

# Warawara Whakaora Ake 2023

**Consulting on predator control in Warawara Forest** - The Department of Conservation in partnership with Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa and the Warawara Komiti Kaitiaki plans to reduce introduced predators across 6,889 hectares of Warawara Forest.

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## Native wildlife and forests need protection

Introduced predators like rats, feral cats, possums, stoats and weasels are severely harming the mauri/health of Warawara Forest. Controlling these predators reduces the damage to native plants, birds, snails, lizards and insects. It also promotes forest recovery and reduces possum migration from public conservation land to private land.

Dame Whina Cooper once called Warawara Forest “Te Wairua o Te Iwi o Te Rarawa – The living spiritual being of Te Rarawa people”. It is an incredibly special place of the utmost historical and cultural significance to the hapū of Te Rarawa.

Warawara Forest is a unique habitat, with endangered plants and animals including kauri snails, kūkupa, long-tailed bats and kiwi. Warawara also holds the last remaining population of tītīpounamu / rifleman in Te Tai Tokerau. Tītīpounamu is one of only two surviving species of the ancient New Zealand wren species.

## The plan to protect Warawara Forest

In 2015, an aerial predator control operation was delivered across 7,108ha. We saw rat numbers plummet, rātā flowering for the first time in years, kūkupa flying in numbers and the overall health of the forest increase significantly. To maintain a healthy forest and allow native species to grow, ongoing predator control is needed.

The most effective tool to control predators over large areas is biodegradable cereal pellets containing 1080. The method involves helicopters distributing bait across the forest along pre-determined and monitored flight paths. This is the only possible way to control possums, rats and stoats across the vast, remote and rugged terrain in Warawara Forest. It also reduces the risk of spreading kauri dieback disease.

Ground-based trapping and bait stations are effective in smaller more accessible areas, however the number of predators can overwhelm trapping networks.



Warawara Forest

## Partnership at work

The predator control operation has been approved by the Warawara Komiti Kaitiaki/Warawara Guardians Committee. The committee includes representatives from each of the 10 marae in the area as well as the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa.

EcoFX is a pest control contractor that will support the delivery of the predator control operation, including consulting with landowners and other affected parties prior to the operation.

## Warawara Whakaora Ake

This work is part of Warawara Whakaora Ake - the Warawara Restoration Project which aims to protect and enhance the mauri/health of the forest through coordinated pest control within the co-managed reserve and surrounding private land.

The partners involved include Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa, Warawara Komiti Kaitiaki, DOC, Northland Regional Council, and Reconnecting Northland.



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*



TE RŪNANGA O TE RARAWA

## Proposed timeframe

Predator control operations are done when monitoring shows predators have reached levels that threaten the populations of native species. Operations are weather dependent.

At this stage, the operation in Warawara Forest is planned to occur between September 1 and December 15, 2023.

This timing allows birds to nest free of predators and fledge more chicks over summer. It also helps plants and trees to flower and fruit more successfully - thereby making food more available to forest birds, lizards and insects.

## Adjacent landowners - Have your say

We are consulting with adjacent landowners. We want to understand your views and answer any questions you may have.

We would like to contact you to discuss the proposed operation. This includes the following topics:

- How the operation could affect you and your wellbeing, native flora and fauna, natural resources and your ability to protect, manage and use these resources.
- Water take locations
- Operational Boundaries
- Stock access to public conservation land
- Fencing location and quality
- Exact timing of the operation

As part of this consultation process, we will consider what we can do to mitigate any effects.

Your feedback will help guide decisions about the operational plan.

## Next steps

We will update you about the outcomes of consultation. This will be in the form of a notification fact sheet, and it will include a more specific timeframe for the operation.

Use of 1080 requires permission from the Ministry of Health. DOC is delegated the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Agency to decide applications for permission to use 1080 on land administered by DOC. DOC ensures that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks of the operation are managed.



Titi Pounamu / rifleman  
Photo by Shellie Evans

## Key facts about 1080

1080 is a manufactured, biodegradable toxin. Its active ingredient, fluoroacetate is found in poisonous plants in Australia, Africa and Brazil. It is also found at lower levels in our native plants including pūhā.

1080 bait is broken down naturally in the environment by micro-organisms, fungi and plants into harmless compounds and does not leave permanent residues in soil, water, plants or animals.

The Department of Conservation complies with all relevant regulations and takes a precautionary approach to the application of 1080.

Operations begin with the distribution of pre-feed non-toxic bait to prepare possums/rodents to eat the toxic bait that will be applied afterwards.

## 1080 and water

Research, regulation and testing continue to confirm that 1080 operations do not affect the water in rivers, streams and lakes. There is also no risk to aquatic life including tuna and kōura.

Any bait pellets containing 1080 that fall into a stream, river or lake are rapidly diluted to harmless levels and almost always undetectable in a waterway after 24 hours.

## 1080 and pigs

Very few individuals from a pig population are poisoned by 1080. Local observations suggest populations rebound quickly and increase in numbers as the pigs have more food (such as berries) as a result of there being less possums.

Like other animals, if pigs eat 1080 bait and don't die, the 1080 is quickly broken down and excreted within days.

## Managing risk – 1080 and dogs

1080 is poisonous to humans, domestic and game animals. In areas where the toxin has been applied, dogs are highly at risk until poisoned carcasses have disintegrated. This takes four-to-eight months. No hunting permits for Warawara Forest will be issued during this time. Seek veterinary advice for suspected poisoning of domestic animals.

### Risks can be eliminated by following these rules:

**DO NOT** touch bait

**WATCH** children at all times

**DO NOT EAT** animals from this area or within the buffer zone outside the treatment boundary. The standard buffer zone is 2 km for deer and pigs, 200 m for rabbits, and 1 km for hares, tahr, wallabies and possums.

### Poison baits or carcasses are DEADLY to DOGS

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. These signs indicate pesticide residues may be still present in baits and poisoned carcasses. When signs are removed this means you can resume normal activities in the area. Always report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs.

### If you suspect poisoning, please contact:

- Your local doctor or hospital
- The National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 or dial 111
- Seek veterinary advice for suspected poisoning of domestic animals

## Map of planned predator control area within Warawara Forest

The map on the next page shows the planned area of 6,889 hectares for predator control. The total area and boundaries may change after consultation.

### For more information

#### Please contact:

The Department of Conservation, Kaitaia Office

Phone: 09 408 6014

OR

EcoFX Ltd

Phone: 07 873 8130

Email: [admin@ecofx.co.nz](mailto:admin@ecofx.co.nz)

[www.ecofx.co.nz](http://www.ecofx.co.nz)

#### Visit the DOC website:

More information about DOC's National Predator Control Programme is available online

[doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme](http://doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme)

You can also see operational updates and detailed maps of predator control on public conservation land on the DOC website

[doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries](http://doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries)

Learn more about why 1080 is used to control introduced predators.

[doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/methods-of-control/1080](http://doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/methods-of-control/1080)

