

3: STATEMENTS OF ASSOCIATION

Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve and White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve (as shown on, respectively, deed plans OTS-201-23 and OTS-201-24)

The Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve and the White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve (together, the Reserves) are of great spiritual, historical and cultural importance to the Hapū of Ngāti Marangatūhetaua (Ngāti Tū), Ngāti Kurumōkihi and Ngāi Te Ruruku. The importance of the Reserves derives from their location in the Tangoio valley, close to Tangoio, one of the principal settlements of the Hapū. The following statement of association is relevant to the Reserves.

- Te Ngarue Stream and its tributaries.

Spiritual importance

The Reserves and their environs contain many natural resources. All natural resources have a mauri (life force). This mauri binds the spiritual world with the physical world and it is this mauri that connects the Hapū with all natural resources. Mauri is therefore the basis of the spiritual relationship of the Hapū with all natural resources.

The Hapū regard all natural resources as being gifts from ngā atua kaitiaki (spiritual guardians). Tangaroa-i-te-Rupetu (Tangaroa) is the spiritual guardian of the moana (sea) and other water bodies and all that lives within them and Tāne-nui-a-rangi of the ngahere (forest) and all that lives within the ngahere. They are sons of Papa-tū-ā-nuku (Earth Mother) and Rangi-nui (Sky Father), from whom all living things descend, including the Hapū. Therefore, ngā atua kaitiaki and the descendants of the Hapū are connected by whakapapa (genealogy). These guardians were central to the lives of Hapū tīpuna (ancestors) and remain culturally significant to the Hapū whānau (families) living today.

Kōrero tuku iho – historical importance

Tangoio has always been an important area of occupation since the first tīpuna settled in the valley. The earliest pā (fortified village) dates from the time of Toi Kairakau (alias Toi Te Huatahi – Toi the Explorer). Toi was a famous navigator and seafarer who established his southernmost pā at the head of the Tangoio valley, above the confluence of Te Ngarue Stream and Te Kareaara Stream, aptly called the Pā-o-Toi. This pā is located across the road from the Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve. Ngāti Tū are direct descendants of Toi.

Located within the Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve is a pā referred to as Rauwirikokomuka pā. Another pā within the valley is Pukenui, located high on the Kaiwaka escarpment at the head of Te Ngarue Stream. Pukenui was built by Kohipipi, a Ngāti Tū chief who occupied it for some time, before rebuilding and occupying the Pā-o-Toi.

Te Rae-o-Tangoio – the forehead of Tangoio, is located near the coast on a promontory, that jutted into what was formerly known as the Tangoio Lagoon (before the 1931 Napier earthquake). It is transected by State Highway 2. Te Rae o Tangoio is an ancient pā site originally established by Tangoio, a chief of the early Toi people. The pā was originally named Te Rae-o-Turei – the head of the turtle, but was renamed Te Rae-o-Tangoio by Tangoio as he lay mortally wounded nearby. Te Rae-o-Tangoio was later occupied by Tataramoa, the eponymous ancestor of Ngāi Tatara (later known as Ngāti Kurumōkihi), and his wife Porangi, Kohipipi's daughter. Marangatūhetaua also occupied Te Rae-o-Tangoio from time to time, and his son Ngapoerau continued in occupation, as do his descendants today.

In addition to the pā named above, there are many other sites of significance in the Tangoio valley which attest to the ahi-kā-roa (long occupation) of the Hapū, including wāhi tapu (sacred places),

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numerous urupā (burial grounds), both ancient and contemporary, mahinga kai (food gathering places) and ancient trails from the coast to Tūtira.

Tangoio remained a principal settlement of the Hapū up until the 1960's when many whānau were forced to disperse due to a series of devastating floods. Even so, some whānau continue to live in the valley today.

Over many generations there have been a succession of whareniui (meeting houses) at various locations in the Tangoio valley. The earlier whareniui was also a whare maire (a place of higher learning and excellence). It was a place where members of the Hapū were educated and had a sound understanding of their tribal history and traditions. The current whareniui, Punanga-te-Wao, stands on Tangoio Marae alongside Tangitū, the wharekai (dining room), and Maungaharuru, a utility building.

Cultural importance

The Tangoio valley, including the Reserves, was a pātaka (storehouse) for the Hapū who lived there.

The ngahere (forests) in the valley were a source of kai (food). In pre-European times there was an abundance of manu (birds). Kererū (native pigeon) in particular, was reported to have been still plentiful at White Pine Bush in the twentieth century. Kaumātua tell of catching kererū in the winter by building a waka (bird snare) and mixing some sweet water in it. Also harvested were tūi (parson bird), weka (woodhen), kākā (native parrot) and kiwi in the ngahere, and pākura (pūkeko or purple swamp hen) and native ducks, such as the pāpera (grey duck), were harvested in the wetland areas. Ngā manu were not only important as a source of food, their feathers were used for cloaks, decorating garments and personal adornment.

Plants were also gathered for kai. Up to the early twentieth century, White Pine Bush was regarded as particularly good for pikopiko (young fern shoots), poroporo and wild gooseberries, as well as miro (brown pine), kiekie and tuwharo berries. The Hapū also gathered kōrau (a type of vegetable), makomako (wineberry) and tawa berries, and karaka nuts.

In addition to being a source of kai, the ngahere was regarded as the "local pharmacy". Hapū members knowledgeable in rongoā (medicinal plants) would gather kawakawa leaves (pepper tree), kōwhai bark, harakeke (flax), runa (dock leaves), kopakopa leaves (Chatham Island forget-me-not), koromiko, mānuka (tea-tree), tutu tree, bluegum tree, ongaonga (native stinging nettle), parapara, piri-piri (burr / biddy-bid), frond stems of mamaku (black tree fern), karaka berries and ngaio. These taonga (treasures) were used for a variety of ailments, were highly valued by tīpuna and remain culturally significant to the Hapū today. However, the availability of rongoā species has diminished considerably over the past century such that Tātarāmoa (bramble / bush lawyer) no longer grows in the valley and the once prolific kawakawa is difficult to find.

Mātauranga (knowledge) associated with the collection of resources from ngā awa (rivers) and ngahere was central to the lives of the Hapū tīpuna and remains a significant part of the cultural identity of the Hapū today. Mātauranga and associated tikanga (customs) and kawa (rules) and karakia (prayers) are all essential for maintaining customary traditions - the ritual and tapu (sacredness) associated with gathering and utilising resources. An example is harvesting of different species according to the seasons or tohu (signs) - according to Hapū kaumātua, the appearance of ripe miro berries was a sign it was time to catch kererū. Another example is the harvesting of rongoā. Extra care was taken with removing leaves and branches to ensure that they would grow back and would remain in plentiful supply.

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Today the Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve comprises regenerating native forest including tītoki, rewarewa (New Zealand honeysuckle), māhoe (whiteywood), putaputawētā (marbleleaf), houhere (lacebark), nīkau (native plam) and kiekie. There are also areas of mānuka (tea tree) and scattered kahikatea (white pine). Manu include the kererū, tūtī (parson bird) and korimako (bellbird).

The White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve comprises mature native forest including kahikatea, mataī (black pine), tītoki, rewarewa (New Zealand honeysuckle), tawa and nīkau, along with kawakawa (pepper tree), porokaiwhiri (pigeonwood) and māhoe (whiteywood). Manu include the kererū, tūtī, korimako and ruru (morepork).

In earlier times, the awa and ngahere were abundant with taonga resources for the Hapū. All of these taonga were harvested for a range of uses, including kai, rongoā, clothing (including feathers for decorating garments and personal adornments), building materials, trade and gifting. Today, the Reserves are the last bastion of ngahere within the Tangoio valley. And the taonga resources within the ngahere and the awa, are far more scarce than in earlier times (and in the case of Tātarāmoa, non-existent).

The continued recognition of the Hapū, their identity, traditions and status as kaitiaki (guardians) is entwined with the Tangoio Valley, including the Reserves and associated resources. Protecting and revitalising taonga species, and the customary practices relating to those taonga species, particularly rongoā, within the Reserves is paramount for present day whānau, as it was for past generations. Guardianship of the area is integral to the cultural well being of the Hapū as kaitiaki.