

Notification

Protecting native taonga species with predator control in the Eglinton Valley

The Department of Conservation's Te Anau Office plans to reduce rat numbers over 7,842 ha of Fiordland National Park (see map).

Protection of species using predator control

The Eglinton Valley is a nationally important home for species such as long-tailed and short-tailed bats. It is also an important habitat for kākā, mohua, robin, rifleman and mistletoe.

Following on from the successful September 2019 predator control operation a second operation is planned. The initial 1080 operation killed an estimated 97.5% of rats and provided a safe nesting period for many forest bird species over the summer.

Predation by rats is severely affecting the long-tailed bat population and recent survival data indicates that high rat numbers during winter have a significant effect on their survival. To protect the bats DOC is planning a further smaller pest control operation to reduce rodent numbers. This will focus on the most productive lower altitude forest where the bats primarily roost.

Why we are using this method

Predator control using aurally applied baits containing 1080 is the most effective tool we have for suppressing rodents over large and rugged areas.

How it is happening

Cereal baits containing the toxin 1080 will target rats and be applied aurally. Additionally, ground-based predator control using pindone will be used in exclusion areas near the road and water supplies. Pindone baits will be placed in plastic bait stations.

Timeframe

The operation will take place between 1 March and 1 June 2020. Pre-feeding with non-toxic bait will begin in March 2020, to prime the predators to eat the toxic bait. Toxic bait will be laid no earlier than 1 March 2020.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) will contact all affected neighbours, place an advertisement in the local newspaper and put up warning signs immediately prior to the operation starting.



Long-tailed bat Photo: Colin O'Donnell DOC

Operational planning

The use of 1080 requires permission from the local Public Health Protection office of the Ministry of Health.

DOC assesses and approves all pesticide operations on public conservation land on behalf of and following procedures approved by the Environmental Protection (EPA). DOC approving managers apply conditions to ensure that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks of the operation are managed.

We consulted iwi and people most affected by this operation prior to finalising the operational detail and area. This involved considering their concerns and needs regarding the operational details and timing.

Important information

1080 is a manufactured biodegradable toxin. Its salt fluoroacetate occurs naturally in poisonous plants in Australia, Africa and Brazil – and in very low concentrations in New Zealand's native pūhā.

1080 is poisonous to humans and domestic animals. Dogs are highly susceptible. Poisoning can occur through eating baits or poisoned animals. The risk to dogs will remain until carcasses have rotted, perhaps for more than six months.

Toxic bait pellets contain 0.15% 1080. They are cylindrical about 2 cm in diameter and dyed green.

Non-toxic bait pellets are cylindrical about 2 cm in diameter and sandy coloured (not-dyed).

These risks can be eliminated by following these rules:

- **DO NOT** touch or eat bait pellets
- **WATCH children** at all times
- **DO NOT EAT** animals from this area or from within the "buffer zone" outside the treatment area boundary. The buffer zone is 200m for rabbits, 1km for hares, tahr, wallabies and possums, and 2 km for deer, pigs and any other animals. For more information go to the DOC pesticide summaries.
- 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 carcasses. When signs are removed, this means that you that you can resume normal activities in the area.

Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs. If in doubt, check with DOC.

If you suspect poisoning

Contact:

- Fiordland Medical Centre; or
- National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 (non-urgent and general enquiries), or dial 111.

For more information

EcoFX
32 Huiputea Drive
Otorohanga 3900
Ph: 07 8738130
Email: admin@ecofx.co.nz

OR

Operations Manager
Department of Conservation Te Anau Office
Lake Front Drive
Te Anau
Ph: 03 2490200
Email: teanauadim@doc.govt.nz

Please get in touch if you want to be notified again immediately prior to the operation.

www.doc.govt.nz/tiakina-nga-manu

www.doc.govt.nz/pesticide-summaries



Short-tailed bat Photo: Colin O'Donnell DOC

Predator Control Area: Eglinton Valley, Fiordland National Park

