

Consulting on the protection of native species in Southern Coromandel

The Department of Conservation (DOC) wants to reduce rat, stoat and possum numbers to protect native species

Native wildlife needs protection here

The Southern Coromandel has large and rare native forests that are valued for their diverse flora and fauna, scenic landscapes, and recreation and tourism opportunities.

These forests have mixed podocarp and broadleaf trees, remnant kauri, coastal pōhutukawa, and kānuka shrubland. Coromandel brown kiwi live on the Peninsula along with many other endemic and threatened native species including invertebrates, bats, birds, frogs and lizards.

These native species are under threat from rats, stoats and possums. Without ongoing protection, we risk losing the unique natural heritage and biodiversity in Southern Coromandel.

The plan to control introduced predators

To protect native species, our team in Hauraki District is planning to reduce predator numbers across approximately 24,300 hectares of forest in Southern Coromandel.

The most effective tool to control predators over large areas is bait pellets containing sodium fluoroacetate (1080). Helicopters distribute bait across the forest along pre-determined and monitored flight paths. This is the only way to control possums, rats and stoats across vast, remote and rugged landscapes.

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

This work is part of DOC's National Predator Control Programme. We are protecting the remaining populations of threatened native species while tools continue to be developed to eradicate possums, rats and stoats across New Zealand.



North Island brown kiwi. Photo by Sue Bell

Monitoring native species

Through sustained predator control, there is a big increase in breeding success for birds, their food source is more abundant, and the forest canopy is healthier.

For example, we know that kiwi are especially at risk – with up to 95% of chicks being killed by predators in some locations. However, sustained predator control through regular aerial 1080 operations and ground trapping means around 60% of chicks can make it to adulthood.

In the nearby forest of Whenuakite, kiwi have been increasing between 2-3 %+ every year for the past 22 years thanks to sustained predator control in partnership with the community.

Read the full story: www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2023-media-releases/predator-control-and-community---a-dream-team-for-coromandel-kiwi/

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.

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.

Learn more about why we use 1080 to control introduced predators.

www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/methods-of-control/1080

Proposed timeframe

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

At this stage, the operation in Southern Coromandel Forest is planned to occur between the 1st July 2024 and 30th November 2024. Operations are weather dependent.

Have your say

DOC consults with iwi, hapū and key stakeholders including adjacent landowners for predator control operations where 1080 is the proposed method. We aim to understand people's views and answer any questions they may have.

The DOC team at Hauraki Office or our contractor EcoFX would like to contact you to discuss the proposed operation. This includes how you think it could affect you and your wellbeing, native flora and fauna, natural resources and your ability to protect, manage and use these resources.

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



Consultation next steps

Your feedback during consultation will help guide decisions about the operational plan.

DOC or our contractor will update you about the outcomes of the consultation and any changes to the treatment boundary plan. This update will be in the form of a notification fact sheet, and it will include a more precise timeframe for the operation.

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

Map of planned predator control area within Southern Coromandel Forest

The map on the last page shows the proposed predator control area of approximately 24,300 hectares.

Managing risk

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 or longer. 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

For more information

Please contact:

DOC operational planner - Hauraki office

Phone: 07 867 9180

AND/OR EcoFX

Phone: 07 873 8130

Email: admin@ecofx.co.nz

Visit the DOC website:

See more information about DOC's National Predator Control Programme

www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme

See operational updates and detailed maps of predator control on public conservation land

www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries

Learn more about how we use 1080 safely and effectively

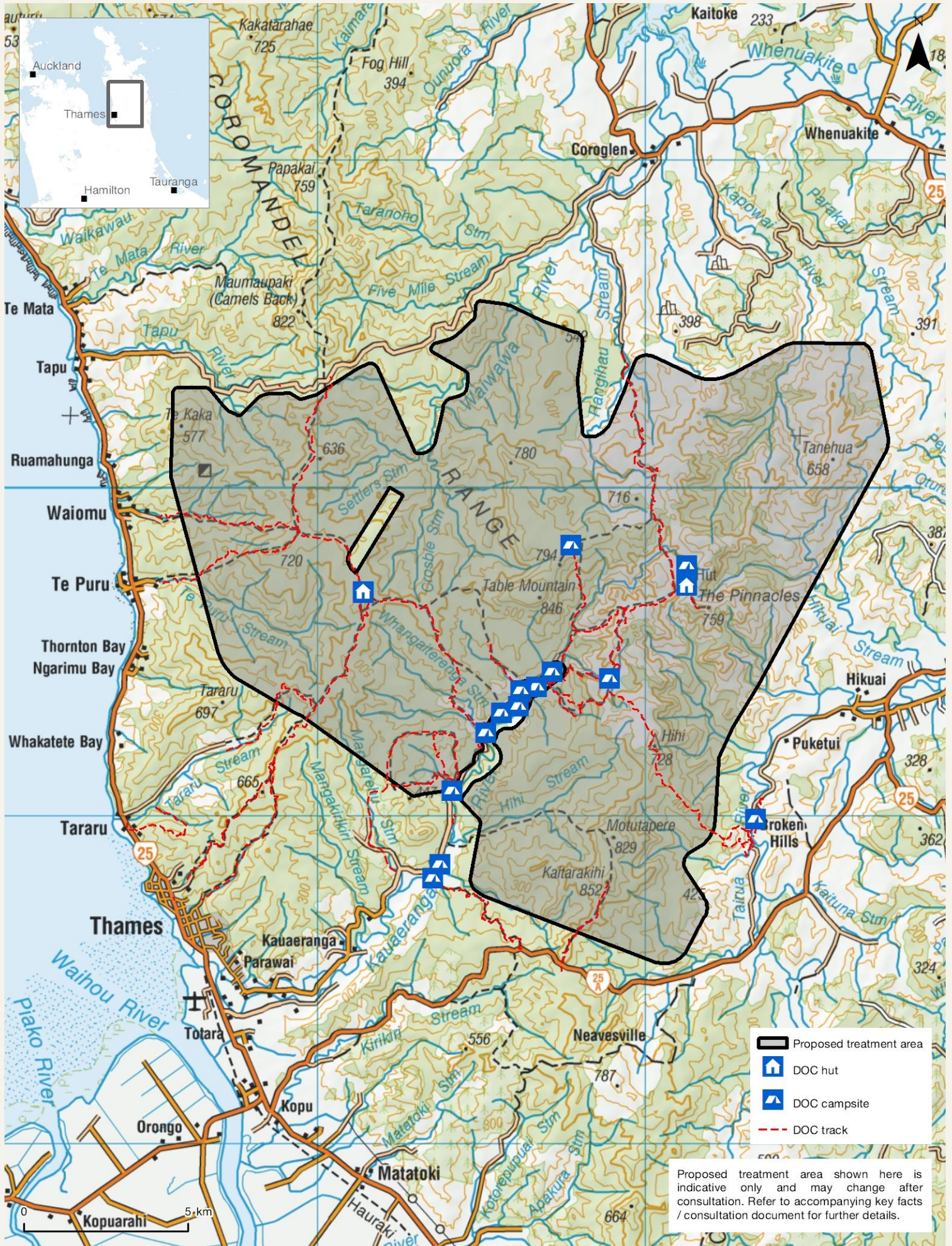
www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/methods-of-control/1080/how-we-use-1080/

See updates about track access and safety

www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/know-before-you-go/alerts

Learn more about Predator Free 2050

www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050



Hauraki Southern Forest

Aerial Predator Control 2024

Proposed treatment area: 25,441 ha