



22 June 2017

New Zealand Deerstalkers Association
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Dear Sir/Madam

Southern Rimutaka Aerial Project

I wish to provide you an update regarding the Southern Rimutaka aerial and ground possum control operation.

This operation is being undertaken on behalf of TBfree New Zealand, by BioWorks, which are part of the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

The operational area is located south of Wainuiomata in the Rimutaka Ranges and in the East Harbour Regional Park near Eastbourne. Access to the treatment areas can also be obtained via the Department of Conservation, Catchpool entrance from Coast Road, the Rimutaka Rail Trail and from Western Lake at Corner Creek.

Control methods for this operation include:-

- 1080 baits, applied by helicopter or hand laid.
- Feratox cyanide, in paper bag bait stations stapled to trees.
- Brodifacoum baits, applied in bait stations.
- Traps will be used in sensitive areas where the use of toxins would be inappropriate.

The operation is being undertaken in two parts as listed below, however actual application dates are weather dependant.

- **Part 1:** Undertake control methods within East Harbour Regional Park and surrounding properties West of Coast Road, Wainuiomata.
 - The aerial 1080 baiting for this area was completed 15 May. We have since had sufficient rainfall to render the baits non-toxic, however possum carcasses still exist and are hazardous to dogs. I advise good dog control is maintained to prevent dogs scavenging on possum carcasses.
 - Ground control with the use of traps, brodifacoum and feratox cyanide in non-aerial treatment areas is currently underway and should be completed early to mid-July.





That's about one bait to every 60 square metres. The Southern Rimutaka operation will be subject to strict safety quality-assurance and monitoring requirements.

Advanced GPS navigational equipment will be used to ensure the pellets are accurately placed and identified exclusion zones avoided.

THE METHOD

A vast majority of possum control in the region is done by local contractors using ground-based traps and hand-laid toxins. The remaining area is controlled using aerially applied pellets containing biodegradable 1080. Aerial control is highly-efficient, cost-effective and has historically been extremely successful at knocking possum numbers down to very low levels. It is preferred in areas like Southern Rimutaka due to the rugged nature of the terrain. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment also supports aerial



Baits covered in deer repellent. The non-toxic pre-feed pellets are brownish-tan while the toxic baits are green.

control. The commissioner completed an extensive review into the use of 1080, in which she strongly endorsed its continued use in New Zealand.

[Please visit \[pcc.parliament.nz\]\(https://www.parliament.nz\) to read this report.](https://www.parliament.nz)

WHAT HAPPENS NOW

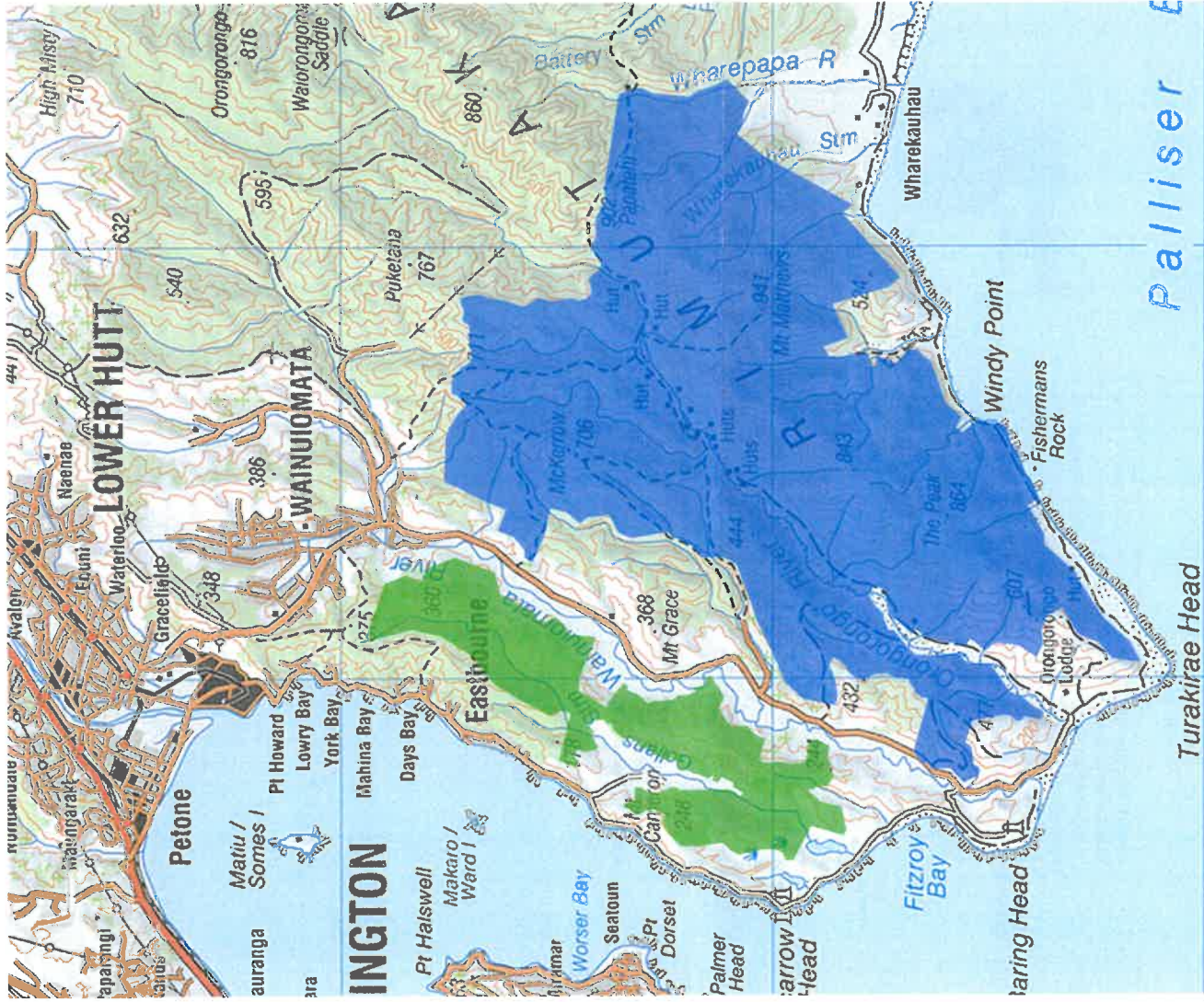
Part 1 (noted on map) of the operation is scheduled to begin pre-feeding in March. Toxic bait will be laid as soon as possible after the third of April, weather dependant. Part 2 of the operation is scheduled to begin pre-feeding in May.

All landowners/occupiers within and adjacent to the proposed control area will be contacted and visited by TBfree contractors ahead of the operation. They will discuss boundary issues, water supply safety and the management of any risks to dogs and livestock. Consents from Greater Wellington Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Health are required for this operation. Affected landowners/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 ship rats and stoats.



Proposed Operational Boundary

- Part One
- Part Two

Boundaries are indicative only and will change after consultation