1. USING THIS RESOURCE

This environmental education resource is designed to give you ideas for planning exciting and experiential learning activities outside the classroom at Lake Okataina. It is one of six specially designed environmental education resources that focus on sites administered by the Department of Conservation in the Bay of Plenty. These ‘Super Sites’ are ideal for learning about forests, endangered species, lakes, and geothermal environments. The ‘Exploring the Forest’ resource is designed for use in any forest park or scenic reserve.

Lake Okataina is a clean and clear lake surrounded by bush. It supports some of New Zealand’s native fish and native water plants. Small populations of waterbirds dwell here also. This resource can be used alongside the ‘Lake Okataina Scenic Reserve’ Super Site resource adding another dimension to a trip here. Alternatively, it could be used as the basis for studying and making comparisons with Lake Rotorua.

I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand

Ka rongo ka wareware
Ka kite ka maumahara
Ka mahia ka matatau

1.1 CROSS CURRICULAR OR SPECIALISED
Everyone retains the learning with greater depth if they have experienced it. In line with principles in the Guidelines for Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools, a range of experiential learning activities is included for you to choose from.

The Guidelines for Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools provides advice on environmental topics and how to plan these into curriculum studies and programmes with a bicultural focus. Check out Guidelines for Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools pages 64 to 75 for useful examples.

Units of work can be used to meet goals from specific curriculum areas, or different curriculum areas simultaneously. This cross-curricular approach mirrors the interconnectedness and interdependence of the environment and is one of the methods of planning recommended by the Guidelines for Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools.

1.2 ACTIVITIES
Activities in the kit can be adapted to the age/level of your students, allowing you to choose achievement objectives at the appropriate level.

Activities are designed to support the key dimensions of environmental education - in, about and for the environment, the key concepts – Interdependence, Sustainability, Biodiversity, and Personal and Social Responsibility and the five aims - awareness and sensitivity, knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values, skills, and participation and action.

The activities offer the opportunity to work across a range of subject areas.
1.3 KEY DIMENSIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Education *in* the environment
Education *in* the environment (both natural and built) gives opportunities to develop skills in observation, data collection, practical inquiry and investigation, as well as social and cooperative skills, group work skills, communication skills, and problem solving.

Education *about* the environment
Education *about* the environment involves not only knowing about and understanding the natural and built environments, but also appreciating the key social, political, ecological and economic factors that influence decision making on local, national and global issues.

Education *for* the environment
Education *for* the environment involves developing a sense of responsibility for natural and social environments. It deals with people’s emotions and their willingness to make lifestyle choices that help to maintain and improve the quality of the environment.

The 5 Environmental Education aims

- **Awareness and sensitivity** to the environment and related issues
- **Knowledge and understanding** of the environment and the impact of people on it
- **Attitudes and values** that reflect the feelings of concern for the environment
- **Skills** involved in identifying, investigating, and problem solving associated with environmental issues
- **Participation and action** – developing a sense of responsibility through participation and action as individuals, or members of groups, whānau, or iwi, in addressing environmental issues.

Key Concepts of Environmental Education

- **Interdependence** – the relationship between all living things
- **Biodiversity** – variety of all life on earth, and the interrelatedness of all parts
- **Personal and Social Responsibility** – Kaitiakitanga – respecting the environment, protecting the mauri of the taonga. People ensuring that their actions don’t cause problems to the environment and taking positive action to help resolve environmental problems already there.
- **Sustainability** – reflected in the concepts of hauora (total well-being and balance with nature) and rāhui tapu (conservation)

Remember to include activities *in, about* and *for* the environment.

*Ko te whenua te wai ū mō ngā ui whakatipu*

*This land provides the sustenance for the coming generations*
1.4 PRE-VISIT AND POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

To get the best value from a field trip, good lead-in and follow-up activities are vital. If students have some formative ideas about what they might find, they will observe in a more focused way and therefore develop their concepts more fully. Follow-up activities allow students to consider what they have seen and experienced, time to assess their previous thoughts and beliefs, with how they feel now.

The ‘Teachers’ Resources’ section includes pre-visit and post-visit activities which are designed to encompass learning 'about' and 'for' the environment. The ‘field trip’ activities for Lake Okataina cover learning ‘in’ the environment. These activities make it easy to cover the Aims, Key Concepts and Key Dimensions of the Guidelines for Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools

1.4.1 Other resources

The activities offer students the opportunity of working across a range of related subject areas. Teachers are encouraged to undertake further extension activities such as:

- Use of media such as the internet, books, videos, maps and tapes.
- Taking part in a Ministry of Education LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom) programme.
- Visits to other facilities offering environmental education programmes and resources.
- Guided trips and recreational activities led by accredited outdoor education providers.
- Using “specialist personnel” in your area as resource people.
1.5 GETTING THERE
Parks and reserves in the Bay of Plenty Conservancy