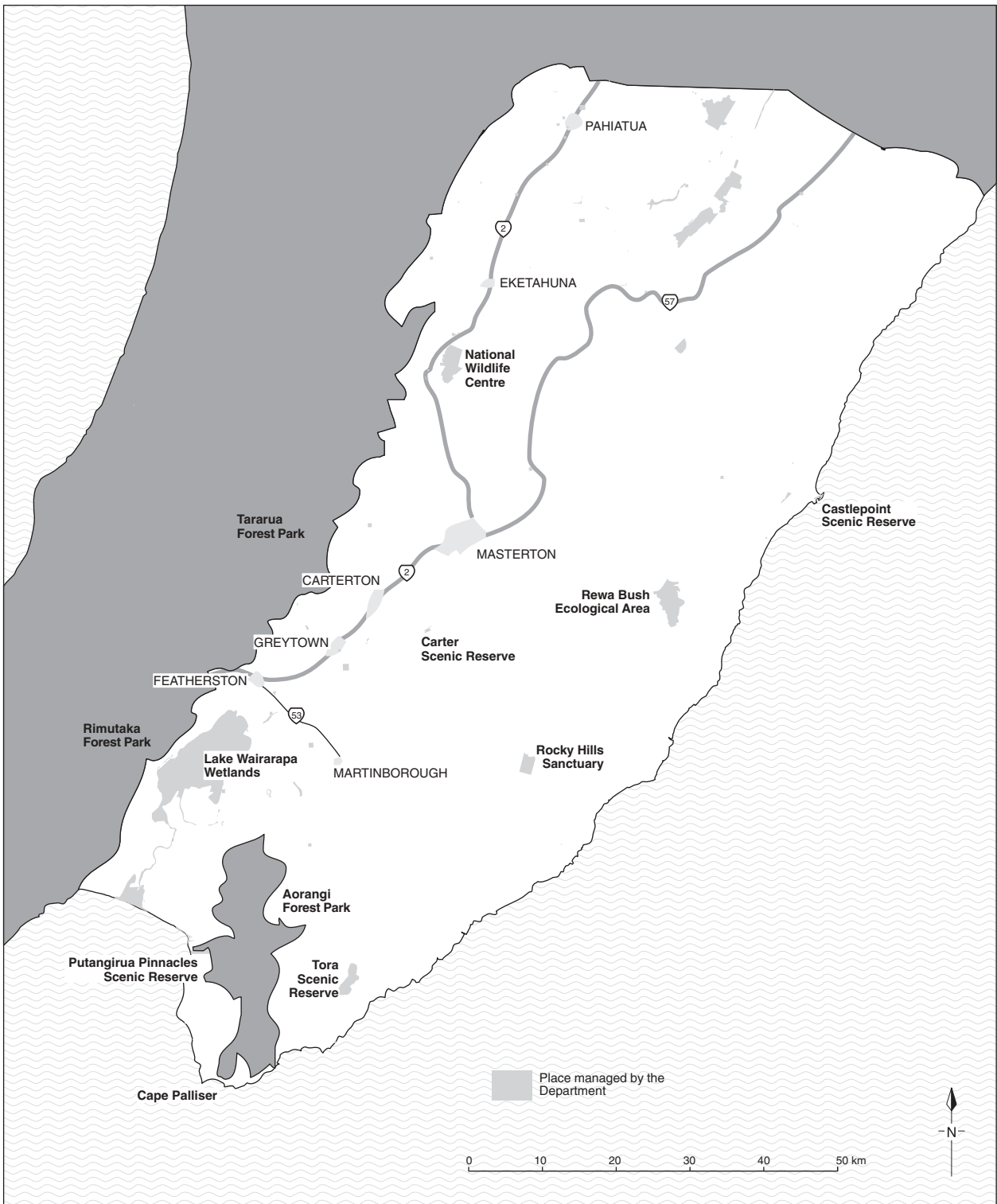


Map 6:  
Wairarapa



**Description**

## 5. *Wairarapa*

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

Wairarapa is from immediately east of the Tararua and Rimutaka Ranges to the east coast, and from Palliser Bay in the south to the northern Conservancy boundary, between Akitio and Cape Turnagain [refer Map 6, p26].

The area straddles eight ecological districts: Tararua, Manawatu Gorge, Woodville, Puketoi, Eastern Hawke's Bay, Eastern Wairarapa, Aorangi and Wairarapa Plains. This area is the southern continuation of adjacent terrains in Hawke's Bay.

Wairarapa has distinct areas determined largely by topography:

- North of Eketahuna: are broad terraced river valleys and intervening hills.
- Wairarapa Plains: formed by the gravel fans of the rivers from the Tararua Ranges and the river floodplains, with Lake Wairarapa and Lake Onoke and their associated wetlands.
- Aorangi Range: rising to a height of 981 m, covered in native forest, forming a series of steep V-shaped valleys, truncated spurs and sharp ridge crests. The range is cut by many faults which have shattered the greywacke. The high rainfall and tectonic uplift can cause severe gully erosion.
- Eastern Wairarapa hill country: from the plains and basins in the east to the sea, broad elevated valleys and steep hill country, with a distinctive band of prominent, serrated and dark coloured hills (taipos), which contrast with surrounding low-lying hills.
- The coast: Palliser Bay in the south forms an arc at the southern end of the Wairarapa Plains, towards Cape Palliser. To the east are rugged vertical cliffs, with boulder beaches and narrow rock platforms, and further north, beyond Flat Point are open bays, sandy beaches and wave-cut rock platforms.

The character of the area was established by the removal of native vegetation and drainage of wetlands and the establishment of pastoral farming and forestry. Townships have been established in the plains and basins in the west of the area, while to the east, human settlement is dispersed among small villages, coastal settlements and farms.

The Department consults with two iwi in Wairarapa: Ngati Kahungunu and Rangitane. Ngati Kahungunu have two administrative cells called taiwhenua; the northern taiwhenua, Tamakinui a Rua, has its office in Dannevirke, and the southern taiwhenua, Wairarapa, has its office in Masterton. Rangitane also have offices in Dannevirke and Masterton.

**Values**

- The large tracts of predominantly native forest within Aorangi Forest Park, Puketoi and Waewaepa Ranges.
- National Wildlife Centre, for the captive breeding and research into threatened species and the education of the public about them.
- Remnant wetlands and coastal communities.
- Cultural, waahi tapu and other culturally and historically important sites to tangata whenua and non-Maori.
- Cape Palliser, only New Zealand fur seal breeding colony in the Conservancy, significant to iwi, with many archaeological sites.
- Geological features: fossil totara forest at Kaimata River mouth, Castlepoint, Kupe's Sail, Honeycomb Rock, Kahu Rock and Whakataki to Mataikona coast and inland Waiohine faulted terraces, Mangaopari Miocene-Pleistocene sequence, Huangarua River cyclothem, McClouds Trig rock slump, Pukemiro Stream uplifted marine benches, U Big Hill earth pillars, ruts and gullies, and the interglacial marine terraces on both sides of Palliser Bay, scarps of many faults, taipos and Putangirua Pinnacles.
- Estuaries: habitat for birds and spawning grounds for native fish; Lake Onoke and at the Akitio, Owahanga and Whareama River mouths.
- Recreation resources: Lake Wairarapa Wetlands, rivers, Castlepoint, Aorangi Forest Park, Putangirua Pinnacles Scenic Reserve and the coast, especially places where the public can gain access by road. Many outstanding natural features and areas in the Wairarapa which provide opportunities for walking, panoramic views, 4-wheel driving, mountain biking and hunting are in private ownership. The area's great recreation potential is not fully realised.
- River systems: provide habitat for birds and fish; in deeply incised river channels of eastern Wairarapa, remnants of native vegetation survived land clearance.

**Threats**

- Goats, possums, deer, pigs, mustelids, rodents, magpies, Canada geese, and domestic livestock.
- Exotic forestry is being extensively planted on the hill country of the Wairarapa. Land clearance practices during the establishment and harvesting of pines can affect remaining remnants, especially areas of regenerating bush which may be cleared and planted in pines. Exotic forestry may enhance freshwater habitats by reducing soil erosion, and therefore improving water quality, though water flows may be reduced. Remnant indigenous forests can be enhanced by the removal of grazing animals.
- Coastal erosion and attempts to protect roads and property by erection of groynes and other protection works.
- Pollution of fresh and coastal waters by sewage from inadequate treatment systems, e.g., coastal waters at Castlepoint and Riversdale and Ruamahanga River.
- Soil erosion is a major problem in the Wairarapa hill country. The combined effects of the removal of native forests, thin soils, and steep terrain have accelerated erosion, and silted waterways have adverse effects on aquatic habitats in streams, wetlands, rivers and estuaries.

### Key Conservation Issues for the Department

- *Clematis vitalba* (old man's beard) threatens forest remnants in northern Wairarapa. Some private fenced remnants are still grazed, due to farmers' belief in grazing for control of old man's beard.
- Recreational vehicles damage mat plant communities, e.g., on Onoke Spit.
- Information about conservation values. The Department needs to expand its databases for the Wairarapa. PNAP (Protected Natural Area Programme) and complementary surveys are required for:
  - HIGH priority: Eastern Wairarapa  
Wairarapa Plains  
Woodville
  - MEDIUM priority: Puketoi  
Eastern Hawke's Bay

[refer Table 9, p.166]

Based on current knowledge, priority areas for protection are: Wetlands, riparian areas with natural vegetation, areas with a portion of pre-European vegetation, regenerating areas with good connections to large areas of indigenous vegetation, habitats significant for threatened species and geological features.

- Goats, possums, deer, pigs and domestic stock grazing in areas managed by the Department.
- Increase awareness of the status and distribution of rare plants and the threats to their continued survival.
- Protecting remnant natural areas and geological features.
- Integrated management of areas with conservation values by the Department, iwi, local government, communities and landowners to protect conservation values within Wairarapa and facilitate recreation.
- Effect of exotic forestry planting on areas of regenerating and mature native vegetation.
- Management of use of coastal reserves vested in local authorities under the Reserves Act.
- Water levels in Lake Wairarapa and associated wetlands to protect and enhance habitat for waders, waterfowl, wetland plants and native fish.
- Advocacy for water quality and riparian management in catchment of Lake Wairarapa Wetlands.
- *Clematis vitalba* in forest remnants, especially in northern Wairarapa, and the need to maintain control in southern Wairarapa.

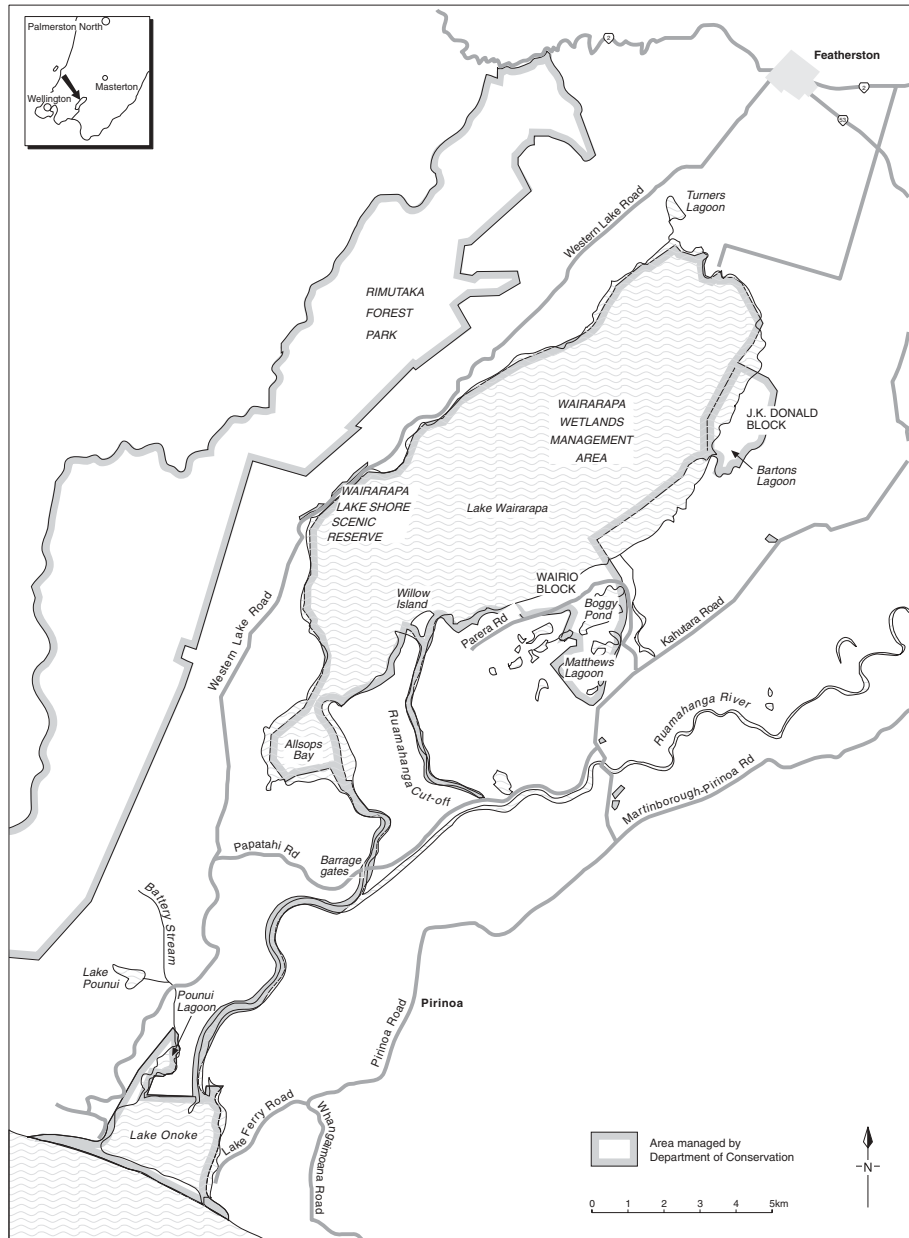
### 5.2 LAKE WAIRARAPA WETLANDS

Areas managed by the Department:	Conservation Unit No.	Area (ha)
<i>Allsops Bay Wildlife Management Reserve</i>	S27004	348.16
<i>Kahutara Scenic Reserve</i>	S27017	3.62
<i>Lake Wairarapa Outlet Marginal Strip</i>	S27006	–
<i>Lake Wairarapa Wetland Stewardship</i>	S27001	9278
<i>MacDonald Stewardship</i>	S27033	27.6

<i>Mathews and Boggy Pond Wildlife Mgt Reserve</i>	S27002	415.62
<i>Oporua Scenic Reserve</i>	S27019	1.69
<i>E.C. Holmes Memorial Scenic Reserve</i>	S27020	1.3
<i>Pounui Covenants</i>	R27066	103.3
<i>Ruamahanga Bridge Stewardship</i>	S25021	6.64
<i>Ruamahanga Cut-off Wildlife Mgt Reserve</i>	S27003	51.7
<i>Ruamahanga Diversion No 1 Marginal Strip</i>	S27005	–
<i>No 2 “ “</i>	S27032	0.18
<i>No 3 “ “</i>	S27028	2.2
<i>No 4 “ “</i>	S27026	0.9
<i>No 5 “ “</i>	S27025	5.5
<i>Tuhitarata Bush Scenic Reserve</i>	S27021	10.07
<i>Wairarapa Lake Shore Scenic Reserve</i>	S27008	27.37

**Ecological District:** Wairarapa Plains  
**Local Government:** SWDC/WRC

Map 7:  
Lake Wairarapa Wetlands



**Description**

Lake Wairarapa, Lake Onoke, their associated wetlands and scattered forest remnants are located in the southern portion of the Wairarapa Plains. This is the largest wetland system in the lower North Island. The Department manages approximately 9500 ha of the lake, river bed, wetlands and forest remnants.

Lake Wairarapa and the Lower Ruamahanga Cut-Off are subject to the National Water Conservation (Lake Wairarapa) Order 1989, which recognises that the outstanding wildlife habitat is created in part as a consequence of the natural fluctuations of water levels, particularly over the eastern shoreline.

Lake Wairarapa is shallow (mostly less than 2.5 m deep) and about 18 km long and 6 km wide, with a surface area of 7800 ha. The eastern and western shores of the lake are very different. The western side is close to the foothills of the Rimutaka Range and the shoreline margin is narrow. Wairarapa Lake Shore Scenic Reserve provides a glimpse of the vegetation sequences from lake shore to ridge top which existed before agricultural development.

On the eastern lake shore the shoreline margin is very wide, as the shore slopes very gradually from open water through zones of different wetland vegetation types to farmland. Natural fluctuations in water levels caused by rainfall and the effect of wind create zones of vegetation with varying degrees of tolerance to inundation.

In the past, when lake levels were low, sandstorms deposited low dunes on the eastern shore, and these, together with changes in river courses, trapped a series of lakes and wetlands from just north of the Tauherenikau River to the former entrance of the Ruamahanga River at Willow Island. The largest of these wetlands are Boggy Pond and Matthews Lagoon Wildlife Management Reserves, several lagoons in the J K Donald Block and Barton's Lagoon. Near the northwest corner of Lake Wairarapa, a small lagoon, Turners Lagoon, was similarly formed.

The old bed of the Ruamahanga River was removed from the system by the flood protection works and is now a Wildlife Management Reserve.

Lake Onoke is a 650 ha brackish lake at the mouth of the Ruamahanga River. The lake is separated from Palliser Bay by a 3 km long shingle spit, which is naturally breached by rising lake levels or cut artificially to reduce the danger of flooding nearby farmland. For long periods the lake is tidal, but in southerly conditions combined with a low river flow, the sea outlet often becomes blocked.

The Pounui lagoons, separated from Lake Onoke by a stopbank, are fed by Battery Stream which flows from Lake Pounui. This deep lake is formed in a naturally dammed valley in the foothills of the Rimutaka Range. The lake and parts of its catchment are protected by two covenants; QEII covenant over lake and western catchment and conservation covenant administered by the Department of Conservation on the southern side of the lake. Victoria University has a lease over the QEII covenant for scientific studies.

Small scenic reserves surrounded by farmland east of the lake on the floodplain (Kahutara, Oporua, Tuhitarata Bush and E.C. Holmes) protect remnant swamp forest.

South Wairarapa District Council administers Wairarapa Lake Domain at the north end of Lake Wairarapa.

## Values

### *Wetland Habitat*

Native birds, including five threatened species, regularly use the wetlands. The wetlands support over 10,000 waterfowl. The eastern lake shore is particularly important for feeding, roosting and breeding. Lake Onoke spit is an important breeding area for caspian tern.

Twelve freshwater fish species, including three threatened species, are known to be present in the wetlands, and marine fish can also enter to feed and spawn.

Whitebait, flounder, eels, perch and brown trout all provide a significant recreational fishery. Although generally depleted from previous levels, eels are still exploited commercially, as are flounders in Lake Onoke. Traditionally, the wetlands provided a major Maori eel and whitebait fishery, Lake Onoke being one of the most important sites in the lower North Island.

The lakes and their shores have a complex and diverse pattern of plant communities, reflecting differences in physical conditions and influences by humans. Native turf plant communities are found on the periodically dry shores along the eastern shore of Lake Wairarapa, in some backwaters and on seasonally dry beds of lagoons adjacent to Lake Wairarapa. There are six nationally threatened plant species in these areas.

Some small remnants of native forest dominated by kahikatea, ti (cabbage tree) and divaricating shrubs, persist among the wetlands on the eastern side of Lake Wairarapa, but particularly on the western shore of Allsops Bay, and on the flood plains at Kahutara, Oporua and Tuhitarata Bush.

Wairarapa Lake Shore Scenic Reserve is a remnant stand of mainly black beech, with some patches of titoki and karaka, and shrubs closer to the lake margin. This is probably typical of the original forest between the Rimutaka Range and Lake Wairarapa.

### *Recreation*

The wetlands are important for game-bird hunting and recreational fishing for flounder, eels, trout, whitebait, kahawai and perch; people also visit to picnic, walk and observe wildlife.

On Lake Wairarapa, boating is restricted by the shallow water, and yachting is restricted to the northwest corner. A hovercraft club uses agreed parts of the lake. Windsurfing is popular at Lake Onoke, and powerboating is well established on the Lower Ruamahanga River. The wetlands are an important area in the southern North Island for game-bird hunting. A total of 600 hunters visit the wetland area during the duck shooting season, 350 during opening weekend. The eastern shore of Lake Wairarapa is the most popular area for hunters.

### *Heritage Values*

The lakes and wetlands were important to tangata whenua as a source of food and materials and for access and to transport produce, which was traded throughout the North Island. The changes of the last 150 years have meant

many traditional fishing sites and sources of plant material have declined, and changes in the shoreline mean that many archaeological sites are now in farmland to the east of the lake.

The area has strong associations with European settlement history; the first sheep stations in the Wairarapa, the beginning of flood control measures, the relationship between early settlers and Maori and the effects of the 1855 earthquake were particularly significant.

#### *Public Awareness*

The area is a site of high significance for public awareness because of its natural and historic features and opportunities to explain to the public the effect of drainage on wetlands, and need for and management requirements for maintaining wildlife and other conservation values.

## **Management Issues**

#### *Inter-agency Relations*

Overlying the land managed by the Department is the Wellington Regional Council's management of water under the Resource Management Act 1991 and water levels within Lake Wairarapa for flood control. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries manage the commercial eel and flounder fisheries and the Wellington Fish and Game Council manage the game bird population. South Wairarapa District Council have regulatory powers over activities on the surface of the water under the Resource Management Act 1991.

In addition, surrounding land is directly managed by local government, Wellington Fish and Game Council and private landowners.

Integrated management of the area requires the co-operation of all the administering bodies, individual landowners, main user groups and iwi.

The Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating Committee resolved the review of the water regime for the wetlands established in March 1991 by water rights nos. 90071 and 90072 granted to the Operations Section of the Wairarapa Division of Wellington Regional Council, and produced the Lake Wairarapa Wetlands Management Guidelines (1991). The guidelines aim to provide clear direction for unified and balanced management to protect and enhance natural and historic resources while providing for the needs of various users. The Department supports the guidelines and will be having regard to them in its management and preparation of a Site Plan (management document) for the Lake Wairarapa wetlands.

#### *Management Planning*

The CMS cannot provide sufficient detail for management of the Lake Wairarapa wetlands and adjacent reserves. Determining detailed management objectives and implementation requires consultation with tangata whenua, local government, Wellington Fish and Game Council, adjacent landowners and recreational groups. A Site Plan for the Lake Wairarapa wetlands and adjoining reserves will be prepared by the Department.

#### *Indigenous Species*

The presence of threatened birds and plants has been established, but on-site work is needed to determine the extent of and risks to their habitat. Neither is

the state of fisheries in the wetlands well known, although knowledge has been expanded by work undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to study current states of fisheries and effects on fish movements of modifications to the wetland system by flood control works. There is some indication that the Barrage Gates at Lake Wairarapa and flood protection works at Lake Pounui have affected fish migration into the lake and that fish numbers have declined.

Caspian tern breeding sites and the mat plant communities on Lake Onoke spit can be disrupted by vehicles. Physically preventing vehicles from the spit would be difficult. The Department will focus on increasing public awareness and erecting signs.

#### *Plant Pests*

The most common exotic species are grasses; tall fescue is colonising the open eastern shore of Lake Wairarapa and is speeding up the rate of accretion as it traps sediments, adversely affecting native turf communities and invading bird habitat. Grazing has become an integral part of wetlands management as a means of controlling these exotic grass species. The grazing, primarily by cattle, does create conflicts with water quality, breeding of birds, protection of native plant and fish habitat, and access for recreational uses. Therefore, for each grazing licence issued, a grazing regime is established to minimise the impact of cattle on natural resources. The impacts of grazing are monitored, and research into grazing effects and controlled burning is being done to further refine grazing as a tool for weed control.

Pussy and crack willow can create habitat used by waterfowl; in many locations, however, they suppress native vegetation and alter the landscape.

Many Class B noxious plants – e.g., gorse, blackberry, hawthorn, egeria, ragwort and hemlock – occur. The Department is required to implement some degree of control whether the plants have an impact on the wetland environment or not.

Raupo is the dominant native plant in most wetlands away from the main lakes. It has spread rapidly in nutrient-enriched water reducing areas of open water. The need and options for control are to be evaluated.

#### *Recreation*

The wetlands offer a special opportunity for wildlife viewing. The recreational opportunities and facilities needed will be clarified in the Site Plan to be prepared. The placement of facilities will need to take into account the breeding areas and sites which could be damaged by accessways.

#### *Water*

Fluctuations in water levels throughout the Lake Wairarapa Wetlands before agricultural developments and the flood protection scheme created the variety of habitats and species now present. To maintain the habitats of indigenous species which remain, water levels need to be managed. Water levels in Lake Wairarapa are controlled by the operation of the Barrage Gates, and the Department will continue to advocate that the lake levels be set to maintain bird habitat. Within specific wetland areas – J.K. Donald Reserve, Matthews Lagoon, Boggy Pond, and the Wairio Block on the

eastern lake shore – water levels will be monitored and the Department will intervene to maintain water levels necessary for indigenous species.

#### *Remnant Native Forest*

Little is known about the effects of drainage on the swamp forest remnants. Research into their long-term viability and management needs is desirable. Regular monitoring is required to assess impacts of weeds.

Other remnant natural areas provide linkages between land administered by the Department and local authorities, and their protection and appropriate management will be sought.

#### *Advocacy*

The health of any wetland is related to the health of its catchments. Under the Resource Management Act 1991, the Department will be advocating to local government that planning be based on integrated management of the wetland and its catchments.

Although not yet classified, the wetlands easily meet criteria established under the RAMSAR Convention (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance) because of the habitat for species and the contribution it makes to maintaining genetic and ecological diversity. The Department will be seeking its classification.

### **Objectives**

- 1 Conservation of the ecological, historical and landscape values.
- 2 Consultation with iwi to identify their management objectives and the protocols necessary to maintain the area's historical and cultural integrity.
- 3 Integrated management of the Lake Wairarapa Wetlands and their catchments to protect conservation values within the wetland area.
- 4 Provision of passive recreation opportunities and interpretation of the natural and historic resources.

### **Implementation**

- 1 Continue to be involved in the Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating Committee and have regard to Lake Wairarapa Management Planning Guidelines.
- 2 Prepare a Site Plan for Lake Wairarapa Wetlands and adjacent reserves, following a public process mirroring the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) process, to establish detailed implementation of the CMS objectives.
- 3 Regularly survey and monitor the extent and status of indigenous species, including freshwater fish and the viability of isolated stands of swamp forest.
- 4 Undertake weed control to protect any priority species or to meet statutory requirements for noxious weeds.
- 5 Monitor impacts of grazing licences and stop or amend grazing licences if adverse effects are identified.
- 6 Research the effects of controlled burning and cattle grazing on natural and historic resources and their effectiveness for weed control.
- 7 Advocate integrated management of Lake Wairarapa wetlands and their catchments in planning processes under the Resource Management Act.
- 8 Advocate to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for sustainable management of fisheries, especially eel and flounder.

- 9 Advocate for improved fish passage into Lake Wairarapa and associated wetlands including Lake Pounui, and protection of whitebait spawning habitat.
- 10 Prohibit the use of mobile hides on land administered by the Department because of their effect on mudflats and advocate they be prohibited on other land.
- 11 Work cooperatively with Wellington Fish and Game Council.
- 12 Consult with iwi and local government regarding the development of a visitor/education centre and accommodation at the wetlands, and investigate feasibility of including such facilities.
- 13 Determine appropriate recreation facilities and discuss providing recreation facilities in partnership with Wellington Regional Council, South Wairarapa District Council, Wellington Fish and Game Council and private landowners.
- 14 Provide a range of public awareness activities to illustrate management issues, provide for visitor enjoyment, and to increase the public's understanding and appreciation of wetland bird species and habitat.
- 15 Seek classification of the area as a wetland of international significance by application to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and seek classification of the wetlands in the RAMSAR list.
- 16 Seek to protect, in cooperation with landowners, remnant natural areas which provide linkages between land administered by the Department and other land administered by the Wellington Fish and Game Council and local government.
- 17 Erect signs on Lake Onoke spit indicating bird breeding areas, mat plant communities and appropriate public behaviour, and undertake public awareness programmes before and during the bird breeding season.
- 18 Erect signs showing access points and routes through the Lake Wairarapa wetlands.

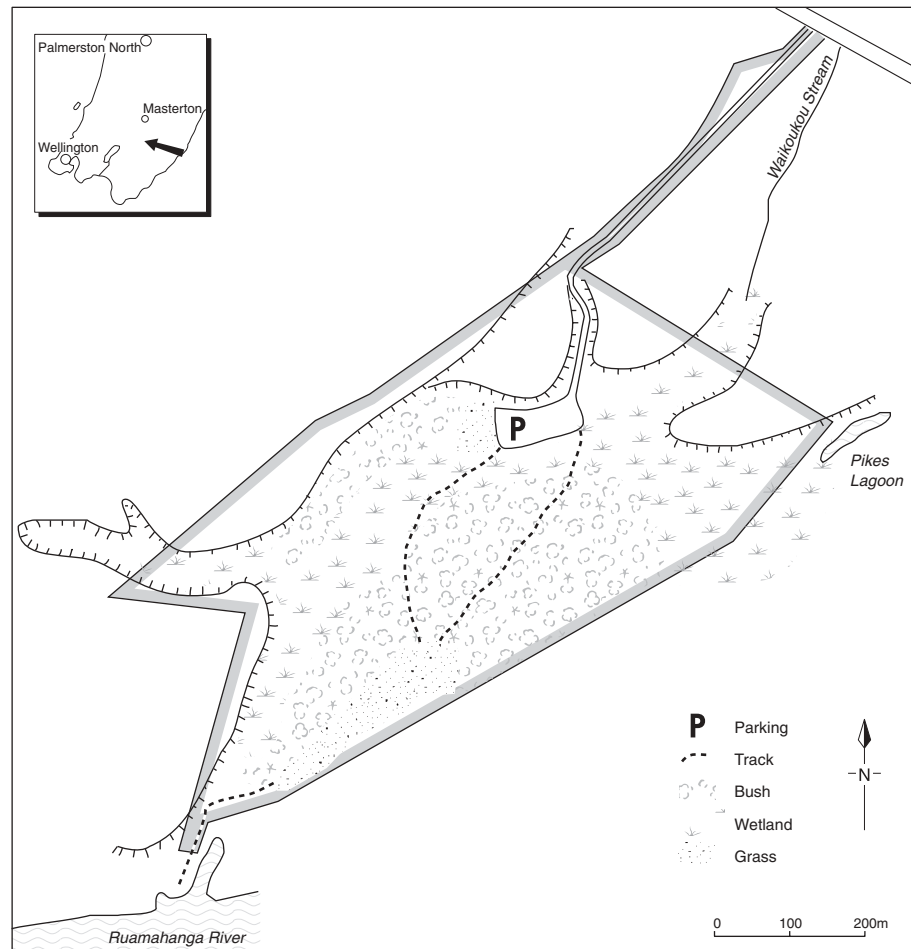
### 5.3 CARTER SCENIC RESERVE

<b>Conservation Unit No.:</b>	526009
<b>Status:</b>	Scenic Reserve
<b>Area:</b>	31.58 ha
<b>Ecological District:</b>	Wairarapa Plains
<b>Local Government:</b>	CDC/WRC
<b>Description</b>	This area of swamp and semi-swamp forest on two old river terraces of the Ruamahanga River represents a patchwork landscape once widespread in the Wairarapa – grass, wetland, shrubland and alluvial podocarp forest. On the edges of the wetland, as drainage improves, kahikatea forest changes to titoki forest with scattered kahikatea and matai. Totara occurs on the better drained terrace slopes. Surrounding land is farmland.

The Waikoukou Stream is the main water course in the reserve and flows through the reserve before joining the Ruamahanga River Reserve.

Access is provided from the public road via a metalled track to a carpark and picnic area. A formed walking track provides a circular walk around the reserve and access to the river bank.

Map 8:  
Carter Scenic Reserve



In 1896, Charles Rooking Carter made provision in his will for protection of this part of his estate, and in 1916 the Public Trust office instituted reservation of the area. It was gazetted in 1921 as a Scenic Reserve.

### Values

The reserve is representative of the natural vegetation of the Wairarapa Plains, which has elsewhere been altered by drainage and clearance.

Due to the wide range of habitats, a high number of indigenous plant species for an area of this size are present. *Coprosma* “violacea” is classified as rare and Carter Scenic Reserve is the type locality for the species. Other rare plants are *Teucrium parvifolium*, and an unnamed *Cardamine*. The herb *Tillaea* (*Crassula*) *acutifolia* is considered vulnerable.

Recreational opportunities for the local community include picnics, walks, educational study, and access to the Ruamahanga River. Development of public awareness opportunities about the reserve requires investigation.

### Management Issues

#### Water

The drainage pattern in the reserve is important to protect the vegetation. The hydrology and its connections with the surrounding water table is unclear, and investigation is needed to prevent further drowning of the forest or drying-up of the swamp. The feasibility of enhancing degraded areas by replanting kahikatea and other indigenous species will be investigated.

*Animal and Plant Pests*

Possums and weeds pose a threat to the indigenous vegetation and need to be monitored to determine control requirements. The reserve is adequately fenced at present.

**Objectives**

- 1 Protection and preservation of the natural resources with particular attention to protection of threatened plants from animal browsing
- 2 Management of the hydrology where possible to maintain the vegetation communities representative of the Wairarapa plains.
- 3 Maintenance of recreation opportunities and increased public understanding and appreciation of its natural and historic resources.

**Implementation**

- 1 Monitor threatened plants in the reserve and implement animal control as necessary to protect them.
- 2 Investigate the hydrology of the reserve and its relationship to the vegetation communities. Undertake where feasible any water management necessary to preserve natural vegetation patterns.
- 3 Monitor applications under the RMA in surrounding area and advocate that land uses and water takes take account of the reserve.
- 4 Monitor and manage the impacts of visitors on the reserve.
- 5 Investigate the provision of interpretation opportunities and visitor information requirements.
- 6 Maintain walking tracks, carpark and access to the Ruamahanga River.
- 7 Investigate planting of indigenous species in grassed or degraded areas.
- 8 Investigate protection of other forest and wetland adjoining the reserve.
- 9 Investigate options for restoration of degraded areas.

## 5.4 CASTLEPOINT SCENIC RESERVE

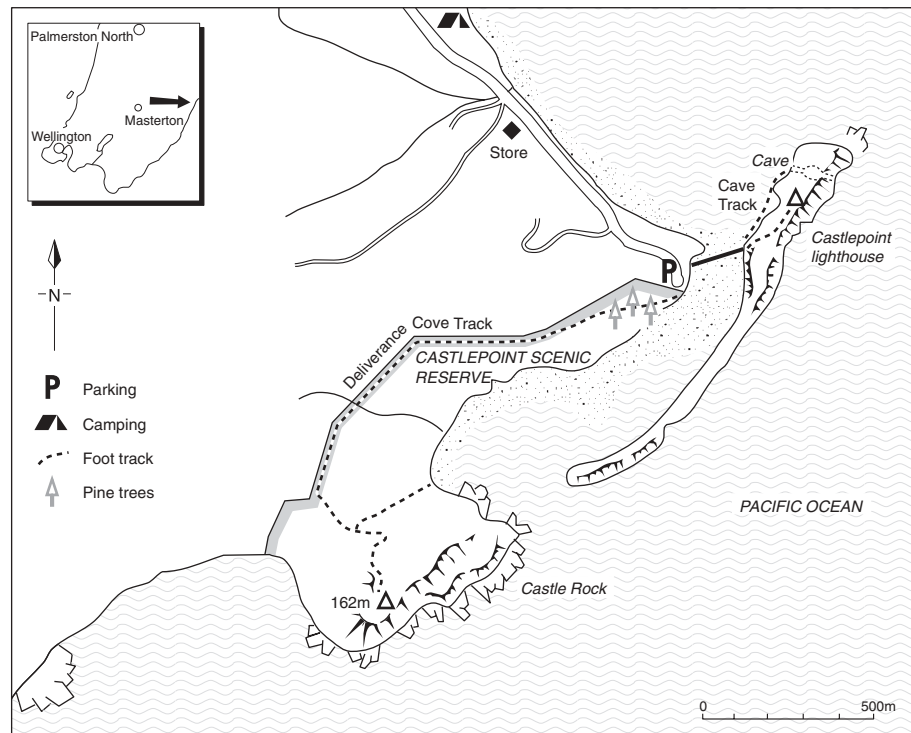
<b>Conservation Unit No.:</b>	U26007
<b>Status:</b>	Scenic Reserve
<b>Area:</b>	36 ha
<b>Ecological District:</b>	Eastern Wairarapa
<b>Local Government:</b>	MDC/WRC

**Description**

Castlepoint Lighthouse stands on a limestone promontory at the northern end of the reserve. The limestone ridge then dips down to form a linear reef which shelters a tidal lagoon. The entrance to this harbour is at the northern end of the hill and bluffs called Castle Rock (162 m), situated at the southern end of the reserve. Sand overlies the rock between the mainland and the lighthouse promontory and forms a feature known as a sand tombolo. A boardwalk provides access to the lighthouse, which is maintained by the Ministry of Transport. Low scrub, tussock and herbfield vegetation are distributed patchily on the land, and exotic trees have been planted on the dunes behind the sandy beach.

Castlepoint is the second most popular beach resort on the eastern Wairarapa coast, and the beach and the geological features of the scenic reserve provide the major scenic attractions of the area.

Map 9:  
Castlepoint  
Scenic Reserve



## Values

The fossiliferous limestone outcrop is a spectacular scenic feature. The reserve is one of only a few coastal vegetation communities legally protected on the Wairarapa coast. It is the type locality for the rare species *Brachyglottis compactus*. The steep seaward slopes have not been modified and have high botanical values.

Red-billed gull, white-fronted tern, black-backed gull, black shag and reef heron have colonies on the reef and cliffs. Seals use it infrequently as a haulout site.

Castlepoint is a popular place for coastal recreation activities. It is visited by a range of educational groups due to its suitability for the study of geological, biological and marine sciences. It is an area of high significance for public awareness.

## Management Issues

### Visitors

The reserve is visited by large numbers of people, especially in the summer. The sand dunes and areas of the reef have suffered from excessive pedestrian use. The lighthouse end of the reef is subject to severe natural erosion and this has been aggravated in the past by trampling and removal of vegetation. Vehicle and motorbike use of dunes is causing damage.

### Boats

The beach is used for boat launching and storage. Their presence can restrict public access, and rubbish from boats can pollute the beach. The Department is particularly concerned about refuelling and maintenance of boats on the beach. The Department will seek to control boat storage and associated activities on the beach.

## Objectives

- 1 Protection and preservation of the natural and historic resources and scenic attractions of the reserve.

- 2 Protection of scientifically valuable or sensitive areas which contain threatened species.
- 3 Increased public understanding and appreciation of the reserve; improved visitor enjoyment and behaviour; improved protection of natural and historic resources and recreation facilities.
- 4 Increased opportunities for public involvement in managing the reserve.

**Implementation**

- 1 Monitor threatened plants and undertake any work required to protect them.
- 2 Maintain contact with the volunteer fire brigade to ensure a prompt response for fire control in the reserve.
- 3 Boat storage and associated activities within the reserve may be authorised and options will be discussed with boat owners.
- 4 Develop an effective Honorary Ranger presence for the Reserve.
- 5 Prepare a site plan to guide the development of walking opportunities and other facilities that improve the quality of recreational opportunities and minimise visitor impacts on sensitive areas, including landforms, geological features and soils.
- 6 Provide interpretation and visitor information to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of natural and historic resources and management of the reserve.
- 7 Identify and provide opportunities for community involvement in the management of the reserve.
- 8 Investigate seeking bylaws under the Reserves Act and other management tools to prohibit use of vehicles on the sand dunes.

## 5.5 NATIONAL WILDLIFE CENTRE

<b>Conservation Unit No.:</b>	T25037
<b>Status:</b>	Native Bird Management Area
<b>Area:</b>	54.9 ha
<b>Ecological District:</b>	Tararua
<b>Local Government:</b>	TDC/MWRC

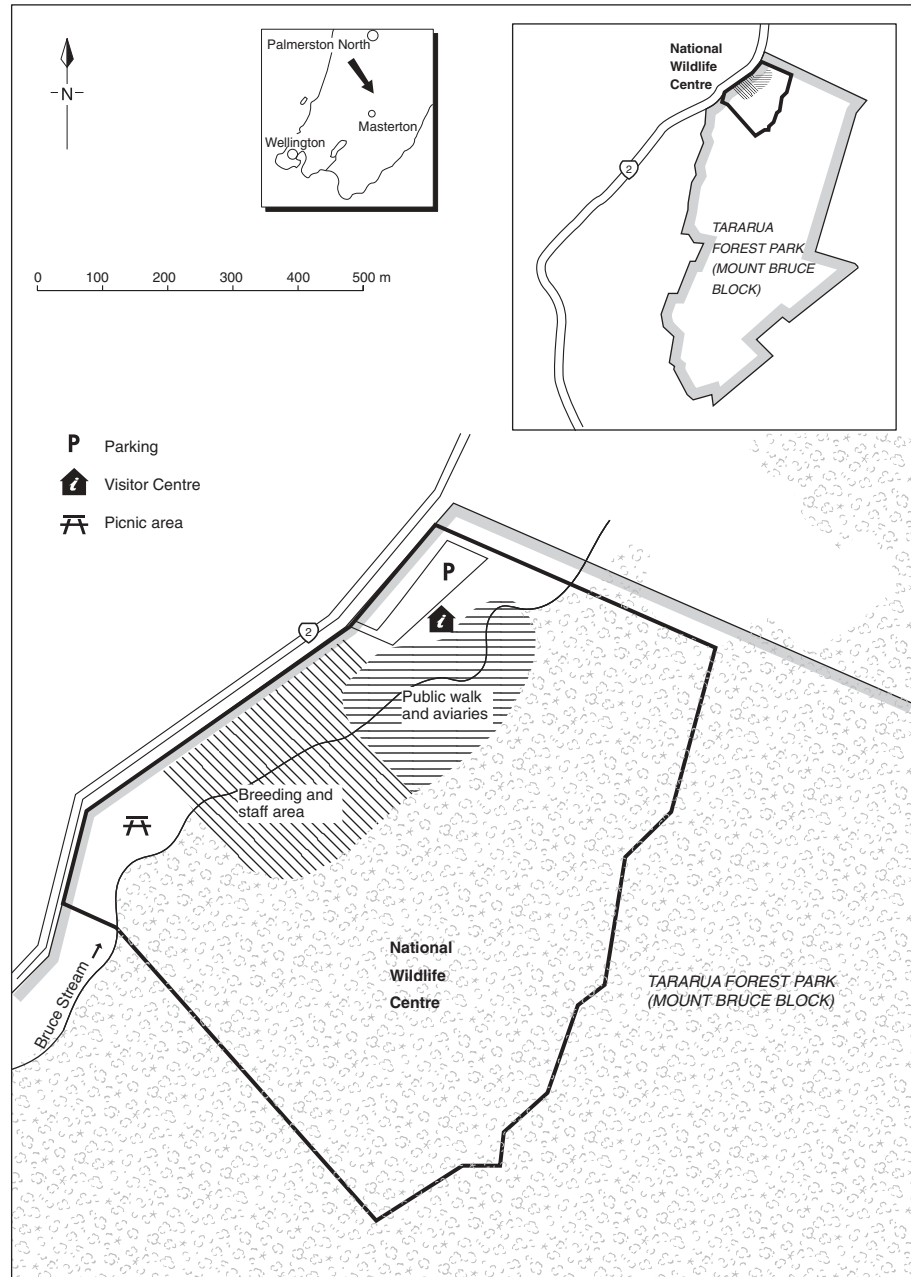
**Description**

The National Wildlife Centre (NWC) is the Department's national centre for the captive breeding of and research into threatened endemic species; it offers visitors opportunities to learn about the conservation of threatened species.

By developing breeding techniques for indigenous birds, to increase population size, NWC captive breeding assists in the Department's work to conserve indigenous species in their natural habitats. The focus has been on threatened indigenous bird species for which captive breeding and management has been identified by a recovery plan as critical for the conservation of the species.

NWC is set amongst podocarp-kamahahi forest along the Bruce Stream on State Highway 2, 25 km north of Masterton. The centre is dedicated to the research and breeding of threatened species and areas have been established for visitors to view the species in a natural setting. The Centre, which includes interpretative displays, is open to visitors seven days a week and attracts approximately 45,000 visitors each year.

Map 10:  
National  
Wildlife Centre



Around the NWC, to the east of SH2 is the Mt Bruce block of Tararua Forest Park, an area of hill country, rising to 710 metres, covered in lowland indigenous forest. It is a remnant of the 40-Mile Bush which stretched from Mauriceville to Woodville. The northern, eastern and western faces represent good examples of successional regeneration following fire and milling. The southern portion has not been milled and retains significant stands of lowland forest. A possum control operation is being undertaken by MWRC for the control of bovine tuberculosis from 1993-1998.

### Values

The indigenous species cared for at the centre, especially the endangered species held as part of the breeding programmes, reflect national priorities for intensive management. The NWC area and Mt Bruce block contain forest habitat important for the maintenance of a variety of native birds. Examples are:

- Podocarp-kamahi forest and Bruce Stream within the National Wildlife Centre.

- Indigenous forest within the Mt Bruce block of Tararua Forest Park provides habitat for such indigenous bird species as kereru, tui, whitehead, grey warbler, rifleman and silvereye.

The NWC provides opportunities for visitors to see and learn about the conservation of threatened species in a natural setting. NWC is a site of high significance for public awareness in the Conservancy. It was the first place in New Zealand where captive breeding of threatened wildlife was successfully carried out.

The expertise of staff, and the associated species management records and information held at the centre, provide a valuable educational and technical resource.

### **Management Structure**

The NWC is managed as a partnership between the National Wildlife Centre Trust Board and the Department. The land is managed by the Department under the Conservation Act 1987, and the Visitor Centre is staffed by the Department. The captive breeding programme is funded by the Department.

The National Wildlife Centre Trust Incorporated comprises representatives of conservation and community interests and was incorporated in 1984. The objective of the Trust is to “promote the education of all New Zealanders and all visitors to New Zealand in the conservation of New Zealand wildlife, wildlife habitats and the natural environs of New Zealand.” The Trust undertook fundraising for the construction of the Visitor Centre in 1985 and the Nocturnal House in 1987, and owns these facilities. The Trust has raised funds for the kokako aviary and the Visitor Centre audio visual and displays in 1992 and continues to actively support the development of the Centre’s role in conservation education.

The Department’s emphasis on captive species work and on-site management is complemented by the Trust’s focus on education about the captive breeding and conservation of indigenous species. This partnership enhances the value of Mt Bruce.

There is iwi representation on the Board to incorporate Maori interests and perspectives into the centre’s management.

The Mt Bruce block of Tararua Forest Park is managed by the Masterton Field Centre of Wellington Conservancy. The primary management activity is annual goat control.

### **Management Issues**

#### *Captive Breeding and Research*

The NWC must always balance the number of species it is undertaking to breed in captivity, research projects associated with those species, and involvement both in capture and release of the species, with its goal of maintaining the highest standards in breeding and research.

The highest priority is accorded those species whose populations urgently require support. Current priorities are shore plover, black stilt, Campbell Island teal and great spotted kiwi. Other current research/rearing/release programmes are for kereru, stitchbird, kokako and North Island saddleback.

The Wildlife Centre will continue to focus its efforts on species most urgently needing captive breeding and research. To maintain flexible

facilities to accommodate the changing needs of species conservation, good liaison between the NWC and field and research staff, experienced and well-trained staff, and attention to detail are all essential.

#### *Visitors and Education*

The NWC provides an opportunity for visitors to see threatened species in a natural setting and to learn about the work the Department is doing to conserve indigenous species for future generations. The Trust and the Department provide high quality inside and outside experiences for day visitors, with an educational component. The focus at the NWC is species management work and the Department and Trust need to balance the provision of visitors facilities against the active management of species.

The potential of the site to provide for captive breeding and day visitors is not being fully realised. A site development plan will be developed to identify visitor circulation routes, and locations for any new facilities for visitors and captive breeding.

#### *Mt Bruce Block, Tararua Forest Park*

Research has been undertaken in New Zealand to establish mainland “island” ecosystems for indigenous species. The proximity of Mt Bruce block to the NWC makes the area a potential candidate for intensive management as a habitat for threatened species. At present creation of a mainland island here has not been evaluated and is not a current priority for the Conservancy. The Conservancy will, however, expand its knowledge of the ecology of the Mt Bruce block to assist in any future evaluation.

#### *Land Classification*

The 54.9 ha of the NWC were gazetted in 1982 as the Mt Bruce Native Bird Management Reserve, for the protection and management of native birds and their habitats. The current classification does not provide sufficient flexibility to manage public access to protect threatened species. Alternative classifications under the Reserves Act 1977 and the Conservation Act 1987 are to be investigated.

### **Objectives**

- 1 Excellence in the breeding and rearing and research in captivity of nationally threatened species in accordance with recovery plans.
- 2 Provision of an attraction for day visitors which provides an enjoyable visit, where they can learn about the conservation of indigenous species.
- 3 Provision of high quality educational facilities for schools and interest groups, related to species work being undertaken at Mt Bruce.
- 4 Effective partnership with the National Wildlife Centre Trust Board to achieve the above objectives.
- 5 Management of the podocarp forest within the NWC to protect its intrinsic values.
- 6 Improved understanding of the ecology of the Mt Bruce block of Tararua Forest Park, in particular of the area’s potential to provide habitat for threatened species.

### **Implementation**

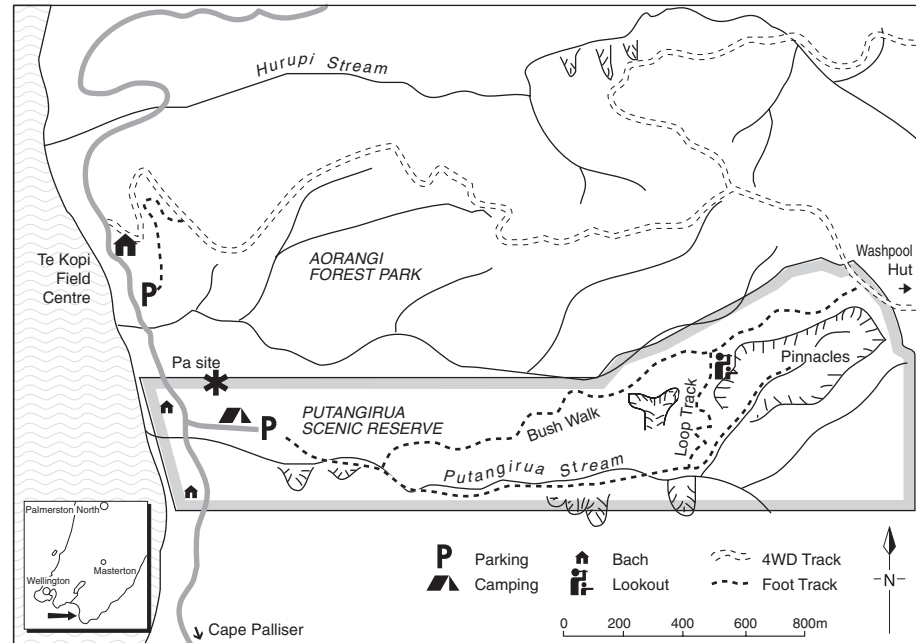
- 1 Prepare and implement an annual breeding and research programme which outlines the specific activities for each species and which implements the captive management plans linked with the species recovery plans.

- 2 Contribute to the development of captive breeding management plans and species recovery plans and maintain liaison with others working in captive breeding and management.
- 3 Identify techniques for the successful breeding and rearing of species in captivity and make these available to other breeders to continue the programmes started by the NWC.
- 4 Provide and maintain a high standard of facilities for the captive breeding programme, appropriate for the priority species at the Centre.
- 5 Further develop and maintain staff expertise in captive breeding and care of species.
- 6 Prepare a comprehensive site plan to guide future development and any rationalisation of existing facilities to better meet the needs of the captive breeding programme and visitors.
- 7 Seek the re-classification of the Mt Bruce Native Bird Management Reserve under Reserves Act 1977 or Conservation Act 1987.
- 8 Improve security measures to restrict unauthorised public access.
- 9 Undertake animal pest control, targeting mustelids and rats, and other species as necessary to protect podocarp forest within NWC.
- 10 With NWC Trust Board, undertake fund-raising, marketing of the centre, and provision of educational opportunities.
- 11 With the NWC Trust Board, work with and encourage the support of the Wairarapa and wider community, through providing opportunities for volunteers and sponsorship.
- 12 With the NWC Trust Board, provide interpretation and visitor information resources to increase the public's understanding and appreciation of indigenous species and the efforts being made to save them.
- 13 Provide opportunities for visitors to see species in natural surroundings, or where this is not practical, in settings which simulate nature.
- 14 Provide educational resources and opportunities regarding conservation of indigenous species.
- 15 Operate a high quality retail outlet, and, while viable, a cafe.
- 16 Assess the impacts of any structures or flood control work on the podocarp forest and design any developments to avoid adverse impacts.
- 17 Undertake survey and monitoring of Mt Bruce block and investigate a research programme to establish its potential as habitat for threatened species.

#### 5.6 PUTANGIRUA PINNACLES SCENIC RESERVE

<b>Conservation Unit No.:</b>	S28002
<b>Status:</b>	Scenic Reserve
<b>Area:</b>	16.09 ha
<b>Local Government:</b>	SWDC/WRC
<b>Ecological District:</b>	Aorangi

*Map 11:*  
Putangirua Pinnacles  
Scenic Reserve



## Description

The distinctive feature of the reserve is the area of badlands erosion (known as the Pinnacles) at the head of the Putangirua Stream. The reserve also incorporates mixed beech-broadleaved forest, manuka forest, shingle valley flats, unstable erosion surfaces and coastline. There is a grassed self-registration camping area with toilets and a gravel carpark at the entrance to the reserve. A walking track along the northern ridgeline provides access to the pinnacles; otherwise, access is up the bed of the Putangirua Stream. The reserve is bounded to the north and east by Aorangi Forest Park and by private farmland to the south. Two unlicensed private baches are on the western side of the road.

## Values

This is one of the best examples in New Zealand of badlands erosion and earth pillar formation. The Hurupi Stream area has the most diverse record of Miocene macrofauna in New Zealand.

There is an old pa site on the hilltop to the north of the entrance to the reserve. The meaning of Putangirua is “echo of the bird-calling flute”.

This is the only formed camping area on land administered by the Department in the Wairarapa outside the Forest Parks and Cape Palliser. The natural features of the site and relatively high public use make this an important area for public awareness. The reserve provides legal public access to the western portion of Aorangi Forest Park.

The indigenous vegetation provides a natural corridor from Aorangi Forest Park to the coast. This is uncommon on the Palliser Bay coastline.

## Management Issues

### *Camping*

This site could become more popular, especially for camping, as the number of people visiting the Palliser Bay area increases. The completion of a new toilet, in association with the Rotary Club, has established adequate facilities in the camping ground and should provide for current and expected usage.

### *Vehicle Access*

The Department considers that vehicular access up the Putangirua Stream

bed conflicts with the use of the stream bed by the increasing number of visitors to the reserve who walk to view the Pinnacles.

### Objectives

- 1 Protection and preservation of the natural resources of the reserve, especially the unusual geological features.
- 2 Provision of camping facilities and walking opportunities.
- 3 Increased understanding and appreciation of the natural and historic resources of the reserve.
- 4 Protection of the historic integrity of waahi tapu and archaeological sites.

### Implementation

- 1 Investigate and provide interpretation and visitor information on natural and historic resources in the reserve.
- 2 Maintain a self-registration camping ground
- 3 Maintain the ridge track and allied tracks to a walk standard.
- 4 Seek bylaws under the Reserves Act 1977, to prohibit all motor vehicles other than Departmental vehicles within the Reserve.
- 5 Issue lifetime licences for the private baches adjacent to the coast in terms of section 44 of the Reserves Act 1977 [refer Section 26.2.2, p 221].
- 6 Consult with iwi and New Zealand Historic Places Trust regarding appropriate management of archaeological sites.

### 5.7 CAPE PALLISER

<b>Conservation Unit No.:</b>	S28005	S28006
<b>Status:</b>	Kupe's Sail Rock Recreation Reserve	Marginal Strip
<b>Area:</b>	5.8 ha	—
<b>Ecological District:</b>	Aorangi	Aorangi
<b>Local Government:</b>	SWDC/WRC	SWDC/WRC

### Description

South from Te Humenga Point to the Ngapotiki Fan and the eastern coastal boundary of Aorangi Forest Park is an area of Cape Palliser with high conservation values, and which is a focus for the Department in this locality.

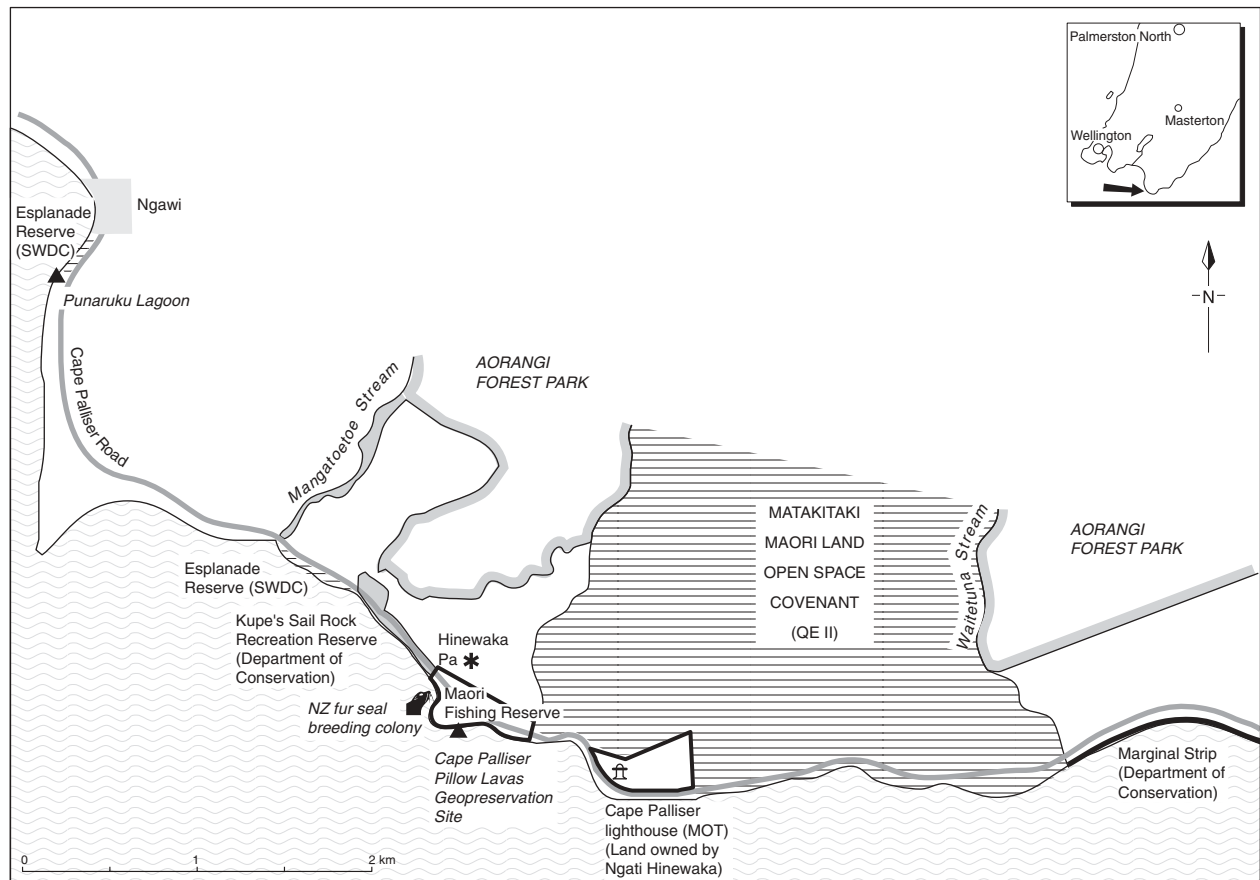
The coastline is rugged, nearly vertical hillsides backing narrow, bouldery beaches and rock platforms with narrow dunes on short segments from Te Humenga Point to Otakaha Stream, north of Ngawi and at Te Kawakawa Rocks.

The area is grazed by stock and other browsing animals, including rabbits, hares and possums.

Human settlement is concentrated at Ngawi and Mangatoetoe; private baches are scattered along the coast.

The Department administers Kupe's Sail Rock Recreation Reserve and an access strip to Aorangi Forest Park on the Mangatoetoe Stream. The remainder of the land is in private ownership, a substantial portion being owned by Ngati Kahungunu. Cape Palliser is a Maori Fishing Reserve, Matakaitaki-a-Kupe.

Map 12:  
Cape Palliser



### Values

The Matakītaki-a-Kupe coastal strip from Mangatoetoe Stream to Waitetuna Stream is of special significance to Ngati Kahungunu because of the sites associated with Kupe (the name is one given by Kupe to the place from which he viewed the mountain ranges of Kaikoura), the high concentration of archaeological sites, waahi tapu and the once important fishing grounds.

Dunes south of Te Humenga Point have a now rare pingao/spinifex association and small wetlands; other rare plants present in the general area are *Rytidosperma petrosum* and *Muehlenbeckia astonii*.

The area contains breeding sites of variable oystercatcher, banded dotterel and red-billed gull.

The main breeding colony of New Zealand fur seal in the North Island is at Matakītaki-a-Kupe and on the immediately adjacent coastline.

Significant geological features include pillow lavas at Cape Palliser, and Kupe's Sail Rock, an outcrop of geologically young sandstone rock.

The area is important for fishing, diving, surfing and picnicking and enjoying the rugged coastline.

### Management Issues

#### Seals

Fur seals have in recent years again been breeding at Cape Palliser. General public awareness of what is appropriate behaviour around the colonies needs to be raised, to reduce disturbance of breeding animals. The co-operation of local people and private landowners also needs to be sought.

*Archaeological*

The high density of archaeological sites on the coastal strip means that careful assessment of any work which disturbs the soil is needed, in case a site is disturbed. The Department will support iwi and the Historic Places Trust in better defining the extent and exact location of sites, and in seeking recognition of the sites, their values and practical means of protection.

*Classification*

The classification of Kupe's Sail Rock as a recreation reserve is not appropriate recognition of its cultural significance to iwi, and the Department will seek a more appropriate classification in consultation with iwi. The classification of other areas may also need to be reviewed.

*Threatened Plants*

Threatened plants are present in areas not yet protected and are being adversely affected by grazing and 4-wheel drive vehicles. The Department will be identifying the location of plants and seeking management to protect them.

**Objectives**

- 1 Enhancement and protection of natural and historic resources of the Cape Palliser area in consultation with iwi and other landowners and the Cape Palliser community.
- 2 Protection of New Zealand fur seal and the sites of the colony and haulouts.
- 3 Increased public understanding and appreciation of the natural and historic resources of the Cape Palliser area and community involvement opportunities in management.

**Implementation**

- 1 Consult with tangata whenua and seek to change the recreation reserve classification of Kupe's Sail Rock to a more appropriate classification.
- 2 Identify distribution of threatened plants and, in consultation with landowners, seek to protect them.
- 3 Support iwi and Historic Places Trust in accurately locating, defining, and protecting archaeological sites.
- 4 Monitor seal populations, especially during the breeding season.
- 5 With iwi, work to protect the New Zealand fur seal colony and haulout areas on iwi land; work with the entire local community to protect seals.
- 6 Investigate and provide appropriate interpretation, visitor information and opportunities for community involvement in management of the Cape Palliser area; aim to increase awareness of conservation values of the area and appropriate behaviour around fur seals.
- 7 Advocate and work with iwi, landowners, SWDC and WRC to conserve the natural and historic resources of the area and for appropriate recreation facilities.

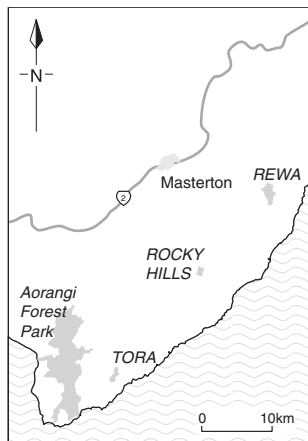
## 5.8 FOREST REMNANTS: EASTERN WAIRARAPA

<b>Conservation Unit No.:</b>	S28011	T27001	T26008
<b>Status:</b>	Tora Bush Scenic Reserve	Rocky Hills Sanctuary Area	Rewa Bush Stewardship
<b>Area:</b>	548.68 ha	403.61 ha	1288 ha
<b>Ecological District:</b>	Eastern Wairarapa	Eastern Wairarapa	Eastern Wairarapa
<b>Local Government:</b>	SWDC	CDC	MDC/WRC

**Description**

The indigenous biodiversity of the Eastern Wairarapa Ecological District has been extensively modified by pastoral and forestry land uses, and few remnants of the original indigenous vegetation remain. Even fewer of those remnants are legally protected.

*Map 13:*  
Tora, Rocky Hills, Rewa  
location



These three forest remnants, all in steep hill country, managed by the Department – Tora Bush Scenic Reserve, Rocky Hills Sanctuary Area and Rewa Bush Stewardship – are significant natural resources in the Eastern Wairarapa because of their rarity, but they are relatively unknown as conservation resources.

Tora Bush Scenic Reserve is mid-way between White Rock Road and Tora Road, 38 km by road from Martinborough. Foot access is over private property.

Rocky Hills Sanctuary Area is at the end of the Rocky Hills Road off the Gladstone–Te Wharau Road. Potential access for members of the public is off Rocky Hills Road over private property. The area is dominated by three high pinnacles of indurated Cretaceous sandstone known as Rough Taipos.

Rewa Bush Stewardship is within Ngaumu Forest off Waihora Road.

**Values**

Indigenous plant communities present in the areas all represent community types which are rare in the Eastern Wairarapa Ecological District.

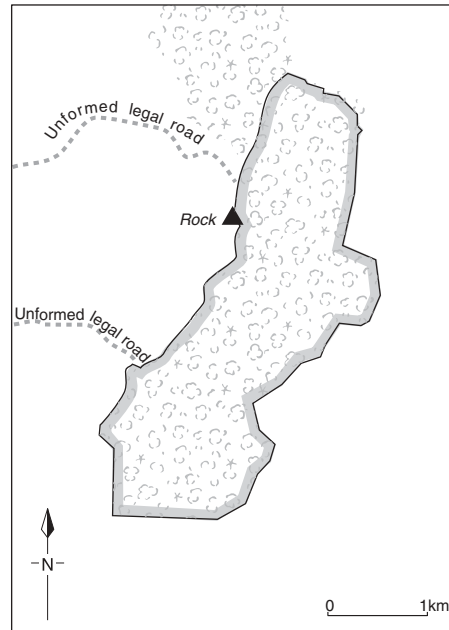
**Tora Bush:** The northern half is dominated by black beech with mixed broadleaved species. The southern half is mostly regenerating shrubland, dominated by kanuka and manuka.

**Rocky Hills:** The indigenous forest types of podocarp (totara, miro and rimu) forest, podocarp-broadleaved forest and broadleaved forest are rare in the ecological district. This is the only Department-managed area with indigenous forest on a taipo landform.

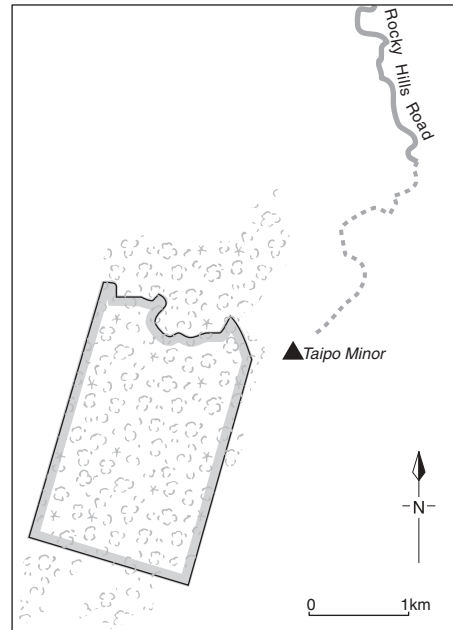
**Rewa:** Mature black and hard beech with podocarps, black beech pole forest and seral broadleaved scrub.

The areas are all of a size which will enable them to remain as viable indigenous plant communities if protected from animal and plant pests and fire; they support indigenous birds, reptiles and invertebrates.

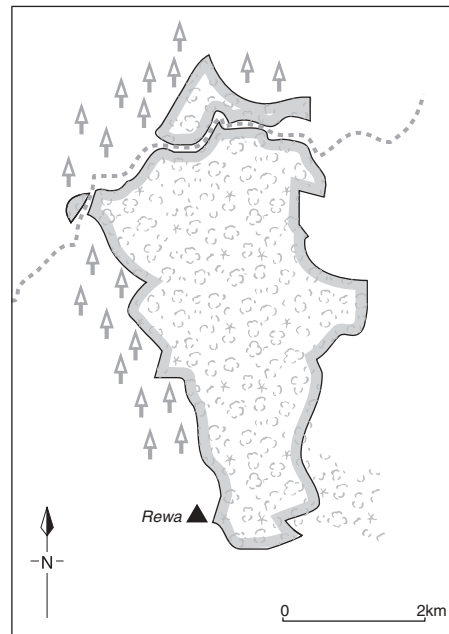
Map 14:  
Tora Bush Scenic Reserve



Map 15:  
Rocky Hills Sanctuary Area



Map 16:  
Rewa Bush  
Stewardship Area



**Management Issues**

*Animal Pests*

All areas would be adversely affected by goats, which already exist on adjacent areas. All areas need to be monitored for goats, and eradication programmes undertaken if any are found. Neither Tora Bush nor Rocky Hills has all the boundaries fenced, and domestic stock are entering the areas; fencing of these areas will be scheduled in the Conservancy’s fencing programme.

*Fire*

Reducing the fire risks at Rewa, for the area itself and for surrounding exotic forest, is a major concern for the Department and the owners of Ngaumu Forest. The access road through Ngaumu Forest is closed to the public in

periods of high fire risk, and the Department will also consider limiting hunting permits at those times.

*Adjoining Areas of Indigenous Vegetation*

At Tora Bush, areas of manuka and kanuka with significant areas of black beech in the gullies exist to the west of the reserve and to the north are significant areas of vegetation similar to the reserve, but affected by stock grazing. These areas enhance the protected areas and are significant enough to warrant protection in their own right.

Adjacent to Rocky Hills on the northern side of the Waipunga Stream an area of indigenous forest connects Rocky Hills to a covenanted area of native forest adjoining Rocky Hills Road.

**Objectives**

- 1 Conservation of the areas' natural resources, in particular the vegetation communities now rare in the Eastern Wairarapa Ecological District.
- 2 Public access to the areas.

**Implementation**

- 1 Monitor the areas for goats and undertake control as necessary.
- 2 Liaise with owners of Ngaumu Forest on fire prevention and fire fighting practices and during felling and re-planting of the exotic forests.
- 3 Negotiate with adjoining landowners for the completion of the fencing of Tora Bush Scenic Reserve and Rocky Hills Sanctuary.
- 4 Seek, in consultation with landowners, the protection of areas of indigenous vegetation adjoining Tora Bush Scenic Reserve and Rocky Hills Sanctuary.
- 5 Erect signs and provide information on public access, in order to identify the areas as lands managed by the Department.