

Hunua Project: 1080 pest management July, August 2015

In late July and early August 2015, 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) will be aerially applied to around 21,500 hectares of parkland and some private land in the Hunua Ranges area.

This is a carefully planned operation, which will be carried out under strict conditions. Read this information carefully to find out more about park access and public safety, particularly for children.

To contact Auckland Council's Hunua project team, phone us on 09 301 0101 or email the [Hunua Project team](#).

To join our mailing list, email the [Hunua Project team](#) with your contact details and 'mailing list' in the subject heading.

Why are we doing this?

In the last few years, possum and rat numbers have increased significantly in the Hunua Ranges. This is having a severe effect on the health of our forest and threatened species, like kōkako that live within it.

Pest control methods being used were no longer effectively controlling pests so council was faced with an important decision. As a result, the way we manage pests in the Hunua Ranges, Waharau and Whakatiwai regional parks has changed to include the aerial application of 1080 bait.

Planning this operation

A highly accurate satellite navigation system (GPS) and custom-designed bait applicators will be used to distribute the 1080 bait and ensure pellets are not spread outside the operational boundary or over excluded areas. Epro Ltd, an experienced pest control contractor, will carry out this work.

Each hectare will receive around 2-3kg of cereal pellets, containing 0.15 per cent of the active 1080 ingredient. That's about one teaspoon of 1080 per hectare.

Council has contacted landowners or occupiers that live adjacent to the parkland to discuss the inclusion of their land in the operational area. Some landowners have chosen to do this and we will be treating their forested areas as part of the operation. Bait will not be applied to any other properties.

Department of Conservation (DOC) administered Mangatawhiri forest conservation area and Vining scenic reserve will also be included in the operation.

To carry out this programme, council must get permission from the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS). ARPHS set conditions to protect human health.

Water

Carrying out this operation, in a water catchment area, requires careful planning and working closely with Watercare. Important measures are in place to ensure the ongoing safety of Auckland's water supply including:

- no flying over the water supply reservoirs
- exclusion zones around the reservoirs where no bait is applied
- using highly accurate (GPS) application technology to apply bait
- returning reservoirs to service only after a rigorous water-testing schedule is complete
- working with landowners to understand drinking water extraction from streams flowing out of the operational area.

The operational cycle

The operation is planned to occur, as weather permits, in late July 2015.

Aerial bait applications of 1080 will be carried out using a two-step method to reach as many of its target species as possible. Step one is a non-toxic pre-feed which familiarises pest animals with the cereal baits and makes them hungry for more. Step two is the application of the baits containing the 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) toxin.

In order to manage such a large area and to take extra care around the water supply reservoirs, the operational area has been divided into two blocks. The Cossey and Mangatangi catchments will be treated as one block, and the Wairoa and Mangatawhiri catchments will be treated as another.

There are likely to be 7-10 days between the pre-feed and the toxic bait application for each of the blocks.

What happens next?

A caution period will be in place for some months after the operation to ensure public safety while there is still a possibility of 1080 remaining in the environment.

Signage will remain in place as a reminder.

We hope to start seeing positive results in six to eight weeks. A monitoring programme has been carried out before the operation and we'll use that information as a benchmark for success.



What is 1080?

1080 baits are coloured green and are about the size of a bottle screw-cap, that's about 2.5cm long and the diameter of a 20 cent coin.

1080 is a naturally-occurring toxin found in many plants throughout the world. Plants have developed it as a natural defence against browsing mammals. It is manufactured for use in baits for pest control and is particularly toxic to mammals. This makes 1080 a valuable tool for managing introduced pests in New Zealand as our only native mammals are bats.

1080 is highly water soluble and breaks down in the environment. It does not accumulate in the food chain or in soil. 1080 is the only toxin currently registered for use on mainland New Zealand as suitable for aerial targeting of possums, rats and stoats.

One individual 1080 bait has a maximum of 0.15 per cent toxin; the rest is a cereal base. This means that, at today's sowing rates of 2–3 kg of bait per hectare, a treated hectare is covered with about one teaspoon of toxin.

Can I still visit the ranges?

During the operation, there may be some temporary disturbances to park users. You may see restrictions to vehicle access – this will be clearly sign posted and gates locked – and temporary closure of areas of the park, park roads, and walking and mountain biking tracks.

These restrictions will only be for short periods of time (approximately two-four days) and normal access will resume after this.

Details of parkland closure will be on our website soon. To find out if the area of parkland you wish to visit is closed, phone us on 09 301 0101 or check our website before setting out.

If you're visiting the parklands

- **Know when the operation is being carried out** – we plan to start the programme in late July, however the weather will play a part in determining the exact start date.
- **Read safety or project signage** – signage will be in place in the treatment areas before, during, and after the operation. It will carry important information for all visitors to the parks.

• **Avoid touching any baits you encounter** – 1080 baits are green in colour and are highly toxic. Pest animals will quickly start eating bait, and we will be clearing baits from tracks and major public areas, however you may see baits within the forest areas. Leave bait alone, supervise children closely, and don't allow them to pick up or eat baits. Consuming 1080 baits could be deadly to a child.

• **Supervise dogs at all times** – 1080 is also deadly to dogs. Do not let your dog roam in the operational area and, if you must bring it into the parks, keep it on a leash and under control at all times. Do not allow dogs to scavenge carcasses.

Pig hunting permits

- Pig hunting in the Hunua Ranges Regional Park is by permit only.
- Permit-based hunting is a recreational activity and contributes to council's regular pest management activity in the ranges.
- The 2015 pig hunting season will finish just before the operation begins. This is to prevent pig dogs from coming into contact with toxin or carcasses during and after the operation.
- All permit holders will be advised of the closure details.
- Pig hunting closures will remain in place until we are confident there is no residual risk to dogs.

Horse riding

- Horse riding in the Hunua Ranges Regional Park is by permit only.
- Horse riding permits won't be suspended during the operation; however horse riders should keep a close eye on horses grazing in the operational area.
- As with walking and tramping, there may be some temporary closures to horse riding trails in the Hunua Ranges.
- If you suspect your horse has ingested poison bait, contact a vet immediately. Symptoms include trembling and sweating.
- Nearby regional parks that are outside the operational area and also offer horse riding (by permit) are Duder and Waitawa.

Campgrounds

- Campgrounds will be closed for short periods of time during the operation. they will re-open after they have been checked for baits.
- Water supplies at campgrounds will also be disconnected for a few days before and after the operation.

Can my dogs be affected?

Dogs are the most at-risk pets during a 1080-based pest control operation. Most reported 1080-related dog deaths happen after they eat a poisoned carcass – not the bait itself. Prevention against poisoning is always better than treatment.

Important tips for keeping your dog safe

- Keep dogs under supervision at all times – don't allow them to roam, especially in bush areas.
- If you must walk your dog in or near the operational area, keep it on a leash and keep it well fed and hydrated.
- Don't let dogs scavenge carcasses on parkland or on any land adjacent to the park, until the all clear is given. This will be some months after the operation.
- Observe council's signage and caution periods.
- If you suspect your dog has 1080 poisoning, act immediately by inducing vomiting and taking your dog to the vet.
- There is no antidote for 1080 but dogs can be saved if early appropriate action is taken.

Working dogs

Farmers who work their dogs in or around a 1080 treated area should take the following precautions until the all clear is given (this may be some months):

- Consider whether stock on your property can be managed without dogs.
- Keep your working dogs well fed. Feeding dogs meat instead of biscuits may make them less likely to scavenge on dead possums.
- Kennel or chain your dogs when they are not working.
- Keep your dog on a leash, when possible.

Consider muzzling your dog

- A muzzle may annoy a dog not used to wearing it, so introduce it gradually.
- A muzzle may also result in heat stress during work. Dogs must be able to pant and be given the opportunity to drink, particularly in hot weather - make provision for this.
- Dog owners with land adjacent to the operational area can request a muzzle from council. Email the Hunua Project team to make a request.

If you suspect 1080 poisoning

Signs of poisoning may appear as soon as half an hour after ingesting poison or up to several hours later. Death can happen between 2 and 12 hours after ingesting the poison. Make the dog vomit immediately and take the dog straight to the vet, warning them you are on your way.

Look out for:

- behavioural changes like disorientation, restlessness, hyperactivity, howling or barking, sensitivity to touch, aggression or snapping
- drooling, vomiting, and involuntary urinating or defecating
- muscle tremors and convulsions.

Emetic treatment

There is no antidote for 1080 poisoning in dogs. Simple emetic treatment is available and effective if administered within an hour of baits or carcasses being eaten. The risk is that wandering dogs may not return within this time, which means that restraining dogs is the only sure protection.

- Dog owners with land adjacent to the operational area can request emetic medication by emailing the Hunua Project team.
- One or two crystals of washing soda (available from supermarkets) down the dog's throat or half a teaspoon of salt thrown on the back of the dog's tongue are also effective methods of inducing vomiting.
- Phone the vet as soon you have administered emetic treatment and immediately take the dog to the vet.

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