

NZ Game Animal Council Media Statement

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Lake Sumner deer management programme a success

A pilot management programme undertaken by the Game Animal Council, in collaboration with the Department of Conservation, New Zealand Deerstalkers Association (NZDA) and local landowners has successfully removed 126 breeding hinds from the Lake Sumner Recreational Hunting Area (RHA).

"We knew from anecdotal reports that the red deer population in the RHA was beyond the desired level for recreational hunting and if left unchecked could have adverse impacts on native biodiversity," says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale. "We therefore decided to trial a targeted hunter-led management operation in order to reduce the population and limit the short-to-medium term breeding capacity of the herd."

"Removing 126 hinds will have a positive future impact on the population while a longer-term management approach for the RHA is developed."

"The 30 experienced hunters who undertook the operation all worked extremely hard over the four days of the operation and did a fantastic job."

"An important aspect of the project was the removal of the jaw and uterus from the animals harvested. These will be analysed to determine the condition and reproductive status of the animals, which will provide important data on the health of the herd and the health of the environment. This will further inform development of the longer-term management plan."

"We want to thank DOC, NZDA (particularly the North Canterbury branch), landowners and the recreational hunters who participated."

"This operation is what game animal management is all about and will improve the quality of the hunting resource in the RHA while helping to protect native vegetation. It really is a 'win-win'," says Gale.

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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