

29 May 2026

Conservation House
18-32 Manners Street
Te Aro, Wellington, 6011
doc.govt.nz
Ref: OIAD-6300

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 02 May 2026, in which you asked for:

“Please provide all data and advice used to support the selection and prioritisation of 1080 drop sites in the Lower North Island for 2026 and future years.

That includes:

- 1. target and by-catch non-target pest species presence and prevalence/density data - with particular emphasis on all deer species, pigs and goats.*
- 2. TB and other data used in support of selection*
- 3. Cost of operations*
- 4. Planned operations through 2026, and future years with selected or short-listed operations, including the area boundaries/extents (or descriptions where not yet defined)”*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

- 1. target and by-catch non-target pest species presence and prevalence/density data - with particular emphasis on all deer species, pigs and goats.*

I am sharing with you a summary of DOC's National Predator Control Programme prioritisation process, which briefly outlines how DOC selects and prioritise sites where predator control will occur, including the use of aerial 1080. In essence, sites are selected based on the significance of the threatened species and ecosystems present, and how vulnerable they are to predators.

Prioritisation, planning, and post operational assessments of predator control operations are driven by monitoring of the threatened native wildlife or plants that DOC is trying to protect, and monitoring of the target pests that need to be controlled (i.e. rats, stoats, and possums). Monitoring is ongoing at each site, usually through permanent networks of trail cameras, acoustic recorders, and tracking tunnels. In essence, DOC controls predators to ensure local threatened species populations survive, and forest canopy health is maintained, by periodically suppressing rats, stoats and possums down to target levels.

Deer, pigs, and goats are not targeted by DOC's predator control operations, so monitoring data for these species plays no role in the selection or prioritisation of predator control sites.

2. TB and other data used in support of selection

DOC does not control pests to reduce the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in New Zealand. That responsibility lies with OSPRI ([About us | OSPRI](#)). Consequently, TB data does not influence DOC's site selection.

3. Cost of operations

Cost is a factor in the prioritisation of predator control sites. This is the last step taken. It occurs after the best remaining wildlife populations have been identified and ranked, their vulnerability to target predators assessed (rats, stoats, and possums), and the likely benefit of predator control estimated. At this point, the estimated costs of control are included in our prioritisation model, to find the best outcomes from the resources available.

As context, aerial 1080 operations typically cost \$40 to \$50 per hectare to simultaneously control rats, stoats and possums. Some locations are more or less expensive than this, primarily depending on the accessibility of the site.

4. Planned operations through 2026, and future years with selected or short-listed operations, including the area boundaries/extents (or descriptions where not yet defined)

DOC has now completed its 2026 predator control programme in the lower North Island. Two aerial 1080 operations were completed: the 20,171 hectare Ruahine operation was completed in March and the 47,896 hectare Project Kaka operation was completed in May. No DOC aerial 1080 operations are planned to occur in 2027 in the Lower North Island. Our programme for 2028 and beyond will depend on wildlife and predator monitoring results and the resourcing available.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and attached documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Ben Reddiex
Director Biodiversity National Programmes
Department of Conservation

Te Papa Atawhai

Item	Document description	Decision
1	NPCP prioritisation document	Released in full