



Built 1952 **Te Totara Hut**



Photo: DOC, 2005



Map: Scale 1:50 000

Source: Terralink V18c, CD 24 of 27



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Built 1952 **Te Totara Hut**

Management Te Urewera National Park
Aniwaniwa Area office
Asset number: 039561
East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservancy, Department of Conservation

Fabric: Te Totatara hut is a small, single storey timber building 4.2m x 4.2m in plan, with one door, two windows and a fireplace, a gabled pitched roof and a low verandah on the eastern side. The hut is primarily constructed from split totara slabs and framing members which are clearly visible inside. The roof and verandah are sheathed in corrugated iron, and the building in flat galvanised sheeting.

It is located in a small clearing, beside Parahaki Stream, in the south-west of Te Urewera National Park.

History: Deer were introduced into Te Urewera between 1898-1920 and protected until 1930. Tentative control was begun by the Government in 1932 around Lake Waikaremoana. In 1954 Te Urewera National Park was established and in 1956

Information Records

New Zealand Forest Service (NZFS) took over animal control and management of huts. After WWII wild animal control intensified, e.g. in 1955 - 10 hunters killed 8000 deer. The Department of Internal Affairs base was at Ruatahuna but there was no accommodation where the work was taking place. Therefore, in 1952 a team of deer cullers led by Rex Forrester went into the bush to build four huts. The team included cullers Bernie Chaney, Ron Christensen, Vic Nelson and packman Jack Still. None had built a hut before and only Rex Forrester had experience splitting and adzing timber. The first hut built was Te Totara. Materials were packed in by horse to the hut site. Logs were split from the small end and adzed to appropriate width and depth.

Fabric Significance: It is an important example of very late, vernacular architecture - a style common in pioneering days that persisted in very remote areas and times of economic hardship and in this case during a period of shortage of building materials.

Historic Significance: Te Totara Hut is the oldest surviving hut in Te Urewera National Park. It commemorates the intensification of wild animal control when the damage caused by deer was acknowledged by government and the 'golden age' of the New Zealand deer culler. It is also important as one of three surviving huts built at this time recalling deer cullers' landscape of post-war period (1950s-60s).

Cultural Significance: The hut will remain in use and be maintained to protect its historic fabric and minimise deterioration. A conservation report (Kelly: 1996) and maintenance plan and repair specification (Cochran: 2001) have been prepared to guide its management. They, and the historic inventory, contain more information about Te Totara Hut.



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