



Protected natural areas within the rural area

Number of and extent (hectares) of protected natural areas within the rural area

Purpose of indicator

A protected natural area is a defined area of land that has legal status protecting indigenous vegetation, habitats, ecosystems or species. In the rural area PNA contribute to its natural character and indigenous biodiversity. Monitoring their number and extent helps to understand whether more areas are being protected or whether these areas are being lost over time.

Current information and trend

In 2011 there were a total of 189 protected natural areas in the rural area, an increase of 29 PNA since 2006. Despite an increase in the number of PNA, there was a loss of extent (3096 ha). The 'loss' is due to various factors including a reclassification and rationalisation of PNA by Department of Conservation and the return of lake beds to Te Arawa under the Te Arawa Lakes Settlement Act 2006 where they were formerly administered by the Department of Conservation. In total PNA covered around 30,656 ha in 2011, down from 34,053 ha in 2006. Figure 1 shows PNA in 2006 and 2011 (note: the Lakes A Zone is included in the rural area).

For public land the Reserves Act and Conservation Act are the most commonly used legislation for protection of indigenous vegetation and habitat, while Queen Elizabeth II covenants are most common for private land and Kawenata for Maori owned land. Table 1 below shows the number of PNA within the rural area protected under each legislation.

Legislation/ protection	Number of PNA
Reserves Act 197	82
Conservation Act 1987	66
Queen Elizabeth II covenant	27
Kawenata (Nga Whenua Rahui)	4
Management agreement	4
Maori reservation	1
Wildlife Act 1953	1

Table 1. Number of PNA protected under legislation

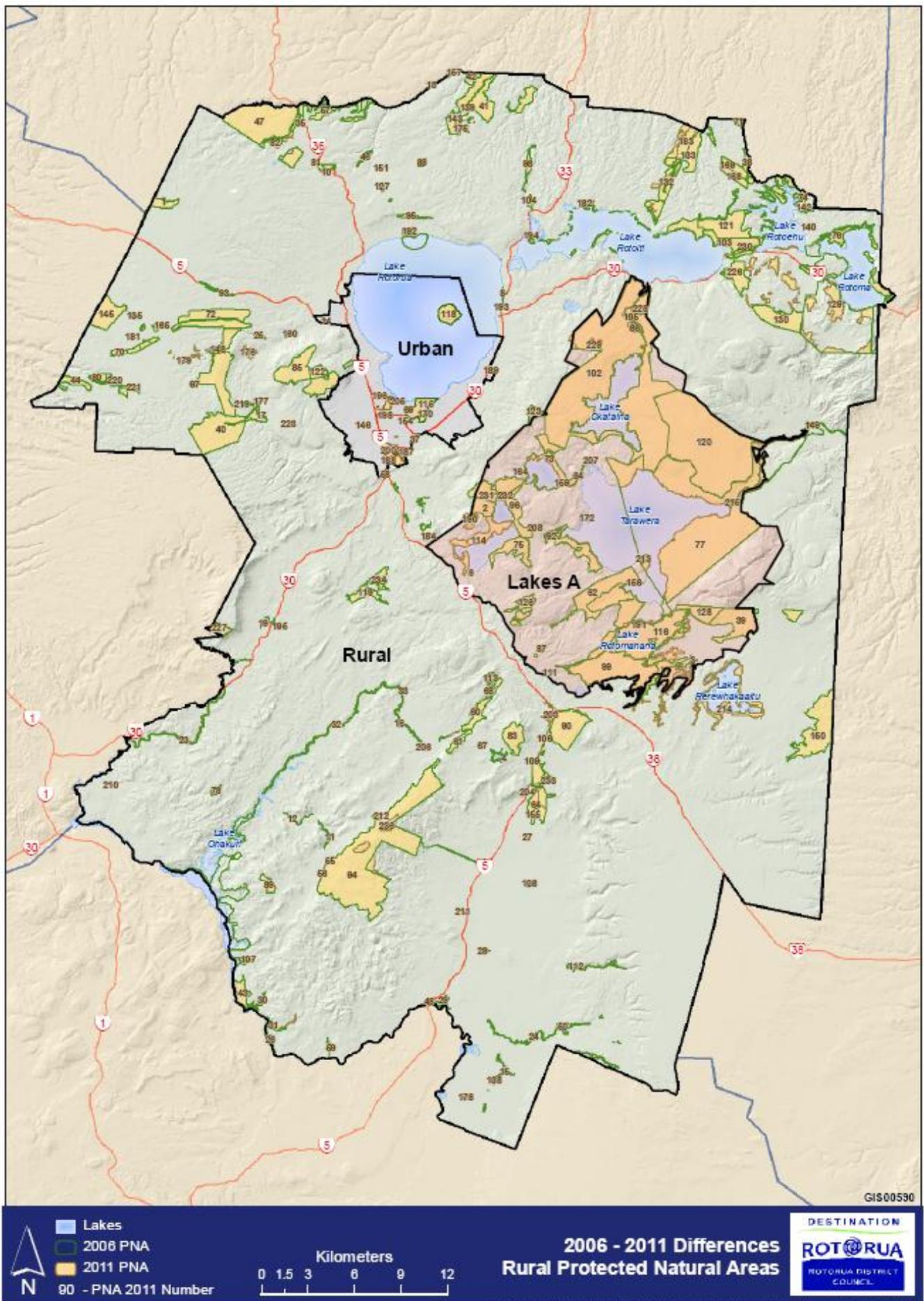


Figure 1. 2006-2011 Differences: Rural Protected Natural Areas

Within the rural area there are 126 identified significant natural areas (SNA). SNA are identified as having significant indigenous vegetation or habitat and may or may not already be formally protected. Like PNA, SNA contribute to biodiversity and habitat for indigenous species. Formal protection of these areas would help to ensure they are not lost.

The Proposed National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity (under the Resource Management Act 1991) aims to halt the loss of areas of indigenous biodiversity that have been identified as significant natural areas. Should the proposed policy statement become operative as it is drafted more SNA are likely to be formally protected.

In Summary

- In 2011 there were 189 protected natural areas within the rural area, with a total area of around 30,656 ha
- The most common protection mechanisms for PNA within the rural area are the Reserves Act 1977 and Conservation Act 1987
- There are 126 significant natural areas within the rural area

Further information sources

[Protected natural areas in the Rotorua district report 2011](#)

[Wikipedia on Protected Natural Areas Programme](#)

www.mfe.govt.nz on the Proposed National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity