

4. Priority Areas

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section identifies those areas in the Conservancy where Departmental effort will be focused, and details objectives and implementation provisions for these areas by drawing together the essential activities of the Department from Sections 5.0-13.0 of this document, which discuss the Department's different functions in more detail.

A rationale for the selection of priority areas is provided, followed by a description of the approach taken to their integrated management. Management of other areas administered by the Department is also discussed, together with the approach taken regarding private land not administered by the Department.

There is a close relationship between this section of the document and the later functional sections. Objectives relevant to the management of priority areas are contained in the functional sections. Implementation statements relevant to the priority areas are contained in the functional sections but are restated in a modified form in this section as priority actions. This is to give clear indication of the Department's intentions for those areas which are most important for conservation in Northland, and whose protection is in the national and international interest.

4.1.1 Identification of Priority Areas

To be most effective over the next ten years and beyond, the Department, tangata whenua and the wider community need to focus on those areas of land and water that, because of their combination of high natural, historic and visitor values, are particularly important for conservation. The vision of this CMS looks forward to a time when there is wide community and visitor appreciation of, and involvement in, conservation work. The key considerations state major elements which need to be considered when planning for the future. [Refer Section 2 Vision.] The overall present status of natural, historic, recreation values and socio-economic factors are described in the context [Refer Section 3 Context.]

Based on an assessment of the present situation, where we would like to be in the future, and the specific functions of the Department, the following criteria have been developed as a guide to determine those areas which are the most important for conservation in Northland and are priorities for integrated management. These are the places where most, but not all, effort needs to be directed. These criteria reflect the factors considered when the Department allocates resources to its major operations such as wild animal control.

Habitat Values

- Size. (Larger areas are usually of greater value.)
- Number and ranking of threatened species present. (Priority must be given to protection of threatened species.)
- Extent of remaining habitats. (Some habitats have been severely reduced in extent so remaining areas are particularly important.)
- Proximity to valuable unprotected areas. (Many areas are surrounded by lands of similar natural value where management should be sympathetic or complementary.)

Those areas of known greatest natural value are identified on Map Four.

Historic Values

- Density of historic places. (High numbers of historic places usually indicate important areas of occupation.)
- Diversity of historic places. (A wide variety of types indicates important areas of occupation.)
- Representative examples of places or features. (The best remaining examples.)
- Vulnerability to damage or modification. (Places which are vulnerable need effort to protect them.)
- Proximity to unprotected areas or features of historic value. (Many unprotected areas have historic values which form part of a larger cultural and historic landscape.)

Those areas of greatest known historic value are identified on Map Five.

Visitor and Recreation Values

- Number of visitors per year classified as: more than 50,000; 10,000 to 50,000; less than 10,000. (Generally, the greater the number of current visitors, the greater the recreation value.)
- Diversity of recreation opportunities and visitor facilities. (A wider spectrum of opportunities and facilities means more visitor expectations can be met.)
- Opportunities for interpreting conservation values and conservation issues. (The areas contain a wide variety of values and issues which can easily be explained to large numbers of visitors.)
- Opportunities for public involvement in conservation activity. (Many visitors are keen to be involved in practical conservation activities and assist the Department's work.)

Those areas of greatest visitor and recreation value are identified on Map Six.

By assessing areas administered by the Department against the above criteria and overlaying the three thematic maps (Maps Four, Five and Six), a number of areas stand out as being particularly significant for conservation. These are identified by the Department as priority areas which have strategic importance to conservation (Map Seven). They contain a combination of resources of outstanding natural value, are the best remaining examples of their type, have special long term importance for the protection of threatened species, are important for their historic values and are of high value for their recreation opportunities and visitor use. They are also important to tangata whenua, whose customs and heritage depend on the survival of these areas. The Department must focus its effort to ensure that those places of national or international importance are protected in the national interest. This assessment is based on the best available information at the time of preparation of this document.

4.1.2 Approach To Integrated Management

Together with implementing general policy and establishing objectives, a prime purpose of the CMS is 'integrated management' [refer section 1.1]. This means management of parts which are combined to a whole. In respect of conservation management it means combining the management of the diverse Departmental functions including protection, use, visitors and recreation, public awareness and planning. The benefits of this approach are increased efficiency in the use of resources and more rapid progress towards achievement of outcomes. The benefits of integration will be most visible in the ten priority areas, and these will also be the areas where the public can expect to see the highest levels of Departmental activity over the next decade.

The essential difference between the priority areas and other areas is in the diversity and intensity of management. Priority areas receive greater effort because of the range and complexity of issues to be resolved. Almost without exception, management needs to combine carefully the needs of threatened species, habitat protection, visitor and recreation use, concessions, historic and archaeological site protection, public awareness and compliance and statutory planning issues. It must also consider the effects on Treaty of Waitangi claim resolution processes and its relationship with tangata whenua. (Priority actions in each priority area are cross-referenced to the relevant functional section e.g.[7.23])

In contrast, management of other areas covers a much narrower range of issues. For example at Ruapekapeka Historic Reserve, management is focused around historic site protection, visitor use and public awareness. In Mareretu Forest and Waipu Gorge Scenic Reserve, home of the last remaining Northland populations of Hochstetters frog, management is concentrated on maintaining stream habitat quality via statutory planning, legal protection mechanisms and on researching predator impacts.

As a corollary, identification of the priority areas does not mean that all other areas of land administered by the Department are unimportant. Virtually all protected land is important because it contains natural or historic resources or sites of spiritual, traditional and

cultural significance. However the Department, the tangata whenua and the public have complementary roles. The Department's strategy must focus on where it can be most effective on a national scale. It will assist communities to protect areas of local and regional significance. The Department is open to community and iwi participation, especially in those areas which are locally or regionally important. The priority areas include areas administered by the Department and areas of significant natural, historic and recreation value in other tenure. Their active and ongoing protection will be encouraged, to ensure that Northland's heritage is passed on to future generations. There is likely to be a significant amplification of conservation results by managing areas as whole units regardless of tenure.

Management of 'other areas' which are not included within a priority area is covered generally in Section 4.12 and more specifically in Sections 5.0 to 14.0. For example animal pest control for Herekino, Raetea/Maungataniwha and Kaihu is identified in Section 5.4. Historic site conservation for Taumatawhana Pa, Okuratope Pa and Ruapekapeka Pa is identified in section 5.7. The approach to visitor use management in Herekino, Raetea, Maungataniwha, Tangihua Forest and around Kaikohe (Ngawha) is discussed in section 7.0 and Appendix Three. All of these areas are important for conservation and will continue to be managed by the Department.

As stated in Section 1.6, the application of the priority areas concept will not compromise the resolution of Treaty of Waitangi claims. Similarly, its application is not intended to prevent the construction of new facilities such as transmission lines or telecommunication facilities. Applications for such structures will be considered in terms of processes described in Section 6.0 of this CMS and the purposes for which the land is held.

4.1.3 Relationship With Private Land

For the areas of private land which surround land administered by the Department, the primary planning mechanisms applicable are those of the Resource Management Act 1991. In those areas, as with all private land in the Conservancy, documents such as the proposed Regional Policy Statement prepared by the Northland Regional Council and district plans of the district councils will determine how natural and historic resources are sustained and protected. The Department has an active and important role in the preparation and implementation of those policies and plans. Through the priority areas concept, the Department is signalling to the Regional Council, local authorities, tangata whenua and the community that these are areas where it will be focusing its effort. The Department will also advocate for good conservation management practices on private land, that are, wherever possible, complementary to or not inconsistent with the objectives of this Conservation Management Strategy.

The Department's specific role and responsibilities with regard to private land are largely limited to the protection of species listed in the Schedules of the Wildlife Act 1953 and public awareness and advocacy functions defined according to the Conservation Act 1987. It also has a role under the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977.

The importance of the priority areas is supported by other plans such as the proposed Regional Coastal Plan, in which the Department seeks appropriate management of a number of marine areas identified as Areas of Significant Conservation Value (ASCV's). These areas are generally of national or international importance for their biological,

physical or cultural values. There is considerable overlap between the priority areas and ASCV's to the extent that almost all ASCV's are contained within a priority area. The Department's objectives for those areas as contained in this CMS are relevant only in an advocacy sense through the processes of the Resource Management Act. Exceptions to this are where the requirements of the Marine Reserves Act 1971 apply to the Poor Knights Marine Reserve or the Wildlife Act applies to the protection of protected species.

INSERT MAP SEVEN, PRIORITY AREAS FOR INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

4.2 TE PAKI/PARENGARENGA

Description

The entire northern section of Muriwhenua (Aupouri peninsula) including Parengarenga Harbour, Motuopao Island and the dune lakes north of Te Kao.

Tangata whenua are Ngati Kuri and Te Aupouri.

Major areas of land administered by the Department are Motuopao Island, Te Paki Recreation Reserve, North Cape Scientific Reserve and Mokaikai Scenic Reserve. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area ?

The northern-most section of the North Island comprises a diverse area of hill country, steep coastal cliffs, continually changing dunelands and expansive wetlands, with many endemic and threatened plants and animals and unique vegetation associations. Its features include the extensive estuary, eelgrass, saltmarsh and mangroves of Parengarenga Harbour, the gleaming white sands of Kokota Spit, several large impenetrable swamps, subfossil kauri, birds, reptiles and snails embedded in compacted dune sands, and serpentine soils at North Cape which support a unique dwarf shrub community with 17 endemic plants. Large numbers of migrant wading birds congregate on the harbour together with variable oystercatcher, New Zealand dotterel and Caspian tern. Wetland and dunelake birds include New Zealand dabchick, New Zealand fernbird, scaup, bittern and spotless crane. Nine species of lizard and numerous species and subspecies of land snails inhabit the typically low windswept vegetation.

Te Rerenga Wairua (Cape Reinga) with its solitary pohutukawa, where the spirits of the dead travel on to Hawaiki-Nui, is a site of significance to all Maori. Over 1000 recorded archaeological sites contain evidence from the earliest periods of human occupation in New Zealand. They feature large areas of tool working floors, camps, pa, terraces, gardening systems, urupa, wahi tapu and middens with the bones of whales, dogs and fish. The lighthouses at Cape Reinga and on Motuopao Island are rich in history, as are the relics of a whaling station and gumdigging.

Cape Reinga lighthouse is a principal international and national visitor destination, mainly for day trips. A variety of tracks and walkways cross the area, linking several campgrounds and providing spectacular coastal vistas and access to wild windswept beaches.

As an area of significant natural, historic and recreation value, the Te Paki Reserves have been investigated for possible National Reserve status by the former National Parks and Reserves Authority.

Management Issues

- The location and type of visitor facilities at Cape Reinga.
- The impacts of visitors, track and walkway location, campgrounds and recreation use.
- The location and nature of tourism concessions.
- The impacts of possums, cats, pigs, rats, cattle and horses on indigenous flora and fauna.
- The invasion and competition by plant pests.
- Damage to flora, fauna, landforms, cultural, historic and archaeological sites, urupa and wahi tapu by off road vehicles.
- The impacts of marine farming, forest extraction, transport and processing on Parengarenga Harbour.
- Cultural use of kuaka, pingao and other natural resources.
- Waitangi Tribunal claim negotiation and resolution.

Priority Actions

1. Seek protection of freshwater wetland, dune lake, forest, and shrubland habitats according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One. Fence lake and wetland margins to limit damage by stock. [5.2]
2. Provide for sustained control of possums, horses and livestock; fencing and pig control in key habitats of threatened flax snails; and eradication of deer. [5.4]
3. Work towards control of plant pests including kangaroo acacia, Oxylobium, hakea species, cestrum, spartina and pampas and monitor for plant pests not yet established. [5.5]
4. Carry out targetted site management of threatened plants and animals according to species recovery plans including research, predator control, captive breeding and determination of habitat requirements. [5.11]
5. Maintain surveillance of Motuopao Island to ensure its predator free status. Introduce lizards subject to species recovery plans. [5.12]
6. Research badly eroded historic sites in dunelands and revegetate with appropriate native species. Stabilise, interpret and carry out vegetation management of pa site complexes at Hiriki, Ngaiwhituaroa and Te Paki airstrip. [5.7]
7. In co-operation with iwi and with the involvement of the tourist industry, recognise the wahi tapu status of Te Rerenga Wairua by the redesigning and upgrading of visitor facilities at Te Rerenga Wairua or the use of alternative sites to better manage expected increases in visitor numbers. [7.5, 7.14, 7.31]
8. Provide interpretation of natural and historic values and investigate the construction of more short walking tracks. Reroute existing tracks which transgress wahi tapu sites. [7.9, 7.16]

9. Investigate, and either authorise or prohibit, businesses not currently operating under concessions. [7.6]
10. Restrict vehicle access to beaches by fencing and signs where historic sites or sensitive vegetation are being damaged or where beach nesting birds are being disturbed. Promote restrictions through pamphlets and liaison with off-road vehicle clubs. [5.11, 8.2]
11. Work with Northland Regional Council to ensure the natural values of Parengarenga Harbour are not compromised by aquaculture. [9.3]
12. Continue to advocate for IUCN Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR) status over Parengarenga Harbour. [8.2]
13. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in resolution of the Waitangi Tribunal claim. [10.0, 11.0]
14. Carry out public awareness and compliance and law enforcement activities to protect threatened or rare species.

Other Areas

Other areas of value to conservation south of Te Paki to the Houhora Harbour include the coastal dunelands of Great Exhibition Bay and Rarawa campground on the eastern coast, and the dunelands of Ninety Mile Beach on the west coast. Of particular importance is Te Ramanuka with its pa sites and shallow dune lakes surrounded by regenerating manuka shrubland. These areas are all important for their density of archaeological sites, as well as being relics of natural dynamic dune systems which have been substantially modified elsewhere on the Aupouri peninsula.

4.3 KAIMAUMAU/RANGAUNU/KARIKARI

Description

Kaimaumau wetland, Rangaunu harbour, Lake Ohia, the Karikari Peninsula, Mangonui township and Oruru River valley.

Tangata whenua are Ngai Takoto and Ngati Kahu.

Major areas administered by the Department include East Beach, Kaimaumau Scientific Reserve, Maitai Bay Recreation Reserve, Puwheke Recreation Reserve, Karikari, Tokerau Beach, Rangaunu, Lake Ohia, Rangikapiti Pa Historic Reserve and Taumarumaruru. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

This most diverse section of Northland's coast is dominated by the Karikari Peninsula and the rounded profile of Puwheke. It features broad beaches of white sand, prominent rocky headlands and intimate sheltered bays rimmed with groves of pohutukawa and regenerating shrubland. The broad shallow Rangaunu Harbour, with eel grass and saltmarshes, contains 15% of New Zealand's mangrove forest. Kaimaumau wetland, an oligotrophic bog system, is the third largest in the country. Together with several shallow lakes, including Lake Ohia and its bed of ancient kauri roots, the area is important habitat for a variety of threatened ferns, mosses, orchids, freshwater fish including the black mudfish, and birds such as banded rail, fernbird and spotless crane. The wetland and estuarine habitats are of international significance for wetland and migratory birds.

Archaeological sites are especially abundant near the coast and include pa such as Rangikapiti and Taumarumaru, middens, garden systems, canoe portages, terraces, urupa and wahi tapu. The history of gumdigging is evident throughout the swamps and wetlands with numerous gumholes and ditches. Historic buildings include the restored Mangonui Courthouse, Butlers House, and others in the Mangonui area. The Mangonui waterfront is a historic precinct. The Oruru river valley/Taipa estuary is an important archaeological landscape and contains over 1000 well-preserved sites including pa, drainage systems, middens and terraces.

Seasonal visitor use is high, especially at Maitai Bay campground and in the Taipa/Mangonui areas. A wide range of coastal recreation activities is possible.

A mining licence for kauri gum valid until 2017 covers 1450ha of land in the vicinity of Kaimaumau, including land administered by the Department.

Management Issues

- Impacts of fire and subsequent increases in plant pests.
- Impacts of plant pests, including pampas, hakea and wattle on wetlands and spartina in Rangaunu, Taipa and Mangonui harbours.
- Damage to archaeological sites and desecration of wahi tapu on conservation land.
- Impacts of possums and goats on forests; and rabbits, cats, and stoats on wetlands and wildlife.
- Deer in Kaimaumau and Aupouri forest, and their migration north to Te Pahi.
- Maintaining fish passage/access in harbours, rivers and estuaries.
- Drainage of, and stock damage to, wetlands.
- Residential and tourist developments.
- Operation of Maitai Bay campground and visitor use of the area.
- Impacts of mining on wetlands.
- Impacts of land clearance and farming on water levels, flows and quality.

Priority Actions

1. Seek to expand areas of protected freshwater wetlands, dunelands, ocean beachfront and shrubland according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One.. [5.2]
2. Work towards control of plant pests, including spartina in harbours, and Sydney golden wattle, hakea species, pampas and broom. Eradicate deer. [5.4, 5.5]
3. Restore Kaimaumau wetland and Lake Ohia to assumed natural levels, recognising potential impacts on farming and mining activities. [5.13]
4. Manage vegetation and visitor use in key historic sites including Taumarumaru, Rangikapiti and Puwheke Pa. Assist with the restoration and interpretation of Mangonui Courthouse. [5.7]
5. Maintain high campground standards at Maitai Bay and provide interpretation at the camp and at Lake Ohia. [7.9, 7.18]
6. Continue to advocate for IUCN Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR) status over Rangaunu Harbour. [8.2]
7. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0, 11.0]

Other Areas

Areas peripheral to the Kaimaumau/Rangaunu/Karikari priority area include the Houhora Harbour, the lower half of Ninety Mile Beach down to Ahipara and the low rolling hill country behind Kaitaia, up to but not including the base of Herekino Forest and the Maungataniwha range. Within this area the most significant conservation feature is a series of small shallow dune lakes including Lakes Ngatu, Heather, Rotoroa and Tangoneone. These are all important habitats for waterfowl and are part of a community initiative involving restoration planting and the creation of short walks. Other features include Simmonds Island with its seabirds, the coastal dunelands backing Ninety Mile Beach and the Paranui Scenic Reserve, a remnant of lowland podocarp hardwood forest bordering a small limestone cave system.

Archaeological values of these areas are high, particularly the middens of the coastal dunes, the relic agricultural systems on the flats and wetlands, and wahi tapu sites within the forest remnants. Evidence of gumdigging is scattered throughout this area.

4.4 WHANGAROA/CAVALLI

Description

The Whangaroa Harbour, surrounding reserves and the Cavalli Islands.

Tangata whenua are Ngapuhi (Whaingaroa), Ngati Kawau, Ngati Ruamahue, Ngai Tupango, Ngati Kura and Ngati Kahu.

Major areas administered by the Department include Ranfurly Bay Scenic Reserve, Whangaroa Forest, St Pauls Rock Scenic Reserve, Kaeo Bush Scenic Reserve, Tauranga Valley Scenic Reserve, Mahinepua Peninsula Scenic Reserve, Whakarara, and Motukawanui Island Scenic Reserve. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

The unique landforms and outstanding scenery of the Whangaroa Harbour feature spectacular rocky bluffs and prominent ridge systems of eroded andesite volcanoes, clad in some of the last diverse coastal conifer/broadleaf/kauri forest in New Zealand. Several threatened plants such as *Calystegia marginata*, *Pimelea tomentosa* and *Coprosma neglecta* spp. "Whangaroa" are present. The harbour contains small but important areas of mangrove/saltmarsh wetlands and tidal rivers with banded rail and fernbird. The open coast is characterised by rocky headlands such as the Mahinepua Peninsula, sandy beaches, and the numerous islands of the Cavalli group. Motukawanui Island, the largest island of the Cavalli group is highly modified but has high restoration potential.

Typical of rich coastal areas, a wide variety of defended and undefended pa, archaic middens, terraces, gardening systems, urupa, wahi tapu and other archaeological features are present. Sites associated with early Maori/European contact include the remains of the 'Boyd' buried in the harbour mud. Kauri milling and ship building are long established industries and one of the last kauri sawmills and shipyards, operated by Lanes & Sons for over a century, can be seen at Totara North. The 'Rainbow Warrior' lies at rest off Matauri Bay with a memorial on a nearby pa.

Recreation use is moderate, with tracks around the harbour to viewpoints such as St Pauls Rock and a popular cottage at Lane Cove. A hut is also available on Motukawanui Island. The area is a base for a wide variety of coastal recreation activities including kayaking, sailing and fishing.

Management Issues

- Impacts of possums and goats on forests.
- Impacts of pigs and dogs on kiwi.
- Invasion of plant pests especially ginger and mistflower in forests and spartina and sharpshrub in harbours.
- Protection of archaeological sites from land development, pigs and visitor use.
- Restoration of Motukawanui Island.
- Establishment of marine protected areas.

Priority Actions

1. Seek further protection of forest and shrubland habitats according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One. [5.2]
2. Investigate proposal from Ngati Kura for a marine reserve around part of the Cavalli Islands. [5.8]
3. Sustained control of pigs, dogs and possums to low levels and fencing of reserves. Exclude and eradicate goats. [5.4.1]
4. Control of plant pests especially kahili ginger, Mexican daisy, mist flower and pampas in forests and spartina in harbours. [5.5]
5. Test rodent eradication on Motukawanui Island; revegetate and reintroduce threatened species according to species recovery plans. [5.12]
6. Control pigs in Ranfurly Bay to protect historic sites and manage stock on St Pauls Rock to maintain integrity of historic areas. [5.7]
7. Advocate for the protection of the outstanding geological features of the ancient Whangaroa volcano. [5.16]
8. Consult with tangata whenua prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0,11.0]

Other Areas

Surrounding the Whangaroa/Cavalli priority area, but within the Whangaroa ecological district, are several other small reserves. To the north is Paikauri, a relic of regenerating ricker and pole kauri, and Taemaro, several small blocks of coastal broadleaf forest. The general area is notable for its coastal pa sites and evidence of gumdigging.

To the south is Takou River. A steep convoluted system of ridges borders the Takou River, clad in mature and regenerating broadleaf forest with some kauri. This provides a habitat for kiwi and kauri snails.

4.5 BAY OF ISLANDS/WHANGARURU/MIMIWHANGATA

Description

Includes all waters, islands and reserves in the immediate vicinity of the Bay of Islands and Kerikeri basin as well as the eastern flanks of Russell Forest and the coastal margin from Cape Brett to Whangaruru and Mimiwhangata.

Tangata whenua are Ngapuhi, Ngati Rehia, Ngati Rahiri, Ngati Manu, Te Kapotai, Ngai Ta Wake Ki Te Moana, Te Patu Keha and Ngati Wai.

Significant areas managed by the Department are the Kerikeri River Scenic Reserve, Rainbow Falls Scenic Reserve, Kerikeri Basin Recreation Reserve, Kororipo Pa Historic Reserve, Akeake Historic Reserve, Waitangi Wetland, Opuia Forest, Marsden Cross Historic Reserve, Black Rocks Scenic Reserve, Moturua Island Recreation Reserve, Waewaetorea Island Recreation Reserve, Urupukapuka Island Recreation Reserve, Manawahuna Scenic Reserve, Te Toroa Scenic Reserve, Whangamumu Scenic Reserve, and numerous other small recreation, scenic and historic reserves around Russell. Ngaiotonga Scenic Reserve, the eastern parts of Russell Forest, Whangaruru North Head Scenic Reserve, Mimiwhangata Coastal Park, Mimiwhangata Marine Park, Te Wairahi (Kaikanui) Forest and Paparahi Point Recreation Reserve are also included. Most of these areas form part of the Bay of Islands Maritime and Historic Park. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

The Bay of Islands is an intricate deeply embayed coastline with numerous tidal inlets, sheltered bays, sandy beaches and conspicuous rocky headlands and peninsulas such as Cape Wiwiki, Cape Brett, Whangamumu, Whangaruru and Mimiwhangata. Numerous islands include the larger Moturua and Urupukapuka islands which have potential for restoration, and strings of scattered islets, stacks and rocks such as the Wide Berth (Rimariki and Otawhanga) islands off Mimiwhangata.

Secondary kauri/podocarp/broadleaf forest, coastal broadleaf forest and vigorously regenerating kanuka/manuka shrubland cover many of the hills which have previously been logged, burned and in places farmed. Locally threatened plants include *Calystegia marginata*, *Hebe acutiflora* and *Fuchsia procumbens*. The forest often forms continuous sequences with freshwater swamps, saltmarsh and mangrove forest and together these support a variety of birds including kiwi, brown teal, spotless crane, banded rail, terns and gulls. Marine rocky and sedimentary habitats are particularly diverse, especially in the outer Bay of Islands and in the Mimiwhangata Marine Park.

The area was heavily populated by Maori and contains very dense and diverse archaeological sites with fortified pa on most headlands, terraces, fish traps, garden systems, middens, urupa and wahi tapu. As the birthplace of government and Christianity in New Zealand, the area has important sites of national cultural and historic significance, especially in relation to the contact period of European colonisation. These include the Waitangi National Reserve, the site of first government at Okiato, early mission stations at Russell, churches, the Stone Store and Kemp house at Kerikeri, Edmonds ruins, Kororareka whaling port, Whangamumu whaling station, Maiki Hill flagpole and many other features.

The Bay is the principal international and national visitor destination in Northland and is a base for excursions to other parts of the region. Visitors are well catered for with visitor centres, tracks, lookouts, walkways, museums, historic buildings and camping areas. Tourism concessions operate throughout the Bay with guided tours, and marine mammal watching is popular.

Management Issues

- Impacts of possums, deer and goats especially on coastal broadleaf pohutukawa forest.
- Invasion of ginger, mist flower, climbing asparagus and pampas into forests and escape of potential plant pests from gardens.
- Protection of kiwi and brown teal.
- Survey and protection of archaeological sites.
- Impacts of visitors and maintenance of tracks and other facilities.
- Monitoring and management of tourism concessions.
- Coastal subdivision and development.
- Establishment of marine reserves.
- Sewage and rubbish disposal.
- Management of the Kerikeri basin.

Priority Actions

1. Carry out possum and goat control, especially on Cape Brett Peninsula (by possum proof fencing), in Russell Forest and coastal peninsula forests and deer eradication in all areas. [5.4.1]
2. Control plant pests especially kahili ginger, mist flower and privet in forests and spartina in harbours. [5.5]
3. Test the feasibility of rodent and predator eradication on islands and continue plant and animal pest surveillance to maintain possum free status on islands. [5.12]
4. Restore selected islands including Motupapa (Cocked Hat Island) and transfer threatened species such as brown teal, kiwi, snails and coastal plants to them subject to species recovery plans and recognising historic and cultural values. [5.11, 5.12]
5. Control and monitor marine mammal watching permits and advocate marine mammal protection to the boating public. [5.10]
6. Continue the investigation of a marine reserve proposal around Deep Water Cove and work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Fisheries), iwi and local communities to ensure co-ordinated management of the marine

environment. Investigate upgrading Mimiwhangata Marine Park to marine reserve status. [5.9]

7. Carry out interpretation, vegetation control, maintenance of tracks and surveys where necessary at key historic sites including Kororipo Pa, Rainbow Falls, Motuarohia Island, Urupukapuka Island, Tapeka Point, Flagstaff Hill and Okiato. [7.9, 7.16, 5.7]
8. Upgrade interpretation at Russell visitor centre and at Kerikeri. Investigate provision of toilet facilities on Urupukapuka Island to better meet visitor needs. [7.9, 7.19]
9. Continue to improve the standard of tracks, especially about Kerikeri. [7.16]
10. Ensure businesses using land administered by the Department are authorised as concessionaires. Seek to expand visitor opportunities through appropriate concessions. [7.6]
11. Advocate for limits to coastal subdivision and development in sensitive areas. [9.2]
12. Prohibit dogs on islands administered by the Department. Advocate the need for rubbish disposal in places provided. [5.4.2, 7.19, 7.22]
13. Replant pohutukawa on Cape Brett Peninsula that have been destroyed by possums. Carry out wetland restoration planting for brown teal. [5.11, 5.13]
14. Advocate for prohibition of sewage waste discharges from pleasure boats. [9.2, 9.3]
15. Seek to expand the area of protected forest and wetlands and sites of historic or cultural value according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One. [5.2, 5.6]
16. Cooperate in the development of a management strategy for the Kerikeri basin. [12.0]
17. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0, 11.0]

Other Areas

The hinterland of the Bay of Islands/Whangaruru/Mimiwhangata priority area falls within the catchments of the Kerikeri, Waitangi and Kawakawa Rivers and the headwaters of the Wairua River. The central feature of this area is the Taiamai Plains, dominated by the imposing pa of Pouerua and Te Ahu Ahu. Areas administered by the Department include Okuratope Pa and Ruapekapeka Pa, site of a major battle during the 1860s land wars.

The most significant natural feature is the geothermal activity at Ngawha and Lake Waiparaheka Scientific Reserve. Important forested areas are the Hikurangi Scenic Reserve, and the west facing flanks and southern outliers of Russell Forest clad in shrubland with regenerating kauri and tanekaha.

Mt Hikurangi acts as a watershed for the Bay of Islands, the Hokianga Harbour and the Kaipara Harbour.

4.6 WHANGAREI/BREAM BAY

Description

Whangarei Harbour and all coastal reserves in the immediate vicinity including those from Bream Head to Bream Bay and Mangawhai.

Tangata whenua are Ngati Wai, Ngati Whatua and Patu Harakeke.

Significant areas managed by the Department include Maungatika Scenic Reserve, Kauri Mountain, Motukiore Island Recreation Reserve, Manaia Ridge Scenic Reserve, Mata Settlement Scenic Reserve, Ruakaka (incl. Ruakaka and Waipu Wildlife refuges), Ruakaka Domain Recreation Reserve, Ocean Beach, Bream Head Scenic Reserve, Bream Islands Scenic Reserve, Bream Islands Nature Reserve, Bream Tail Scenic Reserve, Robert Hastie Memorial Scenic Reserve and Mangawhai Wildlife Refuge. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

This geologically diverse area is dominated by the ruggedly eroded andesite columns, ridges and peaks of Manaia and Bream Head. Greywacke ridges form Bream Tail and low hills surrounding the harbour. Numerous young scoria cones surround the outskirts of Whangarei. The long sweeps of Ocean Beach and Bream Bay are comprised of Holocene dune sands. The coastal conifer/broadleaf/kauri forests on Manaia and Bream Head are of outstanding biological significance with several threatened plants and kaka, parakeet, kiwi and flax snail. Whangarei Harbour is a major shallow estuarine habitat with extensive mudflats and mangroves and supports a wide variety of coastal and wading birds such as New Zealand dotterel, wrybill, banded rail, caspian tern and godwits. Dunelands at Ocean Beach and along Bream Bay and small estuarine river mouths at Ruakaka, Waipu and Mangawhai are significant as breeding grounds for New Zealand dotterel and fairy tern. Marine mammal strandings occur frequently in the harbour mouths.

Archaeological sites are concentrated along the coastal margins with numerous middens, and pa on local headlands and promontories. Historic sites associated with Whangarei city and surrounding smaller settlements include early industries such as a cement works on Matakoho Island and meat works at Reotahi, flax milling, gumdigging, coal mining at Kamo, timber milling and aspects of coastal shipping and navigation. Waipu and Whangarei Heads contain sites of early Nova Scotian settlement.

Visitor use is moderate to high, especially on beaches with boat ramps, and for fishing and surfing. Tracks and walkways through many of the reserves supplement those provided by the local authority. Use is mainly by local and national visitors.

Whangarei, the major urban area and administrative centre for the region, is the location for principal sites of industrial processing. The only oil refinery in NZ, a large forestry port, cement and fertiliser works, transport systems, and other planned or existing activities adjacent to Whangarei Harbour such as at Marsden Point and lower Port Road, all have the potential to cause adverse impacts on natural and historic values if not closely monitored. Three pipelines carrying gas and petroleum products serving the Oil Refinery and Marsden Power Station pass through land administered by the Department and require ongoing inspection and maintenance.

Management Issues

- Invasion of plant pests, especially pampas, climbing asparagus, ginger and mist flower in forests and spartina in the harbour and estuaries.
- Escape of potential plant pests from suburban gardens.
- Wild animal control including possums, goats, cats, dogs and rodents.
- Protection of habitat and breeding grounds for threatened coastal birds.
- Coastal subdivision and development.
- Impacts of urban expansion, industrial processing and port development.
- Disturbance to archaeological sites.
- Quarrying of Whangarei scoria cones.
- Activities and developments in the coastal environment.

Priority Actions

1. Seek to increase area of protected forest, shrubland, freshwater wetland and coastal/estuarine habitats together with outstanding geological features and scoria cones according to priorities established in Sections 5.2 and 5.16 using methods identified in Appendix One. [5.2, 5.16]
2. Carry out sustained control of possums, goats and other animal pests in Bream Head/Manaia and fencing to limit stock invasion. [5.4.1]
3. Control plant pests especially pampas, ginger, climbing asparagus and mist flower in forests and spartina and sharpshrub in harbours. Carry out public awareness programme on plant pest issues and control. [5.5, 8.2]
4. Protect breeding sites of coastal birds by fencing, signs, predator control and wardens at Ruakaka, Waipu, Lang Cove, Langs Beach, Mangawhai and Ocean Beach. [5.11]
5. Support ecological restoration of Matakoho (Limestone) Island. [5.12]

6. Pursue investigation of marine reserve proposal for part of Whangarei Harbour. [5.8]
7. Carry out maintenance, interpretation and visitor impact monitoring on historic sites at Bream Head. Manage stock on Motukiore Island and survey Otaika valley for historic sites. [5.7, 7.9, 7.28]
8. Establish interpretation facilities at the VIN office in Tarewa Park. [7.9]
9. Maintain and upgrade tracks and existing campgrounds when necessary. [7.16, 7.18]
10. Advocate for appropriate objectives, policies, and methods of implementation in planning documents and conditions on resource consents under Resource Management Act processes to ensure protection of natural and historic resources. [9.2, 9.3]
11. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0, 11.0]

Other Areas

The Whangarei/Bream Bay priority area lies within the southern third of the Eastern Northland Ecological Region. On the periphery of the priority area are three features of conservation significance. These are the broken indented coast from Whananaki to Taiharuru with its stretches of sandy beaches and dynamic spit/dune systems at river mouths. Lands administered by the Department on this coast comprise small headland reserves, often with pa, covered in coastal pohutukawa broadleaf forest. Otamure campground is a typical example. The Ngunguru Spit is a feature of particular public interest because of development proposals which may disturb wildlife habitat and archaeological sites. North and west of Whangarei are several significant forest areas such as Motatau Forest, now managed as a mainland island by the Ngati Hine Trust Board, and conservation covenants within Glenbervie forest composed of diverse kauri/podocarp/broadleaf forest. Other important areas are relic wetlands which form part of the once extensive Hikurangi swamp.

Forming a backdrop to Bream Bay are Mata Scenic Reserve (pole kauri), Ruakaka Forest (hard beech/kauri associations), Waipu Caves Scenic Reserve (limestone cave formations and New Zealand Walkway), Mareretu Forest (Hochstetters frog) and Waipu Gorge Forest. Close to the southern boundary of the Conservancy is Pukekaroro Scenic Reserve, an impressive hill covered in dense kauri and the site of a major battle between Ngapuhi and Ngati Whatua.

4.7 POUTO/KAIPARA

Description

All reserves on the Pouto Peninsula south of Te Kopuru/Glinks Gully and adjoining the northern half of Kaipara Harbour within the Conservancy boundary and associated reserves in close proximity to the harbour margin.

Tangata whenua are Ngati Whatua.

Major areas administered by the Department include Pouto North, Rototuna Lake, Punahaere Creek, Rotopoua Creek, Pouto, Kanono, Kaipara North Head Historic Reserve, Kahuparere, and numerous small reserves bordering the Kaipara Harbour. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area ?

This priority area covers the northern half of New Zealand's largest harbour. It is internationally important as a major roosting and breeding area for coastal and estuarine wading birds such as godwits and New Zealand dotterel. The harbour mouth is very dynamic in contrast to the intricate sheltered estuaries, narrow peninsula, saltmarshes, salt meadows, mangroves and tidal mudflats of the inner harbour. Numerous small forested reserves occur on the harbour margins.

The Pouto Peninsula is an outstanding large mosaic of active mobile dunes, consolidated dunes, sandflats, impounded wetlands and dune lakes with patches of coastal scrub and forest. This is one of the largest unmodified duneland systems remaining in New Zealand. The dune lakes are especially important as habitat for dwarf inanga and *Hydatella*, both threatened species. A wide variety of coastal and wetland birds inhabit the area.

The dune lands of the west coast contain a high density of archaeological sites as do several areas within the harbour confines. Ngati Whatua view the entire west coast as a wahi tapu because of the large numbers of koiwi buried there. The harbour and surrounding hillcountry was a major centre of activity during the peak of the kauri logging, milling and shipping industry in the early 1900s. There are scattered relics linked to this industry such as sites of old mills, churches, houses, mission stations, gumdiggings, lighthouses and shipwrecks.

Recreation use is generally low to moderate on lands administered by the Department because of isolation and limited access. Matakohe Kauri and Pioneer Museum is a primary attraction for international tourists. There is potential for increased use and guided tours through recreation concessions.

Management Issues:

- Plant pests such as pampas on dunes and spartina in harbour.
- Spread of oxygen weed in lakes.
- Cattle damage to wetlands and margins of lakes.
- Damage to archaeological sites by off road vehicles on dunes.

- Pollution of waterways by industrial processing.
- Impacts of exotic forestry.
- Impacts of dune destabilisation on special habitats.
- Impacts of water extraction and forest plantings on dune lakes and wetlands.

Priority Actions

1. Seek to increase the area of protected freshwater wetlands, forest and shrubland and coastal/estuarine habitats according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One. [5.2]
2. Carry out sustained control of goats and possums, and fencing to exclude stock from lakes and wetlands. [5.4.1]
3. Control plant pests, particularly pampas and African feather grass on dunes and spartina in harbour and any invasive pests in the dune lakes. [5.5]
4. Authorise recreation concessions for guided tours on Pouto Peninsula. [7.6]
5. Seek to restrict vehicle access to beaches and areas of historic sites in dunes. [7.12, 7.13, 7.22]
6. Promote the values of vulnerable dune lakes, and contain the impacts of upper catchment forest harvesting and processing on harbour values and water quality. [8.2, 9.2, 9.3]
7. Seek restrictions on the extent of forest planting and water extraction on Pouto Peninsula through the resource consent processes of the Resource Management Act. [9.2, 9.3]
8. Liaise with Auckland Conservation Board and Auckland Conservancy to coordinate management of the harbour, promote the values of the Kaipara Harbour and advocate its conservation. [8.5]
9. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0,11.0]

Other Areas

The Pouto/Kaipara priority area covers the lower reaches of the Northern Wairoa River, the largest catchment in Northland. Other areas of land administered by the Department within this catchment include Mangakahia Forest whose peak, Te Tarai O Rahiri (the topknot of Rahiri), is significant for all those who claim descent from Rahiri. Tangihua Forest, the largest in the area, is notable for its sequence of low/mid/high altitude hardwood forest and presence of several coastal species. Mangakahia Forest is a remnant of unmodified mature kauri and broadleaf podocarp forest with sequences ranging from low altitude broadleaf to high altitude podocarp forest. These forests have limited

recreational use. However, the Tangihua outdoor education lodge is used by numerous school groups.

Other features of the area include the Tokatoka Scenic Reserve, a prominent volcanic landform next to the Northern Wairoa River, and Manganui River Wildlife Management Reserve, a sequence of alluvial wetlands and low ridges bordering the Manganui River. This valuable remnant is composed of riverine podocarp hardwood forest with kahikatea, ribbonwood and kowhai and features a wide range of wetland birds including spotless crane and banded rail.

Historically the Northern Wairoa River and Kaipara Harbour feature highly in stories of kauri forest logging and milling, coastal shipping and gumdigging. Many timber mill relics are found on the banks of the river and numerous ships were wrecked on the exposed western coast and at the harbour mouth.

4.8 WAIPOUA/WAIMA/MATARAU

Description

The Waipoua/Waima/Matarau forest tract and associated coastal reserves to Maunganui Bluff and Trounson.

Tangata whenua are Te Roroa and Ngapuhi.

Areas administered by the Department include Waima Forest, Matarau Forest, Waipoua Forest Sanctuary, Tahamoana Scenic Reserve, Katui Scenic Reserve, Muriwai, Kawerua, Trounson Kauri Park Scenic Reserve, and Maunganui Bluff Scenic Reserve. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

The Waipoua/Waima/Matarau forest is the largest intact area of high altitude, kauri, and coastal forest associations in Northland. It spans a full altitudinal sequence from the coast to the highest points in Northland (Te Raupua 781m, Ngapukehau 762m and Mt Misery 728m). The coastal belt with extensive rocky reefs features several dune lakes and wetlands and vigorously regenerating shrubland of manuka/kanuka/towai and scattered mature kauri remnants. These grade into dense, largely unmodified conifer/broadleaf/kauri forest associations which contain the largest mature kauri in the world. High altitude swamp towai and swamp maire forest occurs on the Matarau plateau. Numerous threatened plants include *Olearia waima*, *Coprosma waima* and red mistletoe (*Peraxilla tetrapetala*) at its northern limit. Wildlife includes a small number of kokako and the largest population of kiwi in Northland.

The unique archaeological landscape of the Waipoua River valley features many rock heaps, pa, middens, pits, terraces, urupa and wahi tapu. Aspects of historic interest include: gumdigging along the coast, attempts at farming, early road transport over the

Waoku coach road and through the sanctuary, and crucial historical conflicts over protection of mature kauri forest.

High numbers of national and international visitors are attracted to the area, especially to Tane Mahuta and Te Matua Ngahere, the largest kauri trees. A wide range of other recreation opportunities and facilities are available including short and long walks, a New Zealand Walkway along the coast, lookout points, picnic sites, a campground, lodges, and a visitor centre.

This priority area forms part of the proposed Northland Kauri National Park.

Management Issues

- The impacts of possums, goats and other wild animals on the forest.
- Invasion of plant pests especially into the Waipoua Forest Sanctuary.
- Impacts of visitors, provision of new facilities and upgrade of State Highway 12.
- Access to Waipoua coast and impacts on kaimoana.
- Protection of wahi tapu sites, their survey and control by tangata whenua.
- Telecommunication facilities at Maunganui Bluff.
- Encroachment of the New Zealand Walkway on wahi tapu and private land.
- Proposed traditional and archaeological reserve.
- Waitangi Tribunal claim negotiation and resolution.
- Illegal hunting of kukupa/New Zealand pigeon.

Priority Actions

1. Seek to expand the area of protected forest and shrubland according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One. [5.2]
2. Carry out sustained control of possums, goats and dogs. Fence forest boundaries to exclude stock and goats. [5.4.1]
3. Carry out intensive sustained control of all plant and animal pests within Trounson Kauri Park to create a mainland island for threatened species, including reintroduced species. [5.4.1, 5.5, 5.11]
4. Eradicate plant pests in key areas especially along State Highway 12, the headquarters area, tracks, the Waipoua and other rivers, and kahili ginger, mist flower, pampas, African club moss and Mexican devil weed in forest and coastal shrublands. [5.5]
5. Survey the full extent of historic resources and establish the proposed Waipoua historic and traditional (archaeological) reserve. Assess the architectural values of the former Kawerua hotel. [5.7]
6. Provide for the vesting and management of discrete wahi tapu sites and areas by tangata whenua and the conservation of high value historic sites. [6.12]

7. Provide interpretation at key big kauri trees and at the visitor centre. Rationalise tracks and upgrade where necessary to cope with high visitor numbers. Upgrade the toilet system at Tane Mahuta carpark. [7.9, 7.16, 7.19, 7.28]
8. Ensure businesses operating in the forests are authorised concessionaires. [7.6]
9. Establish a loop track through forest to high standards. Manage public access to Waipoua coast in consultation with Te Roroa. [7.15, 7.16]
10. Assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in resolution of the Waitangi Tribunal claim and avoid any actions which may adversely impact on claim resolution or options for resolution. Consult with claimants and tangata whenua before taking any significant management action. [10.0, 11.0]
11. Carry out compliance and law enforcement, and liaise with iwi, to stop illegal hunting of kukupa/New Zealand pigeon. [5.11, 13.0]

Other Areas

The Waipoua/Waima/Mataraua priority area forms the bulk of the Tutamoe ecological district. Not included within this priority area but of national significance in terms of the Northland Kauri National Park proposal are the forests of Marlborough and Kaihu. Marlborough occupies a gently sloping plateau covered in modified kauri/podocarp/broadleaf forest with a central core of intact forest. It retains relics of old logging operations but is untracked through its interior. Kaihu Forest to the south is a distinctive high altitude plateau rising to Mt Tutamoe and is covered in dense swamp forest with emergent rimu, northern rata, pukatea and maire. Its lower slopes contain regenerating shrubland and the relics of early kauri logging. Mt Tutamoe is a significant site for Ngati Whatua and can be reached by a New Zealand Walkway to the summit. The Kaiwi lakes, administered by the Kaipara District Council, are a significant natural feature containing populations of endangered native freshwater fish. The lakes are also a locally important trout fishery and recreational asset.

4.9 HOKIANGA/PUKETI

Description

Puketi/Omahuta forest, Warawara forest and Hokianga harbour and associated peripheral reserves.

Tangata whenua are Te Rarawa and Ngapuhi.

Significant areas administered by the Department include Puketi Forest, Manginangina Scenic Reserve, Omahuta Forest, Mangataipa Scenic Reserve, Warawara Forest, Paponga,

Motukaraka Scenic Reserve, Tapuwae Scenic Reserve, and Te Pouahi. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

The forests of Puketi/Omahuta and Warawara are large remnants of mature kauri/broadleaf/podocarp forest, which are notable for their general floristic diversity and contain around 20 threatened plants, including *Hebe acutiflora* and *Davallia* "Puketi". Several of the largest mature kauri in New Zealand are found here, as well as a wide variety of wildlife including kaka, kiwi, red-crowned parakeet, bats, geckos and kauri snails. Puketi was once home to the largest Northland population of kokako, which exceeded 100 birds in 1980. There are now just one or two male/female pairs remaining..

The Hokianga Harbour is a drowned river valley with large areas of mangroves, saltmarsh and tidal mudflats, and prominent large dunes at its entrance. It has high coastal/estuarine habitat values with populations of banded rail, spotless crane, heron and numerous other coastal and wading birds. It is bounded by large areas of vigorously regenerating shrubland and forest and wetland.

The harbour margins in particular feature numerous archaeological sites and high densities of middens and pa also occur along the Mitimiti coast. Historically important sites in the area are associated with mission settlements such as Rawene and Mangungu, and the kauri logging, milling and shipping industry at Kohukohu, Horeke and Koutu. The forests contain relics of logging such as driving dams, camps, tracks, bridges and kauri gum-bleeding.

Visitor use is at moderate levels but there is a wide variety of potential opportunities. The forests, especially Puketi/Omahuta, have a well developed network of New Zealand Walkways, short tracks, campsites and picnic areas.

This priority area forms part of the proposed Northland Kauri National Park.

Management Issues

- Wild animal impacts - especially possums, goats, stock, pigs and dogs in forests.
- Plant pest invasions - especially mist flower, ginger and spartina.
- Threatened species management - including kokako, kiwi and bats.
- Shrubland clearance for exotic afforestation.
- Establishment of marine reserves.
- Illegal hunting of kukupa/New Zealand pigeon.

Priority Actions

1. Seek to expand the area of protected wetlands, forest and shrubland according to priorities established in Section 5.2 using methods identified in Appendix One. [5.2]

2. Carry out sustained control of goats and possums in Omahuta, Puketi and Warawara and in key sites for protection of threatened species such as kokako and bats. Fence to limit encroachment of stock. [5.4.1]
3. Carry out plant pest control especially Mexican devil weed, ginger species, and mist flower in forests and spartina in the harbour. [5.5]
4. Investigate a marine reserve proposal for parts of Hokianga Harbour. [5.8]
5. Manage vegetation, upgrade tracks and provide interpretation at Arai Te Uru reserve on the south head of the Hokianga Harbour. [7.9, 7.16]
6. Provide interpretation at key sites especially Manginangina and other parts of Puketi. Rationalise track systems and close, reduce status or upgrade tracks where necessary. [7.9, 7.16]
7. Carry out advocacy to control exotic afforestation and impacts on harbour and shrubland values. [9.2, 9.3]
8. Improve compliance and law enforcement efforts and liaise with iwi to stop illegal hunting of kukupa. [5.11, 13.0]
9. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0, 11.0]

Other Areas

The Hokianga/Puketi priority area covers the core of the Hokianga Harbour catchment. Other areas on the south side of the harbour include Pukewharariki Forest, a ridgeline with mature broadleaf/podocarp forest, and the Aratoro block, a ridge/scarp face/basin system with mature broadleaf/podocarp forest and a large freshwater wetland with fernbird and bittern.

To the north, and forming the catchment boundary are the forests of the Maungataniwha Range, the northernmost unmodified forest tract in New Zealand. Composed of a few small stands of mature kauri amongst a full altitudinal sequence of unmodified areas of hardwoods and podocarps, this forest is dominated by emergent rimu and rata. It is the northern limit of several plants and contains threatened plants such as *Marattia salicina*. Very high bird diversity contributes to outstanding wildlife values with pied tit, kaka, North Island brown kiwi, parakeet, bats and possibly kokako present.

The summit of Maungataniwha is particularly significant for the tangata whenua of Mangamuka and Mangataipa. State Highway One crosses the range providing access to several lookout points, picnic/camping areas at Mangamuka and Victoria Valley and a

soda spring. A New Zealand Walkway traverses the main ridge. These areas are part of the proposed Northland Kauri National Park.

4.10 AHIPARA

Description

The Ahipara plateau from Ahipara to Herekino Harbour.

Tangata whenua are Te Rarawa.

Areas managed by the Department are Ahipara, Ahipara Gumfields Historic Reserve, and Epakauri. (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Why Is This A Priority Area?

The Ahipara plateau, extending from the southern end of Ninety-Mile Beach to the mouth of the Herekino Harbour reflects a history of fire, logging and gumdigging. Successions of low manuka gumland, shrubland and small wetland areas cover the windswept plateau, while remnants of mixed coastal broadleaf/kauri forest linger in the gullies and valleys. The area is notable for its high number of threatened plants, diverse orchid communities and variety of coastal and forest birds. Large mobile and partly consolidated sand dunes have accumulated against the steep bluffs along the plateau edges and extend around the whole coastline. Extensive rocky reefs are a feature of Tauroa Point.

The area is particularly rich in archaeological sites including pa, terraces and middens which span the entire period of New Zealand prehistory. The history of gumdigging is well illustrated by the largest relatively intact evidence of kauri gum digging extraction techniques including trenches, ditches, dams, sluicing and gumholes.

The coastline is popular with local and national visitors for camping, surfing and fishing and for four wheel drive bus tours over dunes and through gumfields. Several walks and tracks extend throughout the area.

This priority area forms part of the proposed Northland Kauri National Park.

Management Issues

- Uncontrolled fires.
- Invasion of plant pests such as hakea and pampas.
- Grazing by goats, wandering horses and cattle.
- Protection of archaeological sites and features relating to the area's gumdigging history.
- Off-road vehicles and their impacts on the dunes and coastal margins.

- Access to adjacent private lands.
- Sand extraction from foreshore.
- Waste management from human activities and unauthorised dwellings.
- Impacts of visitors and recreation concessions.

Priority Actions

1. Carry out sustained control of goats, and fence to limit transgression of neighbouring cattle and horses. [5.4.1]
2. Carry out plant pest control in selected key areas around the Ahipara Gumfields Historic Reserve, with a focus on pampas, lantana and hakea. [5.5]
3. Survey historic sites and carry out a detailed survey of gum digging evidence. Manage access to key areas to maintain the integrity of high value historic sites. Upgrade the track through the gumdiggings and provide appropriate interpretation in association with the local gum museum proposal. [5.7, 7.9, 7.16]
4. Liaise with off-road vehicle clubs and other users to identify areas available for off-road vehicle use subject to conditions protecting nesting birds, archaeological sites and vegetation. [7.22]
5. Formalise access to neighbouring properties along existing roadlines. [6.6]
6. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0, 11.0]

Other Areas

Herekino Forest forms a natural linkage with the Ahipara plateau and is part of the proposed Northland Kauri National Park. It is composed of stands of the northernmost mature kauri, second growth kauri and extensive areas of hardwood/podocarp forest all of which have been partially logged. A least 15 threatened or regionally uncommon plants are present, several of which are at their northern limit, together with a high number of endemic undescribed mosses and liverworts. Wildlife values are high, with pied tit, kiwi, parakeets and kiwi present. Taiko, and short and long tailed bats have been reported. Numerous tracks cross the forest including a New Zealand Walkway. The peaks Orowhano and Maungataiko are significant to Te Rarawa. Surrounding lower hills and fertile flats were heavily populated by Maori.

4.11 OFFSHORE ISLAND REFUGES

Description

The largest of the offshore island nature reserves - the Hen and Chickens Islands Nature Reserve (Taranga and the Marotere group), Poor Knights Nature Reserve (Tawhitirahi and Aorangi), Poor Knights Island Marine Reserve, and Three Kings Islands Nature Reserve (Manawatawhi group). (Refer also to Volume Two.)

Tangata whenua are Ngati Kuri (Three Kings) and Ngati Wai (Poor Knights and Hen and Chickens).

All these islands are administered by the Department of Conservation and no privately owned islands are included in this category.

Why Are These Priority Areas?

Islands are especially important as refuges for threatened species as they provide isolation from human influences and the impacts of introduced plant and animal pests. Islands such as the Three Kings and Poor Knights have high numbers of endemic plants and animals because they have been isolated from the mainland for a long time. All islands contain diverse coastal broadleaf forest dominated by pohutukawa with puriri, kohekohe, karaka, and puka. Where clearance has occurred regenerating kanuka/manuka is present and many endemic plants have become threatened. Birdlife is generally diverse with both mainland forest birds such as kaka and kakariki and a wide variety of sea birds including shearwaters, prions and petrels. Little spotted kiwi and stitchbirds have been introduced to Taranga and saddlebacks to the Chickens. Lizards are common and tuatara are found on the southern groups. Insects, especially weta, are distinctive. Browsing animals and predators, apart from kiore, are absent on the Hen and Chickens. The Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve contains tropical species rarely found elsewhere in New Zealand and features large underwater caves and archways.

Each island has a variety of archaeological sites such as kainga, mahingakai, pa, urupa and wahi tapu, as all were occupied by Maori either permanently or seasonally. Taranga and the Poor Knights for example have extensive historical/archaeological landscapes with stone terraces, embankments, walls and mounds associated with long term occupation and gardening. Features of more recent historic significance are lighthouses and evidence of attempts at farming are other aspects of interest.

Visitor use for scientific purposes is allowed by permit only and landing is generally prohibited. The waters around the Poor Knights Islands which are protected in the marine reserve receive high use due to the excellent diving opportunities. Fishing is prohibited in the marine reserve.

Management Issues

- Eradication of invasive weeds such as pampas, Mexican devil weed, moth plant, Mexican daisy and mist flower.
- Impact of kiore on plant regeneration and animal species.

- Maintenance of predator/rodent free status.
- Illegal landings and the possible threats of fire and introduction of plant and animal pests.
- Compliance with the Marine Reserves Regulations 1993 and potential impacts of high numbers of divers at Poor Knights.
- Impacts of fishing pressure around the Three Kings Islands.

Priority Actions

1. Eradicate kiore from Coppermine, Whatupuke and Lady Alice Islands (Marotere group) and eradicate mynahs and other invasive vertebrate pests from those islands where it is practical and possible to do so. [5.12]
2. Monitor impacts of kiore on wildlife on Marotere Group and assess potential for eradication of kiore on Taranga. [5.12]
3. Maintain predator-free status by regular surveillance, and prepare a rodent contingency plan, for each rodent-free island/island group. [5.12]
4. Survey for and eradicate all invasive weeds especially pampas, moth plant, mist flower, Mexican daisy and Mexican devil weed. [5.5, 5.12]
5. Maintain surveillance of islands and marine reserve, including liaising closely with fishing boats, tourist operators and other vessels frequenting these areas to assist with compliance activities. [5.9, 13.0]
6. Investigate the introduction of threatened plant and animal species subject to species recovery plans. [5.11]
7. Carry out ongoing monitoring of endemic species. [5.11, 5.14]
8. Survey and conserve high value historic places and archaeological sites. [5.7]
9. Raise public awareness of the high values of, and threats to, islands through the media [5.9, 8.2].
10. Establish signage/interpretation at main boat launching ramps [5.9, 7.9].
11. Investigate and set aside designated anchorage sites in the Poor Knights Marine Reserve, providing natural and historic resources are not adversely affected [5.9].
12. Maintain restricted access by permit only for approved scientific research and management programmes. [5.9, 5.15, 13.0]
13. Recognise that customary Maori traditions may need to be practised when landing for management purposes. [11.0]

14. Consult with tangata whenua as appropriate prior to making management decisions and assist the Office of Treaty Settlements in the resolution of Waitangi Tribunal claims. [10.0, 11.0]

4.12 OTHER AREAS NOT CLASSED AS PRIORITY AREAS

A significant proportion of the Conservancy land area is not identified as a priority area. These 'other areas' include the southern parts of the Aupouri Peninsula, Herekino Forest, the Maungataniwha Range, and most of the rolling hill country of central Northland down to the Kaipara Harbour. These areas have been described briefly in the preceding sections according to their proximity to a priority area. (Refer Map Seven.)

The exclusion of this large tract of land from the ten priority areas does not mean that it is not important for its natural, historic or visitor values. There are many areas administered by the Department which contain threatened species, unique vegetation associations, important historic features and are enjoyed by visitors. However they do not contain a combination of these values or the complexity of management issues to the same extent as the priority areas. Their exclusion also reflects the state of current available information, and survey work may lead to a reassessment of this classification.

For example the larger forest tracts such as Herekino, Raetea/Maungataniwha, Marlborough, Kaihu and Tangihua are significant habitats for a wide range of forest birds including kukupa and kiwi. They all contain important vegetation associations, from the dense mixed podocarp hardwood kauri of Maungataniwha/Raetea to the unique high altitude rimu forests of Kaihu. Historic resources are however generally less dense, diverse or threatened than other areas, although all contain evidence of past logging for kauri. All areas to some extent are important to tangata whenua for traditional, cultural and spiritual reasons. Visitor and recreation values are of lesser importance in the regional context as no area receives more than 10000 visitors per year. Because of this, management will be undertaken at a reduced intensity and may be restricted just to animal and plant pest control with limited activity associated with visitors and recreation.

Other examples include Lake Waiparaheke Scientific Reserve and Ngawha Stewardship Area which are protected for their unique vegetation associated with geothermal activity. Management here will be directed to ensuring appropriate wild animal, plant pest and fire control.

Ruapekapeka Pa Historic Reserve and Okuratope Pa Historic Reserve also illustrate the approach where management for protection of historic resources, public awareness and visitor facilities will be the principal focus as there are no important natural values present. Ruapekapeka Pa in particular is an area where tangata whenua and the local community can and do play a significant role in management.

Private land within this part of the Conservancy is also important for its habitat values. Significant areas of forest, regenerating shrubland, and freshwater wetlands are present, many of which are unprotected and threatened by conversion to exotic forest or other land uses.

The Department's approach to management in these other areas is as follows:

1. Management objectives and implementations contained in sections 5.0 to 14.0 of this document will apply where appropriate. Of particular relevance are 5.4 Animal Pest Control, 5.5 Plant Pest Control, 5.7 Management of Historic Resources, 5.11 Protected Species and 5.14 Generalist Survey and Monitoring. Management activity will concentrate on protection of the principal values of the area rather than on all possible opportunities.
2. Other agencies, communities, community groups, and landowners will be encouraged to use relevant objectives and implementations in this strategy in managing areas of natural and historic value they own or administer.
3. To further the objectives of this strategy and to achieve integrated management and protection of natural and historic values, management agreements between the Department, adjacent landowners and/or community groups may be established. [For examples refer to Sections 6.12 Management by Other Bodies, 7.6 Recreation Concessions and Appendix One.]
4. The protection of natural and historic values will be promoted through community liaison and involvement, publicity, education and interpretation.