



Key facts about Otahu pest control 2017



The Department of Conservation is undertaking pest control over approximately 7000 hectares in the Otahu area.

Why are we undertaking pest control in the southern Coromandel?

The Otahu contains large areas of mixed podocarp-broadleaf forest, with remnant kauri, coastal pohutakawa forest and manuka and kanuka shrublands. These places are valued for their diverse native flora and fauna, scenic landscapes and wide range of recreation opportunities.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) monitored possums within the southern Coromandel in February 2017 and found numbers were at damaging levels. Possums consume large amounts of native vegetation which significantly impacts the health of the forest. They also raid nests for eggs and fledglings and compete with native animals for food. Controlling possums allows forest habitats to recover; therefore the primary outcome of the operation is low possum numbers.

High rat numbers also have negative impacts through predation of native lizards, eggs, birds, insects and seeds. They compete with native animals for food and prevent seedling growth.

What has been decided?

Cereal pellets containing bio-degradable sodium fluoroacetate (known as 1080) are being used to control pests. Helicopters are being used to distribute the pellets through the operational area.

The operational area consists of the following blocks (see map):

- Otahu
- Mataora

Timing of the operation

The approved operation timeframe is between July 2017 and October 2017. The exact timing of the operation will be weather dependent and will consist of a non-toxic pre-feed, followed by a toxin drop.

Pest operations are timed for late winter and early spring when food sources for target pests are at their lowest. This increases the take up of bait and the success of the operation.

In addition hitting predators at this time reduces predation on native species through at least one and possibly two breeding seasons to improve nesting survival and increase populations.

Why are we using these methods?

Aerial 1080 is the most efficient and cost effective method currently available to reduce rat, possum and stoat (through secondary poisoning) populations to low levels. This is especially true in large and difficult to access areas.

Baits are applied by helicopter using GPS satellite navigation technology. This results in an even coverage and allows the pilot to be sure of the exact location of the operation boundaries.

Spreading the bait evenly increases the exposure to rats and possums and it is expected the majority will encounter and consume the bait.

Operational planning

The use of toxins for this work requires the consent of the Medical Officer of Health and resource consent.

DOC managers follow procedures and apply conditions to ensure that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks are mitigated or managed.

Key facts

The pesticides we use are poisonous to most animals, including to humans and domestic animals. Poisoning can occur through eating baits or poisoned animals. The risk to dogs with pesticide in carcasses will remain until they have decomposed, which can take from four to nine months.

These risks can be eliminated by following these simple rules:

- **DO NOT** touch bait
- **WATCH CHILDREN** at all times if you are visiting the area during the operational period.
- **DO NOT EAT** animals from this area
- Remember, poison baits or carcasses are **DEADLY to DOGS**

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. Warning signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in baits or animals. When signs are removed, this means that you can resume activities as normal in the area. If in doubt, check with DOC.

For more information

Visit the following website:
www.doc.govt.nz/1080

If you would like more information contact:

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+ Operational boundary is indicative only, and subject to confirmation with site supervisor.

- Proposed_Otahu_Operation_Boundary_2017
- Proposed_Mataora_Operation_Boundary_2017
- Public Conservation Land**
- Legislative Section**
- Conservation Park
- Reserve
- Stewardship Area

1.5 Kilometre
 Scale at A4 = 1:60,000
 NZGD 2000 New Zealand Transverse Mercator
 Not for navigation
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 Basemap : LINZ Topo250 / 50 BA36 Whangamata
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 DOC, Geospatial Services

Otahu \ Mataora

Proposed 1080 Aerial Pest Control Map 2017



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