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Two projects on the cards for mill site

Not one, but potentially two new businesses are on the cards to take over the old Winstone Pulp International (WPI) Karioi site – news that has been welcomed by Ruapehu’s mayor Weston Kirton.

Proposals are for a data centre campus and a biofuel production facility. Kirton says they offer the prospect of significant new investment and employment opportunities for the district.

WPI closed its central North Island mills two years ago, citing unsustainable energy prices, and costing more than 200 permanent jobs, with further job losses in supporting industries.

“Successive blows have cost jobs, reduced business and visitor spending, displaced people and put pressure on Ruapehu communities,” he said.

“Bringing productive activity back to Karioi is welcome news that could help rebuild confidence, create much-needed jobs and generate work for local suppliers, contractors and other businesses.”

Two separate developments proposed

The proposed future use involves two separate developments: a wood pellet production facility by Te Ara Hiko bio-coal, as recently reported in other media, and a co-located data centre campus operated by Data Igloo.

Te Ara Hiko proposes to construct and operate a manufacturing facility producing 180,000 tonnes of wood fuel pellets a year for domestic and export customers.

The proposal would repurpose existing wood-processing infrastructure using regional forestry resources and supporting employment in the wood-processing sector.

Alongside it, Data Igloo proposes a data centre campus providing secure, energy-efficient storage, computing colocation and sovereign data storage and processing.

Data Igloo says its design differs from large, water- and power-intensive overseas data centres by separating low-energy storage from intensive processing and using the region’s climate to reduce cooling and energy needs.

Both developments remain in the planning stages – the data centre needs a change of land use consent, while the biofuel plant is waiting for a consent to discharge water into the Whangaehu River, after it has been treated through a wetland facility.

Environmental safeguards essential

Kirton acknowledged that local iwi Ngāti Rangi opposed the consent application in its current form because of proposed wastewater condensate discharges into the Whangaehu River.

“Restoring employment and economic activity is important, but so is protecting our environment and the health of the awa.

“However, I am confident that Ngāti Rangi can work together with the parties to address these concerns,” he said.

Building confidence in the environmental safeguards will be essential to establishing a successful, enduring operation.

“While I am positive about these opportunities and want to see them explored thoroughly, the outcome we should be working towards is lasting employment and investment that supports our communities while protecting the environment that sustains us.”

Turn to Page 2



Running round Orautoha hills P3



Meet the Ohakune chiefs P5



New bridge, new name P7

Mangapurua Track reopens with seven new, safer bridges



A side-by-side comparison showing the new wider bridges. Photo: Ngā Ara Tūhono Charitable Trust.

By Moana Ellis, LDR

An iconic section of the Mountains to Sea – Ngā Ara Tūhono Great Ride reopened to cyclists on Saturday after seven new bridges and seasonal maintenance improved safety ahead of the summer season.

The Mangapurua Track, which crosses remote backcountry in Whanganui National Park, was closed to cyclists over winter.

Its reopening offers riders improved crossings along a route renowned for its

native forest, historic valley settlements and the iconic Bridge to Nowhere.

Ngā Ara Tūhono Charitable Trust kaihautū ara/general manager Lynley Twyman said the track was in its best opening condition in years.

“I first rode the Mangapurua in 2015 and this is the best opening condition I’ve seen it in since then. This reflects a huge amount of hard work by DOC and the crews caring for this remote track.”

The new bridges were an important safety improvement for walkers and cyclists, she said.

“They make crossings easier to negotiate and improve the flow of the journey, while retaining the backcountry character that makes the Mangapurua so special.”

Twyman said there was still more to do, but walkers and cyclists would be “hugely grateful” for the improvements.

Turn to Page 2

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Mill projects

From Page 1

Paul Ryan, from Data Igloo, said the site is ideal for their operation, being very close to the Karioi electricity substation as well as two fibre optic data cables. The cooler, relatively high altitude site means they won't use any water for cooling.

He said the company plans to hold community meetings to explain the project to members of the public.

He stressed that Data Igloo has been grateful for the support from RDC for the project.

Ruapehu Events & What's On

NOVEMBER 2026

Ruapehu Māori Culture Festival **5 Nov**
Raetihi Primary School. Contact Kay Henare kayhenare06@gmail.com

DECEMBER 2026

Raetihi Christmas Festival **12 Dec**
Contact Kay Henare kayhenare06@gmail.com

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2 • **RUAPEHU BULLETIN** 28 October 2026

A helicopter delivers a new bridge into the Mangapurua Valley. Photo: Department of Conservation.

2027 Community Grants

ERNSLAW ONE LIMITED

Ernslaw One is proud to offer \$12,000 in grants to local groups who make a positive difference to the Ruapehu District.

Applications for the 2027 Community Grants are now open

Who can apply?
Local groups who make a positive contribution to our community are welcome to apply.

How can I apply?
Email enquiries@ernslaw.co.nz to request an application form

Grant categories:
We have three main focus areas:

- Education
- Health and Wellbeing
- Environment
- Successful applications typically receive between \$50 - \$500.

Applications close on Friday, 6 November 2026
All applicants will be notified by 11th December 2026

Community groups who benefited in 2026

Dannevirke and Districts Pony Club, Dannevirke Multi-sport Complex Inc, Friends of Taihape Society, Friends of Taihape Society, Mangaoturoa School Revitalisation Project, Nancy Winter Early Childhood Centre, Northern Rangitikei - Waimarino Justices of the Peace Association Inc, Ōwhango Alive, Ruapehu Alpine Rescue Organisation, Ruapehu Anglican Parish, Ruapehu College Boys Secondary Squash Team, Ruapehu College Girls Secondary Squash Team, Ruapehu Indoor Football Association, Ruapehu REAP, Ruapehu Rugby & Sports Club, Taihape Community Development Trust, Taihape Friendship Group, Taihape Golf Club, Taihape Shearing Sports, Taihape Show Jumping Group, Taorua School, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngāti Rangī, Tongariro Natural History Society Inc, Tūroa Alpine Ski Club Incorporated (TASCI), Utiku Old Girls Netball, Waimarino Golf Club Inc, Waimarino Shears Incorporated, Whanganui Performing Arts, Ohakune Senior Citizens

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Mangapurua Track reopens with seven new, safer bridges

From Page 1

Department of Conservation (DOC) project manager Louise Brown said seven new bridges had been flown into the remote area fully constructed.

“It’s something we’re doing more often, flying in strong, lightweight truss bridges, which have been built offsite.

“Despite being weather dependent, the process has been really efficient, and we’re pleased to have the track open ready for all the keen cyclists riding through this summer.”

The previous narrow bridges had become challenging to negotiate, particularly for people handling bikes, and had reached the end of their useful lives.

The wider replacements provide easier crossings and improve the long-term resilience of the backcountry route.

Bridge replacements have been accompanied by seasonal track maintenance as DOC prepares for the summer influx of visitors.

The work forms part of a wider programme to install 15 new bridges and boardwalks across the Mangapurua and Kaiwhakauka tracks.

Upgrades on the Kaiwhakauka are scheduled for November and December, with bypasses planned during construction. Visitors are advised to check for track updates, allow for possible delays and follow all onsite instructions.

Despite the improvements, the Mangapurua remains a remote backcountry track, rated Grade 3 (intermediate) for mountain biking. DOC warns that exposed sections, steep drop-offs and slippery papa surfaces in wet weather require careful preparation.

Visitors should carry suitable equipment, while cyclists need sound mountain biking skills to tackle the route safely.

The Mangapurua Track forms part of the Mountains to Sea – Ngā Ara Tūhono Great Ride, a network linking the volcanic landscapes of Ruapehu and Tongariro National Park with the Whanganui River, surrounding communities and the Tasman Sea.

The Great Ride is governed by the Ngā Ara Tūhono Charitable Trust, bringing together local government, iwi and community representatives. Its trustees include representatives of Ruapehu District Council, Whanganui District Council, Ngāti Rangī, Te Korowai o Wainuiārua, Tūpoho Trust, the Whanganui Māori Regional Tourism Organisation and the wider trail community.

Local Democracy Reporting is local body journalism co-funded by RNZ and NZ On Air

Letters

Fire starters and medicines

• Recently glimpsing a “no cure” entry in my med’files, I discovered, by my own research, there was now a New Zealand cure, for Bronchiectasis...

“Dr Wong’s study found for the first time that azithromycin, onemacrolide group of antibiotics, is an effective treatment for bronchiectasis”...

Do I now take it upon myself to educate our local medicines, or can I bypass such stress and find a co-operative supplier?

And a simple exercise to find a current *Bulletin* has failed, twice now, as our sad-eyed storekeeper described ‘big blokes’ grabbing handsfull of the local paper for fire starters, not local reading: (

Bereft.

John Riding

• Editor’s note: the struggle is real – with regards people pinching *Bulletins* to light their fires, denying others their

quality local read. When we’ve seen people grabbing handfuls in the past, we’ve asked them why. They say “oh, it’s okay – it’s a free paper”. Sigh.

We offer old newspaper for people who need it – we’ll investigate options for an outlet in Raetihi so the ‘big blokes’ don’t need to nick the latest ones.

Take on tax

• The Greens are constantly telling us that the average person pays tax at the rate of 22%.

This is incorrect.

Turn to Page 4

RDC wants to cut local services: what say you?

Should Waimarino residents and rate-payers continue to be able to access council services in both Ohakune and Raetihi? Or would they rather have one service site and save around \$2 million over 10 years?

The Ruapehu District Council wants locals' views on the issue.

RDC says their current sites in Taumarunui, Ohakune and Raetihi provide "a relatively high level of service".

Ruapehu asked residents earlier this year what changes to council services should be made to keep rates affordable.

Over half of respondents (56%) thought the three libraries should keep operating.

However, 46% said there should not be separate libraries in Ohakune and Raetihi while 43% said there should, and 11% were unsure.

The council is considering four options: Keeping the Ohakune library, customer service centre and council office, but ending Raetihi services; keeping the Raetihi Library, customer service centre and council office, but ending Ohakune; developing a new shared facility serving South Ruapehu and relocating services from Raetihi and Ohakune over time; keep things as they are, in both Raetihi and Ohakune.

The council spends about \$500,000 per year operating its Ohakune and Raetihi offices, and reducing costs by 40% could save \$2 million over 10 years, it said.

Councillor John Chapman, who is based near Raetihi, was opposed to the closure of Raetihi services which houses the council's NZ Post and NZTA services.

"If you take those out, you're basically

stripping the town of basic service," Chapman said.

"You introduce a sort of managed decline in a town that has already suffered from managed decline over the last 30 years.

"It's one of the poorest townships in the country. And there's very little left of Raetihi, in terms of infrastructure. Council's presence is basically the service centre and the pool."

The Ohakune office and its library were much bigger, but it didn't have the NZTA or post services, he said.

"As a council, we're a bare-bones authority; we don't do very much."

Rates were high because the council provided an infrastructure for over a million annual visitors with a "very low rate base" of under 13,000.

"The whole thing is basically based around the lack of support from central government for rural authorities."

A shared southern facility, which required external funding, could align with the proposed Raetihi Community Hub, and potential sales of the council's current office and library assets could help fund it, it said.

Ohakune-based councillor David Nottage said people should be open-minded about the options, but did not support downgrading Raetihi services.

Raetihi residents sometimes felt like they "get the brunt of everything", he said.

"They lost their transfer station, it's been a mission to keep what recycling bins we have there, and now to say we're looking at the pools in Raetihi as well, and Ohakune."

Orautoha hills challenge the kids of the Waimarino



Girls head off from the start line next to the Orautoha School, to head down the road, before heading up the hills in the background. Photo: Ohakune Primary School.

The Orautoha Hills once again posed a daunting challenge for the children of Waimarino's primary schools, when the annual event was hosted by Orautoha School on Monday last week, after it was postponed from the previous Friday.

Kids of all ages ran around the usual course, which features the usual mud, thistles and steep, steep hills up and down – and just the odd bit of sheep 'marbles'.

Hosts Orautoha claimed one age category first place, as did - Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Ngati Rangi and Papanui Junction, while Raetihi claimed a first place in the Year One boys and the Year One girls.

But Ohakune took out the most number of first places, in the Year 2&3 boys, the Junior girls, the junior boys and the intermediate boys.

Results

Midget – Girls. Year 1 1st Ngamu Brown - Raetihi School; 2nd Yuko Horne - Raetihi School. Year 2&3, 1st Jahzeel Brown - Raetihi School; 2nd Amarly Bishop - Raetihi School; 3rd Leigha Averin - Orautoha School.

Midget – Boys: Year 1 1st Ryder Katene - Raetihi School; 2nd Harlyn Hesketh - Raetihi School; 3rd Te Raukanapa Tapa-Gardiner - Raetihi School. Year 2&3: 1st Tom Berry - Ohakune School; 2nd Kobayne Hawira - Ohakune School; 3rd Stellone Hawira - Ohakune School. Junior girls 1st Hana Pilbrow – Ohakune; 2nd Charli McIntosh - Papanui Junction; 3rd Lani Vanbelle-Driesen – Ohakune. Junior - Boys 1st Simeon Lomu – Ohakune; 2nd Kevi – Waiouru; 3rd Whetumairangi Bourke - Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Ngati Rangi. Intermediate – Girls 1st Lilly Wright - Papanui Junction; 2nd Everly Kristiansen – Ohakune; 3rd Merial More Tati – Ohakune. Intermediate - Boys 1st Jack Lilburn – Ohakune; 2nd Te Onewa Hawira – Ohakune; 3rd Ethan Buchanan – Ohakune. Senior – Girls 1st Ariana Perkins-Topine - Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Ngati Rangi; 2nd Kauri Henare-Horne – Raetihi; 3rd Harper Evans – Ohakune. Senior – Boys 1st AJ Julius-Bartlett – Orautoha; 2nd Bear Soverel – Ohakune; 3rd Hendrix Brown – Raetihi.

Carrot Carnival is back for 2027

The Ohakune Carrot Carnival is coming back for 2027 – set for Saturday 5 June.

"With a new location we are taking the Carnival back to represent where it all began," says committee chair Emma Young.

"Our new farm location in Ohakune will give us something we've been dreaming of for years ... more room to grow."

Emma says there will be more space to create, space to entertain, and "most importantly, space to bring you an even bigger and better Carrot Carnival experience".

She adds that one of the biggest changes for 2027 will be how they select stallholders.

"We will be carefully curating our market to bring together a variety of quality, creative and unique stalls.

"We're particularly keen to showcase homegrown, handmade and crafted products, supporting the talented makers, creators and small businesses who put their heart into what they do."

Emma asks potential stallholders to keep a close eye on their social page for announcements and application details.

"While the location is changing, one thing never

will ... our love for the community that makes this event possible.

"We can't wait to welcome back our local schools, clubs, community

groups, growers, businesses and all the wonderful people who help make the Ohakune Carrot Carnival what it is."

Carl Bates

National Party Candidate for Whanganui

Including Ruapehu, South Taranaki and Stratford

Authorised by Carl Bates, carl.bates@national.org.nz

IT TAKES ALL TYPES OF HEROES

We're inviting local heroes of all blood types to roll up their sleeves and donate at our Waiouru blood drive tomorrow!

THURS 29 OCT: 9.30am-1.45pm
Waiouru Community Centre Hall
25 Queree Drive, Waiouru

Walk-ins are available until 1.35pm
All donors to bring physical photo I.D

Scan here to book your appointment

Scan the QR code to the Eligibility Quiz here

NZBLOOD

To check eligibility or for more info visit nzblood.co.nz or call 0800 448 325

Blood bank back for Waimarino donor heroes

After several years away, the Blood Service is back in the Waimarino, holding a blood drive at Waiouru Community Centre Hall on Thursday 29 October, and they are asking for support from *Bulletin* readers.

“Right now, we need more blood donors due to high demand across the country,” says Ayshea Abela, donor relations co-ordinator.

Abela said blood donations can be used to treat people going through cancer, undergoing surgery, or recovering from traumatic accidents.

“Over 40,000 New Zealanders rely on blood and blood products each year and it’ll take all of us to make sure we

have enough to support them.

“This means we’re counting on you to roll up your sleeves and help out.”

Abela said they particularly need O+ and O-.

“But we’re seeking donations from all blood groups, as each donation helps patients in need. And if you don’t know your blood type, why not come along and donate to find out?”

The blood drive will run from 9.30am to 1.45pm, and the service encourages people to book appointments in advance.

“Donations can take up to 60 minutes out of your day from registration to recovery – often less – and we provide great snacks afterwards to get you back on your feet.”

Readers can check their eligibility to donate via the nzblood.co.nz website, book an appointment there or on the NZBS Donor app, and call the team at 0800 GIVE Blood if they have any questions.

“This is our first visit to Waiouru in a long time, but we hope it won’t be the last. We need our community to come out in full force so we can make this blood drive a regular feature.



Waiouru has already been put on the map by all the people here who are willing to serve their communities in times of need – and blood donation is just another way of answering that call. Photo supplied.

Letters

From Page 2

The medium weekly wage as at 30 June 2026 was \$1419 per week or \$73,788 per year. Net Income Tax on this is \$13,836 or 18.75 %.

However, if a person on the above earnings has two children, then they are paid under the Working for Family’s (sic) Tax Credits scheme the amount of \$13,988 per year. This means they are receiving \$159.00 more per year than what they pay in tax.

In my opinion it is misleading and irresponsible for the Greens to keep banging on about the average kiwi paying tax at 22%.

Phillip Harvey

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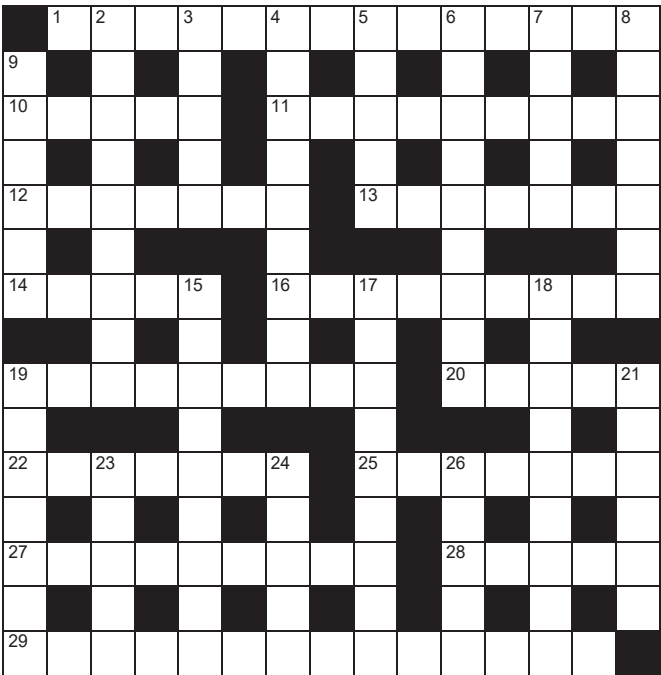
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THE WEEKLY WORKOUT answers for each puzzle are included on this page 874

QUICK CROSSWORD

- Across**
- 1. Applying to all (6,3,5)
 - 10. Leaves out (5)
 - 11. Bans (9)
 - 12. Tornado (colloq) (7)
 - 13. In heraldry, a cross (7)
 - 14. Ascend (5)
 - 16. Attack (9)
 - 19. Shame (9)
 - 20. Lag behind (5)
 - 22. Maxim (7)
 - 25. Cause suffering (7)
 - 27. Worthy of respect (9)
 - 28. Wipe out (5)
 - 29. Tingling sensation (4,3,7)
- Down**
- 2. Expression of disapproval (9)
 - 3. Commencement (5)
 - 4. Exploding star (9)
 - 5. Circles (5)
 - 6. Gifted (9)
 - 7. Excuse (5)
 - 8. Downward movement (7)
 - 9. Lyrical (6)
 - 15. Dancer (9)
 - 17. Depart quickly (colloq) (9)
 - 18. Move toward (9)
 - 19. Over-excited (5,2)
 - 21. Suds (6)
 - 23. Urge (3,2)
 - 24. Attempted (5)
 - 26. Paddock (5)



Enjoy WordFit puzzles?
Magazines available from
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THE TOP 10

1 Free diving, 2 Sir Simon Hoppet, 3 Steve Wonder, 4 Duneidin, 5 Second, 6 Hansel and Gretel, 7 40%, 8 The nikau, 9 Florence, 10 Cliff Richard.

SUDOKU Fill the grid so every row, column and every 3x3 box contains 1-9

6	2		8	4				5
	9							4
			3	2		6	7	
	1		5				9	
4	5		2		1		8	3
	7				3		5	
	8	4		5	2			
2							1	
7				6	8		4	9

1 EASY 2 MEDIUM

The Top 10

- 1. New Zealander William Trubridge has set world records in which sport?
- 2. Which of the following is not a genuine Shakespeare character? Bottom, Pistol, Silence, Sir Simon Hoppet, Sir Toby Belch.
- 3. Who won the 1984 Oscar for Best Song with *I Just Called to Say I Love You*?
- 4. Which New Zealand city's name is derived from the Gaelic for Edinburgh?
- 5. If you passed the person coming second in a race, what position would you be in?
- 6. Which fairytale did the original Engelbert Humperdinck set to music?
- 7. What percentage of all living mammals are rodents – 20%, 30% or 40%?
- 8. What is the world's southernmost palm?
- 9. Florence Nightingale was born in which city?
- 10. Which British singer, born 1940, had a number one hit in five different decades?

CROSSWORD

23. Egg on, 24. Tried, 26. Field.
18. Gravitale, 19. Hyped up, 21. Lather,
9. Poetic, 15. Ballerina, 17. Skedaddle,
5. Hoops, 6. Brilliant, 7. Alibi, 8. Descent,
Down: 2. Criticism, 3. Onset, 4. Supernova,
29. Pins and needles.
Precept, 25. Afflict, 27. Dignified, 28. Erase,
16. Onslaught, 19. Humiliate, 20. Trail, 22.
Prohibits, 12. Twister, 13. Salfire, 14. Climb,
Across: 1. Across the board, 10. Omits, 11.

SUDOKU

1	2
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	6 7 4 3 1 8 9 5 2
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	1 3 9 5 2 8 7 4 6
7 6 5 4 3 2 1	8 5 2 7 4 1 6 9 3
6 5 4 3 2 1	4 9 3 1 5 2 7 8 6
5 4 3 2 1	2 8 6 9 3 5 4 1 7
4 3 2 1	7 1 2 8 6 9 3 5 4
3 2 1	8 1 3 5 7 2 9 6 4
2 1	5 4 8 7 1 4 8 7 5
1	3 9 7 6 1 5 8 2 4
	6 2 1 4 7 9 3 5 8

Ohakune chief team reflects on their roles

Ohakune Fire Brigade chief Paul Sirett and deputy chief Sam Deadman look back on the roles they took up in April and June respectively and how things have changed for them and the Brigade.

We put some questions to the chief team:
How is the Brigade doing – do you have a full crew? The brigade is doing very well, this can be seen through the effort and integrity the members show, we don't ever want to say we are full we want to always take on new people, says Paul.

Do you have room for more? Yes we definitely – we need more people who want to be firefighters, operational and brigade support personnel; there are specialist roles within these – ERD drivers, pump operators, motor vehicle accident, tanker operators and a dedicated lines team. Ohakune is proud to have one of the very few dedicated lines teams in the entire region where they can abseil down almost anything up to 100m.

Membership ideas

You mentioned you're looking at taking on daytime members – mums who's kids are at school? How is that going? We struggle through the day to crew an appliance which needs to be minimum of four, 1 driver, 1 Officer in Charge (OIC) and 2 Breathing Apparatus (B.A.) firefighters. Over the years we have seen a change from people being able to leave their places of work and attend call outs, but we fully understand that it is a lot for a self-employed firefighter or a business employing a firefighter to have them leave at the drop of a hat and potentially be gone for hours. So we are always throwing around ideas about who we can approach to come on board, for instance we have been wondering how we might approach people who are stay at home parents/caregivers. They would go about their day and, if able to attend a call out, they would, but family and work always comes first.

The idea of a support team – members who don't go into fires etc but provide support at callouts – can you explain how that would work? This 'support team' is known

as operational support, you join the brigade and FENZ as a full member, where you do things around the incident scene to support the firefighters with road control, staging areas, first aid, equipment establishment/disestablishment and many more logistical support requirements.

How long have you been a member of the brigade? I joined in 2007 and had a 3-year hiatus 2012-2015 living in Australia. First thing I wanted to do when I returned was to rejoin the brigade, I enjoyed the environment and people that much.

What made you want to join the service? Always thought being a firefighter would be pretty cool, a mate I lived with was in the brigade and he told me to come along and loved it from then on, the environment, the people and all the different specialist tools to carry out rescues of all types, there is a great feeling you get after having helped someone on their worst day.

Why did you want to be chief? I've always had a natural inclination towards leading people/situations, as I moved up through the ranks and took on training it really started becoming a natural pathway and a desire to achieve all I could. I'm incredibly proud of the OVFB and feel a great amount of privilege and pride to lead a truly great brigade.

Elections

I know that in the past, the chief was elected by brigade members – but that doesn't happen now – is that correct? Do the other members have a say? Yes, the brigade would elect leaders. This evolved over many decades and NZFS and FENZ started to gain more control over how this process should work to make sure all brigades were on the same page. FENZ has adjusted the way leaders are positioned by advertising these brigade leadership roles as vacancies with proper position descriptions, training and leadership development plans to enable better support. I had to apply for the position, have an interview with a panel of Assistant District Commanders (ADCs) and then the brigade also has an opportunity to comment in support or not,



Ohakune Volunteer Fire Brigade leaders team, Sam Deadman, left, and Paul Sirett.

towards each of the applicants which counts towards the overall scoring. The positions of Chiefs and Deputies is now a 5-year term with a right of renewal along with brigade and ADC support.

What changes have you made so far, if any? Not too many changes – we have been extremely lucky to be in a good place for a long time, so the first part of my journey as chief is to observe and then set strategies to make the brigade more efficient and empower the team to not only make a bigger and better brigade for the community but to endure many more decades.

Sam Deadman

Sam Deadman has been in the Brigade for 14 years.
What made you want to join the service? I got tapped on the shoulder and ask if I had thought about joining. I came along to a training night, enjoyed it, and haven't left since. I wanted to be part of a team that makes a difference in the community and helps people when they need it most.

Why did you want to be deputy chief? I wanted to become Deputy Chief Fire Officer because I'm passionate about our brigade, our people and the community we serve. After many years, I feel I have gained valuable experience and knowledge that I can use to support the Chief Fire

Officer and help lead the brigade into the future.

What do you see as the key responsibilities? The Deputy Chief Fire Officer supports the Chief Fire Officer in leading and managing the brigade, while helping ensure we are operationally ready to respond to incidents safely and effectively.

A big part of the role is supporting our members, developing their skills and confidence, and making sure we maintain a positive team culture where everyone feels valued and has the opportunity to contribute. It also means setting a good example, holding people accountable, communicating clearly, and helping resolve issues when they arise.

I believe the Deputy Chief needs to be someone the team can trust and approach, who can make sound decisions under pressure and step up to lead when required. Ultimately, the role is about working alongside the Chief and the wider brigade to ensure we have a strong, capable team that is ready to serve and protect our community.

Paul says they train every Tuesday at 7pm and anyone interested in what they get up to is invited along.

"We would love to meet you or check out 'volunteer with us' through the FENZ website."

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ON THE ISSUES THAT MATTER TO RUAPEHU

RUAPEHU BULLETIN 28 October 2026 • 5

Building careers and protecting the environment

Advertorial

What started as a one-man operation has grown into an established environmental contracting business employing seven full-time staff, alongside office support personnel.

Based in Ohakune, Bolt Contracting provides a wide range of environmental services, including pest animal control, pest plant and weed control, native planting and maintenance, conservation monitoring, GIS mapping and property maintenance.

The company currently delivers significant pest control and environmental management programmes for organisations including the Department of Conservation and Horizons Regional Council, alongside work for iwi organisations, farmers and private landowners.

Managing director Dion Hooper says the business has grown steadily, with increasing demand creating opportunities to expand its services and workforce.

“There’s plenty of potential for further growth, but we’re focused on making sure we have the right people, equipment and systems in place to maintain the quality of work we deliver.”

One of the company’s biggest priorities is investing in its staff and providing opportunities for people to build long-term careers in the environmental contracting industry.

“We want to give our staff a really good, consistent job and a career they can build on,” says Dion.

“We’re big on training and making sure our people have the skills and qualifications to do their jobs well. It’s not just a fill-in job. It can be a really rewarding career with opportunities to develop and progress.”

Bolt Contracting invests in industry training, qualifications, competitive wages, health and safety systems and modern equipment, with the aim of developing a

highly skilled and capable workforce.

Dion says that while securing work hasn’t been a major challenge, finding the right people to support the company’s continued growth is becoming increasingly important.

“We’re always interested in hearing from people who have a good attitude, are reliable and are willing to learn. You don’t necessarily need years of experience. If someone has the right attitude, we’re prepared to invest in training them.”

He encourages anyone interested in working in the industry to get in touch, even if there isn’t a suitable vacancy being advertised.

Bolt Contracting operates across a large geographical area, including the Ruapehu District, Whanganui, Taihape and as far south as the Taranaki District.

Much of the company’s work takes place away from public view, with teams working across remote farmland, forestry blocks, native bush and conservation areas.

Their work helps protect native biodiversity, control invasive pest species, restore waterways through native planting and assist landowners with managing their properties.

“A lot of people probably see our vehicles driving around but don’t actually realise how broad the work we do is,” says Dion.

“One day our team might be working on possum or predator control in native bush, and the next they could be controlling weeds on farmland or carrying out planting and maintenance work alongside waterways.”

Dion has worked in the pest control industry for approximately 16 years, having first entered the industry through a Gateway programme while attending college.

Since then, he has gained numerous industry qualifications and developed ex-



The Bolt Contracting team, from left: Jack Deadman, Dion Hooper, Te Awanui Fowell, Kevin McDonnell, Ross Mastrovich, Mark Mastrovich, Emma King, Brenda Webb and Willie Marsh.

tensive experience across pest animal control, pest plant management and environmental contracting.

Today, the Bolt Contracting team brings together more than 40 years of combined industry experience.

While the business has expanded considerably from its beginnings, Dion says maintaining its local roots remains a priority.

“We’ve built a proper contracting business here in Ohakune, and that’s where we want to stay. We want to employ local people, provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and show that you don’t have to move to a bigger centre to build a good career.”

The company has also continued investing in modern

equipment and technology, including GPS mapping, digital field reporting, automated trapping systems and safety monitoring technology, helping improve efficiency, accuracy and worker safety.

For Dion, the long-term goal isn’t simply to grow the company as large as possible, but to establish a sustainable business that benefits its employees, clients and the wider community.

“We want Bolt Contracting to become a strong, sustainable local company that creates good jobs, develops skilled people and contributes to improving the environment around Ruapehu — rather than simply getting bigger for the sake of it.”

YOUR BEST SHOT COULD WIN YOU A 2027 WHAKAPAPA SEASON PASS

What was your favourite Whakapapa moment of winter 2026?
Maybe it was a perfect morning on the upper mountain, the kids making their first turns, fresh snow under your skis or simply one of those days you’ll remember long after the season is over. Whakapapa and the Ruapehu Bulletin are looking for the best photo of the 2026 season at Whakapapa and there’s a 2027 Whakapapa Winter Season Pass up for grabs. Send us the photo that sums up your season!

HOW TO ENTER

Email your favourite Whakapapa photo to ads@ruapehubulletin.co.nz. Include your full name, phone number and a short description of the photo. Entries are open now and close 11.59pm on 31 October 2026.

The winning photo will be announced in the 4 November 2026 issue of the Ruapehu Bulletin. T&C’s available www.whakapapa.com/ruapehu-bulletin-09-2026



New Tūrangi bridge gifted name

From Page 7

cyclists enjoying the Tongariro River Trail.

Fletcher says 174 people crossed the new bridge at the ceremony.

“I counted! Te Tauranga o Waikari has a load limit of 20 people, and it was my job to ensure we were keeping people safe and not overloading the bridge,” she says.

“The Tongariro River Trail is such a popular destination for people out naturing and the turnout demonstrates how valuable it is to this community.”

“We’re incredibly grateful for all the hard work and partnership which have gone into making this happen for Tūrangi and its visitors.”

Te Tauranga o Waikari bridge was funded through the International Visitor Levy, where visitors from overseas contribute to caring for New Zealand’s natural environment and visitor experiences.

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New Tūrangi bridge gifted name

A new suspension bridge on the lower Tongariro River was gifted the name Te Tauranga o Waikari at a karakia and naming ceremony on Friday 16 October.

The name, gifted by Ngāti Tūrangitukua, reflects ngā tapuwae, ngā kōrero tuku iho me te mana o ngā tūpuna (the footsteps, stories and mana of the ancestors of the region). It refers to tūpuna Waikari, who anchored nearby, and acknowledges the importance of the area as a tauranga – an anchorage, fishing ground and crossing place.

The ceremony also celebrated the partnerships which brought the new bridge to life, with mana whenua Ngāti Tūrangitukua, Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, Te Papa Atawhai the Department

of Conservation staff, contractors and community all present.

DOC ranger project lead Charlotte Fletcher says tamariki from local kura made the event special.

“These kids will see this bridge through their lifetimes and they’ll remember being there at the start – what a cool memory to have.”

With a chilly wind buffeting the river, the new bridge was visibly more stable than the now-decommissioned old bridge, a testament to the new structure’s careful engineering and construction. Well-anchored with around 70 tonnes of concrete, the new bridge is similar in design but a little wider than the old one, allowing easier access for

Turn to Page 6



Farewells to Nigel Buck

Community man Nigel Buck has died, peacefully at home on Tuesday last week. He has been remembered by staff at Ruapehu College and the theatre trust:

• The trustees of the Royal Theatre Raetihi were deeply saddened by the passing of our friend and colleague, Nigel Buck.

Nigel was our longest-serving trustee and for many years was a steadfast supporter of the Royal Theatre and all that it represents. He cared deeply about the theatre, its history and its future, and gave generously of his time, knowledge and enthusiasm.

Many will also remember Nigel through his involvement with the Phoenix Players, the theatre’s resident drama group. Whether on stage, behind the scenes, or around the committee table, he was always willing to lend a hand and share his experience.

Having only recently been elected Chair of the Trust, I came to appreciate just how much Nigel knew about the theatre and its journey through the years. He was generous with that knowledge, taking the time to provide me with background, context and advice. His support was greatly appreciated, and I was very much looking forward to working alongside him in the years ahead.

What I will remember most, however, is not simply his dedication to the theatre, but his kindness, wisdom and quiet commitment to the organisations and people he cared about. He was one of those individuals whose contribution was often made without fanfare, yet whose presence was invaluable.

On behalf of the Theatre Royal Waimarino Charitable Trust, I extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Shelagh, and to all of Nigel’s family and friends. We share in their loss and are grateful for the years of service, friendship and fellowship Nigel gave to our theatre community.

He will be greatly missed.
John Chapman, chair, Theatre Royal Waimarino Charitable Trust.

• It is with deep sadness that we share the news that Nigel Buck, husband of Shelagh, has passed away.

The Buck family has a longstanding connection with St John Ohakune and the Ruapehu Anglican



Parish. Nigel was a long serving St John volunteer, a member of the order of St John and an active community and parish member throughout his life.

Leba Phillips, chairperson

• Ruapehu College extends its heartfelt condolences to the whānau and loved ones of Nigel, a much-valued former pupil, long-serving teacher and dedicated member of our community, who has recently passed away.

Nigel’s connection with Ruapehu College began as a student, before he returned in 1978 to begin his teaching career. He taught history, geography and social studies and served as head of social sciences, making a significant contribution to the education and lives of many students over the years.

Nigel was deeply connected to the community he called home. His commitment to service extended well beyond the classroom. He gave his time to the ambulance service, served as a Justice of the Peace, helped run his parents’ local drapery shop and later established his own travel business. Even after retiring from teaching, Nigel continued to support the college as a reliever.

Nigel and Shelagh both shared a connection with Ruapehu College through their work here, leaving behind a legacy of service, dedication and community spirit.

Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with Shelagh, their whānau and all those who knew and loved Nigel during this difficult time.

Moe mai rā, Nigel. Thank you for your many years of service to Ruapehu College and our community. Your contribution will not be forgotten.

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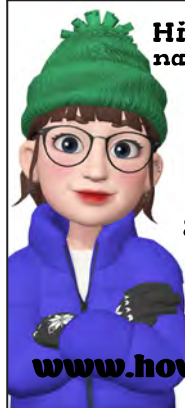
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Over July/August we asked people what Council services should continue as they are, be delivered differently, or could be stopped altogether, to help keep rates more affordable.

Your feedback has helped us to develop a number of proposals to reduce service costs and the amount funded through rates.

We would now like your feedback on these proposal ideas.

YOUR RATES YOUR SERVICES YOUR PLAN

LONG-TERM PLAN 2027/37

Why choices and trade-offs on future services are needed



Affordable rates
We need to keep services affordable for our communities.



Financial stability
We need to be able to fund essential services now and in the future.



Right-sized organisation
We need to match the organisation to the work required and services our communities value.



Water costs
Water charges are forecast to increase by 93% reaching \$3,950 per property by 2033/34.



Government reform
Changes to local government will affect how services are delivered and by who.



Rates capping
Rates capping will constrict Council income to a 2% to 4% range limiting the services we can deliver.

OHAKUNE/RAETIHI CYCLE & WALKWAY



Do you think Council should continue to support the development of the proposed Ohakune/Raetihi cycleway without construction funding and future ownership secured?

DOG FEES



Do you support Council's proposal for dog owners to pay a greater share of dog control services?

KERBSIDE FOOD WASTE COLLECTION



Do you think Council should stop kerbside food waste collection? if so, should support be provided for alternatives such as home composting?

ONGARUE & OWHANGO TRANSFER STATIONS



Do you support Council's proposal to close the Ongarue and Owhango Transfer Stations?

TAUMARUNUI/MANUNUI HALLS



Do you think Council should close its halls in Taumarunui and Manunui if suitable alternative facilities are available?

SWIMMING POOLS



Do you think Council should focus its funding on fewer swimming pools?

PUBLIC TOILETS



Council is proposing to close public toilets in Waimarino, Raetihi and Tangiwai, and introduce user charging at the high-use SH1 Waiouru toilet. What do you think?

OHAKUNE/RAETIHI OFFICES & LIBRARIES



Council is considering options to consolidate its services in Ohakune and Raetihi to one location. In the interim it may also reduce opening hours. What do you think?

Would you support Council removing the contestable portion of the Pride of Place Grant Fund?

PRIDE OF PLACE GRANT FUND



* Before providing your feedback please read the supporting information as this may change how you think about the issue.



Hardcopy feedback forms are available at your local Council office



Bring your questions & feedback and join us at the Raetihi Royal Theatre community hui or 'Coffee with a Councillor' session at Kainui Coffee - Hakiaha St, Taumarunui

- Raetihi Royal Theatre Wed 28 Oct 6pm-9pm
- Taumarunui, Kainui Coffee Sat 31 Oct 9am-12pm



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PUBLIC NOTICES



Visit Ruapehu AGM

Monday 23 November
11.30 – 12.30 followed by light refreshments
The Park Hotel, Waimarino

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Section 101, Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012
Ruapehu Distillery Limited has made an application to the District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council for the **Renewal and Variation of an Off Licence** in respect of the premises situated at **8 Kowhai Crescent, Ohakune** known as **Ruapehu Distillery**. The variation refers to the following: **To amend the earliest licensed hour from 11.00am to 9.00am.** The general nature of the business to be conducted under the licence is that of a **Bottle Store**. The days on which and the hours during which alcohol is intended to be sold under the licence are: **Monday to Sunday 9.00am – 7.00pm**

The application may be inspected during ordinary office hours at the office of the Ruapehu District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council, 59-63 Huia Street, Taumarunui.

Any person who is entitled to object and who wishes to object to the issue of the licence may, not later than 25 working days after the date of the publication of this notice, file a notice in writing of the objection with the Secretary of the District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council, Private Bag 1001, Taumarunui 3946.

No objections to the issue of a licence may be made in relation to a matter other than a matter specified in section 105(1) of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012. This is the first publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICES

**Tongariro District
Weed Control**

1 November 2026 until 21 June 2027

The Department of Conservation, Tongariro District Office, wishes to advise the public that it intends to carry out weed spraying in Tongariro National Park, Tongariro Forest Conservation Area, Ngatokoerua Scenic Reserve, Rangataua Forest Conservation Area and various smaller reserves administered by the Department of Conservation Tongariro District.

Weed control will be by spraying using hand-gun, knapsack or aerial application using helicopters. Work is planned to start on 1 November 2026 and will continue intermittently as weather and resources permit until 21 June 2027.

The target species are Wilding pines, Broom, Gorse, Darwin's barberry, Old man's beard, Marram grass, Heather and various other invasive weeds.

Further information can be obtained by contacting:

Danial van der Lubbe
Principal Ranger Biodiversity
Department of Conservation
Tongariro District
Ohakune Field Base
dvanderlubbe@doc.govt.nz

**www.
ohakune.
info**

PUBLIC NOTICES

**Ngā Waihua o
Paerangi Trust
November Clinics**

By appointment/drop in
Personal health nurse - appointments are available on request in Raetihi or Ohakune, contact Donna 027 491 2183– (free cervical screening)

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Kaupapa Māori mental health and addictions (Rebecca)
Supporting/ addressing needs of tangata whaiora
Drug & alcohol intervention
After hours emergencies – mental health assessment & treatment team 0800 653 358

Whānau Ora (Tina, Darnella and Virginia)
Wrap around services for those with high health and social needs.
Advice and advocacy support
Support for GP practice

Tamariki Ora (Tina and Katherine)
Well child checks for pēpi 0-5 years
Kaiawhina additional support

Bowel Screening
If you have any queries relating to the bowel screening project, please contact Darnella Hawira 0272 455 278, Darnella.Hawira@ngatirangi.com

He Puna Ora (Toni-Renee)
This initiative is about building capability and knowledge within māmā, using mātauranga Māori as a solution to support change. The intention is to improve the well-being of children by addressing the needs of māmā and strengthening the whānau environment. Every Monday, 11am – 2pm at Ngāti Rangi Health Centre.

Offices Closed
All offices will be closed on Wednesday 18 November for Hauora Day.

Appointments/More Information Contact Admin
Mon-Fri- 8.30am-5pm 06 3859 580/0, 0274 758 347 or email Katherine.Herewini@ngatirangi.com

We have an AED Defibrillator available on site.

PUBLIC NOTICES



**Ruapehu Mayor
Weston Kirton**

To arrange a meeting or call back please phone Council on 06 385 8364 or email: kay.kidd@ruapehudc.govt.nz



DEATH NOTICE

BUCK Nigel Edmund (JP)

Peacefully at Ohakune on Tuesday 20th October 2026. Aged 75 years. Dearly loved husband of Shelagh. Beloved son of the late Norah and Eddie. "Sadly Missed"
Friends are invited to a celebration of Nigel's life in St Johns Anglican Church, Ohakune on Friday 30th October 2026 at 1pm, followed by interment in the Ohakune Cemetery.
Bennetts Taihape Funeral Services 06 3880452

SITUATIONS VACANT



**Full-Time Field Operator
– Pest Plant Team**

Starting from \$30 per hour, with progression towards \$40 per hour depending on skills, qualifications and experience.

Enjoy working outdoors and want to do work that makes a difference? We're looking for a reliable, motivated person to join our pest plant team in a full-time field operator role.

Bolt Contracting provides pest control and environmental services throughout Ruapehu and the wider Manawatū–Whanganui region. We help protect native biodiversity and look after the land, working with farmers, landowners and conservation organisations.

The role

Your main focus will be pest plant control, locating and controlling invasive weeds across farmland, bush and conservation areas. You'll also help with a variety of other work, including:

- Native and riparian planting and maintenance.
- Pest animal control, trapping and monitoring.
- General property, equipment and depot maintenance.
- Recording work using smartphones and mapping apps.
- Some jobs involve rugged terrain, changing weather and staying away from home. You'll need to enjoy physical work and be willing to get stuck in alongside the team.

What we're looking for

- A positive attitude, reliability and a strong work ethic.
- Good physical fitness and confidence working outdoors.
- A full, clean NZ driver licence.
- Good communication and the ability to work well with others.
- Confidence using a smartphone and willingness to learn our field apps.
- A practical approach to problem-solving and a commitment to working safely.
- An interest in protecting the environment.
- Pest plant experience, Growsafe certification, rural pest control qualifications, or 4WD, LUV and two-wheeler training would be an advantage. We're also keen to hear from people with the right attitude who are ready to learn.

What we offer

- Full-time work with variety and purpose.
- A starting rate of at least \$30 per hour, recognising relevant skills and experience.
- Opportunities to progress towards \$40 per hour as your skills, qualifications and experience develop.
- Performance bonuses available for reliable attendance, getting work and paperwork completed on time, and taking responsibility for your role while contributing positively to the team.
- Training, mentoring and opportunities to build your career.
- A supportive, hardworking team and access to an Employee Assistance Programme.

Keen to join us?

Email your CV and a little about yourself to office@boltcontractingltd.kiwi. Tell us about your relevant experience and why you'd be a good fit for the team.

We'll review applications as they come in, and the position will remain open until filled.



Protecting native species from introduced predators in Rangataua Conservation Area and Tongariro National Park

The Department of Conservation (DOC) in Tongariro is going to control rats, possums & stoats over approx. 16,454 hectares within Rangataua Conservation Area & Tongariro National Park. This is scheduled for the first clear weather window from 1st November 2026. Prefeed may be laid in late October.

Native wildlife and forests need protection

Native species are fighting for survival due to predation from rats, stoats and possums. Without protection, we risk losing the unique natural heritage and biodiversity within the Rangataua forests.

Rangataua forests are home to endangered plant species such as Pua o te Rēinga (Dactylanthus) and native red, yellow and scarlet mistletoe. Threatened native species found in this area include: North Island brown kiwi (including Western brown kiwi), pekapeka-tou-potu/short-tailed bats, pekapeka-tou-roa/long-tailed bats, whio/blue duck, karearea/New Zealand falcon, kākārīki, kākā, mātāta/fernbird, kererū and koekoeā/long-tailed cuckoo.

Predator control operations are done when monitoring shows predators have reached levels that threaten the populations of native species.

Our plan to protect native species

Through sustained predator control using 1080, there is a big increase in breeding success for native birds, their food source is more abundant, and the forest canopy is healthier.

The safest and most effective method we have to control possums, rats and stoats over large areas is to use biodegradable cereal bait pellets containing 1080. This bait targets rodents and possums. Stoats are also controlled through secondary poisoning as they feed on the carcasses of the dead rodents.

Helicopters distribute bait pellets across the forest area along pre-determined and monitored flight paths using technology that enables accurate placement. This is the only viable method to control predators in Rangataua due to the vast and rugged terrain.

This operation begins with the distribution of non-toxic pre-feed bait pellets (sandy coloured). This prepares possums and rodents to eat the toxic bait (dyed green) that is applied afterwards. Both baits are about 16 mm in diameter and cylindrical shaped.

Consultation and permissions

DOC has consulted with hapū, iwi and key stakeholders including landowners adjacent to the treatment area.

DOC is delegated authority by the Environmental Protection Agency to decide applications for permission to use 1080 on land administered or managed by DOC. Permission has been granted for this operation. DOC has also received the required permission from the Ministry of Health. DOC ensures that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks of the operation are managed.

Managing risk

1080 is poisonous to humans, domestic and game animals. In areas where the toxin has been applied, dogs are highly at risk until poisoned carcasses have disintegrated. This takes four-to-eight months or longer.

There will be warning signs placed at entrances to the treatment area immediately prior to the operation.

Risks can be eliminated by following these rules:

- **DO NOT touch bait**
- **WATCH children at all times**
- **DO NOT EAT animals from this area** or within the buffer zone outside the treatment boundary. The buffer zone is 2 km for deer and pigs, 200 m for rabbits, and 1 km for hares, tahr, wallabies and possums.
- **Poison baits or carcasses are DEADLY to DOGS**

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. These signs indicate pesticide residues may be still present in baits and poisoned carcasses. When signs are removed, normal activities can resume. If in doubt, check with your local DOC office. Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs.

If you suspect poisoning, please contact:

Your local doctor or hospital OR The National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 OR dial 111

Seek veterinary advice for suspected poisoning of domestic animals.

For more information

Please contact: Operational planner, DOC Tongariro Office, Tongariro National Park Visitor Centre, 07 892 3729, tongarirovc@doc.govt.nz

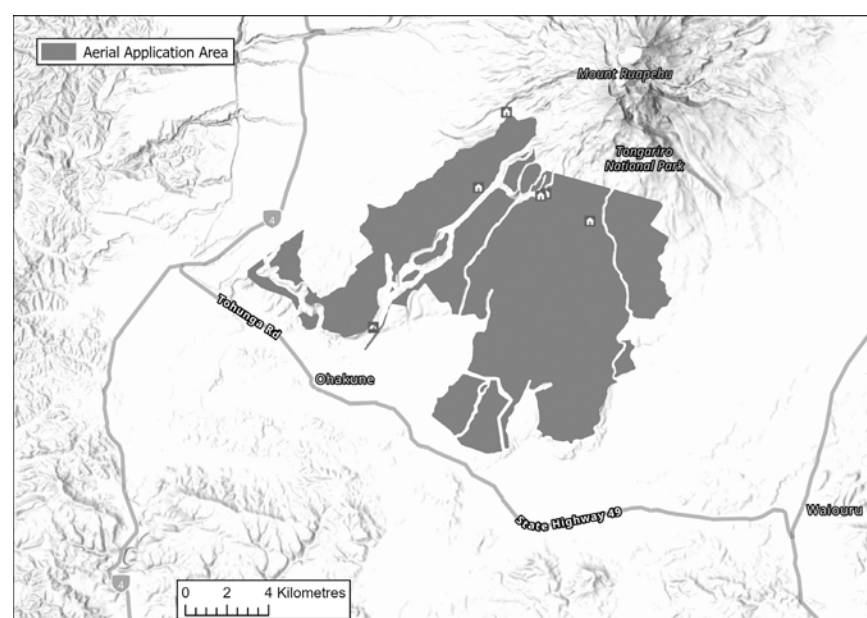
OR Rentokil Rural (EcoFX), Contractor 07 873 8130, ecofx-office-nz@rentokil-initial.com

Visit the DOC website: More information about DOC's National Predator Control Programme is available on our website

www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme

Map of predator control area within Rangataua Conservation Area

This map shows the area we are controlling rats, possums & stoats to protect native species. You can also see operational updates and detailed maps of predator control on public conservation land on the DOC website. www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries



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