

By kill of Deer during 1080 Operations

21 May 2006

Hamilton

Applicant Statement 1080 Reassessment

Background information

- The conservation impacts of deer are often high. In some places they have caused severe habitat degradation. However, deer are also keenly hunted for recreation and commercially harvested for venison.
- The Department currently actively controls deer at 10 sites around NZ (Northland, Auckland/Waikato, Taranaki, Kaweka Mountain Beech project, Te Urewera Mainland Island, Boundary Stream MI, Hurunui MI, Murchison Mtns, Resolution Island, Secretary Island) , and is carrying out research on the contribution that deer control can make to protecting ecological processes in forest and how influential that is compared to other management activities aimed at restoring forests at a further 4 sites (Waihaha, Waiotaka, Anitoki, Hopkins/Huxley).
- The Department recognises that a by kill of deer may occur during aerial 1080 operations.
- By kills are highly variable, ranging from 5% to 93% during monitored aerial 1080 operations (Nugent et al 2001).
- There is no consistent pattern of variation in deer kill with variation in bait type, sowing rate or toxic loading
- Deer density and habitat condition may have an influence on the by kill with high numbers of deer in degraded (or sub-optimal) habitats possibly being more susceptible to being killed.

Deer species may be another factor, with small, grazing deer species such as fallow possibly more likely to be poisoned.