

3: STATEMENTS OF ASSOCIATION

Te Ngarue Stream and its tributaries (as shown on deed plan OTS-201-36)

Te Ngarue (formerly known as Te Ngaru) Stream and its tributaries including the Rauwirikokomuka and Kareara Streams flow from the steep hills north of Tangoio through the Tangoio valley and exit on the coast at Tangoio Beach. Accordingly, the following statements of association are also relevant to these awa (streams).

- Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve and White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve;
- Pākuratahi Stream and its tributaries; and
- Rocks and Reefs and Hapū Coastal Marine Area.

Te Ngarue Stream is of great importance to the Hapū because it flows alongside Tangoio, the principal settlement of the Hapū, and their present day marae.

Te Ngarue Stream was significant to the Hapū as a key mahinga kai (place for gathering food). Historically, the awa provided a wealth of kai (food) to sustain the Hapū and was particularly abundant with tuna (eels) and tūnanga (whitebait).

Prior to the 1931 Napier earthquake, Te Ngarue Stream and Tangoio valley formed part of the Tangoio Lagoon. It was a very big lagoon and started in the Pākuratahi valley stretching all the way north to Te Rae-o-Tangoio in the Tangoio valley. Following the 1931 Napier earthquake, the lagoon was reclaimed and later became market gardens. The surrounding coastal flat land which had been swamp, became pastoral land.

Oral tradition describes an historical event which illustrates the richness of Te Ngarue as a resource for tuna. Marangatūhetaua, a chief of Ngāti Marangatūhetaua (Ngāi Tū), sought the help of Te Ruruku, a chief from Wairoa, to help defend the fishing grounds at Tūtira and Tangoio, which were being plundered by another hapū. Marangatūhetaua boasted how bountiful the kai was at Tangoio. When Te Ruruku and Marangatūhetaua arrived at Te Rae-o-Tangoio, Marangatūhetaua saw that the mouth of Te Ngarue Stream was blocked. He ordered his sons to open up the channel from the mouth of Te Ngarue Stream to the sea. As the current began to flow swiftly to the sea, the tuna began their run, but up blind channels that had already been prepared. Te Ruruku watched as the people squatted over the channels and with legs astride began pulling out the tuna beneath them, swiftly killing them. The tuna were entering the channels faster than they could be emptied. As Te Ruruku watched this ritual, he saw why Marangatūhetaua had boasted of the bounty of the area. Following this event, Te Ruruku agreed to act as a fighting chief for Ngāti Tū and Ngāti Kurumōkihi and to help them repel the invaders. In exchange, Te Ruruku was gifted land and settled amongst them.

Hapū kaumātua (elders) recall digging channels for tuna in the Tangoio Lagoon in the early twentieth century in much the same way as Marangatūhetaua and his people had done several hundred years before.

In addition to tuna, the Hapū harvested a large number of freshwater fish species including kōkopu (cockabully), tūnanga and ngaore (forms of whitebait), pātiki (flounder) and kōura (freshwater crayfish). Although, freshwater fish and tuna have been severely depleted, they are still an important resource for whānau (families) today.

In Te Ngarue Stream lives a kaitiaki (guardian) of the same name, which takes the form of a tuna. It is highly regarded by the Hapū and is carved on the front of Punanga-Te-Wao, the whare tīpuna (meeting house) at Tangoio Marae.

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One of the tributaries of Te Ngarue Stream is Te Rangiataahua Stream. It was used by the women of the Hapū as a place to give birth. This was due to the fact that the waters were always warm. This tributary was named after the mother of Kupa, one of the last known chiefs of Ngāti Kurumōkihi. His pou (post) which was partially burnt is now housed at the Napier museum. Unfortunately, due to pollution of the awa, it is no longer used for birthing.