GREAT ISLAND A24 STOAT ERADICATION PROJECT UPDATE 01

Geoff, Mike and Lindsay (in head net) + 17 stoats

Project Summary/Objective

The Great Island stoat eradication project was established by DOC with the objective to remove
and defend the island from stoats using Goodnature A24 resetting stoat traps.

Great Island (736 hectares) is in Chalky Inlet, Fiordland and is between 270 and 80 metres offshore. It had a standard uncontrolled population of stoats, monitored at 94% before the operation began.

In October 2016, 220 Goodnature A24 traps and 160 monitoring tracking tunnels for stoats were deployed by volunteers and DOC staff.

This project is ongoing and this document is the first 'update' report.

Project Timeline

Oct 17–21 2016 – Placed all tracking tunnels with tracking cards, sited traps and first pre-feed of trap sites.

Jan 7–8 2017 – Changed tracking cards, second pre-feed of trap sites. Stoat tracking = 9%

Mar 6–10 2017 – Changed tracking cards, third pre-feed and set all traps. Stoat tracking = 94%
17 stoats collected after 3 days of trapping.

March 26 2017 – Completed first full trap check, replaced erayz bait. 2 stoats collected. Therefore 19 stoats collected for <u>first full check</u> in total.

April 11 2017 – Changed tracking cards. Replaced all erayz bait. Stoat tracking = 5%. 3 stoats collected.

Jun 24–25 2017 – Changed tracking cards. Replaced all bait. 50% erayz 50% GN ALP stoat lure. Stoat tracking = 0.9% tracking
1 stoat collected.

Project Design

The network on Great Island was established using DOC best practice guidelines for ground-based island eradication of stoats using traps
(1 trap per 6 ha).

Traps were set at 100m intervals on trap lines 300-700m apart based on the shape and topography of the island.

Monitoring was established based on DOC tracking tunnel guides. The density of tracking tunnels was markedly increased by placing a tracking tunnel at every second trap site.

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Therefore, 105 tracking tunnels were set on trap lines and 50 tracking tunnels were set on 5 random transects.

Great Island, Fiordland (23 Stoats)   45.48, 167.67

Stoat ●   Stoat multi-kill ●

Traps: 220 Goodnature A24 stoat traps.

Maintenance/Monitoring Schedule: Change tracking cards and replace all erayz bait 5 times per year. CO_2 canisters + GN ALP stoat lure replaced twice per year.

Monitoring Method: 5 lines of 10 tracking tunnels and 105 additional tracking tunnels at every alternate trap site. Erayz placed in bait cage and suspended from centre of tracking tunnel.

Results

Great Island pre-treatment monitor #1
Jan 7 2017: 9%

Great Island pre-treatment monitor #2
Mar 6 2017: 94%

Great Island post-treatment monitor #1
April 11 2017: 5%

Great Island post-treatment monitor #2
Jun 24 2017: 0.9%

Highlights/ Learnings

This is the first stoat island eradication attempted with Goodnature A24 traps and was more successful than we could have hoped.

This single tool appears to remove most of the resident stoat population and can remain in place to provide ongoing biosecurity.

The project was established and managed by a range of operators including volunteers (tracks were initially not cut, but marked well).

One stoat was caught three hours after the traps were set.

References

Stoat invasion, eradication and re-invasion of islands in Fiordland – Graeme Elliott , Murray Willans , Hannah Edmonds & David Crouchley (2010)
New Zealand Journal of Zoology

www.goodnature.co.nz
Goodnature A24 rat & stoat trap

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