



Purpose of indicator

A protected natural area is a defined area of land that has legal status to protect indigenous ecosystems, vegetation, habitats, or species. From an environmental perspective the highest level of protection and management is usually afforded by formal dedication of the area. Therefore the aim is to increase the number and coverage of protected natural areas. Monitoring shows how much progress has been made over the past five years.

Current information and trend

In the past five years, 33 new protected natural areas (PNAs) have been created in the district. There are now 170 PNAs, covering an area of 34,000 hectares or 13% of the district (Table 4.2). Figure 4.2 shows the locations of PNAs in the district. In 2006 the most common protection mechanisms were scenic reserves under the Reserves Act 1977 and marginal strips under section 42 of the Conservation Act 1987.



From 2002 to 2006, 12 new QEII covenants were created, making these covenants the most popular method of protection for new areas.



Other natural areas in the district may be protected but not listed here. Some areas are informally protected, while others may be protected by default. For example, a recreation reserve is intended for recreational purposes, and esplanade reserves or strips are intended for public access to water bodies. An example of this type of protection is the high quality stand of kahikatea forest in the Rotoma Recreation Reserve. Kuirau Park and Government Gardens are not protected for their biodiversity but contain geothermal habitats that have been ranked as being of significant ecological value. Another example of protection of natural areas and enhancement of biodiversity is the use of consent notices put in place when subdivision occurs.



Biodiversity is threatened by many factors such as habitat loss, fragmentation, competition from exotic species, loss of specialist pollinators/dispersers, fire, intensification of residential activity, and more recently climate change. A change in climate affects the ability of a place to provide favourable conditions for species to survive. Sometimes climate change also gives rise to favourable conditions for invasive or exotic species, to the detriment of indigenous species.

Table 4.2 Protected natural areas in Rotorua

Protective Classification	Number of PNAs 2006	Area (ha) 2006
Conservation Park, Section 61, Conservation Act 1987	2	361.73
Marginal Strip, Section 24, Conservation Act 1987	43	358.36
Stewardship Area, Section 7, Conservation Act 1987	5	76.91
Stewardship Area, Section 62, Conservation Act 1987	32	6,170.5
Wildlife Management Reserve, Government Purpose, Reserves Act 1977	4	76.82
Wildlife Sanctuary, Government Purpose, Reserves Act 1977	1	1.13
Scenic Reserve, Reserves Act 1977	40	18,511.70
Ecological Area, Section 61, Conservation Act 1987	(3)*	(1,348.55)*
Conservation Covenants, Section 77, Reserves Act 1977	9	136.17
Wildlife Refuge, Wildlife Act 1953 (land administered by the Crown, not by Department of Conservation)	3	1,020.61
Wildlife Refuge, Wildlife Act 1953 (over private land)	1	133.71
Protected private land administered as a Scenic Reserve, Reserves Act 1977	5	3,178.20
QEII Covenant	16	469.81
Nga Whenua Rahui Kawenata	10	1,590.04
Covenants set aside as a condition of resource consent	2	2.21
TOTAL	170	34,011.21

Source: Wildlands Consultants

* Already included in totals within Conservation Parks

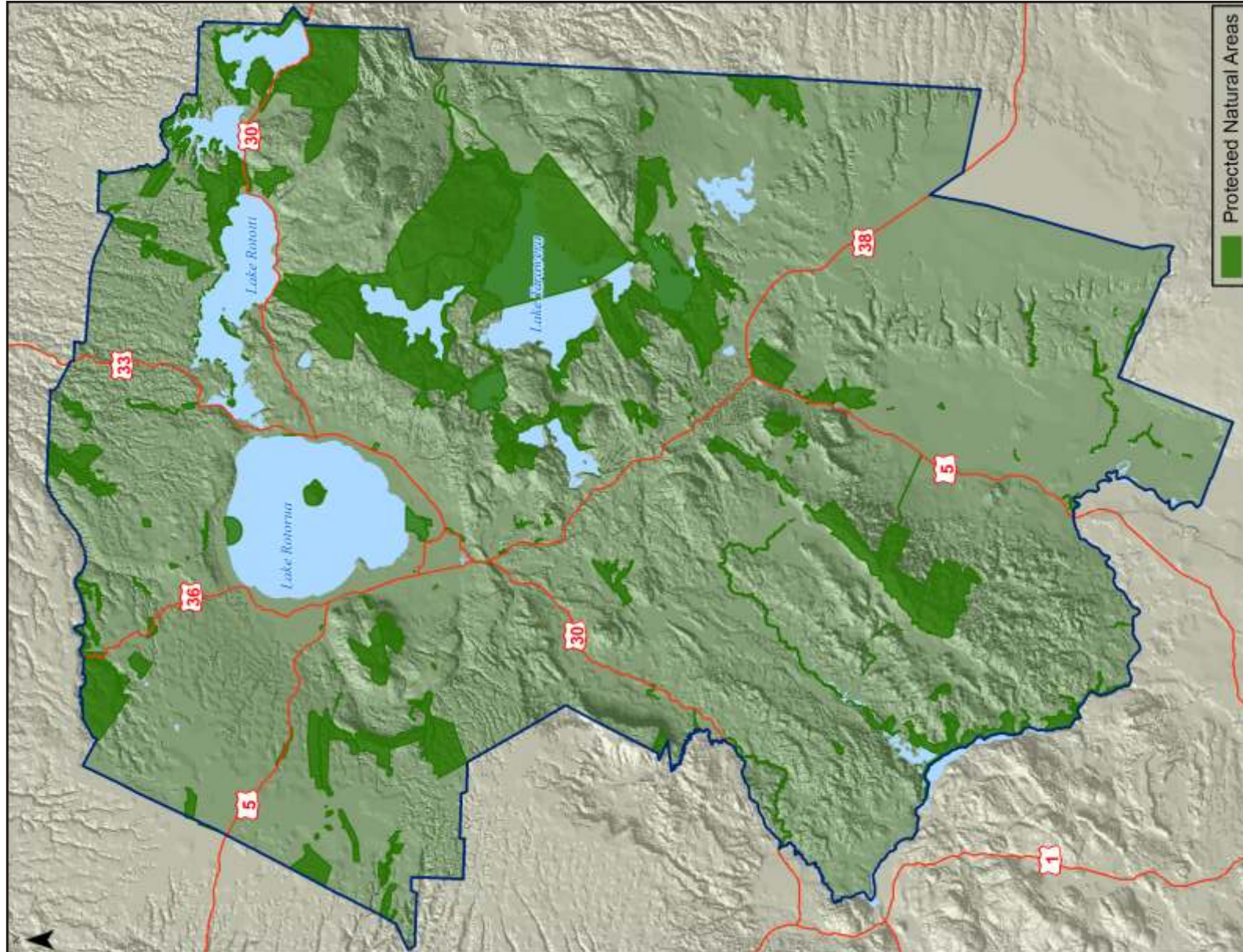
What the community said

Nineteen percent of people in the district believe that natural features (forests and lakes) have become a lot better or better in the last two years.

Biodiversity: landcover

Indicator 4.2 Area (ha) of protected (formal or legal) natural areas

Figure 4.2 Protected natural areas in the Rotorua district 2006



Source: Wildlands Consultants, 2006



ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE



In 15 minutes

- ✓ Join a Landcare group.
- ✓ Find out if there is an area worthy of protection on your property by contacting the Rotorua District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty or Environment Waikato.
- ✓ Contact local community groups and biodiversity groups. How does your special area help wider biodiversity?



In 1 hour plus

- ✓ Set out a management plan for the area of significance. You can contact your regional council for financial and procedural help on this.
- ✓ Make sure that the land use around the area for protection does not compromise the values that make it special.
- ✓ Plant vegetation on hills and near water bodies.
- ✓ Turn your backyard into a wildlife habitat and where possible retain existing vegetation.

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IDEAS

Information about biodiversity and biodiversity programmes

New Zealand Biodiversity
www.biodiversity.govt.nz

Ministry for the Environment
www.mfe.govt.nz

Landcare New Zealand
www.landcare.org.nz

Waikato Biodiversity Forum & Biodiversity Advice Waikato
www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz

Environment Bay of Plenty
www.envbop.govt.nz

Rotorua District Council
www.rdc.govt.nz

Information about native plants and animals

Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society
www.forestandbird.org.nz

Kiwi Conservation Club
(Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society project for children)
www.kcc.org.nz