

Information for Trapping in the Doubtful Valley Feb 2025

Navigation

Where a trapline follows a track all you need do is follow the orange triangle track markers. If the trapline is not on a track (DL, DS and DB) there is orange flagging tape that can be followed. We are in the process of replacing the orange flagging with white triangle track markers. Where a trapline is on a river flat the trapline follows the bush edge, so just navigate along the bush edge looking for trap markers every 200m.

The lines DL and DS have a track recorded on TrapNZ that you should be able to see on your TrapNZ map as a broken red line. As you are the blue dot you should be able to navigate along the trapline using the app should you be uncertain your location is correct. Each trap is identified with a pink triangle marker with an alphanumeric label e.g. DK05 (**D**oubtless project, **K**edron River, trap **5**).

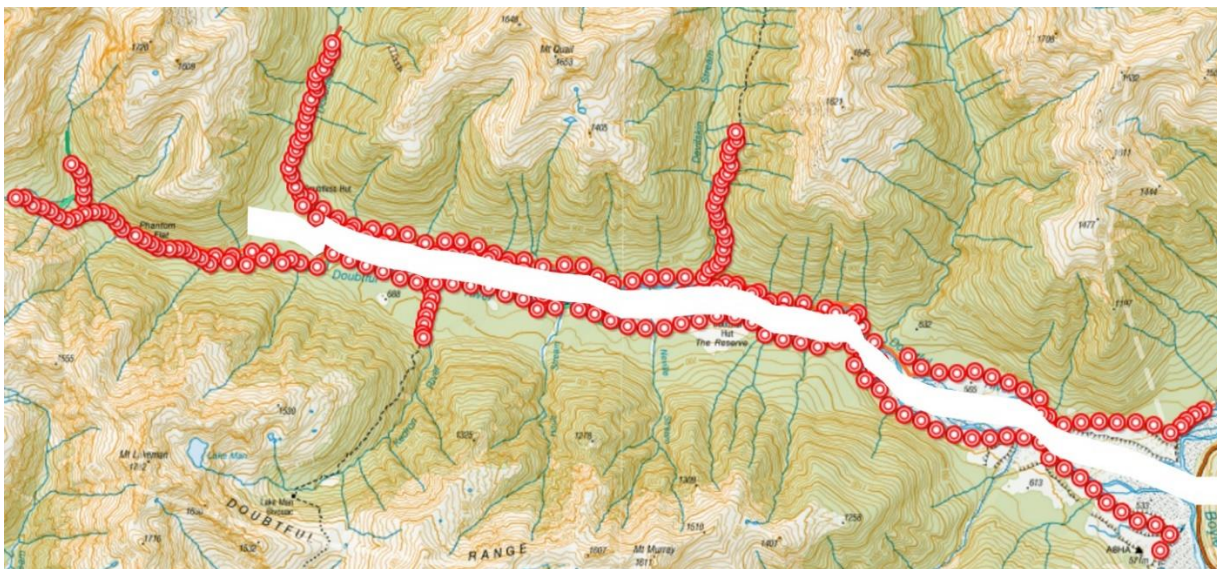
Volunteer attributes

This trapline runs from the valley floor at around 580m up to nearly 1000m at Amuri Pass. A significant part of some track lines are not on a track and have only sparse route marking. Anyone rebaiting should be fit and have skills and experience in first aid, navigation, river crossing and the New Zealand back country. You will get wet feet!

A mobile phone with the 'TrapNZ' app installed is essential for navigation as well as for recording the results of your work, more on this below.

Assigning the traps in the valley to two teams

There will be two teams of two for each rebait. The traplines in the valley will be divided up as follows. One group will rebait the traps on the true right of the Doubtful River while the other team will rebait the traps on the true left. As of December 2024 both these lines have 6 cat traps (Belisle trap in a chimney box) unless you have had training and are carrying the resetting tool these should be left alone.



Team True Left

Will rebait all traps on the lines DL, DD and DS

Which traps to do when is your decision. One strategy that seems to work well is rebait a certain number of traps on the way in so that you arrive at the Doubtless hut at a convenient time. For example when rebaiting the TL side I have chosen to rebait from the Doubtful hut onwards (DL33 to DL53 and then the DS line) on day one, then on day two rebaiting the remainder of the upper valley DL taps (DL54 to DL61], then on the walk out DD line and DL33 to DL2.

Team True Right

Will rebait DR, DK and DB.

Once again leaving a section of the lower valley for the walk out may help even out the two days.

Time allowance

You will be very busy if you are aiming to complete the rebait over a weekend, especially if there are many kills. So start early on the Saturday by staying in the Lewis before your rebait (see accommodation below), and consider having two nights in the valley and taking three days to complete the task.

Keep track of time and assess your progress throughout the day and adjust your goals if you need to. For example, the line DD (running up to Devilskin saddle; one for the Doubtful Left team) takes between 2 and 3 hours from DD01 and back again. If completing this on day one would have you walking to the hut in the dark later, then leave this line to the walk out. If you are unable to complete the whole of any line don't panic. We would rather a few traps were missed in any month than you were attempting to cross rivers in the dark. What we are doing is important, but not as important as you are.

Traps to miss out if pushed for time

Team True Left:

- DL31 and DL32 (two crossings for 2 traps)
- DL52 and DL53 (two crossings for 2 traps)
- DD line to Devilskin saddle

Team True Right:

- DB line
- DK line
- DR74 to DR82

Training

You must be trained in trap clearance and rebaiting. An ability to repair or tune traps is an added advantage, but not a necessity. Here is a useful link, www.youtube.com/watch?v=m30g0w_rJ5E

Training is available for anyone who wishes to upskill themselves in trap maintenance. This link will take you to an introductory video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kABskKb1NzE>

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. The activity should be postponed or cancelled if the forecast is unsuitable, or 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 trap lines in the Doubtful Valley require frequent river crossings, all of which require care, but especially the Boyle River at the entrance to the Doubtful Valley. An indication of the river levels in the Doubtful Valley 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 0.8m do not go. If Hope is between 0.5m and 0.8m go with caution, but do not cross the Boyle at the Doubtful carpark. Instead cross the Boyle North of the bluffs at a good crossing where the Boyle is braided into 3 parts, then use the Tui track and a marked route to a crossing of the Doubtful River where it is braided into two parts.

Alternatively use the Poplars bridge just east of the engineers' camp. This route requires you to climb over a deer fence gate, climb at hinge end of gate and stand on the pipe, not the wires. These river flow figures 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.

TrapNZ App

You will have been invited by the administrators to join this project through TrapNZ. This app will record all your data and aid in navigation. There are routes, suggested river crossing points and the best swimming holes identified on the app too. There is training available for you at <https://help.trap.nz/>. When the TrapNZ app is used offline, your data is stored locally and synced automatically when there is a data connection available. Ensure that it is synced before you go and after you return. If you get to the carpark and find the app will not load, there is a network connection at the Boyle Settlement carpark which may resolve any issues.

Equipment

Volunteers will be required to provide:

- Transport to and from the valley
- Day pack if rebaiting on a day trip or
- Weekend tramping equipment and food
- Suitable clothing including: tramping boots, warm hat, gloves, warm clothing
- Adequate food and water bottle
- First aid kit
- PLB (essential for each person or pair working together)
- 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, safety clips, tongs, hand sanitizer, notebook and pencil and bait. **Get from Bryan at 35 Butler st. 0273745799**
- In the Forest and Bird Boyle Base hut you can find all crockery and cutlery. We also have a two burner LPG stove you could borrow.
- Near the Doubtless Hut there is a cache of overnight gear for your use (gas cooker, gas, plates and eating utensils, emergency tent and 2 sleeping mats). This cache is about 20m due north of DS05 (the first trap to the east of the hut clearing, you will bypass this as you approach the hut. The site of the cache is visible on TrapNZ as long as you are not in 'line-view', go up a level to 'Doubtful Valley Project'. You may get asked to carry in a gas container for the hut – the more gas used use the more often this will happen. **If**

you use the tent and it is not bone dry when you leave please bring it out rather than put it way damp (the poles and pegs can stay behind).

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. Email Helen hills at helenhills.mcp@gmail.com to book this. Also we can use the Deer Stalkers Lodge in the Lewis Pass. Contact Bryan for the key. Book with Keith on 0278147113.

If you are camping in the valley there are many great spots. Phantom flat in particular at the head of the valley has excellent sites. 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.

The Doubtless hut (6 bunks and a spare doc mattress) was recently renovated by us and is a great place to stay in the upper valley. Hidden nearby in 20l white buckets are gas cannisters, a cooker, pots, eating utensils and crockery. This cache is about 30m north of DS05 (the trap on the TL halfway between the hut and the Doubtless River crossing – orange dot on TrapNZ). In addition there is a 2-person tent and two sleeping mats should the hut be full. If the tent is used please see it is bone dry before going back in the storage bucket. If not, it is best to bring it out (leave the poles and pegs). Use adequate ventilation when using the gas cooker and change cannisters outside the hut.

We intend to renovate the Doubtful hut. Until we do so it is small (3 bunks) and best described as serviceable.

Travel

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

Car security

Cars have been broken into at the DoC Doubtful Valley carpark. It is strongly suggested that passengers are dropped off at the point nearest the crossing being used; the driver then parks at the 'Engineers' Camp' or Forest and Bird base and then walk/bike/scooter the additional distance. At the engineers camp you can park your car off the road at the property of John Dryden (3978 Lewis Pass road; behind the bus stop). Call John on 033157630 in advance to set this up. John will most likely run the driver in his car to your start point. He may offer to get you over the river on his flying fox. While a fun way to begin we advise not using this on your return as it relies on coordinating your timing with John, which will be difficult. If the Boyle River is too high to cross then you would be better to use the Poplar's Bridge. If challenged about using this bridge by employees of the Poplars you can say that you are from Doubtless Conservation, you are trapping in the area and that Kevin (the manager) has given us permission to use the bridge when the river is judged impassable. Under **NO** circumstances should cars be left near the gate leading to the Poplars Bridge – this is a condition of our being allowed to use this structure. On TrapNZ you can see the route between the bridge and the Tui track which leads to the True Right trapline.

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 Onedrive (No account necessary; link and QR code below) . 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 can be downloaded Onedrive

First Aid

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

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' immediately below this under '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. Trap surface 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.

Checklist for Trapping in the Doubtful Valley

- Weather at www.metservice.com/mountains-and-parks/national-parks/canterbury-high-country
- River levels at www.ecan.govt.nz/data/riverflow/sitedetails/64608
- Checked for any relevant changes to government COVID guidelines
- TrapNZ downloaded and synced
- Tools and bait from George
- Doubtless hut cupboard key (if appropriate from George)
- Forest and Bird Boyle Base booked through George (early booking please)
- Arranged for car storage with John Driardon (03 315 7630) at the Engineers Camp if required
- If using John's kind offer, checked that he requires nothing from town (eg milk)
- Personal equipment list, including first aid, complete (verbally checked by leader)
- Intentions given to trusted person. See link below (QR code)
- Hi vis-vests in March and April

- If a hazard is encountered that is not anticipated in the above information sheet then please complete a Job Safety Analysis form and send to George. See links on Doubtless Conservation website.
- DoC Volunteer Agreement forms complete and sent to George, if not already completed. See links on Doubtless Conservation website.

Item	Quantity	Checked
First Aid booklet	1	
Antiseptic wipes	8	
Antiseptic ointment	1	
Bandage – gauze 40mm	1	
Bandage crepe – 75mm and 100mm	2	
Gauze squares 7.5 x 7.5mm	6	
Disposable gloves	2	
Eye pad – 60mm x 75mm	2	
Eye issues	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	