

NZ Game Animal Council Media Statement

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Responsible tahr management can benefit everyone

“The resumption of DoC’s Himalayan Tahr control work will naturally have recreational hunters feeling nervous,” says Game Animal Council Chair Don Hammond.

“However, through the work of the Tahr Liaison Group, the Game Animal Council has helped to negotiate a management plan that we believe will reduce the number of tahr on public conservation land in the Southern Alps while protecting critical hunting opportunities.”

There is significant uncertainty about the number of tahr in the Southern Alps, with official estimates ranging from 24,000 to 48,000. However, it is clear that numbers have increased and the priority is to keep wild tahr populations within their feral range.

“The Game Animal Council, through the Tahr Liaison Group, is committed to this season’s management activities. However, we are even more interested in the review and development of a new Himalayan Tahr Control Plan and the \$1 million research and monitoring programme with the expectation that a significant component of this will be dedicated towards understanding the impacts of tahr on native flora and how this can be managed. We look forward to working with DoC on this.”

“It is pleasing that through the management plan agreement was reached to leave recognisable male tahr and provide information on their location to recreational hunters,” says Hammond. “At the end of the day it is the bulls that are the trophies and attract hunters from overseas and generally why local tahr hunters go into the hills. Females are the breeding animals, which means that their management makes the biggest contribution to population control.”

“By coordinating its control operations with the efforts of recreational hunters, hunting guides and tahr meat recovery operators, the Department of Conservation has the opportunity to significantly reduce the cost of population control which is in everyone’s interest.”

The Game Animal Council also encourages recreational hunters to contribute to efforts to gain better information on tahr numbers and the positive impact of recreational hunting on population management by completing the online form that record their hunting returns. The tahr returns form is available at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/hunting/what-to-hunt/tahr/tahr-control-operations/tahr-hunting-returns/>.

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“The Game Animal Council looks forward to working with the Department on the research and monitoring plan and the recording of recreational hunters’ contribution to the management of the current herd,” says Hammond.

Contact:

Don Hammond, Chair

Phone 0274885940

don.hammond@nzgac.org.nz



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