

# GPS Tracking Sika in Kaweka Forest Park

## One month in the life of a Spiker

The following information is gained from one of the five Sirtrack tracking collars used in the pilot study. It contains the track log from a young spiker that was tracked in the Manson area of the Kaweka Forest Park from 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010 to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

The Sirtrack GPS logger attached to the deer collar was set to log a position every 30 minutes for 1 month, at which time the collar was set to automatically fall off. The collar was then recovered and the data was downloaded onto a mapping program to give us the track log of that young stag for that period. The map shows each of the positions logged at 30 minute intervals and the track log of the spiker's route.

Key observations on this particular spiker's movements are summarised below. Note that this information is only taken from one of the deer in this study and is not necessarily representative of all Sika in the Kaweka Forest Park. It is also only information collected from 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010 to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010 so doesn't show a complete annual cycle, for that information we will have to wait.

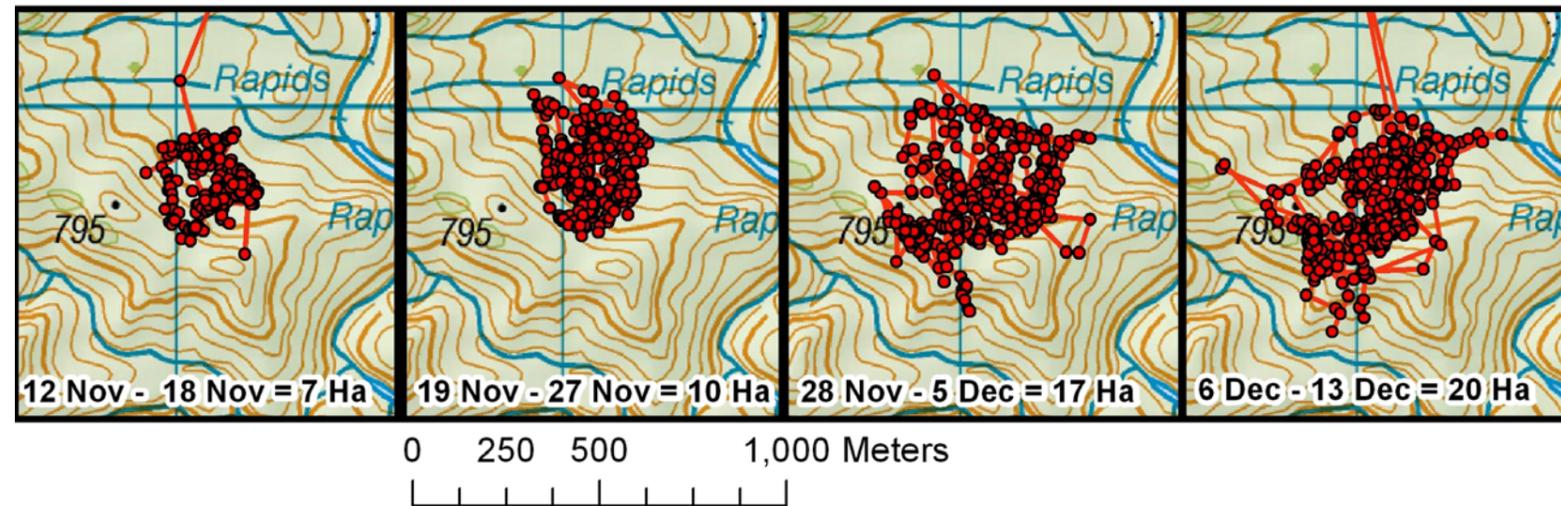
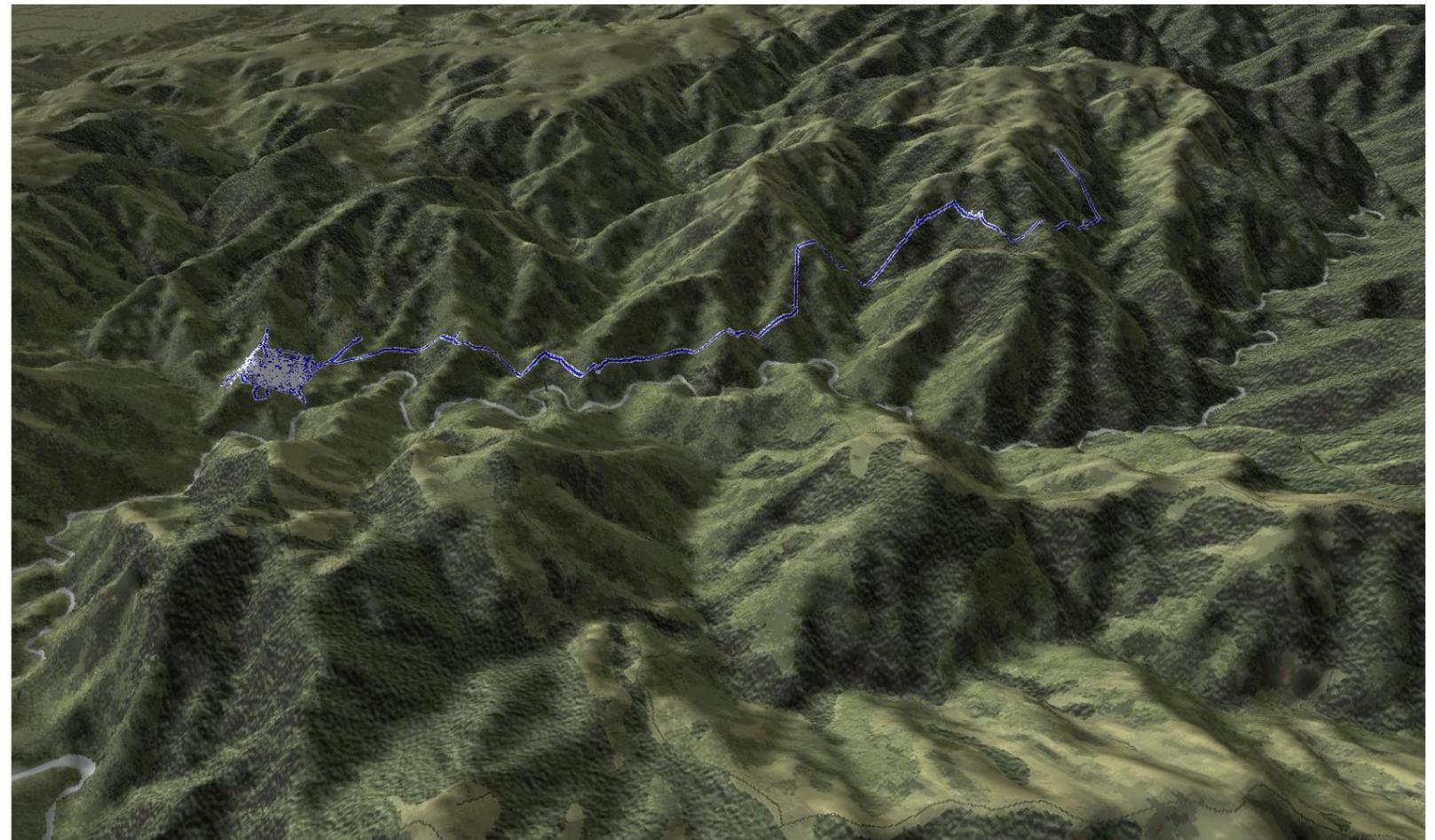
### Capture

- This deer was caught at 6:15 am using a net gun fired from a helicopter, the collar was attached within 5 minutes and the deer was released at the same place he was captured.
- Once released, this spiker bolted for 850 meters then held up in beech forest for 5 ½ hours without moving much at all. At 12:45 pm he started heading south.

### Monthly behaviour

- The spiker travelled a total of 9 km in the first 52 hours of having the collar attached. Travelling times were between 1pm - 3pm, 8pm - 3am, 6am - 8am
- Clear times of rest or very little movement were between 8am - 6pm and 3am - 5am
- After moving 9km from his capture location, the spiker then moved very little and lived in an area of 23 hectares for the remaining 30 days. The area was kanuka forest with mingimingi, coprosma and grass undergrowth.

An interesting observation is displayed in the 4 small maps. These maps show the spiker's positions every 7-8 days. As you can see, he progressively expands his range over the course of the month. None of the other deer did this, they all roamed their whole ranges every 7-8 days. Maybe he was "sussing the place out" slowly. It is surprising to see a spiker in the backcountry during November living in an area of only 7 hectares over 6 days.



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