Consulting on the protection of native taonga species in the Waipoua Forest

The Department of Conservation's Kauri Coast Office plans to reduce possum, rat and stoat numbers to protect vulnerable forest plants and animals

This forest is nationally significant with unique, endangered plants and animals including kauri snails, kokako, kukupa and kiwi.

Why we are controlling pests

Possum browse on forest plants is significant in this forest. Large old emergent trees, such as totara and rata, and key canopy and subcanopy trees, such as kohekohe and mahoe, are severely impacted by uncontrolled possum populations.

Currently, possums and rats and stoats are eating birds' eggs and preying on chicks. This severely impacts the ability of these taonga species to survive. Controlling predators allows our native species to breed and reach adulthood.

Between July and September 2022, the DOC, is planning to complete aerial control to protect these species over most of the Waipoua forest (see attached map). This will give these plants a chance to recover, **and** this will give the forest animals, such as kokako, a chance to breed and for their chicks to reach adulthood.

Possum control works

Effective control of possum does work. Past possum control work in the Waipoua forest, using both aerial 1080 and ground control, has shown to recover canopy and subcanopy tree health.
Effective possum control in the Waipoua and Mataraua kokako areas, using both aerial 1080 and ground control of rats, possums, and stoats, was shown to recover that population from 5 pairs in 1990 to 60 pairs in 2016.

The North Island kōkako is a wattlebird endemic to New Zealand. All populations of kōkako on mainland New Zealand require targeted pest control of ships rats and brushtail possums for their persistence, all other unmanaged mainland populations have gone locally extinct.

Kokako in Waipoua Forest Photo: **Martin Wrzosek**

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

New Zealand Government

Where are we proposing to control predators?

DOC is planning predator control over an area of 17,200ha (see attached map) in the Waipoua Forest Park and surrounding areas of forest.

Consultation – Have your say

DOC is consulting closely with local iwi on this planned operation. It is also seeking feedback from adjacent landowners and the affected community and would like to hear your views. We are here to listen to you.

DOC staff and/or its contractors would like to contact you at a convenient time to discuss the proposed operation; how it affects you, and what we can do to mitigate these effects.

How we are proposing to protect the area

Cereal baits containing biodegradable 1080 would be applied aerially over the planned area. Helicopters with calibrated buckets will distribute bait along pre-determined and monitored flight paths.

Use of a range of predator control methods to protect species

Aerial application of cereal pellets containing 1080 is the most effective control method over large areas. Ground-based trapping and bait stations are effective in smaller more accessible areas. In those areas aerial 1080 may be used to supplement the existing ground-based work. Aerial 1080 operations target possums and rodents. Stoats are also reduced effectively as they eat rodents/possums.

Time frame

At this stage, this operation is planned to occur during the winter/spring of 2022. The operation is weather dependent.

North Island brown kiwi. Photo: Andrew Walmsley

Planning

DOC engages and works closely with iwi, for all predator control. DOC also consults with stakeholders and affected landowners.

Following feedback from this consultation, there will be decisions on what changes can be made to mitigate the effects of the operation on you.

DOC or our contractors will provide an update to confirm the outcomes of the consultation and any resulting changes and a more precise timeframe.

We will contact all neighbours, advertise in the local newspaper and place warning signs at entrances to public conservation land immediately prior to the operation starting.

DOC will contact iwi, landowners and affected stakeholders and the local community after the operation to inform them that the operation has been completed and provide details of reduction of predator numbers. Wherever possible, DOC will also update iwi and stakeholders on the positive outcomes of the control for native species in the area.

Use of 1080 requires permission from the local Public Health Protection Unit.

DOC staff follow procedures approved by the EPA. These regulations ensure that the toxin is applied safely to safeguard the public and the environment.

Department of Conservation
Kauri Coast District Office
!50 Colville Road
Dargaville 0377
New Zealand

March 2022

Phone: 09 430 3450
Email: dargaville@doc.govt.nz
www.doc.govt.nz

Key Facts: What you need to know

1080 is a manufactured, biodegradable toxin. Its active ingredient, fluoroacetate is salt that occurs naturally in poisonous plants in Australia, Africa and Brazil. It does not accumulate. It is broken down naturally by micro-organisms, fungi and plants into harmless compounds and does not leave permanent residues in soil, water, plants or animals.

DOC complies with all relevant regulations and takes a precautionary approach to the aerial application of biodegradable 1080.

All operations begin with an aerial pre-feed of non-toxic bait to prime possums/rodents to eat the toxic bait that will be applied afterwards.

- The toxic cereal bait pellets contain 0.15% of 1080. They are about 2 cm in diameter, cylindrical and dyed green.
- Non-toxic pre-feed cereal pellets are about 2 cm in diameter, cylindrical and sandy coloured (not-dyed).

Managing risk

1080 is poisonous to humans, domestic and game animals. Dogs are highly susceptible. In areas where the toxin has been applied, the risk to dogs will remain until poisoned carcasses have disintegrated, which can be more than six months. These risks can be eliminated by following these rules:

DO NOT touch bait

WATCH children at all times

DO NOT EAT animals from this area

Toxic baits and carcasses are **DEADLY to DOGS**

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. These warning signs indicate pesticide residues may be still present in baits and animals. When signs are removed this means you can resume normal activities in the area.

For more information

Please contact:

Project Manager Landscape Predator Control

Kauri Coast District Office

Department of Conservation

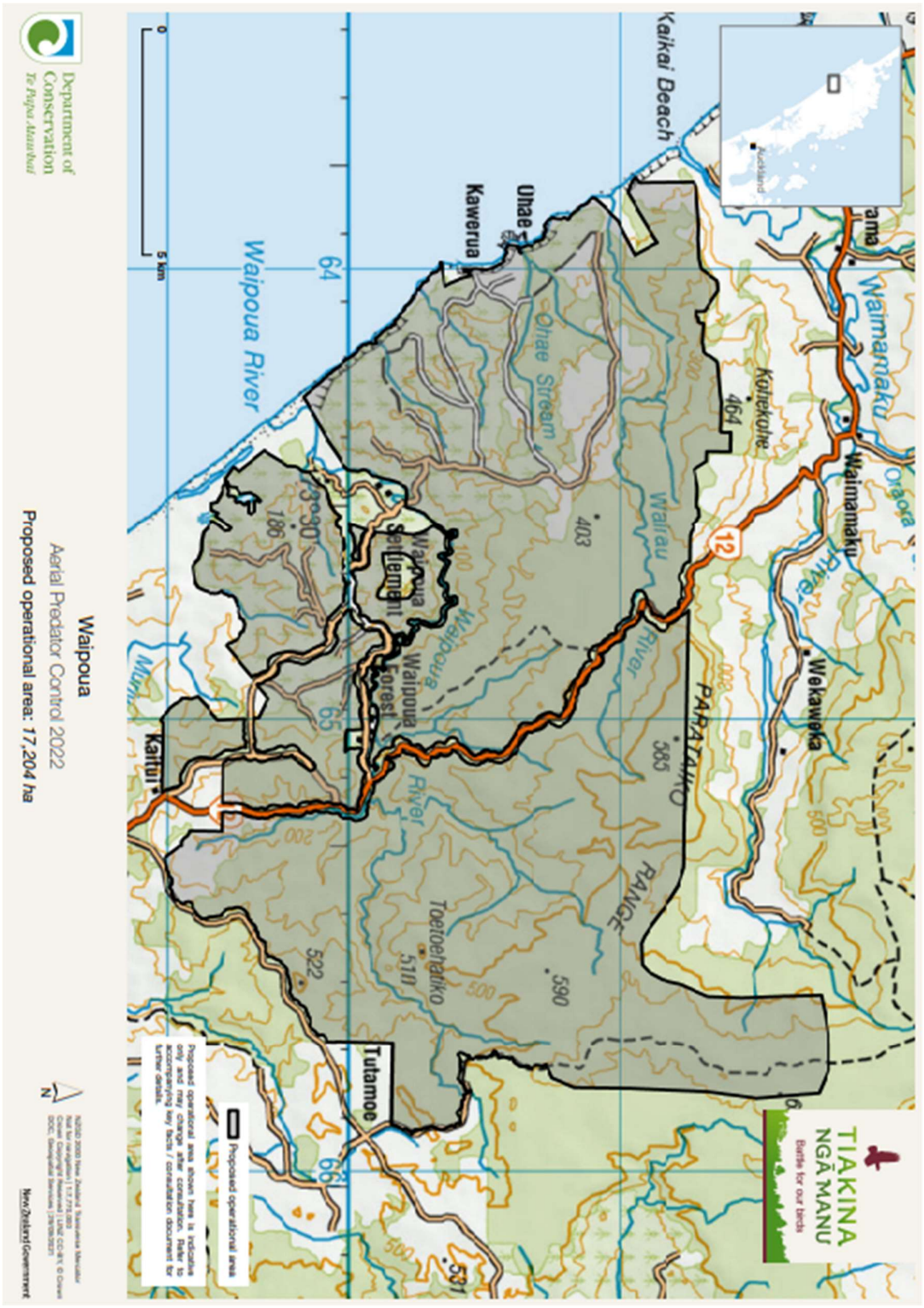
www.doc.govt.nz/tiakina-nga-manu

Department of Conservation
Kauri Coast District Office
!50 Colville Road
Dargaville 0377
New Zealand

March 2022

Phone: 09 430 3450
Email: dargaville@doc.govt.nz
www.doc.govt.nz

This map shows the planned application area for predator control. It is indicative: the boundaries may change subject to consultation and other operation planning requirements.



Department of Conservation
Kauri Coast District Office
150 Colville Road
Dargaville 0377
New Zealand

August 2021

Phone: 09 439 3450
Email: dargaville@doc.govt.nz
www.doc.govt.nz