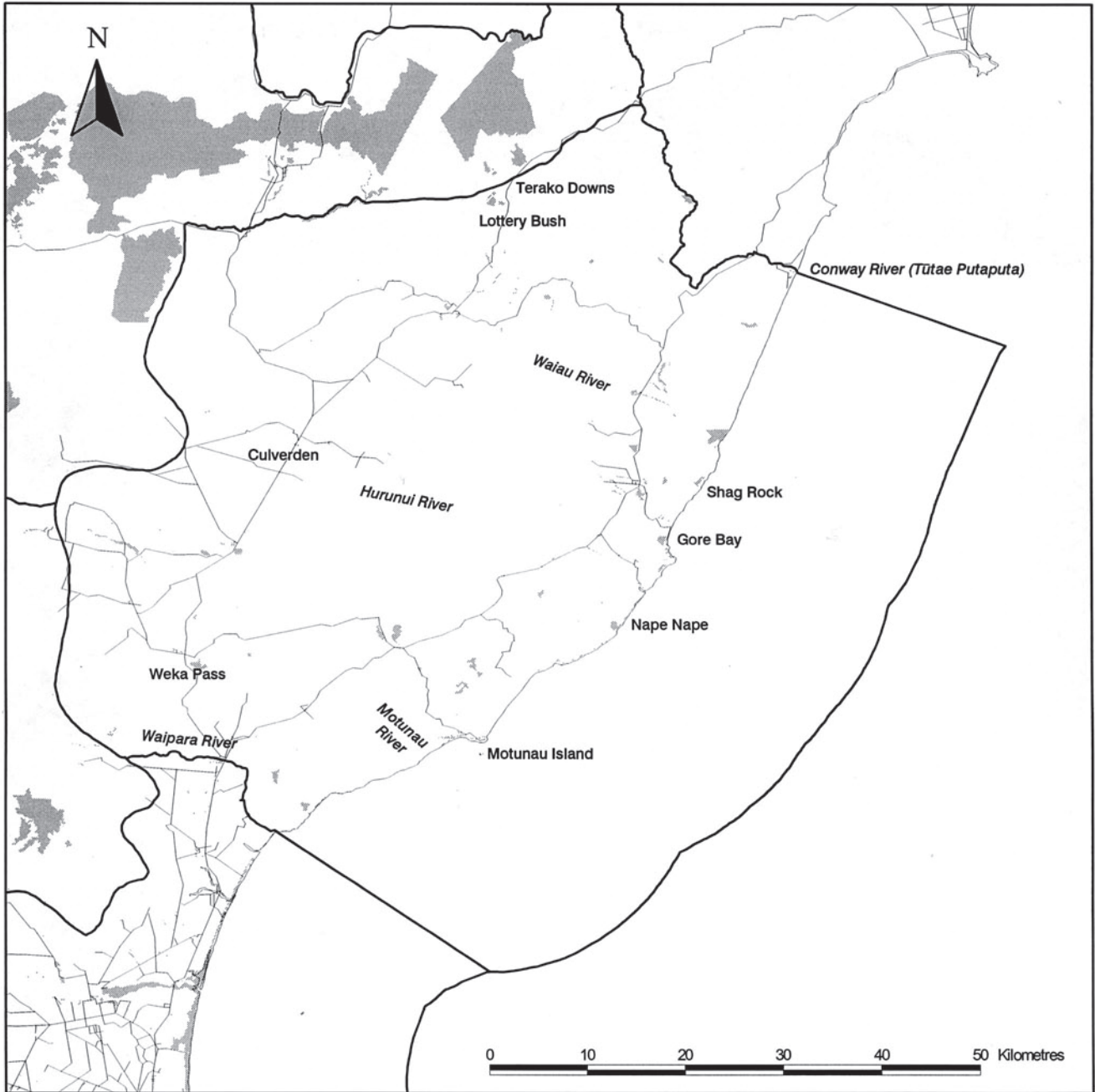




Map 4 Lowry



- CMS Place Unit Boundaries
- Main roads
- Land managed by the Department



4.3 Lowry

Introduction

The Lowry unit contains the coastal hills and ranges north of the Waipara River to south of the Conway River. It includes the inland basin of Culverden and is crossed by the Hurunui and Waiau rivers and several spring-fed streams. Limestone landforms are a distinctive feature.

Features and Issues

People Partnership

Evidence of past Māori occupation includes groves of karaka, rock drawings, middens, and pā site remains on a terrace at the mouth of the Waipara River. These sites are vulnerable, and local Pāpatipu Rūnanga (Te Ngāi Tuahuriri and Kaikōura) have concerns about their well-being. There are marine issues that Te Ngāi Tuahuriri Rūnanga and the Department need to work through.

Today, the area is sparsely populated and its few towns support agriculture and transport businesses. The coastal area around Gore Bay is a holiday destination for people from all over Canterbury. There is some rural and coastal tourism. Community interest groups include Hurunui District Council, recreational and commercial fishing groups, Federated Farmers and landcare groups.

Heritage Conservation

The geology of the area is dominated by greywacke and argillite rock. Significant limestone outcrops also occur, notably in the Weka Pass area. The topography varies from the flat Culverden basin to rolling hill country, and a rugged and dramatic coastal environment. Two major rivers, the Hurunui and the Waiau, flow through this area.

A variety of indigenous plant communities characterise the area, particularly remnant coastal hardwood forest, mixed shrubland, savannah woodlands, and tussock grasslands. The largest kākara woodland in Canterbury is found near Medbury. Areas of remnant podocarp forest such as Wandle Bush, Terako Downs and Lottery Bush are significant. Prostrate kōwhai and cabbage trees/ti rākau are indigenous features of particular interest. This unit is notable for containing some biotic elements from Marlborough, and for communities associated with limestone.

There is no comprehensive ecological survey for the area. There are important remnants of indigenous communities associated with wetlands, limestone outcrops and tussock grasslands in the area. Two keys to conservation in the Lowry unit are the identification and protection of remnant communities and habitat types, and the maintenance of linkages between remnant indigenous communities. The Hurunui and Waiau rivers provide important fish and wildlife habitats.

The coastal environment from the Waipara River to the Conway River (Tūtae Putaputa) is ecologically diverse and has high scenic values. The values of the marine ecosystem are not well known. Excellent habitat exists for the New Zealand fur seal which is present in growing numbers at the breeding colony of Shag Rock, and also at the haul-out area at Napenape.

Motunau Island is of international significance as a habitat for seabird species (such as fairy prion) but is at threat from boxthorn infestation. It is the most important seabird breeding area between the Marlborough Sounds and Foveaux Strait. It is also the main breeding colony of the white-flipped penguin.

Human History

The coastal area was traditionally used by Māori on their travels north and south, with many archaeological sites remaining at the Hurunui River, Waipara River, Conway River, Motunau, and Gore Bay. Groves of karaka, which exist at Gore Bay, were planted as mahinga kai (food) sources. The rock drawings at Weka Pass date back to the moa-hunter period of Māori settlement.

Early European settlement was dominated by the large pastoral estates, such as Cheviot and Glenmark. Historic features associated with transport are the Hurunui Hotel and the Weka Pass Railway.

Recreation and Use

Recreation is centred on the coastal area and rivers. The beaches and river mouths provide good fishing spots and diving for shellfish is also popular. Camping is provided for in a number of locations usually associated with good fishing areas or swimming beaches, such as Gore Bay. Baches are also used for extended stays by holiday-makers at Gore Bay and at Motunau Beach.



The coastal hills provide opportunities for walking and tramping. Tracks exist in the coastal scenic reserves at Gore Bay and Napenape, and the Port Robinson Walkway, with its coastal views, is popular. The Waiau and Hurunui rivers are popular for rafting, kayaking, jet-boating, fishing and gamebird hunting.

Areas Managed by the Department

The following areas managed by the Department are described in more detail in Volume 2, Schedule 2.

Name	Unit
Balmoral Lookout	N33046
Boundary Creek Scenic Reserve	N33039, includes N33041
Cranky Tom Scenic Reserve	N33040
Culverden Scientific Reserve	N33010
Gore Bay Scenic Reserve	O33049
Lottery Bush Scenic Reserve	N32038, includes N32045
Motunau Island Nature Reserve	N34020
Motunau River marginal strip	N34047
Mount Ararat Rātā Reserve	N34004
Napenape Scenic Reserve	N33044
Proposed Waipara Gorge Scenic Reserve	M34123
Pt Tiromoana Scenic Reserve (Cass Peak area)	N34021
Pt Tiromoana Scenic Reserve (Ella Peak area)	N34023
Shag Rock Scenic Reserve	O33070
Teviotdale Archaeological Site	N34046
Waiau Rivermouth Scenic Reserve	O33005
Weka Pass Historic Reserve	M33038

4.3.1 Landscape and Historic Resource Management

Issues

The landscape character of features such as the coastal environment and adjoining hill country, the gorge sections of the Waipara and Hurunui rivers, and limestone outcrops, are important assets of the area.

Rock drawings are largely found in fragile limestone environments, which are vulnerable to damage by, for example, stock rubbing against the limestone surface. The Weka Pass Historic Reserve is managed by, for example, the Department and contains the large Timpendean rock shelter and rock drawing assemblage.

Objectives

- To promote the enhancement of the landscape integrity of the coastal environment, river gorges and limestone areas in the Lowry area.
- To co-operate with and assist Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and Papatipu Rūnanga and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust in protecting rock art sites, in accordance with the outcomes of the *Deed of Settlement* (1997).

Implementation

The Conservancy will:

1. Advocate that the Hurunui District Plan contain objectives, policies and methods requiring that activities avoid adverse effects on the natural character of:
 - the coastline and coastal hills
 - the river gorges
 - the limestone areas
 - geopreservation sites
2. Co-operate with Re Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Papatipu Rūnanga, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and the Hurunui District Council in the development and maintenance of an accurate database, such as a photo library.
3. Continue site inspections and maintenance work on rock art sites.
4. Maintain the Weka Pass Historic Reserve rock drawings protection fence.



4.3.2 Ecosystems and Species

Issues

The unit consists of five ecological districts, three of which have been formally surveyed under the PNA programme (see 5.5.4 Survey and Monitoring). Departmental reserves in the area are small and largely restricted to the coastal area.

The unit's ecological character is under-represented in the existing protected natural area system. Many areas outside land managed by the Department need greater recognition and protection. There is a need to gather more information on the natural values of the area. Motunau Island is the largest island habitat in Canterbury for seabirds, and is predator-free (see Volume 2, Schedule 2, Motunau Island Nature Reserve). It is habitat for white-flipped penguin/kororā, fairy prion/titi, and burrowing seabirds such as white-faced storm petrels/titi, sooty shearwaters/titi, black-backed gulls/karoro, variable oystercatcher/tōrea-pango, and red-billed gulls/tarāpuka. Forty-five species of bird have been recorded on the island. Pied shag/kōau breeding colonies exist at the Motunau River and Boundary Stream mouths.

Objectives

- To identify the significant indigenous vegetation and threatened species of the Lowry unit.
- To use a range of effective methods to protect the indigenous biodiversity of the Lowry unit.
- To protect and enhance the viability of priority threatened species' populations and their habitat(s) in the Lowry unit.

Implementation

The Conservancy will:

1. Survey the ecological values of the Waikari and Waiiau ecological district (see 5.5.4 Survey and Monitoring).
2. Negotiate with landholders to protect significant areas of indigenous vegetation and wildlife habitats (see 5.2.3 Land Ecosystems).
3. Undertake research or surveys to clarify the distribution, status, habitat preferences and threats of the following species in the unit:
 - Plants
 - Coprosma violacea
 - Tupeia antarctica
 - Birds
 - white-flipped penguin/kororā
4. Advocate for the protection of indigenous biodiversity, including the habitat of threatened species and the healthy functioning of ecosystems.
5. Advocate for effective means in Canterbury Regional Council and Hurunui District Council plans to avoid adverse effects to white-flipped penguin.
6. Manipulate white-flipped penguin habitat to enhance the species' population.
7. Seek formal habitat protection for the white-flipped penguin.
8. Undertake plant and animal pest control to reduce the threat of plant and animal pests to white-flipped penguin.

4.3.3 Motunau Island

Issues

Motunau Island Nature Reserve supports a major colony of fairy prion/titi, and is the main breeding colony of white-flipped penguin/kororā. Bird life on the island is greatly impacted by the introduced weed, boxthorn. Motunau River and Boundary Stream mouths have adjoining pied shag/kōau breeding colonies located in trees. Surrounding marine areas are rich in aquatic life.

Objectives

- To protect seabirds from the impact of boxthorn.
- To maintain and enhance the natural values of the island.
- To keep Motunau Island free of predators.



Implementation

The Conservancy will:

1. Develop and implement a boxthorn control programme which includes advocacy for control on neighbouring mainland sites.
2. Survey marine resources around Motunau Island.
3. Provide procedural and policy advice to groups and organisations investigating or promoting marine reserves. This will involve consultation with Te Ruunanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te Ngāi Tuahuriri Rūnanga and the local community.
4. Process applications for marine reserves.
5. Liaise with the Ministry of Fisheries over marine reserve applications.
6. Support the monitoring of key wildlife species on Motunau Island.
7. Seek to obtain reserve status for Crown land foreshore around Motunau Island. This is additional to the 'deemed' reserve status arising from section 20(3) of the Reserves Act 1977.
8. Control island access to prevent introduction of new exotic species (including predators).

4.3.4 Marine Reserves

Issues

The Lowry coastline is physically and ecologically diverse. It contains Motunau Island, Gore Bay, the large seal colony at Shag Rock, large river mouths and numerous other features of interest. Development threats are low, fishing is significant and there are major opportunities for marine reserve initiatives. Te Ngāi Tuahuriri Rūnanga seek better protection of Waipara Beach, and feel that taiapure would be the most suitable protection mechanism.

Objectives

- To survey marine resources in important areas of interest.
- To process applications for marine reserves within the area.

Implementation

The Conservancy will:

1. Survey marine resources in areas of ecosystem significance.
2. Work with community groups and Papatipu Rūnanga to identify marine reserve and other options and areas of interest.
3. Provide procedural and policy advice to groups and organisations investigating or promoting marine reserves. This will involve consultation with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te Ngāi Tuahuriri Rūnanga and the local community.
4. Process applications for marine reserves.
5. Liaise with the Ministry of Fisheries over marine reserve applications.

Less Achievable Tasks

Tasks the Conservancy may not be able to undertake or complete include:

- complete control of nassella tussock
- complete control of woody exotic species in savannah communities
- implementation of protection for all significant areas identified in Cheviot/Motunau PNA Survey
- applying for marine reserves



Table 5: Key Priorities for Lowry Unit

Name	Issue	Method	Result Sought	CMS Activity
4.3.1 Landscape and Historic Resource Management	Developments which detract from landscape character in the coastal environment, river gorges, limestone areas and historic places	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RMA advocacy 2. Recording 3. Fencing 4. Stabilisation 5. Research 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hurunui District Council developed a protected landscape philosophy in the district plan 2. Weka Pass Historic Reserve fence maintained and drawings conserved 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1.2 Treaty Partnership 5.2.2 Landscape 5.2.3 Land Ecosystems 5.2.7 Historic Resources
4.3.2 Ecosystem and Species	Inadequate knowledge and protection of the Lowry unit's ecological values.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ecological survey 2. Reservation or covenant 3. RMA advocacy 4. Landholder liaison 5. Survey 6. Predator control 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full ecological survey coverage completed of significant sites and species 2. Significant sites and species protected and promoted 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1.4 Communication and Liaison 5.2.3 Land Ecosystems 5.2.4 Freshwater Ecosystems 5.2.6 Indigenous Species
4.3.3 Motunau Island	This nature reserve is an important seabird habitat that is infested with boxthorn.	Physical, biological, and chemical control	Seabird populations enhanced by controlling boxthorn to levels that reduce the threat to seabirds	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5.2.5 Marine Ecosystems 5.2.6 Indigenous Species 5.2.9 Plant Pests and Exotic Plants
4.3.4 Marine Reserves	Area contains a diverse range of marine ecosystems that could be considered for formal protection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marine survey 2. Community liaison 3. Advice to groups undertaking marine reserve investigations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A sound knowledge of marine ecosystems is obtained 2. Marine ecosystems protected 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1.2 Treaty Partnership 5.1.4 Communication and Liaison 5.2.5 Marine Ecosystems