

26 March 2024

Daran Ponter
Chair
Greater Wellington Regional Council
daran.ponter@gw.govt.nz

REF: OIA-14974

Dear Daran

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 28 February 2024 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Can I please have a copy of the detailed NZTA budgets for pest control along the Kapiti Expressway and Transmission Gully portions of State Highway 1 for each financial year since these roads opened

Can you also please confirm:

- a. *The objective that NZTA has for pest control in this corridor and the pest species that are targeted; and*
- b. *Whether NZTA or its contractors deploy any traps designed to trap mustelids*
- c. *The number of species killed per annum, by species on both the Kapiti Expressway and Transmission Gully*

Kāpiti Expressway:

The current objective for the State Highway 1 (SH1) Kāpiti Expressway corridor has been to control populations of rabbits where there has been an increase within the MacKays to Peka Peka (M2PP) area. Where we have identified areas of increased population, Greater Wellington Regional Council have helped create a control programme based on the best method for the area. Since NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) started maintaining M2PP, there has been one control that has taken place in 2021. This was completed under a previous contract, with another due to start in 2024 under the Wellington Transport Alliance. The 2021 control involved shooting 260 rabbits and a pindone bait control, with an unknown number eradicated. The two combined treatments reduced the number of rabbits to an acceptable level. The new programme will mainly focus on the northern end.

A budget for the new annual funding block is yet to be confirmed. Budgeted costs for pest control are part of a wider vegetation, plant, pest control budget and budgeted costs for individual elements are unable to be separated out.

The current programme is for rabbits only, as this is the main pest identified during inspections. If there is an increase in mustelids, a programme will be created in conjunction to rabbit control.

Transmission Gully:

The pest control programme along the Transmission Gully corridor focuses on feral pigs and possums, mustelids and deer. This programme is undertaken through a mixture of helicopter and ground-based operations. Currently the TG Contractor’s pest control contractor is monitoring and trapping for mustelids and rodents as part of the requirements for lizard habitat protection in the north of the project. This work has an ongoing annual cost of \$16,400.

The qualified contractor monitors mustelid activity via trapping lines and ink cards. A mixture of A24 and DOC200 traps are used for trapping.

The tables below provide information on the number of pests that have been killed. NZTA does not have an annual breakdown of species killed.

Transmission Gully Project – Culling Programme 2017 to Jan 2024	
Pest Species	Total killed to date
Deer	13
Pigs	110
Goats	1010
Possums	869
Rabbits	26
Hares	865
Sheep (feral)	51
Total (Culling Programme)	2,944

Transmission Gully Project – Trapping Programme (Nov 22 – Jan 24)	
Pest Species	Total killed
Rats	49
Stoats	10
Weasels	5
Hedgehogs	25
Mice	8
Ferret	1
Possum	1
Rabbit	1
Unknown	126
TOTAL (Trapping Programme)	226

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZTA please contact me by email to emma.speight@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emma Speight', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emma Speight

Director of Regional Relationships – Wellington and Top of the South