Approved

MAITAHI

SCENIC RESERVE

DRAFT

MANAGEMENT PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS & SURVEY

This management plan for the Maitahi Scenic Reserve has been prepared in terms of the procedures set down by Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977, on the assumption that the reserve would be reclassified pursuant to Section 24 of the Act as a Scientific Reserve.

With concurrence of the Taranaki National Parks and Reserves Board reclassification of the reserve as a scientific reserve has been approved under delegated authority, by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth.

I therefore approve the management plan pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977 and a delegation from the Minister of Lands.

Dated this day of 1982

P H C LUCAS
Director General of Lands

PREFACE

The Department of Lands and Survey has responsibility in terms of the Reserves Act 1977 of providing, for the preservation and management, for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand possessing recreational use or potential, wildlife, indigenous flora and fauna, environmental and landscape amenity or interest, and natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological, scientific, educational, community, and other special features and values. Scenic reserves are an important part of the reserves system. They may be one of two kinds:

1. For the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, enjoyment, and use of the public, suitable areas possessing such qualities of scenic interest, beauty, or natural features or landscape that their protection and preservation are desirable in the public interest.

2. For the purpose of providing in appropriate circumstances suitable areas which by development and the introduction of flora, whether indigenous or exotic, will become of such scenic interest or beauty that their development, protection, and preservation are desirable in the public interest.

The Maitahi Scenic Reserve is of the first kind.

Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 requires that the administering body shall within five years of the commencement of the Act (i.e. 1 April 1978) prepare and submit to the Minister of Lands for his approval a management plan for the reserve under its control, management, or administration. The management plan is to provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection and preservation, as the case may require, and, to the extent that the administering body's resources permit, the development, as appropriate, of the reserve for the purposes for which it is classified.

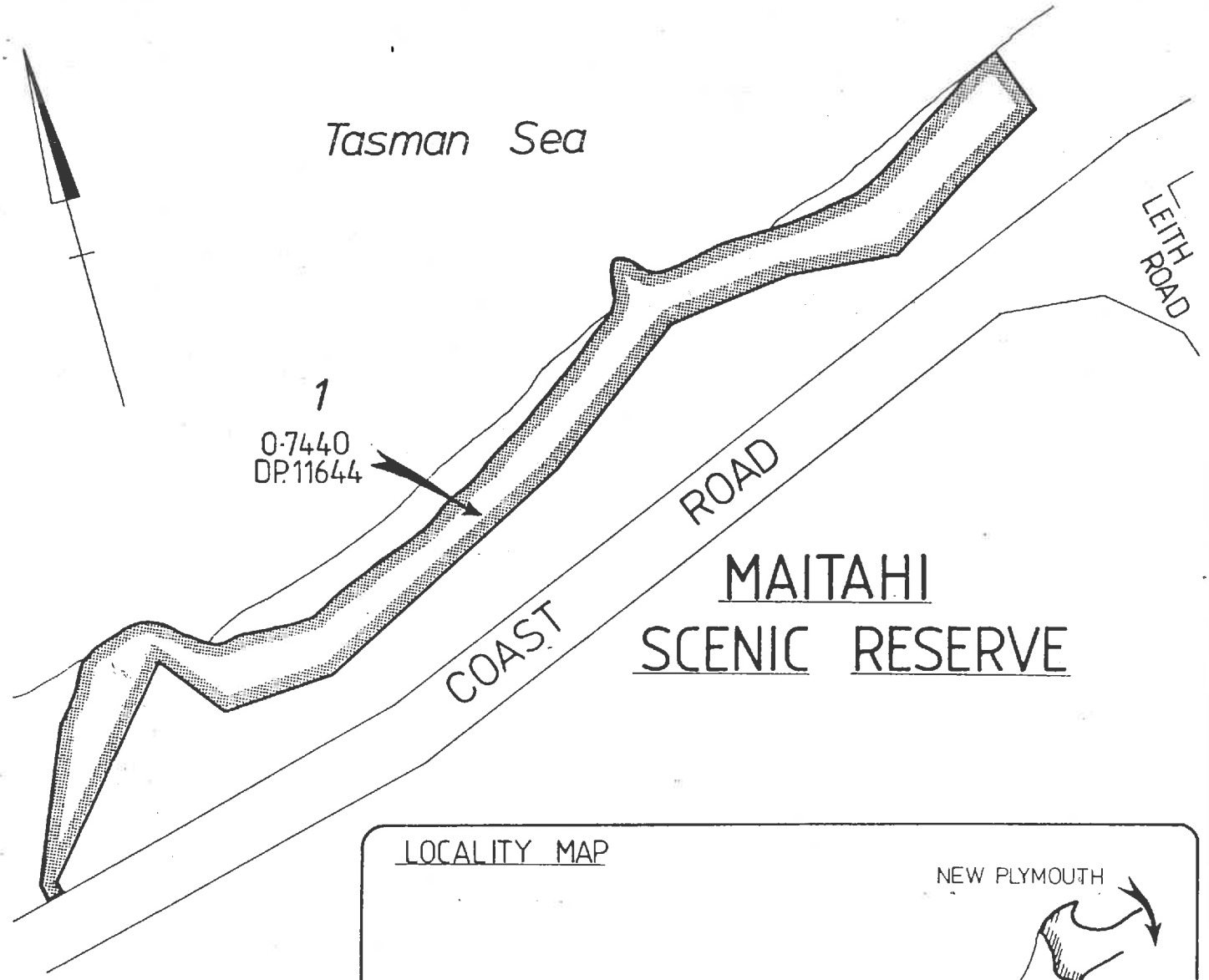
This Management Plan is concerned with setting objectives and policies for the management of the Maitahi Reserve as a Scientific Reserve. The argument in support of this is contained in paragraph 1.11. It contains a description and assessment of the reserve and an expression of the management objectives, policies and implementation practices considered suitable for its ongoing management. It is against these objectives and policies that specific proposals can be assessed. The policies have been designed to provide cohesion and a positive direction for management, but flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions. The Plan will be kept under continuous review and will be comprehensively reviewed if and when this should become necessary.

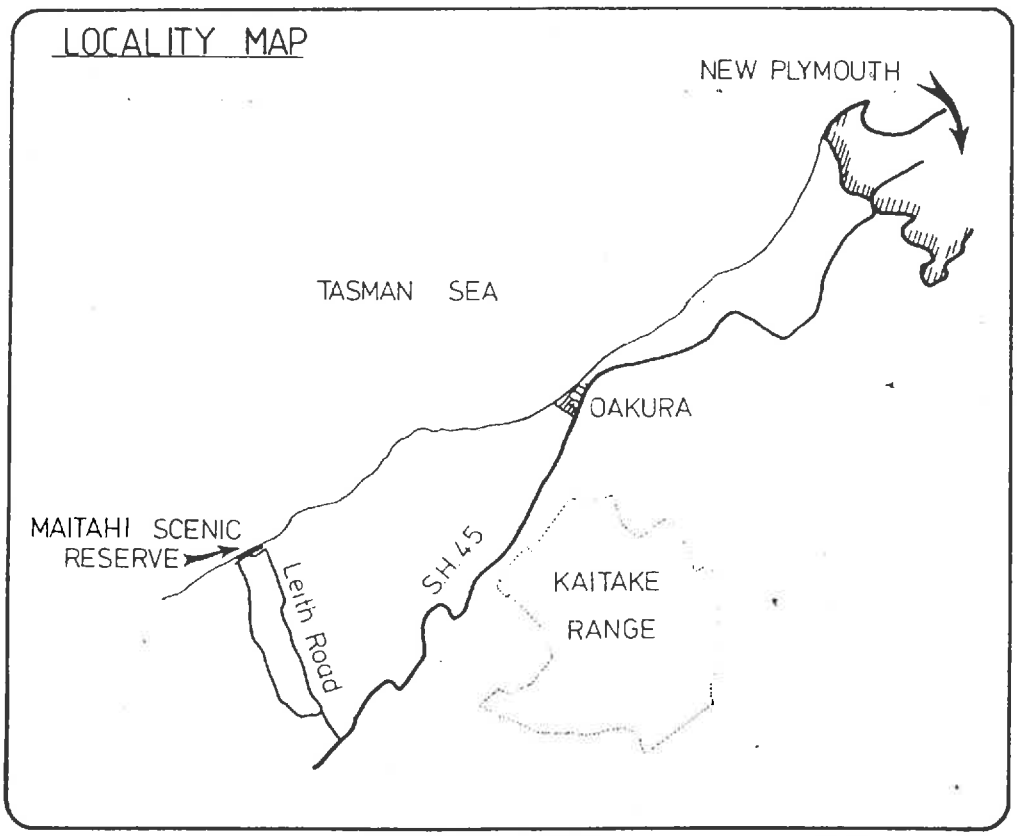
The opportunity for the public to involve itself in the management planning process is provided for in the Act.

This Management Plan has been prepared by the New Plymouth Office of the Department of Lands and Survey.

All correspondence should be addressed to: Commissioner of Crown Lands
Department of Lands and Survey
Box 43
NEW PLYMOUTH

C O N T E N T S





BLOCK I CAPE			SURVEY DISTRICT	SCALE 1:2000	
LOCAL AUTHORITY TARANAKI	COUNTY .	TARANAKI		LAND DISTRICT	
DRAWN BY H. Papuni	CHECKED BY	DATE 17·2·81	FILE 13/233	REF PLANS DP 11624	AIR PHOTOS 4339/2

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Legal Description and area

Lot 1, D.P. 11644, Block I, Cape Survey District. Area: 7440 square metres.

1.2 Location

The reserve is located on the coast in the Taranaki County, 18km south-west of New Plymouth.

1.3 Access

Access to the reserve is obtained from State Highway 45 via Leith and Coast Roads.

1.4 Tenure

Acquired as a reserve for scenic purposes pursuant to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953. (N.Z. Gazette of 2 February 1978, page 210). Classified as a reserve for scenic purposes pursuant to Section 19 (1)(a) Reserves Act 1977. (N.Z. Gazette of 10 July 1980, page 2050).

1.5 Topography

The Reserve is a narrow coastal strip of approximately 20 metres, comprising mainly of cliffs at the rear of the boulder beach exposed at low tide; and also two laharic promontories. Between the promontories there is a small swampy fan at the stream mouth.

1.6 Geology and Soils

Located in the Taranaki volcanic region, the underlying geological formation is Maitahi Lahars (Neall, 1979). The laharic deposits are exposed on the promontories. Soils are classified as yellow-brown loams of the Egmont black loam soil set. Colluvial deposits are at the base of the cliffs, and soils are skeletal on the promontories.

1.7 Climate

The Maitahi Scenic Reserve experiences a typical coastal New Plymouth climate with a summer-winter temperature range of 24°C to 7°C. Rainfall is a moderate 1500mm - 2000mm per annum.

1.8 Vegetation

According to B R Clarkson's 1980 Biological Survey Report (1) there are six distinct areas of vegetation (or habitat) as follows:

A. karaka-taupata/flax. Wind-shorn karaka 5-7m in height on cliff sides with taupata 4-6m in height along the immediate coastal fringe and overhanging the boulder beach. Where the canopy is broken, flax together with some kawakawa and hangehange up to 3m in height occur. Karaka is more common in the eastern sections of the reserve whereas taupata and flax become dominant towards the west with only a few karaka present there. Boxthorn is prominent in parts along the top of the cliff along the southern boundary. Cattle browsing and trampling are evident; flax is being heavily browsed and the understorey is quite bare. Plants present in the ground cover such as Asplenium lucidum, Carex flagellifera, Pteris macilenta var. saxatilis and sea celery (close to the beach) are scattered and restricted to more inaccessible places. Cattle are also causing erosion on the cliff tops by congregating on the cliff edge adjacent to the vegetation.

B. taupata-flax-gorse up to 1m high on eastern promontory. Various coastal herbs such as glasswort, sea primrose, NZ ice-plant, sea celery, Selliera radicans and Lobelia anceps are present on the rocky outcrops exposed to the sea. Scandia rosaefolia (Angelica rosaefolia) (aniseed) and Peperomia urvilleana, two herbs both uncommon in the Taranaki Land District are growing in relatively sheltered spots on this promontory. These two plants are limited to three or four individual clumps and their future at present is uncertain because the reserve is deteriorating as a result of cattle damage.

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(1) Clarkson, B R 1980 : Maitahi Scenic Reserve. Biological Survey Report. Department of Lands and Survey, New Plymouth, File 13/223, folio 84, unpublished.

C. flax-gorse up to 1m high on western promontory. Some taupata, boxthorn and rauhuia (Linum monogynum) also present. Generally second growth vegetation and most of the coastal herbs found on the eastern promontory (habitat B) are absent probably due to the greater disturbance there.

D. raupo-flax-karamu-toetoe up to 2m high in swampy area on fan at mouth of small stream.

E. Boxthorn-taupata/flax-gorse above the tractor track at entrance to reserve. Erosion of the hillside as a result of cattle trampling is quite marked.

F. Pasture.

1.9 Background to Reservation

Following the completion of the Coastal Reserves Investigation for the Taranaki County, (2) and at the request of the Department of Lands and Survey, Mr A P Druce, a botanist with Botany Division, DSIR, Lower Hutt, provided a report (3) confirming the importance of this coastal vegetation. An approach was then made to the owners of the land, Mr and Mrs J M Putt, who in 1976 agreed to donate the land to the Crown for scenic reserve purposes. The reserve was named Maitahi after the stream which runs through it. The acquisition of the land as a reserve and the naming of the reserve were gazetted in February 1978.

1.10 Adjoining Land Use

This coastal reserve is bounded on three sides by farmland which is subject to the usual rural pastoral uses, in particular, cattle grazing.

The land immediately surrounding the reserve is held on freehold tenure, partly by J M and D J Putt (southwestern and southern boundaries) CT 249/66 and partly by R D and J B Barclay (northeastern boundary) CT 147/26. The coastal strip of the Barclay property contains similar values to those of the reserve and it is most desirable that it be added to the reserve.

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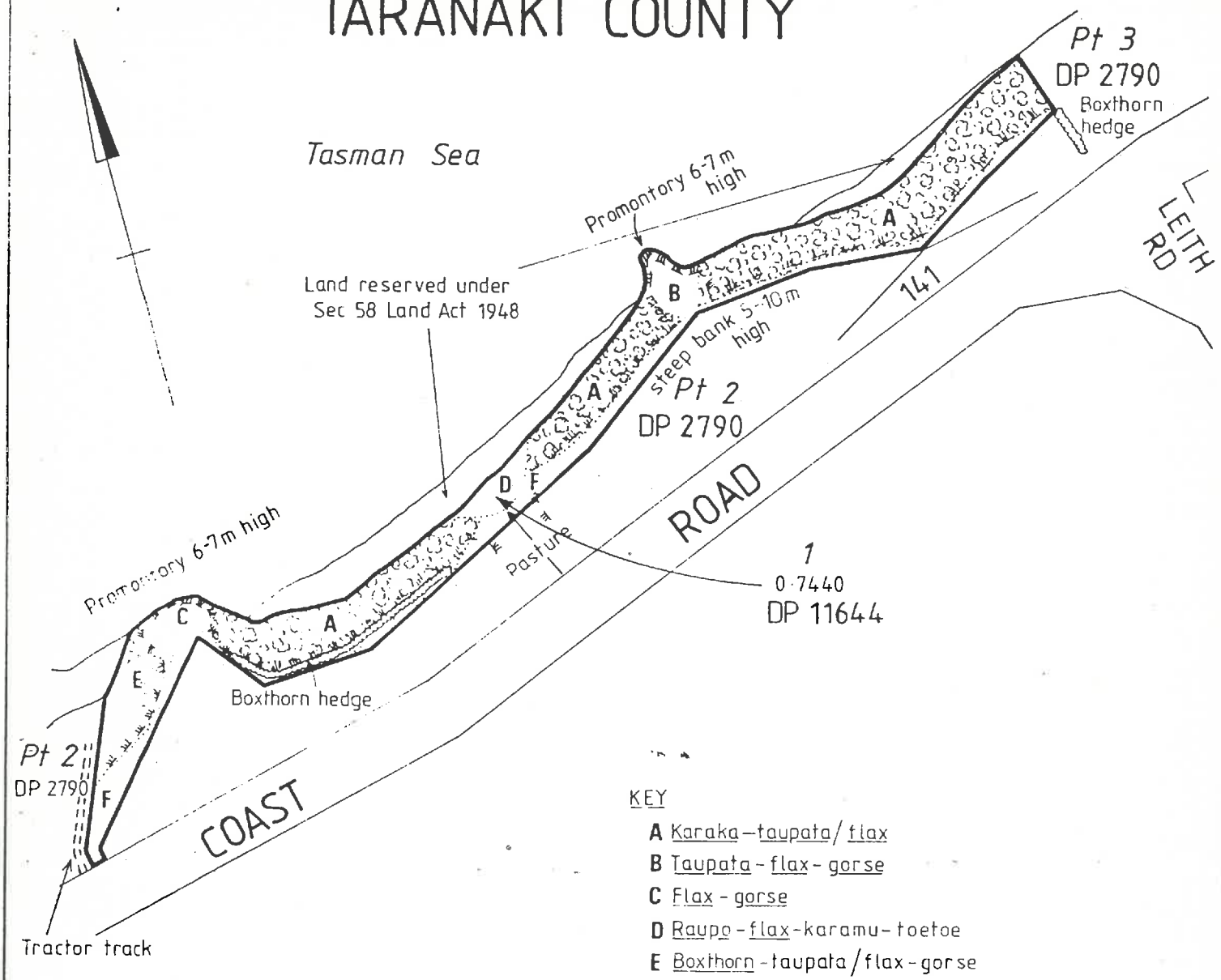
(2) Department of Lands and Survey, 1972 : Taranaki Land District Coastal Reserves Investigation : Report on Taranaki County. Department of Lands and Survey, New Plymouth.

(3) Druce, A P 1973 : Notes on proposed Scenic Reserve, Leith Road, Western Taranaki Coast. Botany Division, D.S.I.R., Lower Hutt, unpublished.

TARANAKI LAND DISTRICT
TARANAKI COUNTY



KEY

- **A** Karaka – taupata / flax
- **B** Taupata - flax - gorse
- **C** Flax - gorse
- **D** Raupo - flax - karamu - toetoe
- **E** Boxthorn - taupata / flax - gorse
- **F** Pasture

Vegetation Plan

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MAITAHI SCENIC RESERVE

Lot 1 D.P 11644

Total Area 0·7440 ha

20 0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140

BLOCK I	CAPE SURVEY DISTRICT	SCALE 1:2000	
LOCAL AUTHORITY TARANAKI COUNTY	TARANAKI LAND DISTRICT		
DRAWN BY BLaw	CHECKED BY Mirrall	DATE JULY 1980	FILE 13/223
REF. PLANS DP 11644	AIR PHOTOS 433912		

1.11 Classification

Although the reserve was given to the Crown as a Scenic Reserve and has been classified as a scenic reserve pursuant to Section 19 (1)(a) of the Reserves Act 1977, there appear to be good and sound reasons to indicate that scientific reserve classification would be more appropriate.

A scenic reserve pursuant to Section 19 (1)(a) of the Reserves Act is -

> for the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, enjoyment, and use of the public, suitable areas possessing such qualities of scenic interest, beauty, or natural features or landscape that their protection and preservation are desirable in the public interest.

A scientific reserve pursuant to Section 21 of the Reserves Act is -

> for the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity for scientific study, research, education, and the benefit of the country, ecological associations, plant or animal communities, types of soil, geomorphological phenomena, and like matters of special interest.

The objectives of management of reserves of both classifications are substantially the same and the prime objective in both cases is to preserve the indigenous flora and fauna and to exterminate the exotic flora and fauna, but in the case of scientific reserves the following differences apply -

> (a) With the consent of the Minister of Lands, the reserve or any specified part of the reserve, may be manipulated for experimental purposes or to gain further scientific knowledge
>
> (b) For the adequate protection and management of the reserve, the Minister of Lands may from time to time, by notice in the Gazette, prohibit access to the reserve or any specified part of it.

With the exception of the Motunui Coastline of the Maitahi Reserve, the karaka-taupata dominated forest is probably the only remaining native forest on the Taranaki ring plain coastline and, additionally, the reserve also contains two plants uncommon in the Taranaki Land District, namely, Peperomia urvilleana and aniseed (Angelica rosaefolia). Consequently the preservation of the flora is of great importance. Furthermore, because of the damage caused by the presence of livestock, the survival of the uncommon plants has been endangered

and emergency steps have had to be taken by way of planting flax and toetoe to provide shelter for the surviving endangered species. The introduced plants, although indigenous to New Zealand, are not from seed obtained from Maitahi and would not normally be admissable in a scenic reserve, but in this case are necessary for the preservation of the endangered species.

The classification of Nature Reserve is the other one that should be considered as such a reserve is for the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity indigenous flora and fauna or natural features that are of such rarity, scientific interest or importance, or so unique that their protection and preservation are in the public interest. This classification is not appropriate however because it does not allow for the vegetation to be manipulated and it prohibits public access except by permit, and such prohibition is not necessary at present and can be invoked later if necessary under a scientific classification which provides a discretion in this regard.

A parallel case in the Wellington Land District is the Himatangi Scientific Reserve.

Because this reserve has been manipulated, for very good reason, the appropriate classification is that of Scientific. The type of management to be given any reserve is dependent on its classification and in this case the management plan and change of classification from Scenic to Scientific are inseperable. Consequently the public notification required in terms of Sections 24 (Change of Classification) and 41 (Management Plans) will be carried out concurrently.

2. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT FEATURES

2.1 Fencing and Gorse Control

Fencing of Maitahi Scenic Reserve to keep cattle out is of the highest priority in order to protect the plants within the reserve from browsing, trampling and cliff erosion. Construction of a fence along the southern boundary of the reserve at the top of the cliffs could however result in a potential gorse problem. Gorse has become established between the pasture and the reserve vegetation and until 1980 has been controlled by spraying. One of the conditions of gifting the reserve by the landowners (Mr and Mrs J D Putt) was that the Department of Lands and Survey was to supply them with one gallon of spray per year for gorse control (Lands and Survey File 13/223, folio 28). This is undesirable because native plants adjacent to the gorse could also be damaged or killed and therefore, the department should take over gorse control now that the reserve is fenced. Planting of flax (Phormium tenax) and toetoe (Cortaderia toetoe not C. fulvida, as only the former species is present in the reserve) between the fenceline and the native vegetation will be necessary to suppress the gorse, to prevent further erosion and to eventually aid regeneration here. Flax and toetoe are hardy species and should be able to withstand the exposed environment of the cliff tops. Removal of gorse by hand will probably also be necessary until the planted species are properly established.

There is also some danger of gorse increasing its range on the eastern promontory (habitat B) and outcompeting some of the coastal herbs that are growing here. Aniseed and Peperomia urvilleana, the rarer plants in the reserve are the most likely candidates for such extinction. If the gorse does spread further onto the promontory, it must be very carefully removed (the 5-6 clumps of aniseed and P. urvilleana being staked out beforehand so they are not damaged) and the area again planted up with flax and toetoe.

2.2 Erosion

The vegetation has obviously deteriorated over the last 9 years to 1980 from cattle damage. Areas such as the cliff sides (habitat A) which apparently had an undamaged understorey of predominantly kawakawa in 1971 (4) have now been thoroughly modified by browsing and trampling. Another danger until the reserve was fenced in 1980 was the slipping of the cliff

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(4) A P Druce, op. cit.

face resulting from the movement of cattle on the cliff edge where they congregated for shelter and/or browsing of the reserve vegetation. The ground here is devoid of plant cover and has compacted into unstable tracks which have given way in parts. A major slip here could result in the loss of a large part of this valuable reserve and could even destroy the relatively uncommon plants, aniseed and Peperomia urvilleana which, so far, have escaped animal damage. The planting along the cliff top with species such as flax and toetoe will help to stabilise the ground. Some gorse could be left remaining on the cliff tops so that erosion protection, shelter for small native plants (5) and nitrogen fixation is provided.

2.3 Rubbish tip on Adjoining Land

Rubbish, which includes roofing iron, farm and household wastes, has been dumped over the cliff on the northern boundary of the present reserve (see Vegetation Plan). A P Druce noted that in 1971 this rubbish dump was present but the disfigurement at that stage was small. It is a prominent eyesore at the moment and if the proposed addition is arranged, the tip will be included in the reserve and non-degradable items such as roofing iron, farm implements and cans should then be removed and the tip left for climbing vegetation such as pohuehue and convolvulus to initially colonise and then make way for other plants. The clothing of vegetation on the slip, combined with the new fence on the southern boundary to keep cattle away from the cliff edge should prevent further erosion here. In addition, the planting of flax and toetoe on the slip will aid in stabilisation.

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(5) Peacock, J E 1980 : Maitahi Scenic Reserve. Department of Lands and Survey, New Plymouth, File 13/223, folio 85, unpublished.

3. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

3.1 The management objectives for the reserve based on scientific reserve classification as derived from the Reserves Act 1977, are:

(a) To preserve as far as possible the flora and fauna indigenous to the site with particular emphasis on the preservation of the rare and endangered species.

(b) Subject to (f), to protect and preserve in perpetuity for scientific study, research, education and the benefit of the country, and for their intrinsic worth, the ecological associations and plant and animal communities peculiar to the site.

(c) To exterminate as far as possible the exotic flora and fauna.

(d) To the extent compatible with objectives (a) and (b) to manage and protect the scenic, historic, archaeological, biological and natural features.

(e) To the extent compatible with objectives (a) and (b) to maintain its value as a soil, water, and forest conservation area.

(f) To the extent necessary to achieve (a), to manipulate the reserve by the introduction of flax and toetoe as shelter for the survival of the rare and endangered species. Consideration to be given to the removal of the introductions when they are no longer needed.

4. MANAGEMENT POLICIES

4.1 Administration

Policy

Administration and control of the reserve is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, acting in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Reserves Act 1977. The reserve should remain under the control of the Department of Lands and Survey but subject to the jurisdiction of the Taranaki National Parks and Reserves Board.

4.2 Plan Amendment and Review

Policy

The management plan will be kept under continuous review and will be comprehensively reviewed if and when this should seem to be required so that it is adapted to changing circumstances or in accordance with increased knowledge.

4.3 Reserve Boundaries and Fencing

Policy

To maintain all boundary fences in stockproof condition; and to negotiate for the addition to the reserve of a small strip of land on the north-eastern boundary discussed in paragraph 1.10.

Explanation

The initial area described by Druce (1973) included an extra 0.4km, approximately, of the coastal strip to the N.E. (see File 13/223, folio 1 map) and the species list is based on this larger region. The extra strip outside the reserve comprises a small terrace behind a boulder bank which is bounded by coastal cliffs. The terrace supports a mixture of plants including sprawling clumps of kiekie (not present in reserve), flax, karamu, kawakawa, hangehange as well as adventive grasses and shrubs e.g. prairie grass, cocksfoot, gorse and lupin. The cliffs behind the terrace are covered with karaka-taupata forest which is in better condition than that in the reserve. The addition of this strip to the present reserve is a desirable objective for the preservation of a larger area of probably the only remaining forest of its type on the Taranaki ring plain coastline.

4.4 Adjacent Land Use

Policy

The Commissioner of Crown Lands will seek the support and co-operation of

adjoining land owners so that land management practices are sympathetic to the reserve and its values.

4.5 Interpretation

Policy

With the agreement of the donors of the land, to erect such signs as are necessary for locating and identifying the reserve and interpreting its significant features in a sensitive and meaningful manner.

Explanation .

At the time the land was given to the Crown for a reserve the donors expressed the wish that there be no signs erected except on the seaward boundary.

4.6 Surveillance and Access

Policy

(a) The Department's staff to make regular inspections of the reserve to check and record on file in written and photographic form changes in the vegetation and in particular the uncommon species.

(b) No encouragement to be given to people to visit the reserve but freedom of access to be permitted unless there are indications that people visiting the reserve are harming the resource or causing a deterioration in the vegetation and in particular the uncommon species.

Explanation

The reserve receives a low level of use and at that level people are not causing any harm. It is the trespassing livestock that have caused the damage. It would be unwise to advertise the importance of the reserve, unduly, in case this attracts people in larger numbers.

4.7 Gorse Control

Policy

(a) To discontinue the practice of spraying the gorse, and to plant flax and toetoe between the fenceline and native vegetation. The removal of gorse by hand may be carried out until the planted flax and toetoe are properly established.

(b) To maintain an appendix in this management plan recording the following details of plants deliberately introduced under policy

(a) : Species, Number of plants, Key to planting site on accompanying map, Origin of seed.

Explanation

Spraying the gorse carries with it the risk of damaging or killing the nearby native plants. Flax and toetoe are hardy species, able to withstand the exposed environment of the cliff tops and can help prevent further erosion through their growth, and will also suppress the gorse. Thus these species will aid regeneration of the native plant life. The absence of a record of introduced plants could confuse scientists in years to come by making them think the particular strain of plants is occurring naturally.

4.8 Repair of Cattle Damage

Policy

To supplement the cliff top vegetation with flax and toetoe as well as leaving some gorse growing on some cliff tops.

Explanation

Over the last nine years, the presence of cattle in this area has caused severe deterioration to the native vegetation and stability of the cliff face. The ground on the cliff edge, once covered mainly with kawakawa, is now completely bare and shows signs of potential slipping. A major slip could destroy a large part of the reserve, including the rarer aniseed and Peperomia urvilleana. Fences have been erected to prevent the intrusion of cattle but past damage has to be repaired. The flax, toetoe and gorse will provide protection against erosion and shelter for small plants. The gorse also provides nitrogen fixation in the soil.

4.9 Other Exotic Plants

Policy

To aim at the control and eventually the elimination of exotic plants from the reserve, including the replacement of pasture with flax and toetoe, and the eradication of the boxthorn hedges.

Explanation

It is an offence to introduce any plants into a scenic or scientific reserve without the consent of the Minister of Lands. The control of noxious weeds is dependent upon adjoining lands being similarly kept cleared.

4.10 Taking of Specimens

Policy

To sympathetically consider requests from any qualified person with the necessary credentials, to take limited numbers of specimens of flora for scientific and educational purposes, provided that the taking of specimens does not unduly deplete the number of the species, damage ecological associations, or spoil scenic attractions. No specimens of the endangered plants; Angelica rosaefolia and Peperomia urvilleana, should be taken unless for propagation to restock the reserve.

Explanation

Unlimited approvals to the taking of specimens could result in the depletion of some species which would be contrary to the purpose of the reserve.

4.11 Domestic Animals

Policy

To prohibit the taking of domestic animals into the reserve.

Explanation

These could be harmful to the wildlife and perhaps some plantlife which inhabits the reserve.

4.12 Grazing

Policy

To prohibit grazing of any kind.

Explanation

Grazing, in the past, has already caused severe damage, erosion and deterioration of this reserve. Refer to 2.2 and 4.8. Good sound reasons will be required to change the present situation.

4.13 Camping

Policy

To prohibit overnight camping in the reserve.

Explanation

Camping is a use considered detrimental to the preservation and well-being of the reserve.

4.14 Appointment of Honorary Rangers

Policy

The administering body will appoint a selected few suitably qualified local residents to be honorary reserves rangers.