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15 September 2011

Clyde Graf
PO Box 19440
HAMILTON

Dear Clyde

**OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST – QUESTIONS REGARDING
AERIAL 1080 POISONING AND TESTING OF DEAD KIWI FOR 1080
RESIDUES IN TONGARIRO FOREST**

I refer to your official information request received via email on 22 August 2011. I list your questions below and provide my response to each.

- 1. When did the aerial 1080 poisoning of the Tongariro forest begin? (What year?) And what years have aerial operations taken place, since?*

The earliest pest control operation that used aerially applied baits containing 1080 in Tongariro Forest was in the southern (Taurewa) part of the area in 1976. Department of Conservation files (from 1988 onward) show that subsequent aerial 1080 treatments over parts of Tongariro Forest have occurred in 1988 (1,262 ha), 1989 (1,314 ha), 1991 (western boundary), over a large area of the forest sequentially in 1995-1996-1997, and in single operations treating almost all of the forest in 2001 and 2006. The Conservancy does not have files from preceding agencies and cannot confidently state what operations may have occurred between the initial 1976 operation and the 1988 operation.

- 2. How many of the 89 dead kiwi on the list you supplied were tested for 1080 residues? (keeping in mind that many birds are scavenged – not just predated – in aerial poisoning operations. We've found plenty of evidence of scavenging while in 1080 drop zones) Dead birds to predators, are like KFC to a hungry team of football players.*

None of the kiwi on the list died within a timeframe when exposure to 1080 was a reasonable possibility; therefore none were tested for 1080 residues. Following the September 2006 operation the shortest time period afterwards that a (freshly) dead kiwi was found was 114 days. The rainfall in Tongariro Forest between September and January far exceeds the 100mm required to detoxify baits (Thomas et al 2004). This, along with the short-lived persistence of 1080 residues recorded in invertebrates (Eason et al 1993), excludes 1080 poisoning as a potential cause of death for any of the dead kiwi found in Tongariro Forest during the five year period in question.

Tongariro Whanganui Taranaki Conservancy

Private Bag 3016, Whanganui 4540
Telephone: (06) 349 2100

I trust that the information provided here adequately answers your questions.

Yours sincerely

Damian Coutts
Conservator
Tongariro Whanganui Taranaki Conservancy

References Cited

Eason, C.T.; Gooneratne, R.; Wright, G.R.; Pierce, R.; Frampton, C.M. 1993: The fate of sodium monofluoroacetate (1080) in water, mammals, and invertebrates. *Proceedings of the forty-sixth New Zealand Plant Protection Conference*: 297-301.

Thomas, M.D.; Maddigan, F.; Gardner, D. 2004: Decay of 1080 baits used for possum control. AHB Report R-80599. AHB, Wellington. 23 p.