

# Key facts about pest control in Mangaweka Reserves 2023/24

The Department of Conservation's Palmerston North office plans to reduce rat and possum numbers to protect biodiversity values in Mangaweka Reserves, please refer to attached maps.

## Why we are controlling rats and possums

This is an ongoing animal pest control operation aimed at improving biodiversity values within the reserves.

Native bird species are reliant on the forest for their food supply. Rats and possums compete with native species for food by eating seeds, fruit and native vegetation. They also impact on forest regeneration and directly prey on birds, eggs, lizards and insects. There are a number of threatened plant species in these reserves, including mistletoe and a significant population of *Dactylanthus taylorii* which is New Zealand's only fully parasitic flowering plant.

## How it is happening

The pesticide used to control rats in this area is a combination of Diphacinone and Cholecalciferol (brand name double tap pellet bait). Baits are dyed green, are in the form of pellets and weigh 12 grams each.

Baits will be placed in bait stations which will be filled up to 4 times per year dependant on meeting

monitoring result minimum thresholds required for successful possum control using potassium cyanide.

The pesticide used to control possums in this area is Potassium Cyanide (brand name Feratox). Baits are dyed blue, and the toxin is encapsulated in a hard coating that requires an animal with considerable jaw pressure to crack it.

Multiple bait bags containing cyanide baits will be stapled to trees on transects throughout the reserves. These baits will be pre fed using non-toxic ferafeed paste. Pre feeding has been proven to increase the number of possum kills during operations using cyanide.

## Why we are using this method

Over the past few years the Department of Conservation has been trailing the effectiveness of double tap bait on rats and possums. While we have found double tap to be highly effective on rats we have seen a steady increase in possum numbers in our reserves. For this reason we have decided to also use Feratox which is a proven method of possum pest control.



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

## Timeframe

The operation will commence anytime from 7 November 2023 and will continue until 30 June 2024. Bait will be present in bait stations throughout the whole year.

DOC will contact all neighbours and place warning signs immediately prior to the operation starting.

## Important information

The pesticide is contained in bait stations and/or bait bags, although animals may drag baits onto the ground. Treat all suspected baits with caution.

The pesticides we use are poisonous to humans and domestic animals.

Poisoning can occur through eating the baits or poisoned animals.

These risks can be eliminated by following these simple rules:

- DO NOT touch bait or bait stations.
- WATCH CHILDREN at all times
- DO NOT EAT animals from this area or within 2km of the treatment area boundary.
- Remember, poison baits or carcasses are DEADLY to DOGS

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. Warning signs indicate that pesticide residues may still be present in baits or animals. When signs are removed, this means that you that you can resume normal activities in the area. Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs. If in doubt, check with DOC.

## Operational planning

The use of double tap pellet bait does not require the consent of the Medical Officer of Health or resource consent from the Regional Council.

The use of Feratox does require consent of the Medical Officer of Health, which has been sought and approved.

The Department of Conservation assesses and approves all vertebrate pesticide operations on public conservation land on behalf of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), following procedures approved by the EPA. DOC approving managers apply conditions to ensure that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks of the operation are managed. This approval entails a detailed assessment of risks involved in the work. The document produced for this exercise is called an Application Assessment and a copy for this operation can be obtained from the DOC office in Palmerston North.

## If you suspect poisoning

- Seek medical attention from your local doctor or hospital
- Contact the National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 (non-urgent and general enquiries), for advice.
- In an emergency dial 111.

## For more information

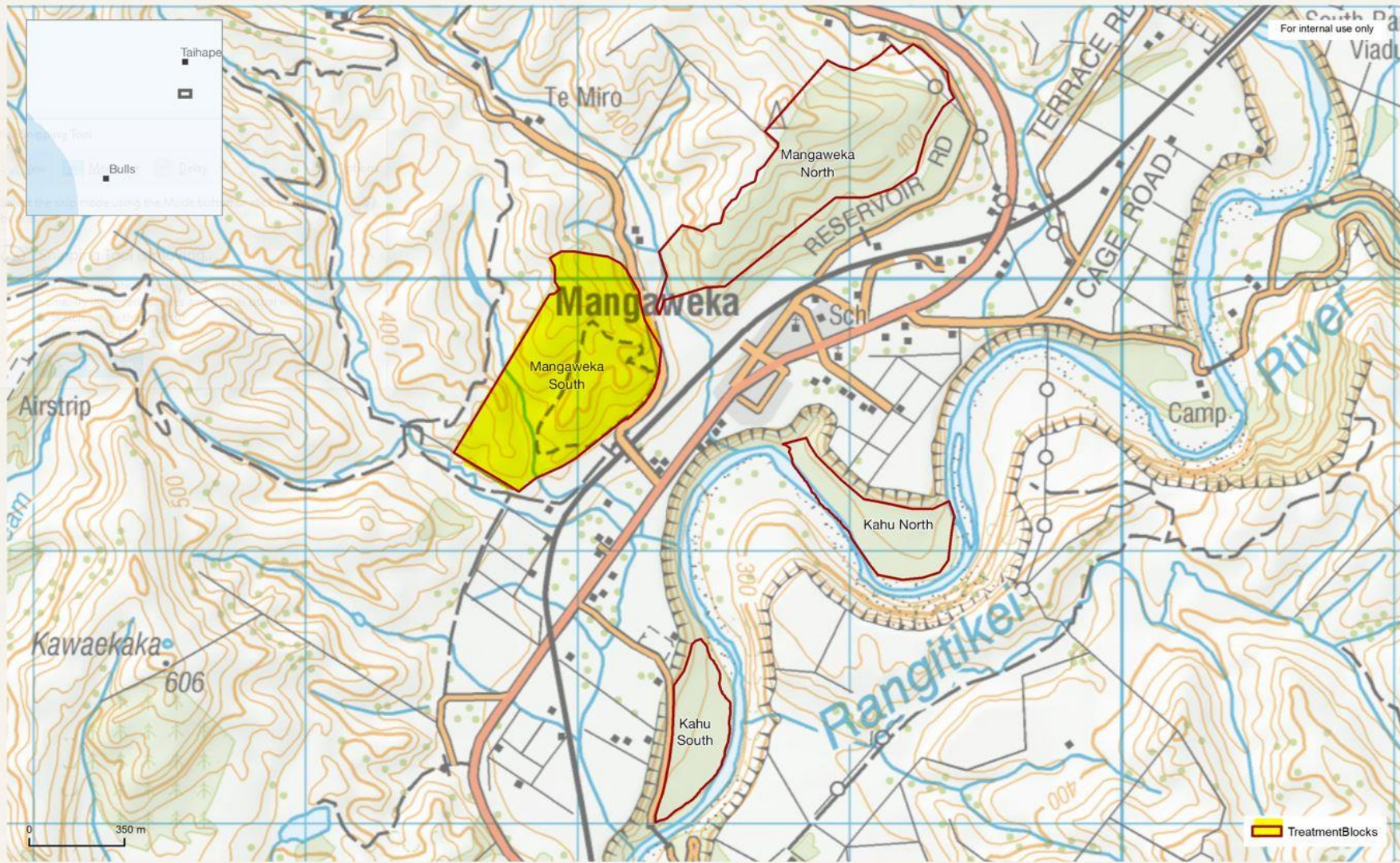
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Please get in touch if you wish to be notified again prior to the operation.

## Map of area where pest control will take place

Mangaweka South



## Mangaweka reserves possum and rat control 2023 - 2024