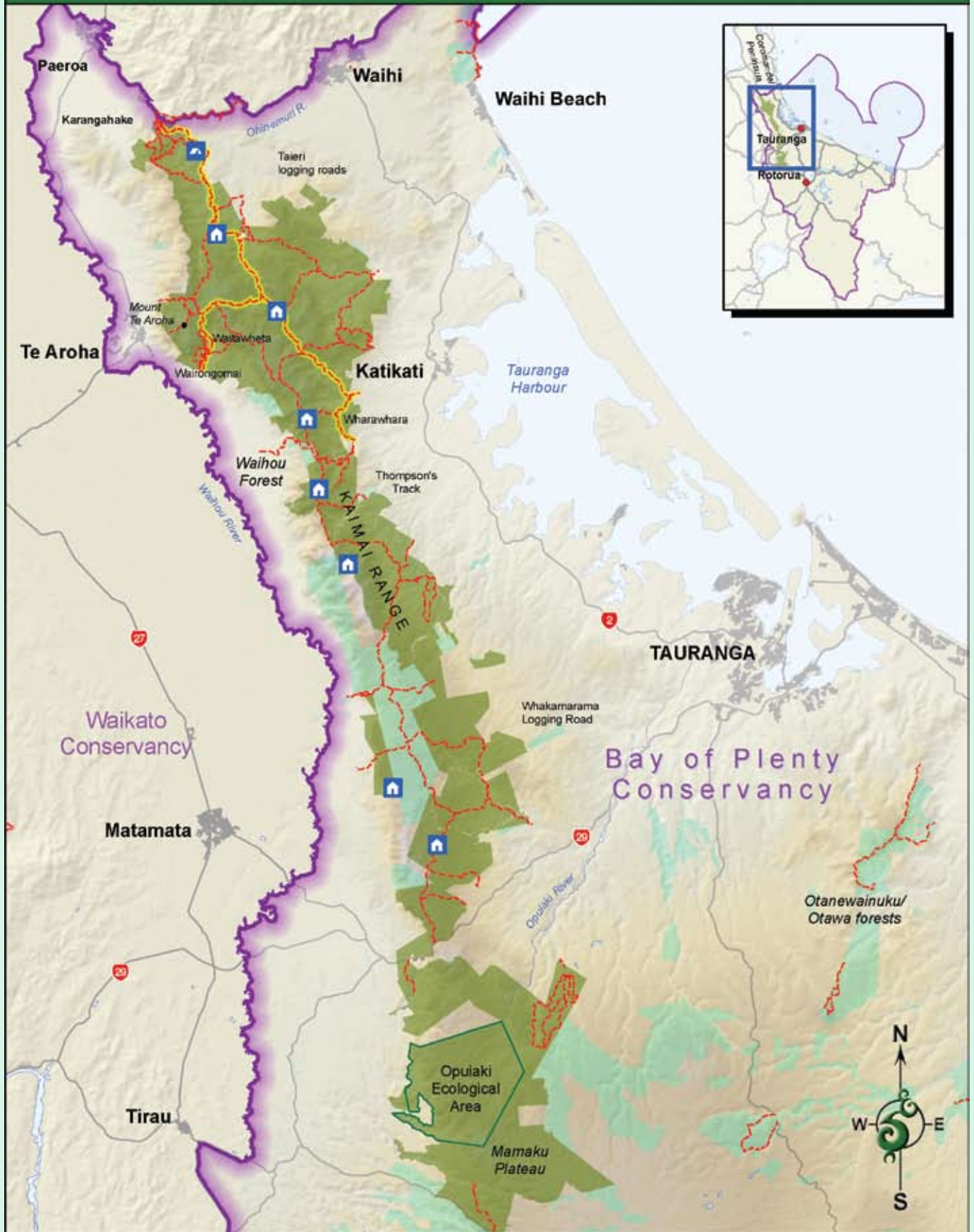








Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park |  DOC campsite |  Walking track |
|  Public Conservation Land |  DOC hut |  Kaimai Heritage Trail |

2.2 KAIMAI-MAMAKU FOREST PARK



The Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park was gazetted in 1975 and covers an area of approximately 37 000 hectares. This large natural area, which performs a vital catchment protection function, is valued for its aesthetic and scenic backdrop and as a place where people can hear and enjoy abundant birdlife and learn about the history of the area. It offers a range of recreational opportunities close to about half of the country's population and is a focal point for the Department of Conservation's effort.

The western catchment of the park flows into the Waihou River, which marks the boundary between the Bay of Plenty and Waikato conservancies. The outcomes, objectives and policies for the Bay of Plenty and Waikato conservation management strategies have been written to complement each other, to achieve a co-ordinated approach to management of the park.

The Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park is dominated by two interconnected major features - the Kaimai Range and the Mamaku Plateau - which separate the Western Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions. These iconic landscape features are integral to the sense of place and natural character of the two regions.

The park stretches 70 kilometres from Karangahake in the north almost to Rotorua in the south. Mount Te Aroha, at 952 metres, is the highest peak. Numerous rivers and streams have etched deep precipitous ravines, gullies and gorges into the face of the Kaimai Range and the edge of the Mamaku Plateau, before the landscape levels out to meander into Tauranga Harbour.

The rugged northern reaches of the Kaimai Range are composed of ancient volcanic rock which has been uplifted through the unrelenting movement of the Hauraki Fault. This resulted in a steep scarp slope facing



the Hauraki Plain to the west and a gentler slope down to the Tauranga basin in the east. The lower southern and eastern parts of the range are blanketed in a sheet of ignimbrite resulting from an eruption about two million years ago. The Mamaku Plateau has its origins in more recent times: it is composed of a sheet of ignimbrite erupted from the site of present-day Lake Rotorua 140 000 years ago.

Geological activity has created steep slopes of unstable rock overlaid with little soil which, combined with heavy rainfall, makes areas of the park highly vulnerable to erosion. It has also created habitats which vary in altitude and soil type, resulting in an unusually diverse range of flora and fauna.

Culture and history

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park is significant to the iwi of Tainui, Te Arawa and Mataatua waka. Mount Te Aroha is sacred to tangata whenua and forms one end of a waka that stretches from Te Aroha (the prow of the canoe) to Te Moehau (the stern), the highest point on the Coromandel Peninsula. Many traditional Maori trails, wāhi tapu, pa sites and historic places exist within the park. It retains a deep spiritual significance to tangata whenua, and the protection of the forests, animals and rivers is essential to preserving its mauri and wairua.

The northern Kaimai Range is nationally recognised for retaining outstanding examples of the country's industrial heritage. Quartz gold-mining and kauri timber industry relics such as driving dams, bush tramways, log chutes and mill sites are well preserved here. The department has linked a number of these sites through the Kaimai Heritage Trail, an integrated network of historically themed tracks, interpretive displays and restored features such as kauri dams, tramways and old mine shafts. This trail enables visitors to experience and learn about an important part of New Zealand's history.

The park contains forty per cent of the recorded archaeological sites on public conservation lands in the conservancy.





Biodiversity

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park provides valuable remnant habitat for a diverse range of flora, from dense low-altitudinal semi-coastal forest of varying composition through to subalpine rainforest.

A highlight of the park is the variety of species that are at either their northern or southern limits. During the last glacial period the Kaimai Range formed a corridor for the northward migration of some plant species that have acclimatised to colder conditions. This resulted in some unusual species compositions, including New Zealand's only example of silver beech and kauri growing together.

The park marks the northern limit of kamahi and red and silver beech (on the mainland) and threatened flora including red mistletoe, king fern, New Zealand cress, thick-leaved kohuhu and willow-leaved maire. It marks the southern limit of naturally occurring kauri forest and several other plant species including towai. This unusual combination of semi-coastal and montane plant species makes the forest composition unique and highly significant.

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park is home to remnant populations of significant indigenous bird species such as whitehead, whio (blue duck), kaka, kokako, kiwi and karearea (New Zealand falcon). Small populations of the endangered Hochstetter's frog are found scattered throughout the northern half of the park. Both long- and short-tailed bats are present, along with the threatened striped skink and some rare invertebrates including the Mount Te Aroha stag beetle, peripatus, and *Paraphanta busbii busbii* (kauri snail).


Numerous freshwater streams and springs (hot and cold) draining into the Tauranga Harbour and Firth of Thames originate within the park. These waterways support a range of freshwater fish and invertebrates including threatened species such as kokopu (short-jawed, giant and banded).

The forest structure throughout most of the park was heavily modified by the logging of kauri and podocarp species such as rimu, miro and totara from the late 1880s until 1972, and by the introduction of mammalian pests including deer, goats, possums and pigs.

Due to the rugged terrain and cobalt deficient soils in an area of the northern Mamaku Plateau, a rare example of virgin lowland podocarp forest remains intact. This has become a last safe haven in the Bay of Plenty for ancient giant rimu and some of New Zealand's most endangered threatened species such as kokako and kiwi.

Recreational hunting is an integral part of controlling feral deer populations within the park. Goat control has been carried out in the park since the mid 1960s. Since 2003, an intensive animal pest control programme has been implemented in the Opuiaki catchment on the Mamaku Plateau. Due to these work programmes, the forest canopy and understorey have recovered and populations of kokako and other forest species have increased.

Typically, a larger forest area provides better habitats, soil retention, and



water and air purification than a small one. Forested areas throughout the Bay of Plenty and Waikato have been removed and isolated as a result of subdivision, roading, agriculture, urbanization and other development.

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park and smaller forest remnants such as Otanewainuku and Otawa, Kaharoa and Rotoehu, could, if connected to each other and to surrounding forested areas, act as core natural areas to enhance biodiversity and catchment protection in the region.

One way of making this happen is to co-ordinate and align pest control operations and forest and riparian restoration programmes on public conservation lands and adjacent land. This requires collaboration between the department, neighbours such as forestry companies, the Animal Health Board, regional councils and other key stakeholders.

Visitors

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park is within two hours driving of the large population bases of Rotorua, Tauranga, Hamilton and Auckland. The park has several entry and exit points and its many activities, such as tramping, camping, picnicking, hunting and enjoying historical and natural features are easily accessible to more than half of the country's population.

The park provides a variety of recreational experiences, ranging from the short to the multi-day. Its three management zones reflect different visitor values.

- In the northern zone, heritage features and high quality walking tracks can be easily accessed from the neighbouring towns of Te Aroha, Paeroa, Waihi and Katikati.
- In the central zone, more self-sufficient visitors such as hunters and trampers can enjoy backcountry experiences.
- In the southern zone, where effort is concentrated on protecting biodiversity values, there is minimal provision for recreational use. The department will consider ways of showcasing the biodiversity values here and making this zone more accessible to the public.

Planned recreational opportunities within the park over the next 10 years focus on further development of the Kaimai Heritage Trail, upgrading the North-South Track and providing a more strategic alignment of accommodation, as well as establishing links to the Coromandel Peninsula at Karangahake.

There is demand for high-impact recreational activities such as quad and two-wheel motorbiking, horse riding and four-wheel driving within the park. There is also growing demand for mountain biking.

Collaboration between the department, neighbours, private landowners, forestry owners, stakeholders, user groups and local authorities could enable development of a range of high-impact recreation opportunities. Areas which border the park could be developed to provide these opportunities, without adversely affecting other recreational users or the intrinsic values of the park. Thompson's Track (administered by the

Western Bay of Plenty and Matamata Piako district councils) is currently a popular location for these activities.

Concessionaires provide a service which can enhance recreational opportunities and the experience of park visitors. The department encourages the establishment of concessions which complement the values of the park - for example, outdoor education camps, guided walks, hunting and river rafting.

Community

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park, which was originally set aside as a reserve for soil and water conservation purposes, exhibits significant air, water and soil protection values. The catchment sustains the headwaters for much of the Paeroa, Te Aroha, Katikati, Tauranga and Matamata municipal drinking water supplies, as well as the Wairoa River hydroelectric power scheme.

Maintaining healthy catchments is integral to protecting the economic and social values of the Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions. The department works with local government to involve communities in managing their local catchments.

The park benefits local communities and visitors in a number of ways. It provides the sense of peace, well-being and stress relief that comes from reconnecting with nature. It encourages an active lifestyle, with consequent health benefits. Community connection to and involvement in conservation initiatives contribute to local cohesion and sense of identity.

Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park contributes to the local and national economy as a source of and site for rich mineral and metal resources, energy generation, tourism attractions, water resources, power and transmission lines and telecommunication towers.

Outcomes - Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park


1. The ecosystems and habitats of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park are healthy and contribute quality ecosystem services to the region.
2. Tangata whenua and local communities are connected to and actively involved in management of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.
3. The cultural and historical heritage of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park is valued and protected.
4. Visitors are attracted by the conservation values of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park and their experiences are enhanced by the services provided.

Management Objectives

1. To manage Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park's catchments so that they contribute to regional air, water and soil protection.

Refer
1.3.6 Ecosystem services:
objectives 1/2, policy 1

Refer
1.4 Historical and Cultural
heritage: objectives and
policies



Refer
1.2 Public Participation in
Conservation Management:
objective 1

2. To maintain or enhance the habitat quality and level of indigenous biodiversity on the Mamaku Plateau.
3. To prevent new pest plants and animals from establishing viable breeding populations within Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.
4. To work with tangata whenua and communities of interest to recognise and protect the sites and stories of special historical and cultural significance.
5. To establish, maintain and improve ecological linkages with adjacent land and the surrounding environment.
6. To develop and promote a range of recreation opportunities which increase awareness and understanding of the conservation values of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.
7. To encourage a range of appropriate recreation concession opportunities, such as ecotourism ventures, guided walks and organised events.
8. To manage the adverse effects of non-recreational activities including mineral and metal extraction, energy generation, power and transmission lines, and telecommunication sites, to ensure protection of resources for future generations.

Management Policies

1. Will work with other organisations and neighbours to manage pests, including possums and goats.
2. Will involve tangata whenua and communities of interest in park management, including planning, developing, establishing and promoting conservation and recreation opportunities.
3. Will raise awareness of the sites and stories of Maori and European settlement, gold-mining and the timber industry.
4. Will develop the Kaimai Heritage Trail as an integrated network of historically themed tracks, interpretive displays and restored historic sites.
5. Will develop the North-South Track as a mountain traverse with a mixed range of accommodation at strategic locations.
6. Will work with tangata whenua and communities of interest, including the tourism industry and local government, to market and promote the park as a visitor destination.
7. Should permit helicopter use for activities including recreation, hunting access and infrastructure servicing.
8. Should investigate and make provision for horse use, including on the Whakamarama logging roads, at the Wairere Paddock and in the Waihou Forest Crown forest lease (in partnership with the lessee), if appropriate.

Refer
1.5.2 Vehicles: objective 1,
policies 5/6

Refer
1.5.4 Animals: objective 1,
policies 1/2/3

