

KERERŪ MARAE

484 - 486 Koputaroa Road, Koputaroa 5575

*Recognising Kererū Marae as our principle home. Celebrating being
Ngāti Ngāroango and Ngāti Takihiku.*



KŌPŪTŌROA STREAM

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on behalf of the Kererū Marae Committee

Te Kōpū o te Tōroa
September 2022

Cultural impact assessment report commissioned by the Kererū Marae Committee in response to Te Waka
Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency Ō2NL (Ōtaki to North Levin) expressway.

He kōrero whakamānawa | Acknowledgements

Tēnei te tino mihi ki ngā ringa rehe, ki ngā kaimahi kua whakatakoto i ngā kōrero ō mua kia whai wāhi ai mātou ngā uri o Ngarongo rāua ko Takihiku te māramatanga mō ngā kōrero ō mua mo tēnei wāhi o Te Kōpū o te Tōroa.

Ki te kōmiti whakahaere o te Marae, Huataki Whareaitu rātou ko Rangi Te Whiu Jury, ko Kim Woon tēnei te mihi. He mihi hoki ki a Te Kenehi Teira rāua ko Janelle Tamihana e noho ana ki te pae o Tūmatakāhuki mō ngā hapū o Kererū Marae. Ki ngā whanau e kaha whakapiki te hauora o Te Ripo o Hinemata, e te Tiamana, e Hone tēnei te mihi. He kōrero whakamānawa hoki ki a Heeni Collins, mō ōu mahi rangahau mo te kōawaawa o Kōpūtōroa.

We would like to acknowledge all whanau who have contributed to the collation of this report.

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1. He Kōrero Whakataki | Introduction

“Taumānuka ki runga, Tāwhirihoē ki raro,
ko Te Maire ki uta, ko Te Wharangi ki tai
ko Te Awahou, ko Matararapa, ko Hōkio ki waenganui
ko Papakiri, ko Hōkio, ko Te Pua-o-Tau ngā rua kōiwi o ngā tupuna”

“From Taumānuka (Ōtaki beach) in the south, and Tawhirihoē (on Rangitikei river) in the north; Te Maire inland, Te Wharangi near the coast; with Te Awahou, Matararapa and Hōkio in between. Papakiri, Hōkio and Pua-o-tau are the burial grounds, where the bones of ancestors lie.”

This peha (saying) reiterates the significance and breadth of the rohe (region) which ngā hapū o Kererū (the hapū of Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Takihiku) connect. The name, Kōpūtōroa means the breast of the albatross and refers to the way clouds of mist sometimes rise over the crest of an escarpment by the Kōpūtōroa stream. Resembling the soft, white plumage of an albatross (Tōroa) breast. Tōroa ki uta, Tōroa ki tai - from the forest to the sea, is a reference to the relationship between the Kererū and the Tōroa. This saying is synonymous with the migratory nature of Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga. Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, to which the hapū of Kererū Marae descend. Our people moved between Wharepūhanga and Te Kōpū o te Tōroa often, which was critical to ensure ahi kā remained.¹

Some of the first to settle at Kōpūtōroa included people with whakapapa from all three hapū - Ngāti Takihiku, Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Hinemata. Clearings at Kererū had been made before 1840, when the Treaty was signed. When our tupuna first settled here, there were approximately 28 “tūtū kākā, kaikas, miro, totara and tawa”. tuna, kōkopu, īnanga and smelt were plentiful in the Kōpūtōroa stream, and harakeke was also a rich local resource. There was an extensive wetland, which the Kōpūtōroa stream ran through before it reached the Manawatū river².

The pollution of our waterways has under-mined our rangatiratanga, the authority of our tūpuna and our ability to sustain ourselves from our local environment as the health of the rivers continue to deteriorate, the health of our people deteriorates. With the loss of land and waterways came the loss of economic independence. People were forced to towns and cities, away from their ancestral homes, dismantling their strong connection with their culture, their language, their identity. The continued degradation of the mauri of our surrounding waterways will further undermine article two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi³.

Mauri binds the physical and spiritual worlds and is the life-force of all living things. When the mauri of our awa is low, such is reflected in the living world. High pollution levels and the decimation of the ecology which sustains the mauri of the awa negatively impacts the ability for our hapū to actively engage with our waterways.

The following report details the historical context and relationship which Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Takihiku have with Te Kōpū o te Tōroa (*also spelt Kōpūtōroa or Koputaroa*) which the Ō2NL project have will have an impact.

¹ Ngāti Takihiku pūrongo ā hapū, He iti nā Mōtai, vol 1, p465 - 466

² Otaki MB 9 Manawatu-Kukutauaki no 3. Partition case. Starts 19 July 1889. 4,000 acres.

³ Ngāti Takihiku Pūrongo a Hapū, He iti nā Mōtai, vol 1, p458

2. Ko Ngāti Ngarongo, ko Ngāti Takihiku | The people

Taikapurua was the first leader of Ngāti Ngarongo to migrate south. “Some of the Ngāti Ngarongo came in the first heke, soldiers for Te Whatanui. Taikapurua was one,” Hokowhitu McGregor told the land court in 1905. The first significant Ngāti Raukawa migration was Te Heke Whirinui in 1826. Ihakara Tukumarū (Ngāti Ngarongo) and Poutu Hairuha (Ngāti Takihiku) came in the later heke, Te Heke Mai Raro (1828-30) after the attempt to settle in the Hawkes Bay.

Hekeratua shared during Manawatu-Kukutauaki no 3. partition case proceedings that he was indeed one of the people who travelled with Ngāti Raukawa from Maungatautari to this district. He explained on arrival some of Ngāti Raukawa stayed in Ōtaki while the elders went to kotikoti whenua (select land). Approximately a hundred went to divide the land at Manawatū. Te Koheto and Whatuaio chose the Wakapuni on the north bank of the river. The selection went on up the river and while there they captured the original owners (Muaūpoko) and took the land. The place where the ope camped at the time of the kotikoti whenua was Puni-taua (near the current Pua-o-tau urupā, see figure 1). Ngāti Ngarongo went to Te Wakapuni. Ngāti Takihiku went to Te Kari. Hori Whitiopai gave it to Hairuha. There was said to be 5 pā tuna in that awa. Te Hika gave the east side of Kōpūtōroa to Hairuha and Ngāti Takihiku remained there.

Hairuha then allocated land at Kōpūtōroa to his relatives which was below the mouth of the Otauru to Te Kari. They planted the inland parts at Kererū at Papakiri with potatoes and afterwards they went to Puatahi. Most of Ngāti Ngarongo were at that time living at Te Awahou and Te Raumatangi (current day Foxton).

Ngāti Takihiku were at Katihiku at that time. Both Hairuha and Hori Whitiopai had cultivations at Pikau-tahi, Te Kari and Te Kai o te Kapukapu, east of the Kōpūtōroa stream. Ngāti Ngarongo moved to the area later - having lived at Te Awahou, Matakarapa, and for a time with Ngāti Whakaterere until they quarrelled, when Ngāti Ngarongo moved to Te Maire. They moved to Kōpūtōroa after that.

It was not till 1860 (Kohimarama) that Ngāti Takihiku and Ngāti Ngarongo lived together on the land before the Court. That was the year that the clearing was made at Te Kai o te Kapukapu. That was the first place they occupied together. Te Kai o te Kapukapu was a collective mahinga kai. At this time, hapū cultivated, birded and fished there together. Te Kaikapukapu was named by Ihakara in connection with the preparing of the soil and planting potatoes⁴. The locations of each of these significant sites are identified on figure 1.

Ngā hapū o Kererū have occupied and held mana whenua at Te Kōpū o te Tōroa since the 1830s. It was allocated to Taikapurua of Ngāti Ngarongo initially by Te Rauparaha, and then his relative Te Hikapounamu. Poutu Hairuha of Ngāti Takihiku obtained the area from Te Hika and Hori Whitiopai, and allocated it to two couples, who as a group, had whakapapa to all hapū. Kererū and Te Kai-o-te kapukapu clearings are sites of early cultivation and bird-snaring, while the Kōpūtōroa stream was important for fishing - tuna, whitebait, īnanga, kōkopu and smelt. Surrounding wetlands are also important and are home to a diverse range of species. Both Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Takihiku were united in resisting the encroachment of Ngāti Huia in 1868. Despite this unity, Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Takihiku were divided again through the Native Land Court process in the 1870s and 80s. The importance of the stream is expressed in the name of the former town, the railway station, which continues in the naming of the school, the community hall and the road⁵.

⁴ Ōtaki MB 9 Manawatu-Kukutauaki no 3. Partition case. Starts 19 July 1889. 4,000 acres.

⁵ Kōpūtōroa Stream – Ngāti Raukawa, p. 15

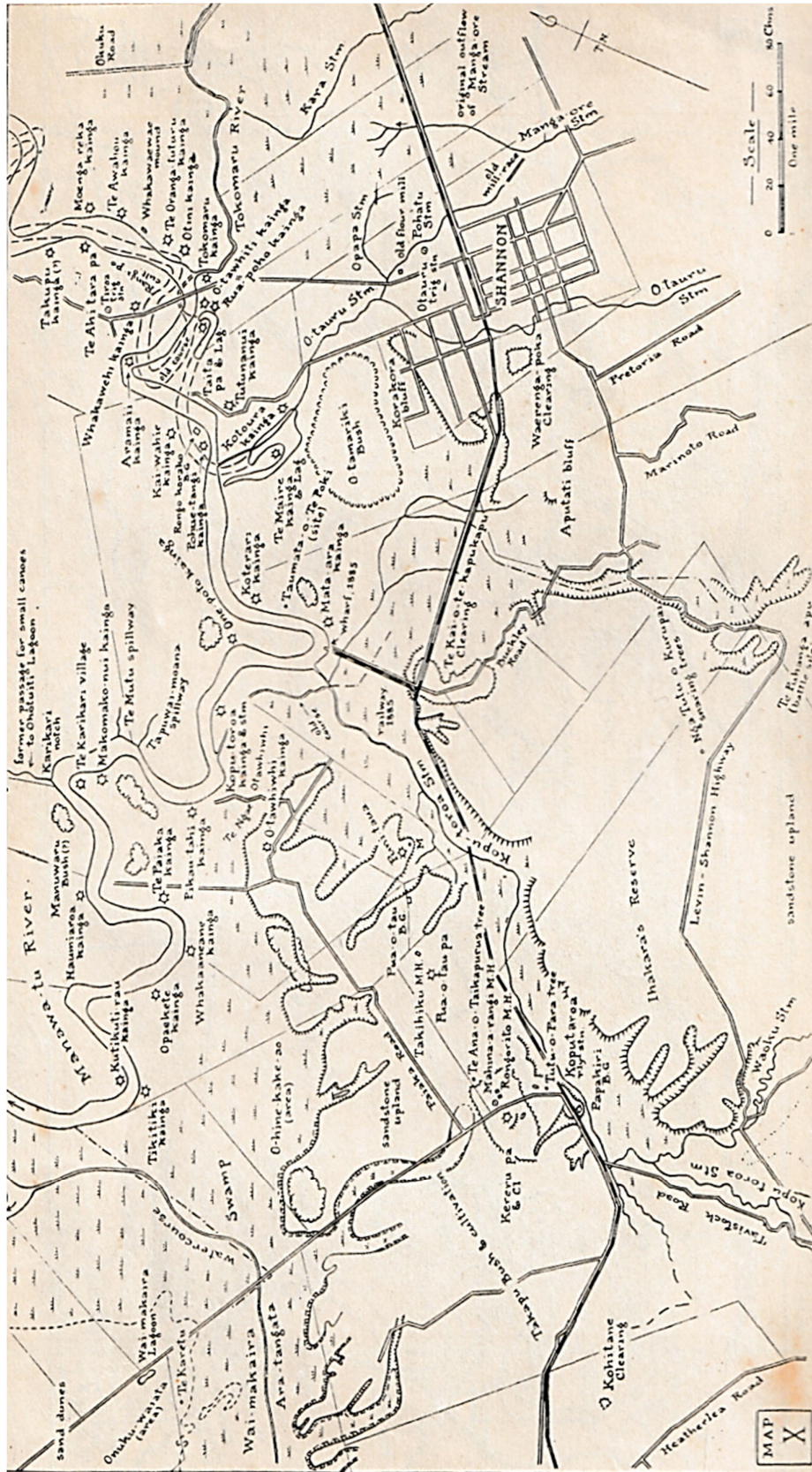


Figure 1 Entire Map X (Adkins, Horowhenua, 1948)

3. Te Kōawaawa o Te Kōpū o Te Tōroa | The place

Pukemātāwai is in the Tararua Range, near the maunga Hangaohiatangata, (Arete this maunga is used to calibrate topographical survey) the other is Ngapuketurua (Mt Dundas). Pukematawai is the mātāpuna (source) of all the rivers on the western side of the ranges - the Ōtaki, Ōhau and the Manawatū and several rivers flowing to the East such as the Mangahao. It is where the wai māori (freshwater) comes from. The mauri and oranga of the Koputōroa catchment descend from Pukematawai as it has a direct link to the Manawatū River⁶.

The Koputōroa stream starts in the southern part of the Tararua range, the Arapaepae foothill ridge, though the upper course of the stream was previously known as Te Awa-a-te Tau. Streams which join it from the right bank are the Ma-kirikiri and Waoku. Small left bank tributaries are the Wai-taikī and Wai-kōrito. The southern portion of the stream is close to Gladstone Rd, east of the water treatment plant, at the southern-most ridge of Kohitere Forest. Another tributary comes down from above the rifle range, and another from near the B18X trig station (377m) to cross under Denton Rd and join the larger stream. The Waoku stream is near Potts Rd. The Koputōroa stream flows under a bridge on McDonald Rd, flows near Ihakara Hall, and then the east side of Tavistock Rd, beyond Koputōroa Rd, past Papakiri urupā, continues to the right of the railway line, and through the wetland, Te Ripo o Hinemata. The railway line crosses over it, and it flows north-west of the railway, west of Buckley Rd West, to join the Manawatū river. Its previous course was to continue north-west, to join the Manawatū river at its next bend down-river, near the Koputōroa kainga⁷.

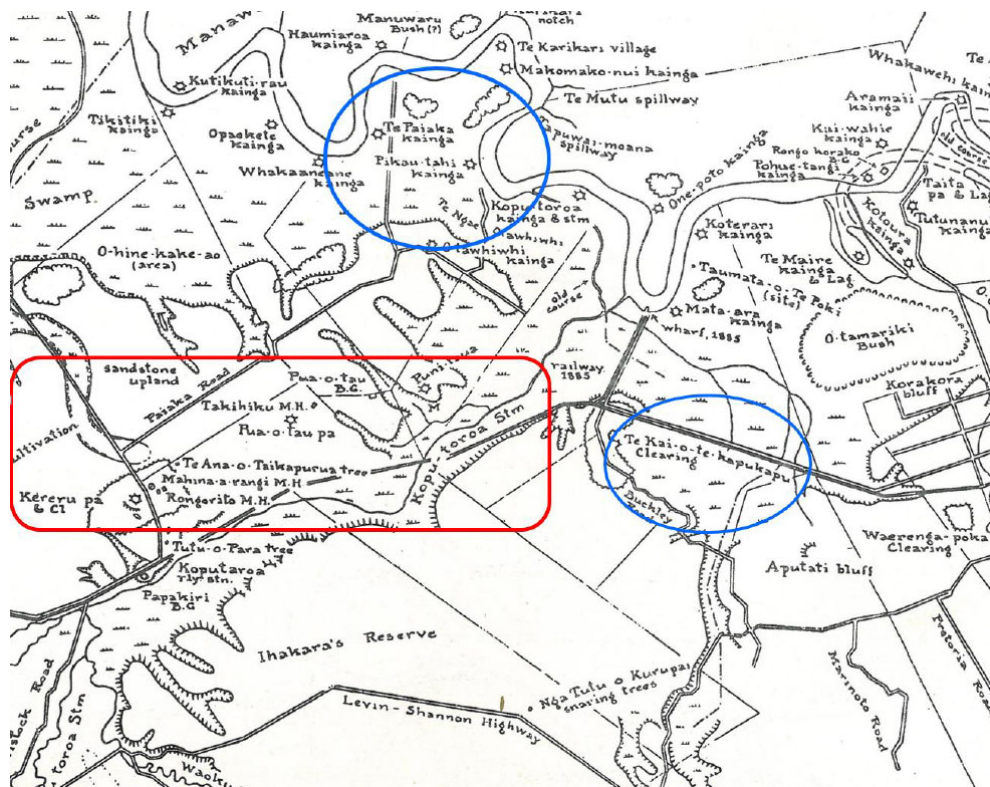


Figure 2 Part of Adkin map X : Showing Kōpūtōroa stream, Kererū marae and clearing, the former Takihiku meeting house, Pua-o-tau urupā (red box), and other areas of early occupation, Te Kai-o-te-kapukapu and Pikau-tahi kainga (circled with blue)

⁶ TK Teira, 2022

⁷ Kōpūtōroa Stream – Ngāti Raukawa

Koputōroa stream crosses a floodplain about 7kms north-east of Levin and joins the Manawatū river. Kererū marae, is situated about 200 metres away on Kōpūtōroa Rd, hapū members identify strongly with the stream as a mahinga kai. The stream and river have traditionally been important sources of tuna (eels), whitebait, kōkopu and kākahi (freshwater mussels). Hauhau (mudfish) and pūpūrangi (giant carnivorous snails) have also been present in the stream and wetlands but are now rarely seen. For decades the Kōpūtōroa stream has been affected by farm run-off, market-gardens and other commercial practices which have degraded its natural values and water quality⁸.



Kākahi (fresh-water mussels), formerly eaten, were plentiful in the Kōpūtōroa Stream and a few remain there still.



Banded Kōkopu is one of five species that make up New Zealand's whitebait catch. The newly hatched larvae swim out to sea and return to freshwater rivers and streams about four months later to mature. The adults can grow to between 20-30 cm.



The giant carnivorous snail (Powelliphanta or Pupurangi) is nocturnal, eats earthworms, can weigh up to 90gms and live for 20 years. Their eggs are hard-shelled and can be up to 14mm long. The photo is of *Powelliphanta traversi* which is found in the Horowhenua.

Crown Copyright: Department of Conservation Te Papa Atātahi (October 1973)



Hauhau (mudfish) still live in the Kōpūtōroa Stream and wetlands. They are nocturnal and can tolerate times of drought, finding a moist, dark place to hide until the waters return.



Tuna or eels have long been gathered for customary purposes. Above is a long-fin tuna, an at-risk species, also found in the area.

⁸ Ngāti Ngarongo, He iti nā Mōtai, vol 1, p457

4. Ngā kōrero nō mua mai, ki ēnei rā | A timeline

Koputōroa was home for up to 200 hapū members until the 1950s, there were two shops, a Post Office and a railway station. Flax-mills and farming were the basis of its economy in the late 19th century, and the closure of the flax-mills during the first World War led to its decline, including impacts which we continue to see in the taiao (environment)⁹.

Māori Land Court records state that the Ngāti Raukawa hapū of Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Takihiku under the leaders Taikapurua, Poutu Hairuha and Ihakara Tukumarū have occupied the land beside the Koputōroa stream since the 1830s. They were allocated the land there by Te Rauparaha and related chiefs (to Te Rauparaha and those named above) who later went to “kotikoti whenua” (cut up or allocate areas of the land), defeating the earlier occupants (Muaūpoko), and taking some captive as slaves at the same time. The first clearing was named Kererū, for the plentiful kererū there, and the next, east of the stream, was Te Kai o te Kapukapu (named by Ihakara Tukumarū)¹⁰.

There are extensive wetlands alongside the stream, including Ramarama, near Kererū. There were previously cultivations at Papakiri, but that name is now associated with an urupā, near the former railway station, at the large bend in Koputaroa Rd. Streams were used to mark boundaries. This is seen in the following two instances:

- Te Hikapounamu claimed Pikautahi to Kōpūtōroa, and that chief (of Ngāti Pare & Ngāti Toa) gave the east side of this area to Hairuha, according to Tiaki Hekeratua¹¹ (*Manawatu-Kutuktauaki no 3 sub-claim hearing, 30th July 1889*). Kōpūtōroa stream also became a boundary between Ngāti Ngarongo and Ngāti Huia, south-east of Kererū (*Takapu hearing, OMB 9, 24th July 1889*).
- Ihakara Tukumarū (p198): “Ka whati ki Kōpūtōroa, ko au ko tērā taha e noho mai ana. If you attempt to cross that stream, my gun will be fired at you.” The boundary with Ngāti Whakatere further up-river was the Otauru stream.

The Manawatu-Kukutauaki block no 1, of 2,000 acres, had been claimed in the Land Court by Ihakara Tukumarū in his name only. In the 1870s he gave 1,000 acres of this land to a lawyer, Sir Patrick Buckley, for his fees. Buckley had been counsel for Te Whatanui’s descendants, the Ngāti Pareraukawa section of Ngāti Raukawa, in their fight against the loss of 32,000 acres of the **Horowhenua block**, wrongfully given by the Native Land Court to Muaūpoko.¹² The land given included **Te Kai o te Kapukapu** clearing, which



Figure Map developed by S.Halliday for Ngāti Ngarongo Report, *He Iti nā Motai*, 2019, p447

⁹ Kōpūtōroa Stream, - Ngāti Raukawa, 2019

¹⁰ Kōpūtōroa Stream, - Ngāti Raukawa, 2019

¹¹ Otaki MB no 9, p253-4.

¹² Adkin, Horowhenua, 1948, p170

became known as “Buckley’s”. The Manawatu-Kukutauaki no 3 block, known as **Ihakara’s reserve**, is shown on Adkin map X as to the south and east of Papakiri, extending to Buckley Rd and the Levin-Shannon highway. But Ihakara’s reserve was originally a block of 11,400 acres, which extended north to the river (see figure 3). In 1873, ownership was awarded to ten men - including Ihakara Tukumarū and his brother Kereopa, and Hohepa Te Hana. Most of it was purchased by the Crown in 1875, except 4,000 acres in the north-west, including the kainga of Kererū, Kōpūtōroa stream and access to the Manawātū River (see figure 4)¹³. In 1889 the remaining 4,000 acres was divided unequally between Ngāti Ngarongo led by Kereopa Tukumarū (3A - 3,000 acres) and Ngāti Takihiku led by Tiaki Hekeratua (3B - 1,000 acres). The owners were given individual shares, which led to fragmentation and loss of communal ownership¹⁴.

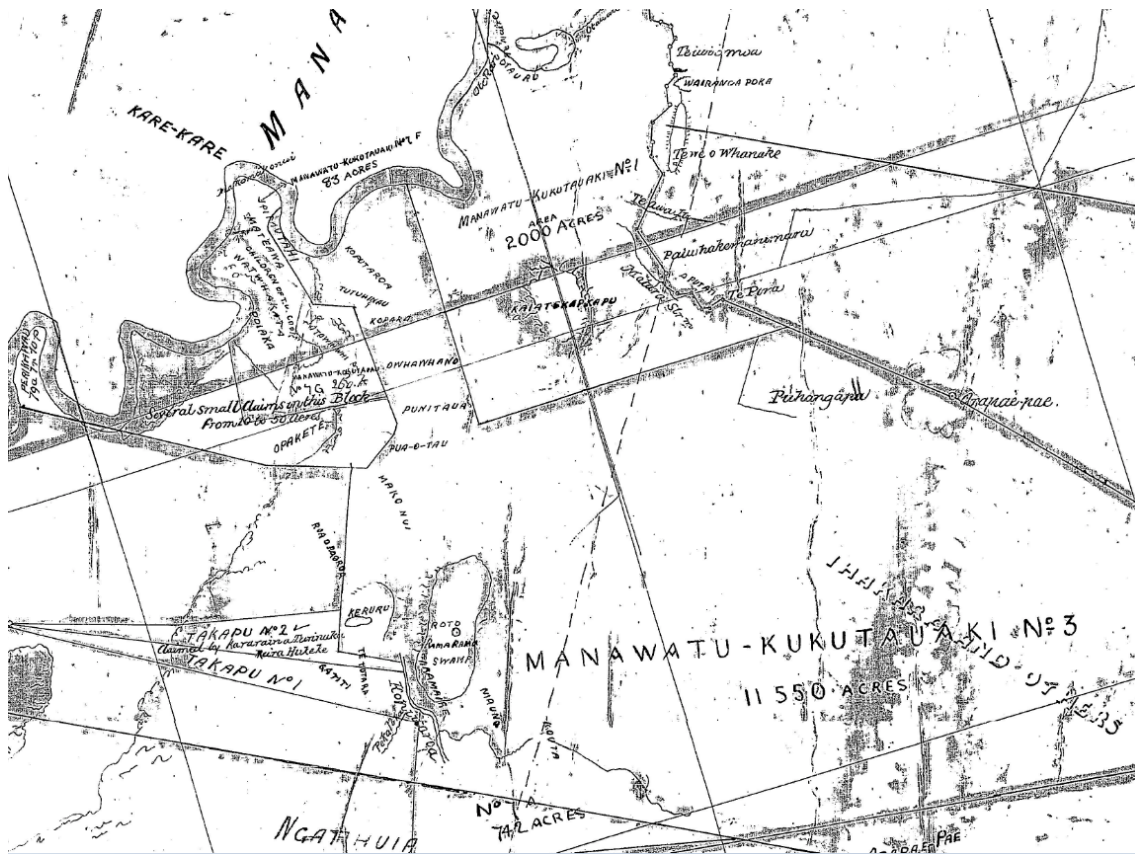


Figure 5 Part of SO11013 4, ML4235, 1872

During the time which Influenza ran rampant within our local communities (19th century), Dr Buller visited “the Māoris here last Saturday for the purpose of obtaining photographs for the Governor of the principal natives, amongst them being Kereopa Tukumara and his niece Aputa daughter of the late chief Ihakara Tukemara. He also liberated a number of trout in the Kōpūtōroa stream ... In a short time all the bush on the west side of the railway line between here and Heatherlea will be felled...”¹⁵ This reflected the damaging effects of colonisation on traditional lifestyles¹⁶. Trout were competing with native species, and there was an immense loss of native forests.

The removal of forests from 1870 to 1910 following land alienations increased erosion, landslides, flooding and destroyed the habitat for birds, insects, bats reptiles, fish, flora and fauna. The quality, length, depth and

¹³ Ngāti Ngarongo report, He Iti na Motai, 2019, p445.

¹⁴ Kōpūtōroa Stream, - Ngāti Raukawa, 2019

¹⁵ Manawātū Herald, 3 Dec 1891

¹⁶ Kōpūtōroa Stream, - Ngāti Raukawa, 2019

breadth of the forest in the region¹⁷. Flooding problems escalated in the 1910 – 20s, along with the collapse of the harakeke boom in 1919. By 1914, only one of three flax mills were operating. At this time much of the former harakeke country was being converted into farmland. Harakeke cultivations benefitted from flooding, farmland did not¹⁸. The combination of deforestation, drainage of swamps and wetlands, along with soil erosion (caused through deforestation) served to reduce the land’s flood carrying capacity¹⁹. The wetlands once helped soak up major flood events.

Converting land for farming purposes have played a critical role in the destruction of our ecosystems, which had a negative impact on water quality, soil stability, biodiversity, and productivity of the soil. The deforestation of such vast areas destroyed the mahinga kai of our people, who were disproportionately (and continue to be) impacted by the forest clearing activities due to their residence on the lower portions of the Manawatū²⁰. Degradation continued well into the 60s - every drain in the Manawatū was flood-gated where it joined the river, this included the Kōpūtōroa stream. There was extensive work done by the Catchment Board on deepening and straightening both the Kōpūtōroa and the Waoku streams in the 1960s. The streams were dredged to modify the surrounding land to improve farm drainage, which impacted immensely on the habitat which these streams were for native species²¹.



Figure Members of Ngāti Hinemata, of at least three generations, enjoy a planting day at Te Ripo o Hinemata (2011)

A Wildlife Service survey of the Kōpūtōroa Wetland in 1974 found native plants included kahikatea, tawa, koromiko, lancewood, mahoe, flax, ferns, raupō & bracken and also blackberry. However, the state of the wetland is nothing to be desired (which the stream flows through) with farm drains running into the area, layers of silt deposited (building up at each flood). In 1992 the wetland was vested into trust which was empowered to lease out land and to enter a Covenant with the Department of Conservation (DOC). This highlights the need to partner with DOC to manage the wetland together, to protect, preserve and enhance its natural values. In 1999, the wetland was protected by a Conservation Covenant (Kererū Covenant) by the DOC with the trust, which is now known as Te Ripo o Hinemata Wetland. An outcome of this is the 10-year management plan²².

¹⁷ Ngāti Raukawa and the Manawatū River (draft), 2022, p. 604

¹⁸ Pātete, 2021, p. 744

¹⁹ Ngāti Raukawa and the Manawatū River (draft), 2022, p. 603

²⁰ Ngāti Raukawa and the Manawatū River (draft), 2022, p. 613

²¹ Kōpūtōroa Stream – Ngāti Raukawa, p. 7

²² Kōpūtōroa Stream, - Ngāti Raukawa, 2019

5. Ngā tohu nō te ao Māori | Customary concepts and practices

The cultural concepts explored in this section are threads which hold together te ao Māori, and are critical to explore in relation to this project. The explanations provided are applicable in the context of this project. There may be further definitions associated with these concepts not explored here. Each of these concepts have the opportunity to give effect to positive social, health, and educational outcomes, each concept holding an enduring place in the role of tikanga and kawa.

Harakeke - Harakeke that is used for traditional weaving is best grown on the margins of wetlands because it was easier to access and maintain in these locations rather than actually in the wetlands. Locally used cultivars including “Wharanui”, which is very tall and pale green, with broad blades, and soft and easy to use. Kererū Marae included a whole family of weavers.

Kākaho - Toetoe flower stalks (kākaho) are used to line the interior walls and/or ceiling of whareniui. Mahinaarangi, the ancestral house of Kererū Marae continues to maintain this traditional practice. They are placed vertically between the poupou (wall slabs), with horizontal kaho (wooden laths) lashed in front. On this framework, thin strips of pingao, kiekie or harakeke are laced around both the kākaho and the kaho to form patterns. Completed wall panels are called tukutuku.

Mauri – Life essence, and life force. Every living particle has its own mauri – there is mauri within bodies of water, rākau, maunga and of the whenua (these are specific to this project). For this project we need to consider the mauri of the streams that the project crosses and the catchments, including the unique subterranean lakes that bubble in puna (springs) that feed the dune lakes. There are many traditional stories about the big lakes - Lake Waiwiri, Papaitonga and Punahau. There are other lakes, including Te Hakari, Pekapeka and Waiorongomai and Huritini within the area that need to be considered in the project. A number of these are being restored by hapū groups. At Koputūroa, hapū have been restoring the wetland, Te Ripo o Hinemata, near Kererū marae. This area is also a focus for the Ō2NL project.

Mutu – A traditional method for catching Birds was with the use of mutu (foot snares). Mutu are set up on the upper branches of trees, and tree with mutu in are known as tūtū. The trees most often used for mutu at this site were probably kahikatea, although other podocarps, northern rata, hīnau and maire were also used. Kākā were caught in mutu-kākā by pulling taut a string attached to the snares. A decoy bird was often used. Kererū were caught in waka-kererū- a wooden trough filled with water and with snares attached to its side – when they came to drink. Two nikau trees in the southern portion of this reserve, near Potts Rd, were known as **Ngā tūtū o Kurupai**. Kurupai was a wahine, and these were her bird-snaring trees. Today, game birds are hunted on the site.

Parawhenuamea - The atua, deity for water is Parawhenuamea. She is responsible for protecting all water. She is the daughter of Hinetuparimaunga, the atua for all maunga. When it comes to protecting all the mana and mauri of the environment, the atua are all wahine, women. Parawhenuamea, in turn, is the mother of other atua that are responsible for gravels, sands, wetlands and lakelets in the lowlands. One of Parawhenuamea is Hinemoana, the deity of the sea. What this is saying is that there is a whole whakapapa linked to wairua, mauri, through tupua. That is why water has such mana, is so important to consider in the project.

The atua are responsible for looking after future generations from the perspective of health and wellbeing now and in the future, for example climate change. This whole approach, way of thinking and acting, is referred to as raupapa, to put things in order -connecting the environment, planning and future generations.

Peha / Pepeha – are the ultimate statement of connection of the Ngāti Ngarongo and Takihiku people with our surroundings. Pepeha are frequently practiced, and used as educational tools to support the retention of mātauranga māori and whakapapa. The peha used in this report acknowledges the locations which the iwi, hapū and whanau hold in high regard, with an ancestral connection. This is rooted in the concept of whakapapa.

Raupō - Raupō was traditionally used for making poi. First the pith was scraped from the raupō fibre. The loose pith was then formed into a ball, which was enclosed in raupō and tied above.

Tauranga waka - There was a tauranga waka (landing) in the covenant, and a waka was found on the site in the 1940s or 1950s. It is now currently stored on a neighbouring property owned by the Laws, who were previous lessees of the covenant. Waka were used for transport through the wetland areas.

Tuna - The main fish caught in Koputōroa Stream were tuna (eel). Every tangi would have 15-20 tuna caught using four pātuna (eel weirs) located within the wetland. Up until 15 years ago a family member had a licence to eel commercially in the area. Īnanga, Kōkopu and Smelt were also caught in Koputōroa Stream.

Waiora – is the living essence of water – which is also used to represent health and well-being. What is critical here is baseline and ongoing monitoring for the project, using a mātauranga Māori approach, recognising Wairua, mauri and the atua.

Waipuke – is flooding and diluge. This is an existing issue for the district. Also, **huarere taurangi**, weather that changes, or climate change, is important to address in the design for the project, not just in a planning sense. In terms of **mātauranga Māori**, flooding and climate change are important to address, because of their connections to **mana** and the **atua**.

Whakapapa – Whakapapa is the recording of connections across, up and down through generations. Importance is placed on the accurate recollection of such critical mātauranga.

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Maps

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