



## **Changes to tahr control operations positive**

Discussions between the Game Animal Council (GAC) and the Department of Conservation (DOC) have resulted in some positive changes to where the Department will focus tahr control outside Aoraki/Mt Cook and Westland Tai Poutini National Parks.

Reallocation of hours between and within management units will see a number of more accessible tahr hunting areas left for hunters while there will be an emphasis on control work in more inaccessible and remote locations.

"It makes much more sense for control operations to concentrate on places that are either seldom visited by hunters or very difficult to access," says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale. "We are pleased that DOC has agreed not to cull some of the more popular hunting spots and has reduced the hours it will spend in areas with low tahr densities."

Operations have been reduced within the South Rakaia and Upper Rangitata management unit that is heavily used by hunters, while the Two Thumbs/Sinclair (Mesopotamia) area, Naumann Range, Ben Ohau Range south of Fred's Stream, and the Wills/Makarora/Hunter management unit will not see any further control work. Control will be increased in some of the more remote areas west of the main divide where tahr densities are high and hunters struggle to access.

"There is also a commitment that control work will not take place close to or around road ends, huts and helicopter landing sites frequently used by hunters and other backcountry users."

"We hope this change of emphasis outside the national parks will provide hunters with some decent hunting opportunities in accessible locations."

"The GAC looks forward to further collaboration with DOC to build the scientific basis for future tahr management, including improved understanding of populations and herd demographics, as well as the impact of tahr on native vegetation in different locations," says Gale.

“We firmly believe a collaborative approach that complements existing hunting activity is the way forward when it comes to the management of New Zealand’s highly-valued game animal species.”

Information on the changes to the 2020-21 Tahr Control Operational Plan are available at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/hunting/what-to-hunt/tahr/tahr-control-operations/>.

*The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce and conservation.*

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