

Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan

Te Ngahere o Kaimanawa
Te Kaupapa Whakahaere
te Papa Whenua

Tongariro Taupo Conservation Board

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CONTENTS

Preface	1a
<hr/>	
Part One - Introduction	
<hr/>	
1.0 Context and Purpose	2
<hr/>	
1.1 A Guide to Using This Plan	2
1.2 Legislation and Policy	4
1.3 Tongariro/Taupō Conservation Management Strategy	5
1.4 Statutory Bodies With Park Administration Responsibilities	6
2.0 Kaimanawa Forest Park Values	8
<hr/>	
2.1 Background	8
2.2 Physical Environment	8
2.2.1 Topography and Rivers	8
2.2.2 Geology and Soils	9
2.2.3 Climate	10
2.3 Indigenous Biodiversity	10
2.3.1 Flora	10
2.3.1.1 Forest Habitat	11
2.3.1.2 Low stature vegetation	11
2.3.1.3 Wetland vegetation	12
2.3.2 Fauna	12
2.3.2.1 Recreational Species	14
2.4 Cultural Heritage and Historic Resources	14
2.5 Recreation	16
Part Two - Park Management	
<hr/>	
3.0 Park Management Philosophies and Issues	20
<hr/>	
3.1 Key Management Philosophies	20
3.2 Management Issues	22
3.2.1 Managing Threats to Biodiversity	22
3.2.2 Managing the Kaimanawa Recreational Hunting Area	23
3.2.3 Managing Public Access	24
3.2.4 Managing Conflict between Aircraft Use and Park Values	25
3.2.5 Managing the Impacts of Mountain Biking	26
3.2.6 Protecting the Park's Wilderness Character	26
4.0 Treaty of Waitangi	28
<hr/>	
4.1 Treaty of Waitangi	28
4.2 He Kaupapa Rangatira - A Joint Initiative	29
5.0 Management Zoning	34
5.1 Ecological Management Areas	35

5.2	Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone	36
5.3	Kaimanawa Recreational Hunting Area	38
5.4	Visitor Management Settings	39
<hr/>		
Part Three - Conservation Objectives and Policies		
<hr/>		
6.0	Protection of Natural and Historic Resources	44
<hr/>		
6.1	Biodiversity	44
6.1.1	Ecological Management Areas	44
6.1.2	Indigenous Flora	45
6.1.3	Invasive Weeds	46
6.1.4	Indigenous Fauna	47
6.1.5	Animal Pests	49
6.1.6	Domestic Animals	51
6.1.7	Biosecurity	53
6.1.8	Ecosystem Services	54
6.2	Historic Resources	55
6.3	Landscape Protection and Restoration	58
6.4	Water and Catchment	59
6.5	Fire Control	61
7.0	Recreation	63
<hr/>		
7.1	Recreation General	63
7.2	Public Access	65
7.3	Tracks	67
7.4	Huts and Camping	68
7.5	Day Visitors and Roadside Camping	70
7.6	Tramping	71
7.7	Recreational Hunting	72
7.8	Mountain Biking	74
7.9	Sports Fishing	75
7.10	Rafting and Kayaking	77
7.11	Park Interpretation, Information and Signs	78
7.12	Public Safety	79
8.0	Concessions and Other Approvals	80
<hr/>		
8.1	Concessions General	80
8.2	Guiding	82
8.3	Aircraft	84
8.4	Commercial Filming and Photography	86
8.5	Wild Animal Recovery	88
8.6	Events	89
8.7	Utilities and Easements	90
8.8	Research	91

8.9	Transport	92
8.10	Gravel Removal and Access for Crown Minerals	93
9.0	General Policies	95
9.1	Community Involvement	95
9.2	Working with Adjoining Landowners and Resource Managers	96
9.3	Use of Forest Resources for Traditional Māori Purposes	97
9.4	Natural Hazards	98
9.5	Chainsaws	99
9.6	Roads and Motorised Vehicles	99
9.7	Waste Disposal	100
9.8	Compliance and Law Enforcement	101
9.9	Defence and Police Training	101
9.10	Departmental Research, Monitoring and Survey	102
9.11	Plan Implementation, Monitoring and Review	103
9.12	Classification of Public Conservation Land	105
<hr/>		
Part Four - Further Information		
<hr/>		
Appendix A Visitor Management Settings		109
<hr/>		
Appendix B Conservation Legislation and Policy		111
<hr/>		
Maps		113
<hr/>		
1	Management Zones	113
<hr/>		
2	Visitor Facilities	115
<hr/>		
3	Aircraft Landing Sites	117
<hr/>		
4	Land Cover	119
<hr/>		
5	Significant Habitats	121
<hr/>		
6	Managed Sites	123
<hr/>		
7	Monitoring Locations	125
<hr/>		
8	DOC, Fish & Game and Local Authority Boundaries	127
<hr/>		
9	Land Tenure Adjoining Kaimanawa Forest Park	129
<hr/>		
Glossary		131
<hr/>		
Bibliography		139
<hr/>		

Preface

The purpose of the Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan (the plan) is to implement the *Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy* and to establish detailed objectives and policies for the integrated management of Kaimanawa Forest Park (the park). In accordance with the Conservation Act 1987, the plan seeks to protect the park's natural and historic resources and cultural heritage and, where consistent with protection, to facilitate public recreation and enjoyment. The plan is consistent with all other relevant legislation and the *Conservation General Policy 2005*.

Kaimanawa Forest Park is a place with unique values. Its wilderness character, natural resources and outstanding recreational opportunities attract people looking to 'get away from it all'. Protection of the park's wilderness character is emphasised throughout the plan.

The plan has been prepared by the team at Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy with active involvement from the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board. Public notice of the intention to review the plan was given on 7 September 2004 and written ideas and suggestions for the review were invited by way of submission. The *Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan Review Discussion Document* was prepared to facilitate public comment. In total, 147 submissions were received within the required time frame and were considered in the preparation of the *Draft Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan* (December 2005). A public consultation process resulted in a further 77 submissions. A submission analysis highlighted the main areas of interest in the plan being the management of the park's biodiversity, public access, the management of deer and recreational hunting in the park and the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone. Following public hearings, meetings with key stakeholders and interest groups and extensive consultation with the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board, this working draft plan has been developed for further consideration and discussion by the Board.

In line with the Conservancy's co-operative relationship with Ngati Tuwharetoa, the Tuwharetoa Trust Board and the Kaupapa Atawhai Manager have been involved with the drafting of the *Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan*.

Alex Wilson
Chairman
Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board

Paul Green
Conservator
Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy

Part One Introduction

1.0 Context and Purpose

Kaimanawa Forest Park is managed as a conservation park under section 61 of the Conservation Act 1987. The principal purpose of management of a conservation park is to protect natural and historic resources and, where consistent with this purpose, to facilitate public recreation and enjoyment [Conservation Act 1987 section 19(1)(a) and (b)].

The Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan will direct the work of the Department of Conservation, Te Papa Atawhai (the department) in the park from 2007-2017. As a guide for the next ten years, the plan seeks to give clear directions for management, while remaining flexible enough to allow for changing circumstances within the ten-year timeframe.

This plan is the second management plan for the park since the Conservation Act 1987 was enacted, replacing the plan released in 1991. Prior to 1987 annual state forest park management plans were prepared under the Forests Act 1949.

1.1 A GUIDE TO USING THIS PLAN

This plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Conservation Act 1987.

The purpose of this plan is to implement the Tongariro/Taupō Conservation Management Strategy and to establish more detailed objectives and policies for the integrated management of the park. In accordance with legislation, the plan seeks to protect the park's natural and historic resources and cultural heritage and, where consistent with protection, to facilitate public recreation and enjoyment.

This plan is set out in several parts, as follows:

Part One - Introduction

The first part of the plan outlines the legislative and administrative context in which the park is managed and the relationship of this plan to other agencies' planning documents. It also contains a description of park values, against which the key management philosophies for the park are developed.

Part Two - Park Management

The second part of the plan outlines the key overarching park management philosophies. Any activity in the park should be assessed against these philosophies. This section also contains a description of the main threats in relation to park management.

Part Three - Conservation Objectives and Policies

The third part of the plan contains the detailed policies for park

management. Each section contains an explanation, which outlines key issues from which policies and objectives have been developed.

The following conventions have been used within this plan:

- Policies where legislation provides no discretion for decision making state that a particular action or actions ‘will’ be undertaken.
- Policies that provide for strong guidance on decision making, without diminishing the roles of the Minister and other decision-makers, state that a particular action or actions ‘should’ be undertaken.

Note: When the term ‘should’ is used it is anticipated that only in very exceptional circumstances will the outcome differ to that expressed in the policy. While it is essential to acknowledge the discretionary nature of decision making, this plan and its policies are designed to give as much certainty to management practices as possible. If there are exceptional circumstances the decision must be made by the conservator or another person higher than the conservator in the delegation chain.

- Policies specifically intended to allow flexibility in decision making state that a particular action or actions ‘may’ be undertaken.

Part Four - Further Information

The fourth part of the plan contains supporting information that may assist decision making, including maps, appendices, a bibliography and a glossary.

When using this plan it is important to read and consider the plan and its sections and provisions as a whole. Various objectives and policies may influence the interpretation of other parts of the plan. Cross-referencing is provided to assist in this.

The plan remains the primary document against which day-to-day management decisions relating to the park are made. However, it cannot be used in isolation from other planning instruments that affect the park, for example legislation, general policies and the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy (refer to sections 1.3 Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy, 1.4 Statutory Bodies with Park Administration Responsibilities and Appendix B Conservation Legislation and Policy).

The requirement for a 10-yearly review of this plan and the process for that review are prescribed in legislation. The planning approaches are not prescribed by the Conservation Act 1987 but are determined through best practice.

1 The Minister of Conservation’s decision making powers are in most cases delegated to departmental employees. When that is the case, that person acts as the Minister’s delegate. The Director-General’s decision making powers are also in most cases delegated. A delegate may, if he or she thinks the decision calls for the exercise of any of the powers, functions or duties at a higher level because of the nature of the issues involved, refer that matter to a higher level of authority for consideration and/or decision. A delegation does not preclude the Minister or Director-General from making the decision if he/she wishes to. This also applies to any, other than the lowest, level of delegation.

1.2 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

A range of legislation applies to the park. The key legislative and policy frameworks that influence the management of the park are contained in the following diagram.



This plan must not derogate (i.e., deviate or detract) from any of these key acts (or any other acts), the Conservation General Policy 2005, or the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy (CMS).

Key sections of the Conservation Act 1987, Wildlife Act 1953 and Wild Animal Control Act 1977 can be found in Appendix B Conservation Legislation and Policy.

The Conservation General Policy was released in April 2005, after the process for preparing this draft plan was initiated. However, the policies in this plan have been checked for consistency with the general policy.

Key management philosophies from the CMS are outlined in section 1.3.

Two rivers within the park, the Mohaka River and the Rangitikei River have National Water Conservation Orders placed over parts of them in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991.

Statutory and non-statutory plans, strategies and reviews of particular issues are also produced by Department of Conservation on both a local and national basis. Important documents with a bearing on the provisions of this plan are: the national Visitor Strategy, Historic Heritage Strategy, Wilderness Policy, Policy Statement on Deer Control, Tongariro Taupo Strategic Plan, Department of Conservation 'Statement of Intent', Biodiversity Strategy, recovery plans for threatened indigenous species and local animal pest and invasive weed control plans. This plan is a further means of guidance for the implementation of these documents and strategies.

1.3 TONGARIRO/TAUPO CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The key policy framework providing reference for this plan is the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy approved in 2002.

The purpose of conservation management strategies are to:

“... implement general policies and establish objectives for the integrated management of natural and historic resources and for recreation, tourism and other conservation purposes ...” [Conservation Act 1987 section 17D].

The principal function of the CMS is to provide a management umbrella for Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy activities for the next 10 years and beyond.

The CMS sets out the following principles that guide management of public conservation lands and sites with conservation values within the conservancy:

1 Protection and enhancement of the natural environment within the conservancy

Highest priority will be given to retaining and restoring natural biodiversity and protecting threatened indigenous natural resources within the conservancy.

2 Protection of historic resources where they are managed by the department

The historic resources to receive highest protection priority are those with unique cultural, scientific or archaeological value and high representative status.

3 Development of an effective conservation partnership with tangata whenua

The department is required to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

4 Fostering recreation use of public conservation land

The conservancy is comparatively small in area but its land, lakes and rivers provide for the full range of recreation opportunities, from urban to the remote end of the spectrum.

5 Limiting non-recreation commercial use of public conservation land

There is strong demand from national and international business communities to use conservation resources in a range of ways. Examples include international film productions utilising scenery for backdrops, use of high points for telecommunication utilities or the provision of easements for access to privately held sites.

6 Enhancing advocacy outcomes and community relations

The department has a statutory function to advocate for protection of natural and historic resources.

1.4 STATUTORY BODIES WITH PARK ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The department's Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy administers the park. Day-to-day management is undertaken by the Turangi-Taupo Area Office based in Turangi. The Taupo Fishery Area manages part (generally the western watershed) of the sports fishery within the park. There are a range of other statutory bodies that have administrative responsibilities in the park.

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board plays a definitive role in administration of the park, in particular overseeing the preparation of this plan, and recommending approval of the final document.

The Conservancy has a co-operative arrangement with Tuwharetoa, and seeks to work with the Tuwharetoa Iwi Trust Board and hapū of Tuwharetoa to fulfil statutory responsibilities to give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi.

Regional policy statements and regional and district plans provide the planning context for natural and physical resources. Environment Waikato, Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council and Hawke's Bay Regional Council and Taupo and Rangitikei district councils are responsible for the development and implementation of these plans.

The Hawke's Bay and Wellington fish and game councils are responsible for the issue of sports fish and game bird licences and for the setting of related restrictions for the sustainable management of sports fisheries in the park (where not managed by the Taupo Fishery Area). Regional fish and game councils are established under part VA of the Conservation Act 1987. Section 26Q(1) describes the specific functions of fish and game councils

“to manage, maintain and enhance the sports fish and game resource in the recreational interests of anglers and hunters”.

Biosecurity New Zealand implements the New Zealand Biosecurity Strategy and is responsible for the exclusion, eradication or effective management of risks to the park posed by those pests and diseases identified as unwanted organisms.

The New Zealand Fire Service is responsible for determining standards of fire prevention, safety and control. The department is a Rural Fire Authority and responsible for fire control within the park.

The Ministry of Transport (Civil Aviation Authority) is responsible for aviation safety and regulation. The department controls aircraft landings and hovering within the park.

The New Zealand Police are responsible for law and order, some compliance and law enforcement measures (in conjunction with the department's officers) and search and rescue.

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust is responsible for the identification, protection, preservation and conservation of the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand and, in particular, the protection of archaeological

sites and the registration of historic places.

Refer to Map 8 DOC, Fish & Game and Local Authority Boundaries.

2.0 Kaimanawa Forest Park Values

This section contains a description of the park's values; the present state of its physical characteristics, natural and historic resources, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities. The current state of the park is linked to past and present threats to park values. A description of threats to park values is contained in section 3.2 of this plan.

2.1 BACKGROUND

The park was gazetted in 1969 and now comprises an area of 77 348 hectares. The park is situated south-east of Lake Taupo and lies between Tongariro National Park to the west and Kaweka Forest Park to the east.

The park was formerly two state forests: State Forest 90 (Kaimanawa North) comprising 28 997 hectares of land gazetted between 1938 and 1948, and State Forest 51 (Kaimanawa South) comprising 17 820 hectares gazetted in 1900 and 32 024 hectares gazetted in 1939. Following a campaign launched in 1964 by the Wanganui Tramping Club to have the areas gazetted as national park, the two state forests were combined in 1969 to form one state forest park with an area of 76 042 hectares. Further additions have given the park the total area of 77 348 hectares.

In 1987 all state forest parks became conservation parks under section 61(2) of the Conservation Act. The name Kaimanawa Forest Park was retained for reasons of familiarity.

The Waingakia Stewardship Area is managed as part of the park, though it is not formally gazetted as part of the park. The department intends to undertake the gazettal of this area as part of the park during the life of this plan.

2.2 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2.2.1 Topography and Rivers

The Kaimanawa Ranges, which form the bulk of the park, are made up of:

- four ranges running north-east to south-west in the south and south-west;
- a complex multi-directional ridge system in the north-east; and
- gently sloping terrace land in the north.

Altitudes vary from 560 metres in the north to 1727 metres in the mountainous central region. The highest point is Makorako at 1727 metres.

The four ranges in the south of the park (from east to west, Makorako, Island, Middle and Umukarikari) are drained by the Rangitikei River and the Waipakihi River (which at about the southern tip of the Umukarikari Range swings north to become the Tongariro River). The north-eastern quarter is drained by the Kaipo and Oamaru rivers, tributaries of the Mohaka River which flows eastward to Hawkes Bay. The south-eastern quarter is drained by the Ngaruroro River via the Mangamingi Stream and Te Wai O Tupuritia Stream. The northern section of the park is drained by the Waimarino, Tauranga-Taupo, Hinemaiaia and Waitahanui rivers which flow directly to Lake Taupo.

All major rivers which originate within the park are utilised as domestic and/or agricultural water supplies outside the park boundary. This is particularly so in the case of the Tongariro (Waipakihi), Waimarino, Tauranga-Taupo and Hinemaiaia rivers. These rivers all drain into Lake Taupo and deliver high quality water, which is increasingly important as scientific evidence mounts regarding Lake Taupo's declining water quality. This decline in water quality has been predominantly caused by high nitrogen-leaching land uses. Land in indigenous vegetation, such as that found in the park, leaches a very low amount of nitrogen and is one of the land uses most compatible with maintaining high quality water.

The Tongariro River has been harnessed for the generation of hydroelectric power and is part of a complex power development scheme which commenced in 1964 and was completed in 1982. The power scheme has had both positive and adverse effects on the ecological, recreational, cultural and aesthetic values of the park as a result of the structures associated with the scheme being located within or adjacent to the western boundary. These structures include the two intake dams on the Tongariro River which intercept water from the river. The water is diverted through a system of tunnels to an underground powerhouse beneath the park and then via the Poutu Canal to Lake Rotoaira. The tunnel outfall above the Rangipo Dam is the only indication of the 20-kilometre tunnel which diverts water from the headwaters of the Moawhango River to the south.

2.2.2 Geology and Soils

Geologically the Kaimanawa landscape contrasts strongly with the volcanic cones and ring plain to the west and rhyolite plateau to the north. The park is dominated by Kaimanawa Greywacke, composed of undifferentiated, complexly folded greywackes and argillites with minor tuffs. No fossils have been found but the greywacke is assumed to be Permian to Jurassic in age (300-145 million years old). Various younger rhyolitic and andesitic volcanic rocks and deposits are also present.

Faulting of the greywacke is complex and not yet fully documented but is constrained by the north-east to south-west tectonic setting of the region. The Ngamatea Fault is thought to extend in a north-south direction through the north-eastern section of the park and the Kaimanawa Fault is concealed but is thought to proceed northwards from the Rangipo Desert and along the northern boundary of the park. The main river

pattern is structurally controlled by faulting, with bedding and jointing contributing to a lesser extent.

Several notable geological and geomorphic features are present. Ignimbrite and pumice terraces derived from massive pyroclastic flows of various eruptions from Taupo volcano and subsequent alluvial processes occur in several valleys. Ignimbrite Saddle on Middle Range is such an example. Extensive rounded or table-like ridge top areas occur in many regions; these are thought to be ancient erosional surfaces or uplifted by regional faulting. Andesite lava outcrops in the Tongariro River trench form spectacular gorges including Tree Trunk Gorge and the Pillars of Hercules. The Kaimanawa Schist, a nationally significant schistose belt, is another feature of Middle Range.

The soils of the park are largely developed from volcanic ash and lapilli from the Taupo eruption. The main beds of the present-day soil profiles are Waimihia ash and lapilli (erupted approximately 3500 years ago) and Taupo ash and lapilli (erupted approximately 1800 years ago). Fine tephras from Tongariro National Park volcanoes are also present.

Although wind and rain have eroded these deposits, especially on exposed ridge tops, soil erosion is not a problem in the park.

2.2.3 Climate

Comparatively to other north island mountain ranges, the Kaimanawa Forest Park has less precipitation. In all but the extreme north the park is sheltered from the prevailing westerly by the central volcanoes. The park is also shielded from southerly and easterly winds by the Ruahine and Kaweka ranges. These factors produce a drier, sunnier and calmer climate than other north island ranges.

In summer the climate is generally mild with good weather from December until April, although heavy rain, sleet and snow can develop at higher altitudes at any time of the year. Winter can be severe in the alpine areas with blizzards, heavy snowfalls and hard frosts common. Snowfall only persists for longer periods at higher altitudes, while frosts lie for weeks in sheltered south facing gullies and riverflats. The majority of rainfall occurs during northerlies which trigger the most severe flood events. The annual rainfall within the park is estimated to be approximately 3500 millimetres.

2.3 INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

The Biodiversity of the Kaimanawa Forest Park is typically montane and alpine in composition, being dominated by beech forest and alpine communities with associated common fauna. The park contains a large area of alpine habitat though it is comparatively less diverse when compared to other mountain ranges such as the Ruahine and Tararua ranges. Smaller areas of podocarp-broad-leaf forest occur in the south west. Most of the vegetation of the park, except in the extreme south was destroyed by the last Taupo eruption in 186AD. Pre-Maori forest

had fully returned but was later reduced in extent particularly in the south and most larger river valleys by Maori and European fires. Where fires occurred there is now a mosaic of red tussock grassland, scrub and smaller pockets of beech forest. The Park contains no endemic plant or animal species which is likely due to the regularity of cataclysmic volcanic events. Forest fauna is generally typical of alpine and beech forest communities. The park also contains reasonable populations of some declining species such as kaka (*Nestor meridionalis*) and kakariki (*Cyanoramphus auriceps*). Many of the rivers have waterfall barriers to fish passage and still have solely indigenous fauna.

2.3.1 Flora

The distribution of plant species and vegetation found within the park is to a large extent governed by altitude, with the usual modifying effects of aspect, the slope of terrain, soil drainage and cold air ponding. There are some striking anomalies, the most apparent being the absence of silver beech (*Nothofagus menziesii*) in most of the western and southern parts of the park, the irregular pattern of podocarp and podocarp/red beech (*Nothofagus fusca*) forest along the north-western margin, the complete absence of common podocarps in forest over the same altitudinal range in the north and the dominance of mountain beech (*Nothofagus solandri* var. *cliffortioides*) in the south of the park. The altitude at which forest gives way to montane grassland varies from 1160 to 1370 metres above sea level.

2.3.1.1 Forest Habitat

The podocarp/beech forests west of the Umukarikari Range occupy the terraces and valley sides above the Tongariro River and the Waiotaka, Waimarino and Tauranga-Taupo river valleys. This locally significant forest habitat can be subdivided into three altitudinal belts consisting of:

- rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) /matai (*Prumnopitys taxifolia*) /kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*) forest at the lower altitude;
- rimu/red beech forest with a kamahi sub-canopy at medium altitude; and
- red beech forest with some Hall's totara (*Podocarpus hallii*) and mountain beech at higher altitudes.

In the north and east an association of red and silver beech is the dominant vegetation cover extending from Ngapuketuru and Maungaorangi trig northwards and east to the Oamaru River. The upper canopy of this association is occupied almost exclusively by co-dominant red and silver beech, with kamahi commonly occurring especially in the west, all three species of beech are also found together in the Waipakahi valley. The sub-canopy association, as a result of deer browse, is now dominated by species unpalatable to deer, such as horopito, a range of small-leaved shrubs, a dense layer of crown fern (*Blechnum discolor*) and stumpy tree fern (*Dicksonia lanata*). Broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*) was once abundant but is now in decline.

In the south and at high altitude south of the Ngapuketuru and

Maungaorangi trigs, pure mountain beech is the principal forest association. Apart from localised areas this species is dominant at the tree line. Sub-canopy species associated with mountain beech are infrequent, consisting mainly of broadleaf and mountain toatoa (*Phyllocladus alpinus*). The understorey, as a result of deer browse, is dominated by species unpalatable to deer, such as small-leaved shrubs. In dense windfall areas caused by cyclone Bernie in 1983 there are large numbers of mountain beech saplings, along with the occasional palatable shrub species such as three finger (*Raukaua simplex*).

2.3.1.2 Low Stature Vegetation

The Kaimanawa Forest Park has nationally significant sub-alpine and alpine vegetation, consisting of alpine scrub, shrubland, tussock grassland, scree fields, flushes and herbfields above a predominant mountain beech forest treeline. Woody scrub tends to occupy the gullies while tussocks and herbfields are more common on faces and shallow basins. Numerous scree fields, composed of shattered greywackes, provide habitat for species like scree willow herb (*Epilobium pycnostachyum*) and yellow forget-me-not (*Myosotis australis*), more commonly found in the South Island. Red tussock (*Chionochloa rubra*) grasslands are dominant in the south but are replaced by snow tussock (*Chionochloa pallens*) on the steeper and wetter middle range and further north.

In the valley floors of the Waipakihi River, and to a lesser extent, the Ngaruroro and Oamaru rivers, nationally significant riparian tussock grasslands occur. The Waipakihi Valley is the most representative site, with red tussock occurring on higher alluvial river terraces, while hard (*Festuca novae-zelandiae*) and blue tussock (*Poa colensoi*) colonise the younger stony river terraces. The grassland and stony river bed areas are a stronghold for rare species such as the volcanic plateau forget-me-not (*Myosotis* aff. *pymaea* "Volcanic Plateau"), as well as a range of now locally uncommon small herbaceous plants growing on river gravels, such as willow herbs (*Epilobium* spp.), scab weeds (*Rauolia* spp.) and the uncommon fuzz weed (*Vittadinia australis*). Locally significant frost flat heathland vegetation, dominated by monoao (*Dracophyllum subulatum*), occurs on some of the higher river terraces. At the headwaters of the Waipakihi Valley a belt of scrub, dominated by stunted mountain toatoa (*Phyllocladus alpinus*), pink pine (*Halocarpus biformis*) and bog pine (*Halocarpus bidwillii*), occurs in association with alpine peat bog vegetation. A similar scrub association occurs at high altitude, above 1200m, at the head of the Waimarino Valley.

A small frostflat dominated by monoao occurs near the Te Tiringa Stream. This area is a remnant of a vegetation type that was previously common within Lake Taupo Forest prior to exotic afforestation.

2.3.1.3 Wetland Vegetation

Wetlands are important habitats, of high biodiversity. In New Zealand, wetland area has been reduced by 85-90% since European settlement in the mid 19th century. Wetlands are recognised as a priority habitat in the

conservancy, with wetlands containing the largest number of threatened plant species of any habitat type in the conservancy. Six (75%) of the acutely threatened and 12 (44%) of the chronically threatened plants of the conservancy occur in wetlands. Threats to wetlands continue in the Park, and include weed and pest infestation.

The park contains many wetlands ranging in size and type. In the alpine zone alpine bogs are common, such as the wire rush (*Epodisma minus*) dominated bog at the upper end of the Waipakihi Valley. Numerous areas of saturated alpine habitat also occur on southern aspects and where slopes are gentle. The Clements Mill Road wetland is highly intact with no invasive weeds present. It is a small discrete area surrounded by beech forest and was likely to have been formed following the Taupo (186AD) eruption. Wetlands associated with streams are common though very small in size. They are most commonly associated with tussock grassland river flats along the Waipakihi Valley.

2.3.2 Fauna

The park hosts a diverse range of bird species, reflecting the different habitat types present. Tui (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*), bellbird (*Anthornis melanura*), whitehead (*Mohoua albicilla*), tomtit (*Petroica macrocephala*), fantail - piwakawaka (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*), rifleman (*Acanthisitta chloris*), morepork (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*), grey warbler (*Greygone igata*) silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*), NZ pigeon - kereru (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandia*), robin (*Petroica australis*), kaka and kakariki are present in the forests, while paradise duck (*Tadorna variegata*) are often seen on open riverbeds and pipit - pihoihoi (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*) on all open ground. Occasional North Island brown kiwi (*Apteryx mantelli*) calls are heard in the park. There is little scientific information on the kiwi population, but anecdotal evidence suggests that kiwi may have declined to a point where only a few individuals remain hence kiwi in the Kaimanawas are likely to become extinct. Blue duck - whio (*Hymenolaimus malachorhy*) are present in low numbers in most river catchments but, like the kiwi and kaka, have declined significantly in recent years. Shag colonies have been seen in the Waiotaka and Waipakihi rivers and shags are occasionally seen on all rivers which hold trout. Long tailed (*Eudynamys taitensis*) and shining cuckoos (*Chrysococcyx lucidas*) are numerous in summer. Banded dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*) and grey duck (*Anas superciliosa*) have also been recorded. Harrier hawks (*Circus approximans*) are common in open country and bush falcons (*Falco novaeseelandiae*) and kingfishers (*Halcyon sancta*) can be observed. A range of geckos and skinks are present in the park but their distribution and abundance is unknown.

The indigenous giant land snail (*Powelliphanta marchanti*) is present around the confluence of the Rangitikei and Otamateanui rivers in mature mountain beech at altitudes of 1070 to 1370 metres. A significant feature of this colony is that it is situated within the area covered by the extensive pumice ash showers of the Taupo eruption of 1800 years ago, which was thought to have eliminated these snails from the volcanic plateau. The department is protecting this population from predation

by possums and rats.

Other invertebrate species of regional importance, such as peripatus worms, have been observed in the park but their distribution and abundance is unknown.

A significant population of short-tailed bats (*Mystacina tuberculata*) has been detected throughout the northern and western parts of the park. Its status is uncertain but it may interact with populations in other sites like Rangataua Forest. Long-tailed bats (*Chalinolobus tuberculata*) are also known to be present and relatively common.

The park's various forest associations contain a diversity of insects. The green cicadas, (*Kikihia subalpina* and *Kikihia cutura*), are found in parts of both the Kaimanawa and the adjoining Kaweka forest parks.

Rivers within the park contain limited indigenous fish species. Most indigenous fish species are absent from the Lake Taupo catchment because migration to and from the sea is prevented by hydro dams on the Waikato River. Prior to the advent of the dams, Huka Falls, Aratiatia Rapids, rapids near Ohakuri and a sheer-sided, high velocity gorge near Arapuni prevented access. Koaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*) and common bullies (*Gobiomorphus cotidianus*) are the only indigenous species that naturally occur in the Taupo catchment and some experts consider that the bullies could only have been introduced. The upper reaches of the Waimarino, Tauranga - Taupo rivers and the Hinemaiaia stream are trout free and represent an unmodified native aquatic habitat, making these catchments nationally significant. Koaro are found in low densities in the Waimarino River and may exist in the headwaters of other Lake Taupo tributaries. The Mohaka, Ngaruroro and Rangitikei rivers contain low numbers of koaro but none have been recorded within park boundaries. The Rangitikei River contains a healthy population of long-finned eels (*Anguilla dieffenbachia*), a species that is now threatened and in gradual decline.

Overall, most species of fauna in the park are in decline, due in the main to predation from introduced pests. Except where the department is undertaking management, for example, the *Powelliphanta marchanti* work and occasional aerial 1080 operations - most populations are declining. It is possible that local extinctions will occur during the life of this plan, particularly if beech mast events, which result in rapidly expanding populations of mice, rats and stoats, increase over that period. Intensive management, with an attendant increase in resourcing, is required to halt this decline.

2.3.2.1 *Recreational Species*

The park also contains a number of introduced game animals that are highly valued by hunters. These include sika deer (*Cervus nippon*), red deer (*Cervus elaphus*), wild pigs (*Sus scrofa*), rainbow trout (*Salmo gairdnerii*) and brown trout (*Salmo trutta*). The management of these animals must mitigate their effects on park values whilst recognising their recreational value.

According to Grace (1959:62), the name Kaimanawa is derived from the words of Hapekituarangi. Ngatoroirangi, tohunga of Te Arawa waka, travelled inland to the Taupo region from Maketu and then journeyed around the lake to Tokaanu, where he met Hapekituarangi:

'[Ngatoroirangi] said to him, "What brings you to this cold and barren country where there is nothing to eat?" Hapekituarangi, while looking toward Kaimanawa range, replied, "My breath is my food!" The range to this day is known by that name (kai, meaning eat; and Manawa, in this case, breath).'

The following paragraphs are based on notes from Batley (1979).

The numerous Māori place-names which occur within and adjacent to the park on early maps and in Māori Land Court records are evidence of widespread use of the area by the Maori in pre-European times. Known archaeological sites have been located in areas closely adjacent to the forest park (for example, Horehore Pa, Motiti and Te Pukehou). There are also traditional Māori settlements, sites associated with events in traditional history, named Māori tracks and other areas, (for example, traditional burial caves) which have been reported in Māori history but which at present lack the archaeological evidence which ensures their absolute protection under the Historic Places Act 1993.

In many examples the lack of physical evidence of human activity on these sites is due to the fact that they are situated in relatively inaccessible areas. Being difficult to locate, they have not been subjected to the scrutiny of persons trained in archaeological techniques. The known Māori tracks are perhaps an exception as, in some cases, flakes of obsidian (volcanic glass) used as artefactual material by the prehistoric Māori, have been found near river crossings, on saddles and at other places along these routes. Information on specific Māori sites will only be included in park information documents after consultation with the appropriate iwi authority.

An area which should produce evidence of pre-European activity lies on the true left bank of the Oamaru River above the Kaipo confluence in the vicinity of Te Rouiti Pa, Te Tounui or Te Rourahi Pa and the Paengaroa cultivation. This area was associated with Māori settlement and warfare involving the Ngati Whiti, Ngati Maruahine, Ngati Tuwharetoa and Ngati Kurapoto tribes in the mid-seventeenth century. Some place names identify occupation, for example, Te Ranga a Whakarua, Te Wai O Tupuritia and Tapui o Maruahine. Other sites traditionally identified with first settlement of the Ngati Tuwharetoa in the Taupo area in the mid-sixteenth century are Kotipu (Woody's Tongue), Rangitaiki and Otuariki (locality unknown).

Traditional Maori routes into the park include some of the following named tracks:

- (a) Te Arapakiaka from Te Whakau into the Kaimanawa block;
- (b) Te Arawahairi from Te Whakau into the Kaimanawa block;

- (c) Te Arawhatawhati between Pirua and Te Harororo;
- (d) Kataone from Te Whakau into the Kaimanawa block;
- (e) Manukatutehai leading into the Kaimanawa block;
- (f) Ngatakutahi from Te Whakau into the Kaimanawa block;
- (g) Pirua into the range (Maori Tongue/Clements Mill Road locality);
- (h) Te Pua a Te Haki from Rangipo into Owhaoko;
- (i) Takapoutuawauru from Waiharuru Stream into the range;
- (j) Tauranga-Taupo from Tauranga-Taupo to the Owhaoko block;
- (k) Tauwhakairiaio from Te Whakau into the Kaimanawa block.

The first written information comes from visits by Bidwill at Taupo in 1839 and by the missionary-botanist Colenso in 1847. The surveyors Percy Smith and Cussens traversed the country in the 1870s and 1880s. Alexander McKay's report on the geology of the Kaimanawa Ranges appears in 1901. In 1911, B C Aston made two botanical visits to the upper Moawhango and the Waipakihi valleys, but a comprehensive botanical survey only began in 1931 and has continued intermittently (because of the comparative remoteness of the area) up to the present (Elder 1963).

Sites relating to early survey and gold mining activities are present within the Kaimanawa Range and include the mine shaft of the Pioneer gold mining claim (1885) on the Oruamatua-Kaimanawa IV block, the remains of the last Motumatai Hut and, about one kilometre south-west of this, the site of the original Motumatai Whare, which was constructed prior to 1874. Other early hut sites exist in the Te Apunga (Kaimanawa), Golden Hills and Boyd's Rock areas.

Apart from the headwaters of the Rangitikei, Taruarau and Ngaruroro rivers, the search for gold also extended up the rivers and streams draining into Lake Taupo from the Kaimanawa Ranges. The alleged site of Bracken's Reef, reputedly covered by a large landslip, is on one of two streams within the park boundary. This reef was reported by Captain William McDonnell and Christopher Bracken in September 1869.

The most significant early European influence was associated with the introduction of sheep to the large tracts of tussock country within the Kaimanawa Range area. Merino sheep were introduced around Lake Taupo by the Grace family in 1856 but were killed out, partly by wild dogs. Alfred Cox took up a lease south of the Napier-Taupo Road in 1867-70 (Elder, 1963). The Boyd brothers farmed sheep in the area around the current Boyd Hut. An economic slump at the end of the 1920s meant the end of this venture and the brothers walked off the land, leaving 2000 unshorn sheep to wander the Ngaruroro Valley.

The association with early sheep farming is commemorated in a number of place names, such as Mount Donnelly (Makorako), Mount Michael (Whakamarumaru), Mount Dowden (a corruption of Dowding) and Boyd's Rock.

Between 1937 and 1972 approximately 4037 hectares of red beech/silver beech forest in the northern and eastern regions of the park (Clements Mill Road area) was subject to red beech splitting operations for the production of fencing material, while 526 hectares in the Tiraki Stream area was cut for saw logs.

These logging operations led to changes in the structure of the beech forest in this area. The large over-mature red beech component of the canopy was removed, leaving in its place red and silver beech canopy trees of smaller stature, thereby enabling more light to reach the forest floor and the development of what is now an extremely dense ground cover of red beech regeneration.

In the 1950s and 1960s deer hunting, both for the domestic and international markets, sustained the lifestyles of several bands of hunters who camped in various locations within the park. A typical operation was the four-five person camp in the vicinity of the current Boyd Hut. The hunters used horses for transport and installed a corral at the Boyd Hut camp. A two-room subterranean chiller also existed at this site to keep the meat fresh. The hunters lived in tents and actively hunted from the late afternoon into the night. Supplies were re-stocked on an irregular basis by light plane, with carcasses being transported on the back flights to either Taupo or Rangitaiki (Kelly 1968).

Today, the park hosts a range of recreational activities such as walking, tramping, camping, recreational hunting, mountain biking, kayaking and angling.

2.5 RECREATION

Kaimanawa Forest Park's wilderness character has special appeal to visitors. The intrinsic values of the forest with its natural attributes and historic significance, with cultural heritage and landscape features, combined with its relatively low level of human intervention and use, engender the distinctive wilderness character that is so valued by park visitors. The park's wilderness character fosters visitors' experience of peace and natural quiet and a sense of remoteness, discovery, challenge, solitude and self-reliance.

The wilderness recreational opportunities offered by the park are relatively uncommon in the North Island. For this reason, the emphasis for recreation management in the park is placed on retention of the park's distinctive wilderness character and special values so that present and future generations have an opportunity to experience an area relatively untouched by human intervention.

Tramping is one of the main recreational activities in the park. Extensive areas of beech forest, alpine tops and open tussock land provide a range of tramping opportunities from day walks through to multi-day tramps. A number of backcountry tracks and huts provide access to parts of the upper Mohaka, Ngaruroro, Tauranga-Taupo and Waipakihi river valleys.

Day visitor and road-accessible camping opportunities are catered for around the park periphery in the north and west, with vehicle access to scenic corridors of podocarp/beechn forest, numerous roadside camping and picnic sites and short walks.

The recreational hunting opportunity in the park is of national importance. The Kaimanawa/Ahimanawa/Kaweka area has the only large wild herd of sika deer in the southern hemisphere. Red deer can also be stalked throughout the park. In recognition of the sport-hunting potential of the sika herd, the northern part of the park was gazetted as a recreational hunting area (RHA) in 1982. It is one of the highest-used RHAs in the country.

The Rangitikei, Mohaka and Ngaruroro rivers provide excellent angling opportunities within the park. The Rangitikei River has a reputation for producing trophy rainbow trout while the Ngaruroro produces large to average sized rainbows. The Mohaka is renowned for producing trophy brown trout. Because of their outstanding wild and scenic characteristics, outstanding recreational fisheries and wildlife habitat features, the Mohaka and Rangitikei rivers have National Water Conservation Order status under the Resource Management Act 1991.

The majority of the tracks and routes within the park are not of a standard suitable for bicycles and hence mountain biking opportunities are limited. Mountain biking is permitted only on formed and maintained roads, Tree Trunk Gorge-Kaimanawa Road Track and Urchin Campsite-Pillars of Hercules Track. Because of a large number of submissions calling for mountain biking to be permitted on the Clements Road-Oamaru Hut track via Te Iringa (the 'Te Iringa Track'), the department will allow mountain biking on this track for a two-year trial period. Continuation of mountain biking on this track will be dependent on the outcome of a monitoring programme to determine the extent of any social or environmental impacts. Other mountain biking opportunities are provided both on and off public conservation land within the conservancy, for example, at Erua, Tongariro and Erua forests.

Recreational rafting and kayaking opportunities are available to the experienced enthusiast. The Ngaruroro and Mohaka rivers, which have their sources within the eastern part of the park, can both be kayaked and rafted by people with a high level of skill and experience.

Part Two

Park Management

3.0 Park Management Philosophies and Issues

3.1 KEY MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHIES

The key management philosophies defined for the park reflect the requirements of the Conservation Act 1987 - to protect the park's natural and historic resources and cultural heritage and, where consistent with protection, to facilitate public recreation and enjoyment. The Act also requires the department to give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi. The key management philosophies have evolved through two park management plans and through community involvement in this special backcountry area.

The key management philosophies will be used in decision making processes as benchmarks against which activities and uses will be measured. The philosophies below are numbered for ease of use; the numbering is not intended to imply a hierarchy of importance.

1 To protect the natural and historic resources of Kaimanawa Forest Park

This philosophy is derived from the Conservation Act 1987. The park contains nationally important habitats. Its natural and historic resources must be protected even though protection methodologies may at times be in conflict with other community aspirations.

The management of the park must be consistent with its overarching legislation, the Conservation Act 1987 and its relevant schedules. Park management must also be consistent with the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy and the Conservation General Policy 2005. A large number of departmental policies, strategies and guidelines are also taken into account during the development of this plan and in day-to-day management of the park.

2 To protect Kaimanawa Forest Park's wilderness character

The park has special values. Its natural resources and historic resources, cultural heritage, landscape features and natural character, combined with its relatively low level of human intervention and use, engender the distinctive wilderness character that is so valued by park visitors. The notion of wilderness can be subjective and personal, but for the purposes of this plan includes the qualities of peace and natural quiet and a sense of remoteness and discovery, challenge, solitude and freedom that fosters self-reliance and a feeling of being close to nature.

Management of the park will continue to place high importance on retaining the park's wilderness character. To aid this objective, only limited visitor facilities will be provided, at or below present levels.

3 To facilitate public recreation and enjoyment of Kaimanawa Forest Park

Providing for public enjoyment of natural and historic resources, where this is consistent with management for conservation, is one of the key principles of the Conservation Act 1987. However, there is an inherent tension between preservation and use of public conservation land. Recreational use of the park must be balanced with ensuring that this use does not adversely affect the park's natural and historic resources, cultural heritage and distinctive wilderness character. This is a critical challenge facing park managers.

4 To give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi

The Crown has a statutory requirement to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in its management of public conservation lands. Through a process in the 1990s these principles were established for Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy. The application of these principles to the park is given force through this plan. The implementation of He Kaupapa Rangatira, a framework and protocol for giving practical expression to the partnership with iwi, will provide tangata whenua with the opportunity to have an evolving and ongoing role in the management of the park. There is a strong interconnection between the Treaty principles and the broader conservation philosophies applied to park management.

4.1 TO PROVIDE FOR CO-OPERATIVE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

The department seeks to manage the park in a relationship with tangata whenua. The relationship between the Crown and iwi will be exercised within the park through co-operative conservation management. The implementation of He Kaupapa Rangatira, a framework and protocol for giving practical expression to the partnership with iwi, will ensure that iwi and hapū have an ongoing role in the management of the park. Be it in decision making processes for use of cultural materials, the re-introduction of previously-present species, the consideration of concessions that may affect cultural heritage or the development of future park guidelines or strategies, iwi will be critically involved.

5 To reflect the values of the community in management

The park is managed by the department for the people of New Zealand. Support and involvement from communities is very important for the long term conservation and public enjoyment of the park. Many community groups with an interest in the park, including non-government organisations, recreational groups, research institutions and universities play an ongoing role in its management. The department recognises that the contribution of all people with an affinity for the park is important and will build internal responsiveness and skills to assist community involvement in park management.

6 To ensure management is integrated with that of the adjoining Kaweka Forest Park

The Kaweka Forest Park adjoins the north-west part of Kaimanawa Forest Park. Kaweka Forest Park is managed by the Department of Conservation's East Coast/Hawke's Bay Conservancy. The boundary between the two parks is an arbitrary line on a map but the parks are in fact one contiguous natural environment. Management should reflect this and ensure that actions are compatible with those of the adjoining Kaweka Forest Park.

7 To maintain and/or develop effective working relationships with adjoining landowners

The public's continued benefit, use and enjoyment of the park relies on the continued public access to and through the park. To ensure that public access is maintained, the department must ensure that effective working relationships are developed and maintained with adjoining landowners, while recognising their private property rights.

Similarly, protection of the park depends, to a large degree, on the use of adjoining land and resources. At present, land use adjacent to the park is for the most part consistent with park values and provides an important buffer zone around the park. Successful working relationships are needed to ensure that this buffer is maintained, with the department providing assistance and advice on this wherever it is sought by private landowners.

3.2 MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Past management experience within the park and public comments received during two rounds of public submissions in the preparation of this plan indicate that a number of issues must be addressed in order to provide strong management direction. Current major issues are outlined below. Many other issues also need to be addressed. These are included in the explanations to plan provisions in the 'Conservation Objectives and Policies' section.

3.2.1 Managing Threats to Biodiversity

The biggest threat to Kaimanawa Forest Park is the major modification of its indigenous ecosystems caused by invasive weeds and animal pests.

Invasive weeds are present in various parts of the park and threaten low-stature vegetation in particular. An example is *Pinus contorta* in the alpine and sub-alpine shrublands and tussock grasslands.

Animal pests pose a major threat to the park's indigenous flora and fauna. They have the potential to cause forest canopy collapse, regeneration failure and the loss of vulnerable species. Damaging animal pests include possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), mustelids (ferrets, stoats and weasels), deer (*Cervus elaphus scoticus*, *Cervus Nippon*), pigs (*Sus scrofa*), rats (*Rattus rattus*), mice (*Mus musculus*), cats (*Felix domesticus*), hares (*Lepus europaeus*), uncontrolled dogs and introduced birds. Introduced fish have an impact on indigenous aquatic habitats and species. These animal pests have the potential to cause local extinctions over the next

ten years and have already caused wide-scale decline, for example in indigenous bird populations.

Most native animal species are in decline in the park, due mainly to predation by introduced pests. Most populations are struggling, except where management is being undertaken such as the aerial 1080 operations in the *Powelliphanta marchanti* protection area. It is possible that local extinctions will occur over the next 10 years. Further intensive management, with an attendant increase in resourcing, is required to halt this decline. At the present time, the park is not given a high priority for nationally significant biodiversity protection programmes.

During two rounds of public consultation submissions indicated strong public support for the protection of the park's indigenous biodiversity. However, submitters were divided on whether indigenous biodiversity should be maintained at current levels or whether to seek restoration to the full complement of ecosystems that would normally be expected to be found in an environment such as the park.

The department cannot protect all indigenous biodiversity throughout the park. This is a mammoth task well beyond current funding levels. Representative sites with high ecological significance have been selected and intensive management of these sites will aim to protect a full complement of species. These sites are discussed in depth in Sections 5.0 Management Zones and 6.1 Biodiversity. These sites have outstanding species diversity and their geography lends them to protection.

3.2.2 Managing the Kaimanawa Recreational Hunting Area

A challenge facing managers of the park is to work with hunters to achieve realistic, sustainable biodiversity outcomes. The recreational hunting opportunity in the park is of national importance. The Kaimanawa/Ahimanawa/Kaweka area has the only large wild herd of sika deer in the southern hemisphere. Red deer can also be stalked throughout the park. In recognition of the sport-hunting potential of the sika herd, the northern part of the park was gazetted under the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 as a recreational hunting area (RHA) in 1982. Recreational hunting areas are intended as places where recreational hunting is the primary means of controlling deer. The Kaimanawa RHA is one of the highest-used RHAs in the country.

Deer have been present in New Zealand for a relatively short time and studies have already shown that the impacts of deer vary by species, location and the values being protected. There is research currently under way (Adaptive Forest Management - AFM) to clarify this further and over time there will be a greater knowledge of the level to which deer need to be controlled in order to protect natural values.

However, studies have shown that deer prevent regeneration of favoured plant species, causing significant changes to the structure and composition of indigenous ecosystems. There is no evidence that equilibrium has been reached between deer and the indigenous ecosystems they inhabit. Deer can continue to inhibit forest regeneration even at low density rates. As many indigenous plant species can live for hundreds of years, it will

be decades, if not centuries, before the longer-term adverse impacts of deer on indigenous forests become clear. In at least some areas within the park, deer-induced changes to the forests and the flow-on effects to other indigenous species are likely to be irreversible.

Refer to 5.3 Kaimanawa Recreational Hunting Area.

3.2.3 Managing Public Access

Maintaining public access to and through the park has, at times, been difficult. The interior of the Kaimanawa Ranges contains a large area of private land known as the 'East Taupo Lands'. When the park's track network was established in the 1970s by the then Forest Service, the tracks that access the Waipakihi, Cascade and Boyd huts and Ngapuketurua trig were put through a block of private land without the landowners' permission. In 2001, the landowners and their lessee raised the possibility of denying free public access through this block. Following discussions between the lessee and the department, the lessee established a paid-permit system for members of the public wanting to use five tracks that crossed this block.

Recreational access to the park's northern and western boundaries through adjacent private land has also been difficult in the past and is currently only legally available via Clements Mill Road, Kiko Road and Kaimanawa Road. During the process for renewal of resource consents for the Tongariro Power Scheme, Genesis Energy negotiated an easement on behalf of the public to allow public use of Kaimanawa Road from State Highway 1 up to the boundary of the park for the duration of its resource consent. This will secure public access to Kaimanawa Road for the life of this plan.

Access to the Mohaka River end of the park is via a legal paper road through Poronui Station. However, in several places this paper road does not follow a practical alignment and, in effect, cannot be used by the public for the purposes of access. As a consequence, the department and the Poronui Station owners came to an agreement whereby a more practical route on Poronui Station land was established. The agreement is for foot access only and does not have any legal status. The department will continue to work with the owners of Poronui Station with regards to ensuring practical foot access in perpetuity through the station to the park.

In 2003 a Nga Whenua Rahui covenant was signed by the department and the owners of the 8600 hectare Needles Block, which is situated at the south-east end of the park. The covenant agreement includes the right for the public to access up the Waipakihi River, though the block of private land on the true left bank downstream of Karikaringa Stream. However, there is currently no legal right of public access across Waipakihi Road, which crosses private land known as the Rangipo North blocks.

During the two rounds of public consultation submissions indicated strong support for maintaining public access to and through the park. Most submissions focused on access across the private block of land (East Taupo

Lands) in the interior of the Kaimanawa Ranges. The great majority of submitters' recognised the property rights of the private landowners and lessee. Some submitters supported the retention of the current permit system for crossing the private land, others suggested the department negotiate a payment on behalf of the public to the landowners, in lieu of the permit system, and some suggested rerouting tracks to ensure that they stay entirely within public conservation land.

The department intends to continue support for a permit system for crossing the interior block of private land, although track rerouting will be investigated if it becomes necessary. The department will continue discussions with the land owners/lessees of East Taupo Lands in regard to making a payment for access on behalf of the public.

The department will continue to advocate for public access to other parts of the park.

Refer to 7.2 Public Access.

3.2.4 Managing Conflict between Aircraft Use and Park Values

The noise and presence of aircraft conflicts with special park qualities such as natural quiet and remoteness and potentially conflicts with the enjoyment of park users who are seeking solitude, physical challenge and a sense of self-sufficiency. The location of helipads near huts also contributes to a growing problem with rubbish in and around huts, as air access allows greater loads to be transported.

Conversely, aircraft can facilitate use and enjoyment of the park by providing access for the less-experienced, people with impaired mobility, visitors with time constraints and specialised groups such as hunters and anglers. They also provide access for management purposes and for some authorised commercial ventures, such as filming and wild animal recovery.

At present the department has no jurisdiction over airspace and cannot control general overflying of the park, though it has some means to influence flight paths through landing permits and concessions.

During two rounds of public consultation submissions indicated that the public have few concerns regarding possible conflicts between aircraft use and the experience of park visitors. Many submitters highlighted their appreciation of the increased recreational opportunity afforded by aircraft access. There were however a number of submissions concerned with the intrusive noise of overflying aircraft, in particular in the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone. The department will seek the co-operation of aircraft operators to re-route their flight routes away from this area if possible.

There was strong opposition to a suggestion from the department that aircraft landing sites be located away from huts. This suggestion was made to reduce the loads transported into huts and consequently the amount of rubbish left at them. However, submitters considered that relocating landing sites would not alleviate the problem, but rather would move it to a different site. Following consideration of submissions,

the department has determined that the policy of locating landing sites adjacent to huts will continue.

Refer to 5.2 Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone and 8.3 Aircraft.

3.2.5 Managing the Impacts of Mountain Biking

Mountain biking is an increasingly popular recreational activity. However, the majority of tracks and routes within the park are not of a standard suitable for mountain biking. In general, cycling tracks need to be wider, of a lower gradient and a higher standard than tramping tracks - hence mountain biking opportunities are limited in a mountainous, erosion-prone area like the Kaimanawa Ranges. In addition, there is potential for conflict between trampers and mountain bikers using the same tracks, particularly on the steep and narrow tracks that are characteristic of the park.

During two rounds of public consultation submissions indicated that backcountry mountain bikers generally agree that the park's terrain makes it unsuitable for mountain bikers. However, downhill mountain bikers submitted that a number of tracks were suitable for their sport. Many submitters sought an overnight mountain biking opportunity. Other submitters were divided on possible conflict between walkers and cyclists though the majority supported the provision of mountain biking opportunities in some parts of the park.

Following consideration of submissions, the department has determined that mountain biking will continue to be permitted on formed and maintained roads, the Tree Trunk Gorge-Kaimanawa Road Track, Kiko Loop Track and Urchin Campsite-Pillars of Hercules Track. The Clements Mill Road-Oamaru Hut Track, via Te Iringa (the Te Iringa Track) will be open to mountain biking for a two-year trial basis.

Refer to 7.8 Mountain Biking.

3.2.6 Protecting the Park's Wilderness Character

There is growing pressure to develop remote areas and/or areas in a natural state within the North Island as domestic and international visitor numbers rise with a resultant increase in demand for facilities and vehicular access. Tongariro National Park, which adjoins the park, has had very strong growth in visitor numbers over the past decade and there has been a noticeable displacement of visitors to Kaimanawa Forest Park.

Consequently, this plan places emphasis on protecting the park's wilderness character through management actions such as: park zoning, limits on further development and maintenance of the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone (REZ) in its natural state, and encouraging limits on aircraft flight paths. Public recreation and benefit will be facilitated where this is consistent with management for conservation.

The draft Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan signalled to the public that the department considered concessionaire use of the Rangitikei REZ incompatible with the wilderness experience and solitude sought by its

visitors and therefore wanted to decline further concession applications for this area. Most public submissions did not support this proposal but many submitters agreed with the purpose for which this area has been set aside. To balance protection and use of the Rangitikei REZ, the expectations of visitors set out in the Visitor Management Settings found in Appendix A will be used to guide the department and these are reflected in policies set out in section 8.0 Concessions and Other Approvals.

Refer to 5.1 Visitor Management Settings, 5.2 Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone, 8.0 Concessions and Other Approvals and Appendix A Visitor Management Settings.

4.0 Treaty of Waitangi

4.1 TREATY OF WAITANGI

The tangata whenua (people of the land) of the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy are the Ngati Rangi, Ngati Tuwharetoa and Ngati Tahu iwi (tribes). The Ngati Rangi people occupy the southern reaches of the conservancy and the Ngati Tahu people the north-eastern reaches. Between these points and extending to the west, north-west and east boundaries of the conservancy, lies the ancestral domain of the kindred hapu (sub-tribes) of the Ngati Tuwharetoa people.

Through the development of the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy, Ngati Tuwharetoa and the Crown agreed on an approach which would lead to co-operative conservation management. This is reflected in He Kaupapa Rangatira.

Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi

The recognised authorities responsible for determining Treaty principles are the Courts and the Waitangi Tribunal. Based on decisions and findings from these sources, nine important principles have been identified as having broad application. They are:

Kawanatanga The principle of government

Tino rangatiratanga The principle of traditional iwi authority

Exclusive and undisturbed possession The principle of exclusive and undisturbed possession

Tiritetanga The principle of equality

Kaitiakitanga The principle of guardianship

Whakawhanaungatanga The principle of partnership

Tautiaki ngangahau The principle of active protection

He here kia māhio The principle of informed decision making

Whakatika i te mea The principle of redress

The Courts and the Waitangi Tribunal agree that the spirit of the Treaty is what matters. Treaty principles will continue to evolve and reflect changes in circumstances over time. They should not be seen as exhaustive or definitive.

In co-operative conservation management, application of the nine Treaty principles and achievement of their associated objectives depends on the particular circumstances of each case, including the significance to iwi of the land, resource or taonga in question and the statutory framework. The principles and their objectives provide direction for the broader machinery provisions of this plan.

4.2 HE KAUPAPA RANGATIRA - A JOINT INITIATIVE

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy is the lead process for He Kaupapa Rangatira. This plan is an important element in identifying specific protocols to sit inside that kaupapa.

He Kaupapa Rangatira will enable the department and iwi within the conservancy to define and exercise their respective responsibilities with a minimum of conflict. Over time this will help the parties achieve the conservation policies, actions and outcomes which they seek.

He Kaupapa Rangatira is the principal means by which the Treaty principles and objectives will be implemented and achieved in the park. It is a practical and pragmatic expression of the relationship between Ngati Tuwharetoa, Ngati Rangi, Ngati Tahu and the department. The department will facilitate the development of He Kaupapa Rangatira together with iwi, in accordance with the principle of whakawhanaungatanga. Subsequent implementation may occur at an iwi, hapu or whanau level.

In order that the department and park community may understand the Treaty of Waitangi issues that sit in behind and alongside management of the park, the department will maintain an up-to-date register of Treaty of Waitangi claims and their scope. This register will be held by the department's kaupapa atawhai manager.

Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and Objectives

1 Kawanatanga (Article I of the Treaty)

The authority to make laws for the good order and security of the country.

Objective

- To manage the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy in accordance with the Conservation Act 1987 and the acts listed in the First Schedule to the Conservation Act 1987 and to interpret and administer these acts so as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Note: In the Whales Case (Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board v The Director-General of Conservation) the Court of Appeal ruled that section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 applied to all the acts in the First Schedule of the Conservation Act 1987 to the extent that the provisions of section 4 were not inconsistent with the acts of the First Schedule.

2 Tino Rangatiratanga (Article II of the Treaty, Maori version)

The right of Maori to exercise traditional authority and control over their land, resources and taonga.

Objectives

- To recognise and actively promote the exercise by iwi of tino rangatiratanga over their land and resources and taonga of significance to them.
- To identify with iwi opportunities for them to exercise an effective degree of control over traditional resources and taonga that are administered by the department, where this is not inconsistent with

legislation.

Note: an effective degree of control may vary from full authority at one end of the spectrum to a right to be consulted at the other.

3 Exclusive and Undisturbed Possession (Article II of the Treaty, English version)

The right of Maori to exclusive and undisturbed possession of their land, forests, estates and fisheries.

Objective

- To recognise, particularly when the department is exercising its advocacy function, the right of Maori to exclusive and undisturbed possession of land in Maori title and resources and other taonga of significance to iwi.

4 Ūritetanga (Article III of the Treaty, both versions)

The right of Maori and non-Maori alike to equality of treatment and the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship.

Objective

- To ensure that tangata whenua as individual citizens and taxpayers receive fair and equal access to the resources of the conservancy and benefits offered by the department to the general public.

5 Kaitiakitanga

The right of Maori to undertake their duty of guardianship/custodianship/stewardship of their land and resources and taonga of significance to them.

Objectives

- To recognise and actively promote the exercise of kaitiakitanga by iwi in respect of their land, including resources and taonga of significance to them and under the control of the department.
- To facilitate the exercise of kaitiakitanga by iwi in respect of traditional resources and taonga of significance to them where these are administered by the department.

6 Whakawhanaungatanga

The Treaty provides for a partnership between Māori and the Crown, which requires the parties to afford each other reasonable co-operation and utmost good faith, in accordance with their Treaty obligations.

Objectives

- To identify with iwi the means to provide opportunities for partnership and participation in conservation management, particularly in respect of traditional land, resources and taonga administered by the department.
- To actively develop a relationship of co-operation, utmost good faith and mutual respect between the department and iwi and to reflect the importance and quality of that relationship in the culture of the department and all of its operations.

7 Tautiaki Ngangahau

The duty of the Crown to ensure the active protection of taonga for as long as Maori so wish it.

Objective

- To actively protect the interests of iwi in respect of land, resources and taonga administered by the department or under the department's control where these are considered by iwi to be of significance to them.

8 He Here Kia Māhio

The duty of the Crown to make informed decisions.

Objective

- To engage in regular, active and meaningful consultation with iwi in respect of the work of the conservancy.

9 Whakatika i te Mea

The duty of the Crown to remedy past breaches of the Treaty and to prevent further breaches.

Objectives

- To avoid any action which might frustrate or prevent redress of Treaty claims.
- To actively assist the Government in the resolution of Treaty claims where these relate to Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy.
- To address any grievances which tangata whenua might bring to the attention of the department, formally or informally, in respect of any act or omission of the department in the administration of the park.

Development Issues for He Kaupapa Rangatira

The following issues are indicative (but not exhaustive) of the matters which need to be resolved to the satisfaction of iwi and the department in order to achieve co-operative conservation management:

- consultation between the parties;
- participation in conservation management projects;
- sharing of resource information;
- recognition of the parties' perspectives and sharing of resources;
- development of resource management approaches to achieve the protection of taonga;
- involvement in the process of considering concession applications;
- iwi involvement in concession opportunities;
- cultural resource allocation;
- management of wahi tapu;
- participation by iwi in the preparation of management plans, strategies and policy;
- development of projects which give effect to the principles of tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga;
- involvement in visitor services to achieve ongoing protection of taonga;

- identification of restoration projects for iwi participation;
- use of tikanga Maori in the department's work;
- staff development in cultural learning; and
- departmental involvement in relevant Treaty claims.

5.0 Management Zoning

The following management zones overlay the park and assist with consistent and planned park management.

The park is divided by three types of management zones; eight Ecological Management Areas, the Remote Experience Zone in the south and the Recreational Hunting area in the north. Visitor Assets are managed according to the parks Visitor Management Settings

The Ecological Management Area (EMA) zoning replaces the previous intention of the gazettal of the Tiraki, Ecology Stream, Waipakihi and Waiotaka ecological areas that was proposed in the draft Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan (December 2005, section 5.1 Ecological Areas). These ecological area gazettals were originally proposed when the park was managed as a state forest park under the Forests Act 1949. Under that Act, ecological area status would have protected these indigenous forest associations from logging. When the Conservation Act 1987 was enacted all state forest parks became 'conservation parks' under this new Act and so were no longer at threat from logging. Conservation management focuses on a range of habitat types described in section 2.3.1 Flora. Regionally or nationally significant parts of what were the proposed Tiraki, Ecology Stream, Waipakihi and Waiotaka ecological areas will now be included in the Ecological Management Area zoning.

Refer to Map 1 Management Zones and Map 5 Significant Habitats.

5.1 ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT AREAS

The Kaimanawa Forest Park is located in the central North Island and is part of the North Islands contiguous axial ranges. Bioclimatically the area is dominantly montane and alpine with vegetation and associate species typical of these habitats, similar sites are found in both the North and South Islands.

The Kaimanawa Forest Park is ecologically important with intrinsic values of an integrated forest system. It is valuable both on a local and national scale. The indigenous flora and fauna of the park is vulnerable and in many instances, under threat. The conservation of natural heritage is subject to a process of prioritisation due to resource constraints and the high vulnerability of New Zealand native species and ecosystems. Prioritisation for conservation management will respond to the status of species, habitats, threats, the availability of resources, and the likelihood of management success. Significant habitats and sites of key species have been identified and are referred to as Ecological Management Areas (EMAs).

The identified EMAs are:

- 1 the Waipakahi Valley;

- 2 the Alpine Areas throughout the park;
- 3 the forest west of Umukarikari range;
- 4 the Rangitikei Otamateanui confluence;
- 5 the Te Tiringa frost flat;
- 6 the Clements Mill Road swamp;
- 7 the Waimarino River; and
- 8 the Rangitikei River.

The monitoring infrastructure in the park is designed to provide information on the effectiveness of existing management practices, trends and vegetation compositional health and to identify the need for additional management, refer to Map 7 Monitoring Locations.

Refer to Map 4 Land Cover. The location and ranking of significant species and habitats in the park is depicted in Map 5 Significant Habitats, as are the location of the Ecological Management Areas. The location of existing biodiversity management activity and monitoring infrastructure are shown in Map 6 Managed Sites and Map 7 Monitoring Locations respectively.

Specific policies and objectives for the EMAs are found in 6.1 Biodiversity

5.2 RANGITIKEI REMOTE EXPERIENCE ZONE

Objectives

- a To protect the wilderness character of the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone (REZ) in perpetuity.
- b To manage the Rangitikei REZ in accordance with the Wilderness Area provisions of the Conservation Act 1987, Department of Conservation Wilderness Policy and in accordance with the Remote Experience Zone Visitor Management Setting identified in Appendix A.

Policies

- 1 No visitor facilities will be provided in the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone.
- 2 Aircraft landings in the Rangitikei REZ will only be permitted in emergencies or for management purposes.
- 3 The department will advocate to aircraft operators that they exclude overflying of the Rangitikei REZ.
- 4 New concession applications or concession renewals involving use of the Rangitikei REZ should be restricted to be in accordance with the Visitor Management Setting identified in Appendix A. The total number of people per party should be restricted to three. No more than two groups should be permitted in the Rangitikei REZ at any one time. This will be managed by the department through a booking system.
- 5 The department will recommend to the Minister that a maximum

number of recreation concessions per annum for the Rangitikei REZ be set in consultation with current concessionaires and taking into account the concessionaires' activity returns for the financial year 2005/06.

- 6 Applications for events within the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone should be declined.

Explanation

The Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone (REZ) ensures that priority is given to management to avoid or minimise any adverse effects on the natural resources and the park's wilderness character within the headwaters of the Rangitikei and Otamateanui catchments. The Rangitikei REZ incorporates an area of 15 841 hectares.

Within the Rangitikei REZ, land is retained in its natural state, with no facilities provided and no aircraft landings permitted. An exception to the restriction on aircraft landings is made for management purposes and emergencies - which include search and rescue operations, wild animal control operations, the Otamateanui Powelliphanta marchanti snail protection work and fire-fighting. Recreational hunting is not considered a management purpose.

Current national policy relating to wild animal control operations on public conservation land means that the park, including the Rangitikei REZ but excluding the Kaimanawa RHA, is open for hunting by helicopters from 1 June to 30 October each year.

Visitors to the Rangitikei REZ tend to seek the solitude and independent experience. Contact with large numbers of concessionaires and their clients would undermine the reasons for visiting this zone. For these reasons, the department will seek to restrict concession applications involving use of the Rangitikei REZ. Where a concession is held for activities in the Rangitikei REZ at the commencement of this plan, that concession will be permitted to continue for its term. New concession applications or concession renewals will be required to comply with the provisions identified in the Visitor Management Settings (refer to Appendix A). These reflect visitors' expectations in regard to the Rangitikei REZ and include maximum party sizes of three people with no other parties being encountered during a trip. The department will therefore recommend to the Minister that these expectations be reflected in concessionaire use of the Rangitikei REZ. Concession applications involving facilities and infrastructure, aircraft landings or large number of people, for example events, will be declined in accordance with the provisions of this plan.

The Rangitikei REZ is part of a wider area of land proposed for gazettal as a wilderness area under section 20 of the Conservation Act 1987 during the 1980s. The background to the wilderness proposal is as follows:

- At the Wilderness Conference of 1981, Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand formulated a proposal for a 47 000 hectare Kaimanawa-Kaweka Wilderness Area, including some 13 500 hectares of the park and extensive areas of Māori land and Defence Department land.

- In 1983, the Wilderness Advisory Group recommended to Government a Kaimanawa wilderness area of 21 000 hectares. This wilderness contained some 7000 hectares of Māori land, the inclusion of which was essential for wilderness criteria to be met.
- Existing use on adjacent land is compatible with a remote experience zoning.
- The possibility of establishing a wilderness area within the park, particularly in the Rangitikei catchment, has been closely examined. It is now considered that a wilderness area could not be established because it would not have clearly defined topographical boundaries (the park boundary is deficient in this regard) and, were it to extend into the Waipakihi catchment, it could not be buffered so as to be unaffected by human influences.

The possibility of establishing a Kaimanawa wilderness area has not been abandoned. A remote experience classification is established over this area to prevent irreversible management decisions which would compromise any future Kaimanawa wilderness area option.

Refer to 5.1 Visitor Management Settings, 8.1 Concessions General, 8.2 Guiding, 8.3 Aircraft, 8.6 Events, Map 1 Management Zones and Appendix A Visitor Management Settings.

5.3 KAIMANAWA RECREATIONAL HUNTING AREA

Objective

- a To continue to manage the Kaimanawa Recreational Hunting Area as a gazetted Recreational Hunting Area (RHA), for the purposes of recreational hunting, where hunting as a means of recreation is to be used to control (though not exclusively) wild animal numbers, to assist with the protection of natural and historic resources.

Policies

- 1 The Kaimanawa RHA will continue to be managed in accordance with the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 and the objectives and policies in this plan.
- 2 An adaptive Recreational Hunting Management Plan will be prepared for the park, including the RHA, in consultation with an established working group, which represents the hunting community. It will balance the recreational resource requirements with conservation values and ecosystem services. The principles under which the working group will operate will be formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding with the department.
- 3 The use of deer repellent during possum control operations in the Kaimanawa RHA will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Explanation

The Kaimanawa, Ahimanawa and Kaweka ranges support the only wild herd of sika deer in the Southern Hemisphere. In recognition of the sport hunting value of this herd a recreational hunting area (RHA) was

gazetted in the north-east of the park in 1982. The RHA covers an area of 23 980 hectares of mainly mixed red/silver beech forests within the Kaipo, Hinemaiaia and Oamaru river catchments.

The Kaimanawa RHA is managed under the Wild Animal Control Act 1977. In recreational hunting areas, recreational hunting is the primary (though not exclusive) means of control of wild animal numbers. One of the key requirements of the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 for RHA management is the preparation and review (every five years) of a wild animal control plan.

Within the Kaimanawa RHA no wild animal recovery operations are allowed and deer repellent can be used during animal pest control operations.

The national Policy Statement on Deer Control states that the status and management of existing recreational hunting areas will be reviewed as and when necessary in order to facilitate deer control to protect natural resources, as provided for in Part III of the Wild Animal Control Act 1977. The Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan Review Discussion Document 2004 signalled an intention to review the status of the RHA. An overwhelming majority of submitters considered that the Kaimanawa RHA gazettal should be retained in recognition of the value placed on it by recreational hunters. Following consideration of submissions, the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy has signalled that it does not intend to seek a review of the status of the Kaimanawa RHA.

The department's policy for use of deer repellent on public conservation land is that it may only be used in recreational hunting areas. The department can consider approving its use during possum control operations within the Kaimanawa RHA on a case-by-case basis.

Refer to 7.7 Recreational Hunting, 8.5 Wild Animal Recovery and Map 1 Management Zones.

5.4 VISITOR MANAGEMENT SETTINGS

Objective

- a To manage the park consistent with the Visitor Management Settings and associated criteria identified in Appendix A, in order to protect the park's natural resources, historic and cultural heritage and distinctive wilderness character.

Policy

- 1 The park will be managed in a manner consistent with the Visitor Management Settings and associated criteria identified in Appendix A.

Explanation

Providing for appropriate recreational (visitor) use is one of the principal functions of the department, where that use is not inconsistent with the protection of natural and historic resources. In meeting the requirement

(in section 19 of the Conservation Act 1987) that the department facilitate public recreation and enjoyment of the park, the department recognises that park values can be positively or negatively affected through the management of visitor use.

The park's strength is in backcountry and remote-type opportunities which cater to visitors who seek such experiences. The park cannot be all things to all visitors but is managed as part of a complementary system of recreational opportunities, both within the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy and beyond.

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is a recreation planning method used to help identify the Visitor Management Settings contained in Appendix A. These settings provide for particular park values or visitor experiences in different areas of the park. Emphasis is placed on protection of the park's wilderness character. The ROS categories used reflect this. The ROS approach is set out in the New Zealand Recreation Opportunity Spectrum: Guidelines for Users 1993, the Recreation Strategy for Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy (forthcoming) and the Visitor Strategy 1996.

The Visitor Management Settings strongly influence the nature and standard of visitor facilities provided throughout the park. They can be used to assist with managing concession activities in a way that does not detract from the desired experiences of visitors. They also assist in the management of adverse effects (for example, aircraft noise) or conflicts between visitor activities.

Visitor Management Settings appropriate for the park, based on those in the above references, have been used in this plan. The settings are:

- Remote Experience

Incorporates the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone, a 15 841-hectare area over the headwaters of the Rangitikei River and Otamateanui Stream.

- Backcountry Off Track

Applies to all areas that have no visitor facilities and are not part of the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone.

- Backcountry Tracks

Includes all the backcountry areas that contain visitor facilities such as tracks, huts, camping areas, signs and toilets.

- Front Country

Includes visitor facility areas at the Kiko Road, Clements Mill Road and Kaimanawa Road ends, with assets such as short walks, tracks, picnic areas, toilets and signs.

The Backcountry Off Track and Remote Experience Zone visitor management settings overlay the greater part of the park.

It is important to note that the park is part of a complementary network of recreational opportunities throughout the conservancy and country. The Visitor Management Settings have been considered within this national framework as well as within the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy

system. Visitor Management Settings for the park have focused on the opportunities that are unique and/or regionally or nationally best represented within the park. Where comparable experiences can be or are adequately provided for outside the park, there will be a reduced need to provide for them inside the park.

The national Visitor Strategy (1996) identifies seven representative visitor groups. Five of these groups are provided for by the opportunities offered within the park; these are cross-referenced against the Visitor Management Settings in Appendix A.

The spectrum of opportunities provided for these visitor groups include the easily reached Pillars of Hercules viewing opportunity and the Kiko Loop Track day walk, the car-accessible camping opportunities along Clements Mill and Kaimanawa roads, the park's track and hut network, the rugged backcountry accessible from the park's track network and the wilderness of the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone.

Refer to Appendix A Visitor Management Settings and Map 1 Management Zones.