
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE POU ATAWHAI TAIAO O AOTEAROA

7 March 2014

Hon Nick Smith
Minister of Conservation
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Dear Minister

Proposed Kauri National Park

Thank you for your letter of 10 February 2014 seeking a formal recommendation from the Authority for the establishment of a national park in Northland.

I am pleased to advise you that the Authority formally recommends the establishment of the proposed Kauri National Park. The Authority has some concerns about particular matters which it records below but these do not undermine its recommendation.

It is necessary to record that the Authority does not have the support of Te Roroa for the establishment of the Park. The Authority's view is that such support is necessary. The Authority has met with Te Roroa, heard and understood the points it has raised (primarily that it wants a co-governance relationship over the Park) but responding to those points is not within its mandate. It is the Authority's hope that you will be able to secure Te Roroa's confidence that national park status will not harm or diminish their values; and, that their kaitiakitanga and tikanga will be recognised and respected. The Authority's view is that recognising and respecting Te Roroa's mana means that their support must be obtained.

The Authority also heard many concerns expressed about the health of the forest due to the impacts of PTA; and, animal and plant pests. The Authority makes a strong recommendation that increased measures be implemented to address these concerns in order to maintain and preferably enhance the values which justify national park status.

Identifying the economic and social implications, both positive and negative, has long been a fundamental aspect of a national park investigation. When the General Policy for National Parks was reviewed over 2002-2005, recreational implications and cultural implications for tangata whenua were added. The Authority has some concerns about the adequacy of the Department's investigation report. It also notes that Te Roroa specifically raised the lack of a robust assessment of implications with the Authority and considered that this impacted on their ability to engage on an informed basis. Despite this, the Authority's view is that the report forms a useful basis for further work to be undertaken in this respect.

The last matter that the Authority wishes to highlight in sending its recommendation to you is the outstanding Treaty claims over the area. When the Authority last considered whether a national park should be established in the Northland kauri forests, it considered that progress could not be made until all the claims had been settled. On that occasion it declined to make a formal recommendation for that reason. The Authority has come to a different conclusion on this occasion. The values of the area are not consequential on whether or not there is a claim outstanding and so the Authority merely draws the claims to your attention and leaves it to you to decide the implications of them for progressing the current investigation further at this time.

For the avoidance of doubt, I draw your attention to the omission from the recommendation of the Mataihi Wetland Scientific Reserve. This small parcel of land is isolated from the rest of the investigation area, 30 kilometres to the south. The Authority considers its current classification as a scientific reserve is the most appropriate for its values. It is also subject to a Treaty claim.

The Authority appreciates that resolving the above matters may take time but it believes they are necessary to ensure that the best possible foundations are laid to protect the future status of the areas recommended for national park.

For your information you should note that the Authority;

- 1 Receives and notes the advice of the Northland Conservation Board and the comments of the Chair of Te Roroa Manawhenua Trust;
- 2 Recommends the establishment of a Kauri National Park comprising Waipoua Forest, parts of the Kawerua Conservation Area, Kawerua Marginal Strip No. 1, Gorrie Scenic Reserve, Donnelly's Crossing Scenic Reserve, Marlborough Road Scenic Reserve, Katui Scenic Reserve, Trounson Kauri Park Scenic Reserve and Trounson Addition Scenic Reserve;
- 3 Not recommend the inclusion of the Mataihi Wetland Scientific Reserve for national park status;
- 4 Advise the Minister of the matters it considers need particular consideration by him, viz-
 - recognition of the mana, kaitiakitanga and tikanga of Te Roroa within Waipoua Forest and protection of wahi tapu sites;
 - identification and assessment of the national, regional and local economic, social, recreational and cultural implications of a change of status;
 - maintenance of national park values; particularly the indigenous flora and fauna of the investigation area; and
 - the outstanding Treaty claims.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yvonne Sharp'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small flourish at the end.

Yvonne Sharp
Convenor, NZCA Kauri National Park Investigating Committee