

# Notification about predator control in the Landsborough Valley

To protect native species, the Department of Conservation (DOC) is going to reduce rats, stoats and possums in the area.

## Why we are controlling introduced predators

The Landsborough Valley is a stronghold for native biodiversity thanks to sustained ground and aerial predator control undertaken over the last 25 years.

However, rats, stoats, and possums continue to be a major threat for native species, especially in years when beech trees seed heavily (a mast event) and rats and stoats rapidly increase. Once the supply of seed is exhausted these predators target birds and there are devastating impacts if we don't take action.

The mast prediction for 2023 indicated that rodent numbers were unlikely to meet the threshold for a control operation in the Landsborough in 2023/2024. However, recent monitoring shows rodents are at critical levels. This suggests that beech seeding and subsequent rat breeding has been higher than predicted. In response, DOC has triggered an urgent predator control operation. This will ensure protection for the many species that are benefitting from predator control here including mohua, kākā, kākāriki, pīwauwau/rock wren, korukoru/scarlet mistletoe and pekapeka/bats.

## How are we going to achieve this

The safest and most effective method we have to control introduced predators over large areas is to use biodegradable cereal pellets containing 1080. This bait targets rodents and possums. Stoats are also controlled through secondary poisoning as they feed on the carcasses of the dead rodents.

Helicopters will safely and precisely distribute bait across 33,672 hectares of the forest along pre-determined and monitored flight paths. This is the only viable method to control introduced predators in the Landsborough Valley due to the vast and rugged terrain.

The operation begins with the distribution of non-toxic pre-feed bait pellets. This prepares predators to eat the toxic bait (dyed green) that is applied afterwards. Both baits are 16 mm in diameter and cylindrical shaped.

The operation will be supplemented by a trapping network that is being bolstered with new double-trap boxes. This is being supported by South Westland tourism workers funded through the Jobs for Nature programme.



Kākā

## Consultation and consent outcome

DOC has consulted with hapū, iwi and key stakeholders. This involved discussing the operational plan and considering ways to mitigate any concerns.

DOC is delegated the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to decide applications for permission to use 1080 on land administered or managed by DOC. The Permission application is currently being considered for this operation. DOC has also applied for permission from the Ministry of Health.

## Timeframe

The operation is planned for the first clear weather window between January and March 2024. The timing is weather dependent.

## Next steps

Adjoining landowners and other stakeholders will be notified and there will be a public notice in the local newspaper/s. There will also be warning signs placed at entrances to the treatment area immediately prior to the operation.

After the operation, DOC will contact iwi, hapū, and stakeholders about the results of the operation. We also aim to share insights about the outcomes for native species overtime.

## Map of predator control area within the Landsborough Valley

This map on the next page shows the 33,672-hectare area we are controlling predators. It is indicative because the boundaries may change subject to a boundary check.

## 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.

### 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 Haast Visitor Centre

Ph: (03) 750 0809

Email: [haastvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:haastvc@doc.govt.nz)

### Vector Control Services

Ph: 0508 141 268

Email: [info@vcs.net.nz](mailto:info@vcs.net.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](http://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](http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries)

See updates about track access and safety

[www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/know-before-you-go/alerts](http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/know-before-you-go/alerts)

Learn more about why we use 1080 to control introduced predators

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

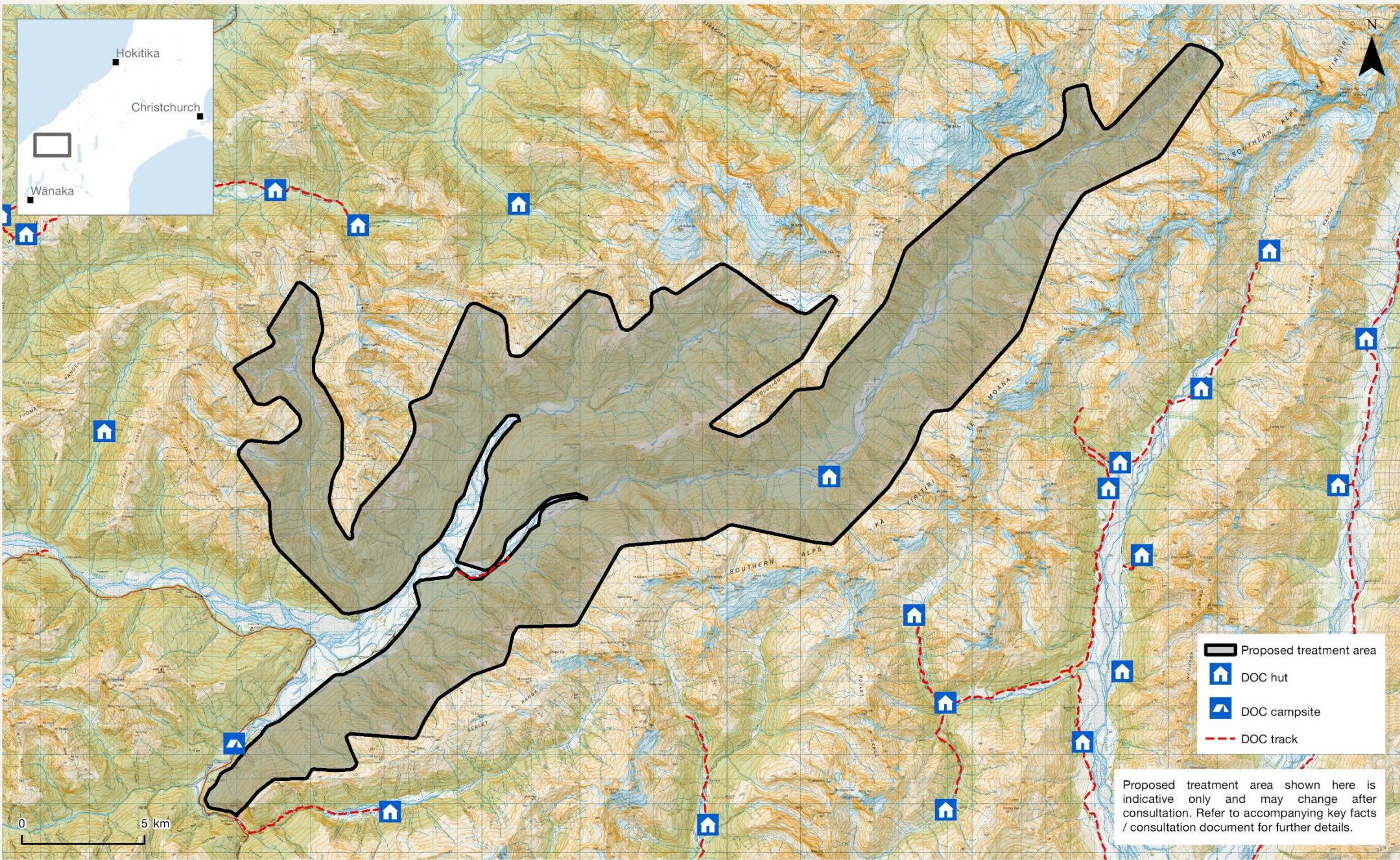
Learn more about Predator Free 2050

[www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050](http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050)



Korukoru / scarlet mistletoe





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