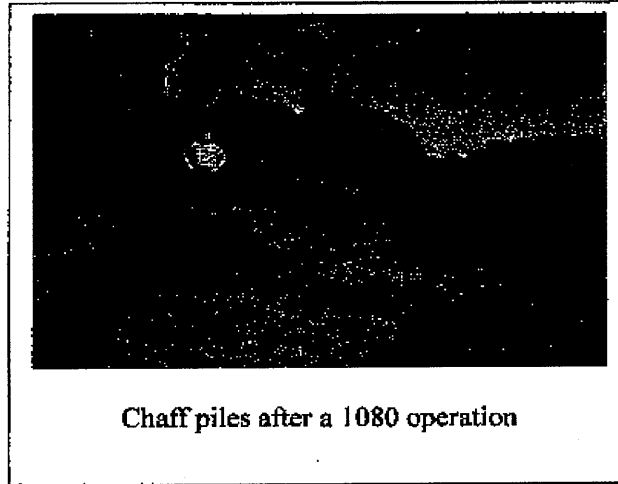


hunters have been telling us all along and the best way to fix this is to sack the manager in charge of the poison drop to take the heat off us and require that in future all carrot baits be screened to remove the chaff. Problem solved.



I audited the next poison drop and found that while the screening of the baits did remove a lot of the chaff it was nowhere near enough. Driving along a bush track through toi toi left a large number of chaff particles stuck on the windscreen. Problem not solved.

Chaff particles have a much higher surface area to volume ratio so the dose of poison from chaff is very much higher than for normal carrot bait.

Chaff is easily swallowed by birds.

When 1080 poison is distributed over the forest the severe impact of the baits with the forest canopy dislodge the chaff which then sticks or lodges up in the feeding zone of many of our native birds.

While the chaff is dyed green so are many caterpillars and moths which native birds readily eat.

Clearly we still have a problem but sending photos and making contact with DOC has achieved nothing. DOC explained that when the carrots are cut the small pieces of chaff stick to the baits in the carrot juice and are not removed by screening. When I asked what they were going to do about it the answer was "nothing". They then explained that it doesn't matter how many birds we kill so long as we are killing rats. With the rats reduced any surviving birds will be able to make up the losses next breeding season. My next question was "So killing some individuals is good for the population?" Answer. Yes!!

I must be just a dumb hunter because I can't figure that out. If we kill rats it is good because we reduce their breeding, if we kill native birds it is good because we increase their breeding!!!

Science tells us a different story. Rats start breeding at around four months old then breed every two to three months and produce up to 12 young each time. Birds breed perhaps twice every 12 months and produce up to eight young. When a number of rats are

