

Trapping Mt Norma & Sylvia Tops Lines Feb 2025

There are two traplines at the entrance to the Nina Valley. For each the route is marked with orange markers, while the wooden tunnels are marked with pink (Mt Norma) and red (Sylvia Tops) markers. There are also ten possum traps on the Mt Norma Line marked with blue markers, these start around wooden tunnel #18.

Volunteer attributes

The traplines run from the valley floor at around 600m up to 1300m. A significant part of the trap line is not on a track and has only sparse route marking. Anyone rebaiting should be fit and have skills and experience in first aid, navigation, river crossing (Nina River at the end of the Sylvia Tops trapline) and the New Zealand back country.

A GPS or mobile phone with an off-line map app or with the 'TrapNZ' app installed is essential for navigation as well as for recording the results of your work, more on this below.

Training

You must be experienced in trap operation, carcass clearance and rebaiting. An ability to repair or tune traps is an added advantage, but not a necessity. Training is available for anyone who wishes to upskill themselves in these areas.

There is instruction available in the TrapNz app at <https://help.trap.nz/>

Accountability

Doubtless Conservation Group will be responsible for trapping training and provision of specified equipment. Volunteers are responsible for ensuring they have the skills, attributes, fitness and understanding of the training necessary to complete tasks.

Weather

A weather forecast for the area (Canterbury High Country) must be obtained 1-2 days before the planned activity. Alternatively 'Windy' has proven to have accurate forecasts over the past years. The activity should be postponed or cancelled if there is any doubt about the weather's suitability. A rebait being missed one month is not a big issue, an accident is.

River crossing

The Sylvia Tops line requires a river crossing, although this can be avoided with a short walk up the Nina River to the Nina swing bridge. This route is along our Nina Boyle trapline and is sparsely marked. An indication of the river levels in the Lewis Pass can be gained through monitoring the Hope River at Glen Wye (www.ecan.govt.nz/data/riverflow/sitedetails/64608). Also check the weather to ensure levels are not going to rise. If the Hope is likely to be above 0.6m do not cross the Nina River – use the Nina swing bridge instead. If the Hope is between 0.5m and 0.6m then cross with caution. See the specific river crossing information for the Sylvia Tops trapline below. These are guidelines only, you are to use your experience and judgement. You are advised to:

1. Check weather forecasts in advance and postpone the work if necessary.
2. Identify the safest place to cross stream/river.
3. Do not cross rivers alone and support each other when you cross.
4. Do not cross a stream with excess water (water flowing faster than walking speed, discoloured, debris being carried down the river, rocks moving in the water and water surging to the surface). Visit www.mountainsafety.org.nz/learn/skills/river-safety/
5. Do not attempt to cross if any member of the team person doesn't have skills, confidence or experience to safely cross.

Walking up the TR of the Nina to the swing bridge will add less than an hour in total to your day – a small price to pay for safety.

TrapNZ App

You will be invited by the administrators to join this project through TrapNZ. This app will record all your data and aid in navigation. When the TrapNZ app is used offline, your data is stored locally and synced automatically when there is a data connection available and you open the app. Ensure that it is synced before you go and after you return. There is a slow network connection at the Boyle Settlement campsite if you need one.

From June 2024 all the lines in the Nina Valley, Norma, Sylvia, Lucretia, Duchess and Hurunui College traps (Lower Nina Valley and Upper Nina Valley) are all in the Nina Valley Project).

Equipment

Volunteers will be required to provide:

- Transport to and from the valley
- Day pack if rebaiting on a day trip or
- Day or weekend tramping equipment and food if staying in the Nina Valley overnight
- Suitable clothing including: tramping boots, warm hat, gloves, warm clothing
- Adequate food and water bottle (see line specific information on water availability)
- First aid kit
- PLB (essential for each person or pair working together)
- Face masks, disposable gloves, hand sanitiser
- Volunteers need to be prepared for wet and cold conditions throughout the year.

Doubtless Conservation will provide:

- Trap tool kit, including gloves, screw drivers/spanner, hand sanitizer, notebook and bait. **Get from Bryan at 35 Butler st. 0273745799**
- GPX files on TrapNZ and/or on our website (Volunteer Information page)

COVID 19

Follow the government guidelines that are in force at the time of your activity.

Accommodation

To reduce fatigue the Forest and Bird base at Boyle is an ideal place to stay before and/or after your work in the Doubtful Valley. This is \$10 for members and non-members. To book the Forest and Bird Lodge please email helenhills.mcp@gmail.com. Please make these requests in plenty of time. Also we can use the Deer Stalkers Lodge in the Lewis Pass. Once again see George or Bryan for the key.

If you are camping in the valley there are many great spots. Be warned though, there is no shortage of namu (sandflies) in any of the valleys in the Lewis Pass. To avoid fires do not use open fires or cook in your tent.

Travel

It is approximately a 2.5 hour drive to the carpark at the entrance to the Nina Valley. Drivers of all vehicles should be appropriately licenced and not in a state of fatigue. Drive safely and to the conditions.

Hunters

You are advised to wear a high vis-vest when working in the forest in March and April.

Intentions

Leave your intentions with someone who, in the event of you being overdue, will call 111. Suitable intentions forms can be found at:

www.adventuresmart.nz/assets/Uploads/eb2e242aa5/Outdoors-Intentions-Form-v2.pdf

www.adventuresmart.nz/assets/Uploads/5a32f6e21e/Additional-Group-Members-Form-v2.pdf

Safety

Safety of people is paramount, and far more important than the activity of trapping. Familiarise yourself with the safety information in this document. It is a good idea to be familiar with the Doubtless Conservation Safety Plan which could be downloaded from www.doubtlessconservation.org.nz/volunteer-information.html The backcountry of Aotearoa/New Zealand is not static, the risks can change. To help main safety in this situation each trip to carry out trapping related activities shall have a leader appointed. They should complete the Job Safety Analysis form that is appended. Volunteer agreement forms are also appended.

First Aid

A first aid kit should be carried. The minimum list recommended by DoC is attached at the end of this document.

Lure Application

Use the tips below to maximise the effectiveness of our efforts through careful lure application.

Salmon Pellets/Fish Food

This lure is palatable to stoats so it can be used for both as a lure and for prefeeding. Ten grams (12-14 pellets) to be used per trap.

- 1/3 of the pellets into the bait area of the trap, place in the LureGard where these are present.
- A further 1/3 are place in the entrance(s) to the trap. This should be accessible without the pest having to fully enter the trap.
- The last 1/3 can be placed near the trap, on a dry aerated position if possible.

If salmon pellets were used in the previous rebait any old pellets can be placed outside the trap as additional prefeed.

To record in TrapNZ, when you set up the trap defaults at the start of the rebait, select 'other' then add 'Fish Food' below the heading, 'Lure notes'.

Mayonnaise or Eggsellent Lure

As this lure is also palatable to stoats it can be used for prefeeding too. To reduce the impact of mice, smear this bait on the surface when you apply it. This means mice must lick the lure, consequently they will leave their saliva on the surface. Stoats can detect and are attracted to mice saliva, therefore our lure may have been eaten but there is still an attractant for stoats.

- One 500g bottle for 50 traps.
- 1 Tsp or 10g per trap.
- 1/3 smeared down the wall of the trap in the bait area.
- A further 1/3 in each trap entrance (can be eaten without entering the trap).
- The last 1/3 can be placed near the trap, on a dry aerated position if possible. Side of the trap works well.

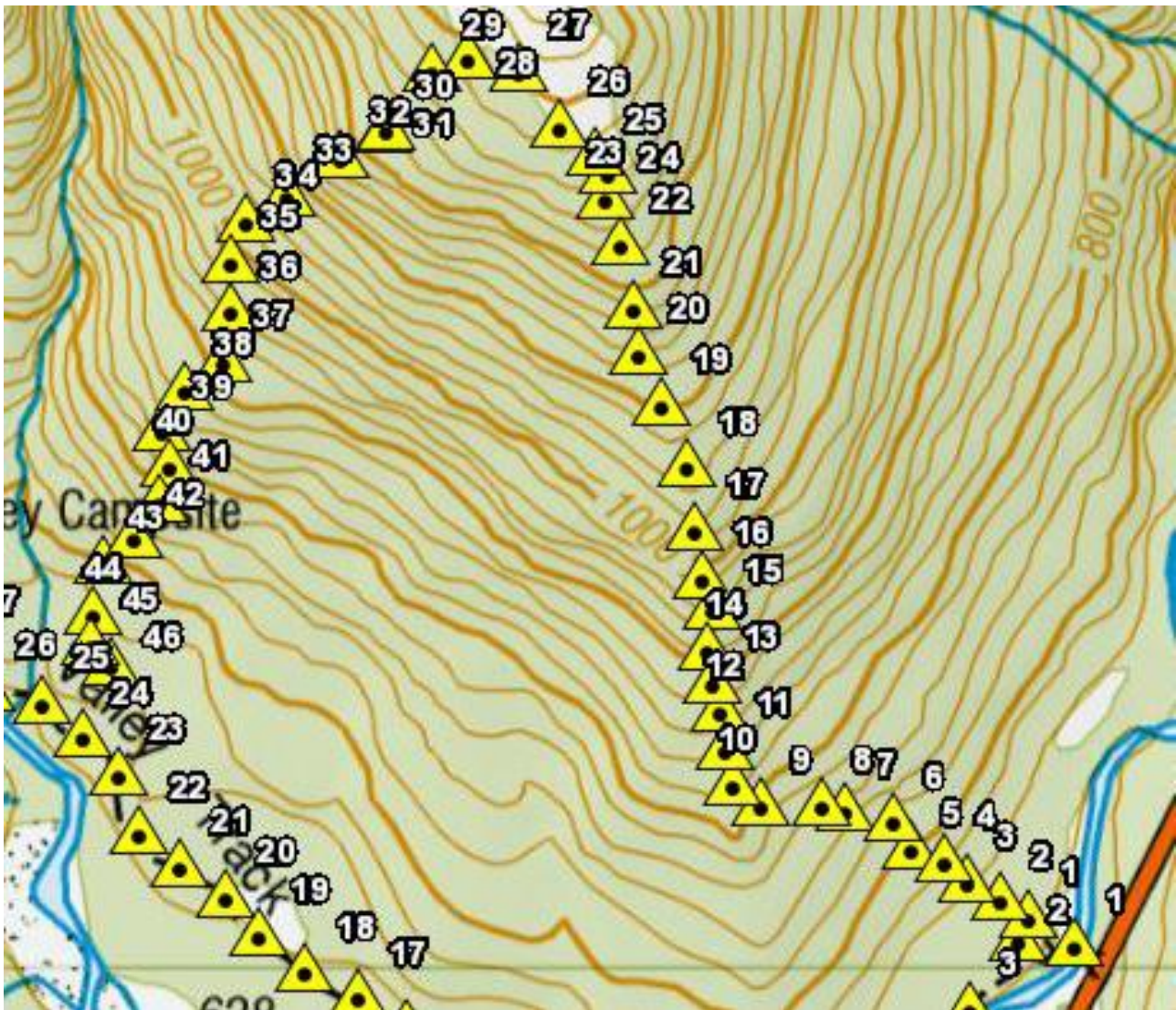
To record in TrapNZ, when you set up the trap defaults at the start of your rebait, select 'Mayo'.

Scuffing or Disturbing the Ground

Stoats are very sensitive to the ground being disturbed. With your boot scuff a 30cm by 30cm area near the trap entrance.

Mount Norma Trapline

1. Complete this in an anticlockwise direction (track markers are installed for this direction), starting on the right about 100m after the roadside Lewis River swing bridge (see map below).
2. The route is sparsely marked with orange markers. The traps are all marked (red markers) and numbered. The ten possum traps are between 17 and 22. See traps 1 – 46 below. Other traps numbered below are administered by Hurunui College. Feel free to reset any as you walk out, just record the kills and email George.
3. This trapline runs from the valley floor at around 600m up to the bushline at 1300m, then back to the valley floor. The route to the bushline ascends the Mt Norma route and is well trafficked and easy to follow. The route down on the other hand is steep and rough in places. The route down is immediately after trap 27 and initially descends in the open before entering the bush at trap 28. Trap 46, the last one, is about 200m from the Nina Valley track which you use to return to the Lewis River swing bridge.
4. Water is only accessible at the very beginning and end of this trapline - it is best to carry your own for the day.



Sylvia Tops Trapline

1. Complete this in an anticlockwise direction (track markers installed for this direction), starting about a kilometre past the Nina Swing bridge (see map below). The start is soon after trap 39. The start is marked with a track marker.
2. The route is sparsely marked with orange markers. The traps are all marked with red markers.
3. This trapline runs from the valley floor at around 600m up to the bushline at 1300m, then back to the valley floor. The route through the bush is just that, a route not a track; by and large it is steep and rough. The start of the NZDA route from the bushline, at point c below, has a white pole indicating where to enter the bush. This too is very steep, especially between between traps 25 and 27.
4. Along the bushline section, between traps 14 and 19, the traps are sited at the bushline high points – so aim for these, don't trek up and down unnecessarily.
5. Water is only accessible near traps 1, 19 and 39, so it is best to carry your own for the day.
6. Use TrapNZ to record your results.
7. Crossing the Nina River near trap 39 can be a significant risk. See below.



Crossing the Nina River

At the eastern end of the Sylvia Tops trap line (trap 39) the NZDA route crosses the Nina River. This is not normally difficult, but this river can become impassable after heavy rain. Use your judgement and experience. If you arrive at the riverbank and judge the Nina to be impassable you can travel upstream to the swing bridge and cross there. This highwater route follows our Nina-Boyle trapline. The start can be identified by a large orange triangle marker which is just visible at the western end of the small flat (pictured below) that you come to immediately after trap 39.

If you judge the Nina to be safe to cross the best place to do so is about 100m upstream of the end of the trap line. Once across the river you will need to travel down the TL to continue to the Nina Valley track. There is a patch of scrub blocking your path down the river, but this is easily passed on the LHS (north). Large orange triangles mark the bush entrance to the track that leads to the Nina Valley track.



View towards the safe crossing point of the Nina river from the the point where the route to the Nina Valley track meets the true left of the Nina.

You can gain a sense of what height the Nina is running at by monitoring the Hope river at the site below.

www.ecan.govt.nz/data/riverflow/sitedetails/64608

Experience shows us that if the Hope is above 0.6m you should exercise extreme caution and consider walking up to the Nina swing bridge.

Item	Quantity	Checked
First Aid booklet	1	
Antiseptic wipes	8	
Antiseptic ointment	1	
Bandage – gauze 40mm	1	
Bandage crepe – 75mm and 100mm	2	
CoLon gauze squares 7.5 x 7.5mm	6	
Disposable gloves	2	
Eye pad – 60mm x 75mm	2	
Eye 8ssues	4	
Elastoplast – mixture of sizes, PVC and fabric	50	
Fabric dressing strip	1	
Non-adherent dressing (mixed sizes)	6	
Paraffin gauze	1	
Plastic bags for waste disposal	2	
Resuscitation aid (with mouthpiece)	1	
Roll of fabric strapping tape – 50mm	1	
Roll of micropore tape – 25mm	1	
Roll of sleek tape – 25 mm	1	
Saline solution – 30ml	4	
Safety pins or clasps	10	
Scissors	1	
Skin closures/Steri-strip	4	
Splinter probe	4	
Triangular bandage	2	
Thermal blanket	1	
Tweezers	1	
Wound dressing with bandage -#14 and #15	2	

In the event of an accident requiring medical attention, the first priority is the care and attention of the injured person. However, when it is possible, please fill out the incident form that is part of the safety analysis document and forward to Doubtless Trustees. This form is appended.