

Aorangi Recreational Hunters.
Email aorangihunters@gmail.com
May 2014

Dear Hunters,

Aorangi Forest Park (Recreational Hunting Area) update

A Major Breakthrough in NZ Recreational Hunting History.

As your representative for the Aorangi Recreational Hunters Group, I can report to you that we now have quite probably the largest Protected Red Deer Herd (on crown land) in the country. Negotiations I have been involved in on your behalf have secured an undertaking by our partners TB free New Zealand (more about this following), to protect the valuable Aorangi Red Deer Herd, now and into the future.

“Project Aorangi” See Pest Control fact sheet May 2014 (Part Included)

This is a major conservation project encompassing all the Aorangi Forest Park (RHA) and a large part of the surrounding Private Land.

A detailed collaborative agreement is being finalized between the partners,

Aorangi Restoration Trust (ART)
Aorangi Recreational Hunters (ARH)
Local Land Owners
Ngati Hinewaka
Department of Conservation (DOC)
TB Free New Zealand (OSPRI)
Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC)

It is a credit to you as individuals and as a group, that you have made rational decisions about Aerial 1080 and have embraced the integrity of Epro Deer Repellent. This has protected our Deer Herd and opened up the pathway for the formation of “Project Aorangi”

“Project Aorangi” kicks off this winter (2014) with the aerial 1080, multi species pest control operation by TBFree New Zealand

The entire Aorangi Forest park (RHA) 19,000 Ha
Surrounding Private Land (Bush) Approx 13,000 Ha

That is about 32,000 Ha, apparently the largest ever in the lower North Island and both pre-feed and Toxic bait is to be coated with Epro Deer Repellent. This will continue at approx 3 yr intervals, for at least 10 years.

Quotes from TB free New Zealand's written statements.

“Project Aorangi” Pest control programme May 2014.

to every 120 square metres). Deer repellent will be used across the entire operational area. The sowing rate of bait

kereru”. The entire Aorangi pest control operation will involve deer repellent to reduce the risk of deer by-kill and maintain hunting stocks.

I think it's important to note here that this represents a serious investment from TBFree New Zealand in the health of our Deer Herd (and therefore the quality of our recreational opportunities). Although the cost of Epro Deer Repellent is in the hundreds of thousands, we all know that ground control would more than double the cost of the operation. Therefore ARH would argue that the addition of Epro Deer Repellent is in effect at least cost neutral. That said, it would be ungracious of us as individuals and as the ARH Group not to acknowledge the financial commitment from TBFree New Zealand. As partners we should look to add value to them where possible.

In the next 10 years I would expect the Health of the forest supporting our Deer Herd to dramatically improve, bird numbers especially.

**Healthy Forest = Healthy Herd
We stand to be the envy of the Hunting World.**

“Project Aorangi” promises to deliver us Herd security and a much improved environment to hunt in.

More about this in the future as the documentation is completed.

Three current initiatives supporting “Project Aorangi”

1/ A Trapping Project.

This is aimed at Stoats/ Ferrets/ Cats.

A \$40k grant has enabled the purchase of 400 traps (Doc 250 and Timms traps)

These are being placed along the rivers on the Western side of the park.

Over time it is intended to have permanent trap lines in all the rivers originating from the park.

The aim is to control pest numbers on the Private Land outside the Aerial 1080 Zone and maintain low numbers between the 1080 drops within the park.

DOC and the Aorangi Restoration Trust have put this project together and ARH's are involved in maintaining these lines.

The Trust (ART) has also established a trap line around the coast to control pests ensuring the Little Blue Penguins have a better breeding outcome.

2/ Epro Deer Repellent (EDR).

A group of ARH Hunters will travel to Taupo during June 2014.

We intend to help out with the coating of bait with EDR.

We need to fully understand this process because it is vitally important to us. Also we will look for win/win PR opportunities for ourselves / our partners and along with this, opportunities to spread the word regarding the effectiveness of EDR to the wider hunting community.

3/ Weka Reintroduction Project.

Located on Homeburn station alongside the AFP (RHA)

Hunters have initiated the first Bird Reintroduction Project of Project Aorangi.

The Hutt Valley Deer Stalkers Branch has given an undertaking of Funds and Labour to get the Reintroduction Project off the ground.

The project is well advanced towards obtaining the list of consents needed.

It will consist of fencing a 5Ha QE2 Block on Homeburn Station, to enclose 5 pairs of Weka.

It is a breed and release program so the young will be regularly released into the park.

Aorangi Recreational Hunter's Achievements of the Last Few Years

1/ First significant DOC estate to get Ministerial approval for EPRO Deer Repellent added to Aerial 1080 operations (2005) (Nationally Ground Breaking)

2/ Negotiated the **addition** of Epro Deer Repellent in 2006 and 2009 Aerial 1080 operations in AFP(RHA)

3/ Gained a seat on **Aorangi Restoration Trust**.

4/ Gained a seat on "Project Aorangi" **Steering committee** as partners.
This is where major decisions are made.

5/ Have a written undertaking for pest control in the Aorangi Forest Park (RHA) for the next 10 years, with **no threat** to our Red Deer Herd.

We have made great progress directly from the fact that we are not only in the **TENT**;
But more importantly at the TABLE.

I know from listening to hunters most of my life, that your love of the wild and the quality of the bush environment is highly valued and is a significant part of a memorable hunting experience. So it is particularly pleasing to me as your representative to see Hunters so pro-actively leading "Project Aorangi".

Regards to you all
Paul Cutfield
Your representative for
Aorangi Recreational Hunters



Project Aorangi – Haumanu kia Haumako pest control programme

A significant collaborative effort is set to get underway this year to protect native birds and bush as well as control bovine tuberculosis (TB) in the southern Wairarapa. TBfree New Zealand, the Department of Conservation (DOC), Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and the Aorangi Restoration Trust (ART) have combined to undertake Project Aorangi, due to begin in mid-June 2014, depending on the weather. The 10-year project aims to provide a “triple hit” on pests by reducing the number of possums, stoats and rats over around 30,000 hectares of the Aorangi Forest Park and surrounding private farmland.

How pests will be targeted

TBfree New Zealand is planning an aerial pest control operation within the Aorangi Forest Park. The proposed operational area is shown on the map overleaf. It will be carried out by BioWorks, which has undertaken pest control operations in the Wellington region for a number of years. Previous aerial possum control in the area was last completed in 2009. It is envisaged that this operation will be repeated every three years during the 10-year project. Volunteers working with ART and DOC will also undertake ground trapping in a large amount of land surrounding the Aorangi Forest Park.

Why this method of pest control?

Biodegradable 1080 is particularly suited to this operation, given the size of the area to be treated and the rugged terrain. It is a highly effective, cost-efficient and safe method of targeting and controlling introduced pests. It does not persist in soil or water and has no lasting effect on animals that consume a non-lethal dose. The independent Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has strongly endorsed its continued use in New Zealand. To view the commissioner’s report, visit www.pce.parliament.nz

What this operation involves

Non-toxic, tan-coloured cereal pellets will be distributed in the operational area by helicopter one to two weeks before the toxic application at a rate of 500 grams per hectare. These non-toxic pellets give possums and rats a taste for the bait and overcome potential bait shyness.

Toxic, brown cereal pellets, containing biodegradable 1080 (also known as sodium fluoroacetate) will then be distributed in the operational area by helicopter



at a rate of one kilogram per hectare (roughly one bait to every 120 square metres). Deer repellent will be used across the entire operational area. The sowing rate of bait has been significantly reduced from previous operations. This operation will have strict quality assurance and post-operational monitoring requirements. Helicopter pilots will use GPS navigational equipment to ensure the accuracy of bait placement and avoidance of exclusion zones.

