

**Joint Press Release**

**New Zealand Game Animal Council**

**New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association**

30 May 2016



## **Battle for Our Birds 2016**

The Department of Conservation is soon to commence a large-scale aerial 1080 campaign to control rats and stoats on Public Conservation Land in response to a beech mast event. Battle for Our Birds 2016 (BfoB2) follows a similar campaign in 2014.

Information about the possible areas affected and the reasons for BfoB2 is available here <http://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/battle-for-our-birds-2016/gac-nzda-predator-response.pdf>

The Department of Conservation BfoB2 webpage is here [www.doc.govt.nz/battleforourbirds](http://www.doc.govt.nz/battleforourbirds)

Please note that final site selection will not occur until monitoring is complete in June. The total area treated will be 800,000 hectares, about two thirds of the shaded area on the map in the information brochure.

There is limited opportunity for mitigation of the effects on game animals and hunters. Mitigation involves either use of deer repellent and/or timing of the operations. The Department of Conservation has already chosen to use small baits (6 gram) and low sowing rates (1-2kg/ha). Cancellation of aerial operations and ground-based poisoning are not options. There is an urgent need to prioritise areas for mitigation.

The **Game Animal Council**, the **NZ Deerstalkers' Association**, and the **Department of Conservation** have been consulting to identify effects on game herds and potential mitigation. We have identified that the most at risk and most highly valued game herds are Wakatipu white tailed deer, fallow deer in the Wakatipu, Blue Mountains and North-West Nelson areas, and Ruahine Ranges red deer.

We are seeking hunter input to help us to prioritise areas for mitigation, including areas we have not already identified. Please visit this website <http://nzgameanimalcouncil.org.nz/battle-our-birds-2016-mitigation-survey> to notify us of your highest priority. We welcome input from all recreational and commercial hunters.

### **Contacts**

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