. Toxic baits will also contain cinnamon to attract possums and be dyed green to deter birds. Bait containing 1080 will be applied at the rate of 2kg/ha, which equates to about one bait every 60m².

Use of advanced GPS equipment and calibrated sowing buckets for helicopters involved with the operation will ensure that pre-feed and toxic bait is evenly distributed throughout the project area, and that exclusion zones are avoided.

The operation will be subject to strict safety, quality-assurance and monitoring requirements.

The method

A large amount of possum control in the region is done by contractors using raised traps and hand-laid toxins. This control method is not always the most

practical or efficient. Aerial control is thorough, cost effective and known to be extremely successful at knocking possum numbers down to very low levels. This level of complete coverage cannot be achieved by ground control methods in this area. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment also supports aerial control. The commissioner completed an extensive review into the use of 1080, in which they strongly endorsed its continued use in New Zealand.

Please visit pce.parliament.nz to read this report.

What happens now

This operation is planned for February/ March 2022. A contractor, Vector Free Marlborough Limited, will be delivering the operation 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.

Statutory permissions from the Department of Conservation and the relevant Public Health are required for the operation. Affected landowners and occupiers as well as interested parties will be contacted again before



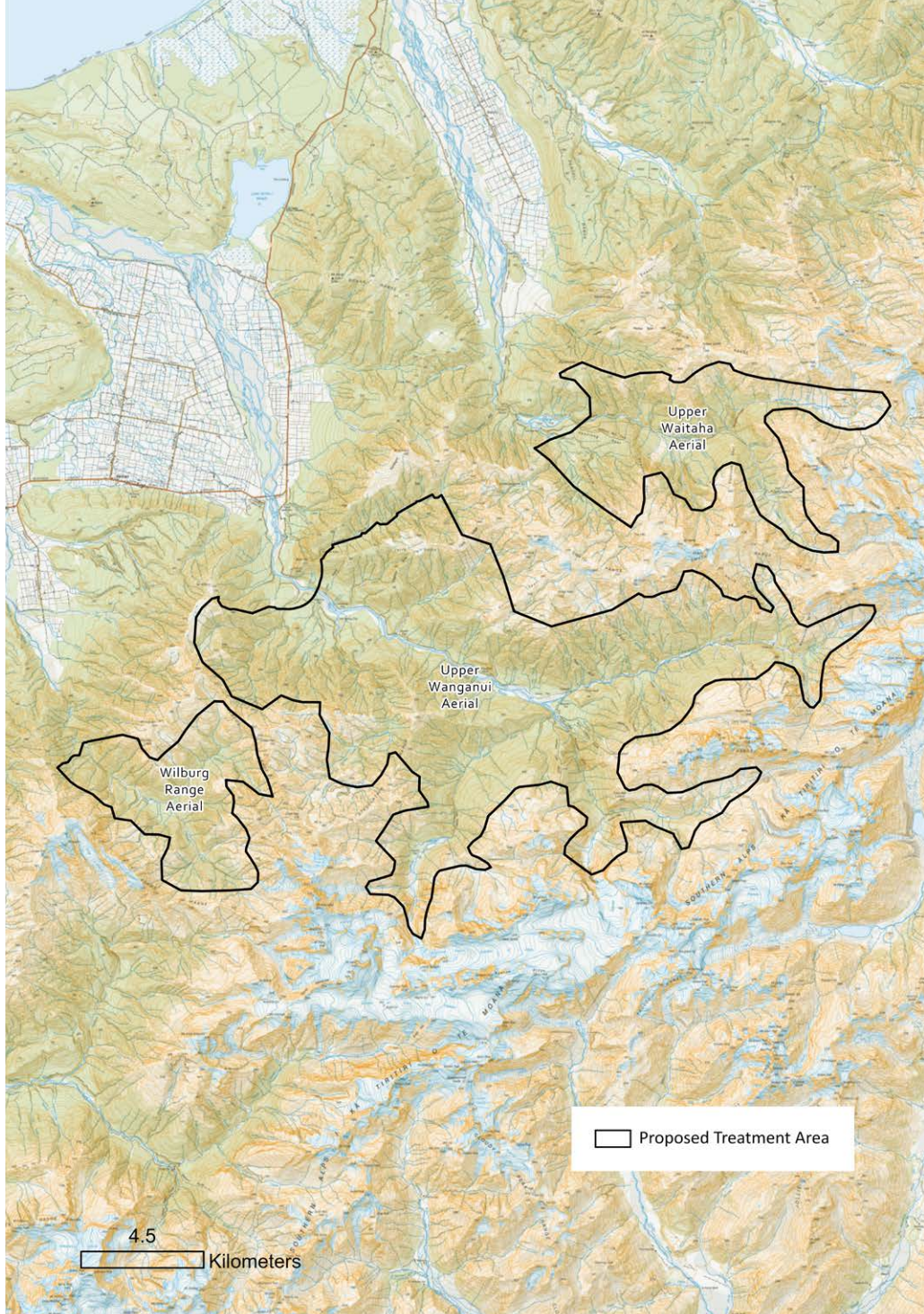
the operation starts. Notices will be published in local newspapers and warning signs will be placed at all likely access points to the operational area.

The map in this factsheet is subject to change during the consultation period. An updated map will accompany notifications prior to the aerial.

Kea mitigation

In line with DOC's 'Kea code of Practice, OSPRI is undertaking a number of activities to mitigate the impact of 1080 on the South Westland kea population. We are working with Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research (MWLR), DOC and the Kea Conservation Trust to undertake bait aversion training with local Kea. The aversion method was developed by Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) and trialled successfully in the nearby Perth River Valley pest operations. More information can be found on the ZIP website: zip.org.nz

With the Upper Wanganui/South Westland aerial, OSPRI and MWLR will undertake Kea aversion training in the 2 months prior to toxin application. This training involves using Tahr, pig and goat carcasses as a protein lure and cereal pellets with the additive Anthraquinone. This has a fast-acting but brief effect of making kea feel sick shortly after



ingesting the pellets, with the intention of deterring them from eating those pellets in future while causing no lasting harm to the kea.

OSPRI are continuing to work closely with technical advisors at DOC to ensure improved outcomes for Kea when carrying out vector control operations.

Please do not touch any kea aversion training devices installed in the area, and treat all bait as toxic.

Biodiversity benefits

The operation will have additional conservation benefits for native birds and bush. Possums destroy our native forest, feeding on young foliage and preventing regeneration. Possums prey on native birdlife, eating eggs and chicks. Biodegradable 1080 is extremely effective at controlling possum populations and has the additional benefit of controlling other introduced predators such as ship rats and stoats.

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 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. Wild game food safety guidelines can be found on MPI's website.

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.

Free dog muzzles will be provided on request. Please contact OSPRI or the contractor to obtain a muzzle.



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

Because of public interest in this operation, there is a special interest page on the OSPRI website:
ospri.co.nz/hari-hari

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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.

Drinking water recommendations'

Public health units apply strict conditions to aerial operations so that drinking water supplies are not contaminated. Safety has been confirmed by tests on several thousand water samples taken after aerial 1080 operations over many years.

While toxin application takes place, and for 72 hours afterward, people visiting the project area should avoid taking water for drinking and cooking purposes from streams, lakes and tarns. Where provided at facilities such as huts and campsites, use alternative water supplies or carry in your own supply.

The contractor will liaise with the supply owner/manager of any public or private water supplies that are deemed to be affected to identify appropriate mitigation(s).

