

Natural areas of Whangarei Ecological District

Reconnaissance Survey Report for the
Protected Natural Areas Programme

NEW ZEALAND PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS PROGRAMME

Diana Manning

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Foreword

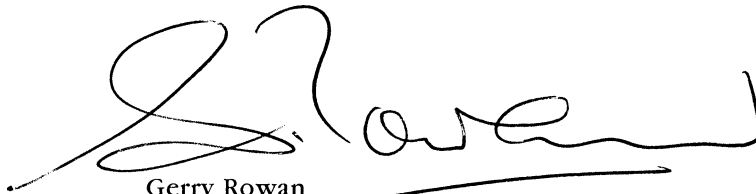
The Whangarei Ecological District comprises a range of landscapes with significant wildlife and vegetation values.

Whangarei Harbour, a major shallow estuarine habitat with extensive mudflats, saltmarshes, shellbanks and mangroves, supports a rich diversity of international and resident coastal and wading birds which seasonally number in their thousands, despite the concentrations of housing, and the port, airport, cement and fertiliser works around it.

Surrounding the outskirts of Whangarei City are numerous young scoria cones, clothed with nationally unique volcanic broadleaf forest, which are an important food source for the threatened kukupa (NZ pigeon).

The once vast Hikurangi swamp on the Wairua River flood plain has been much diminished through drainage and development. However, the remaining wetlands have high biological values, including the presence of the threatened black mudfish and heart-leaved kohuhu.

This report briefly describes these outstanding places, but in itself does not ensure their future preservation. Remaining natural areas of the Whangarei Ecological District need scientifically based management that goes beyond physical protection if they are to survive with most of their features intact. In most cases, management needs to be active, involving landowners and the wider community, including iwi and councils, if these special habitats are to survive for the enjoyment of future generations in years to come.



Gerry Rowan

Conservator - Northland

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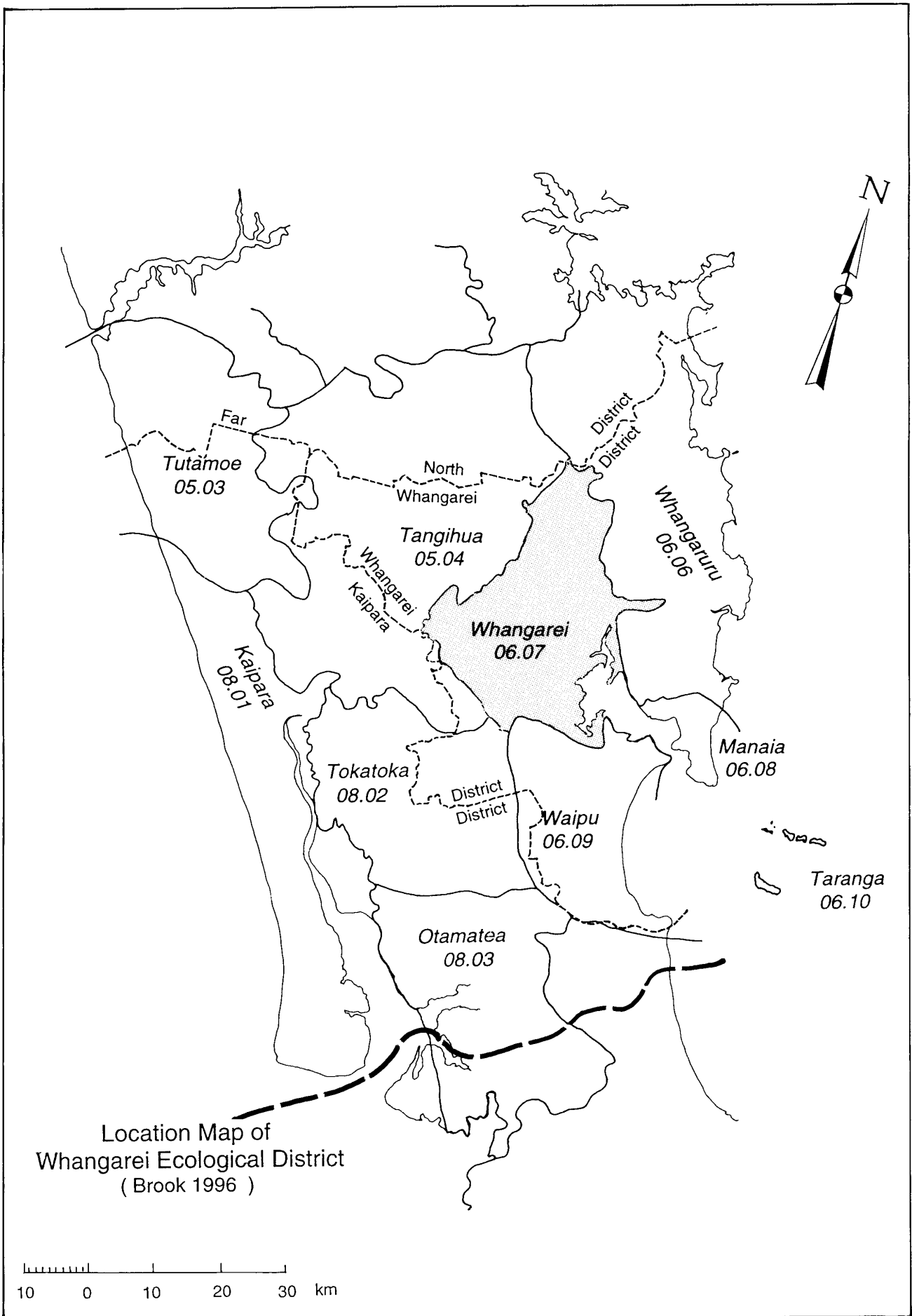


Figure 1. Location map of Whangarei Ecological District (Brook 1996).

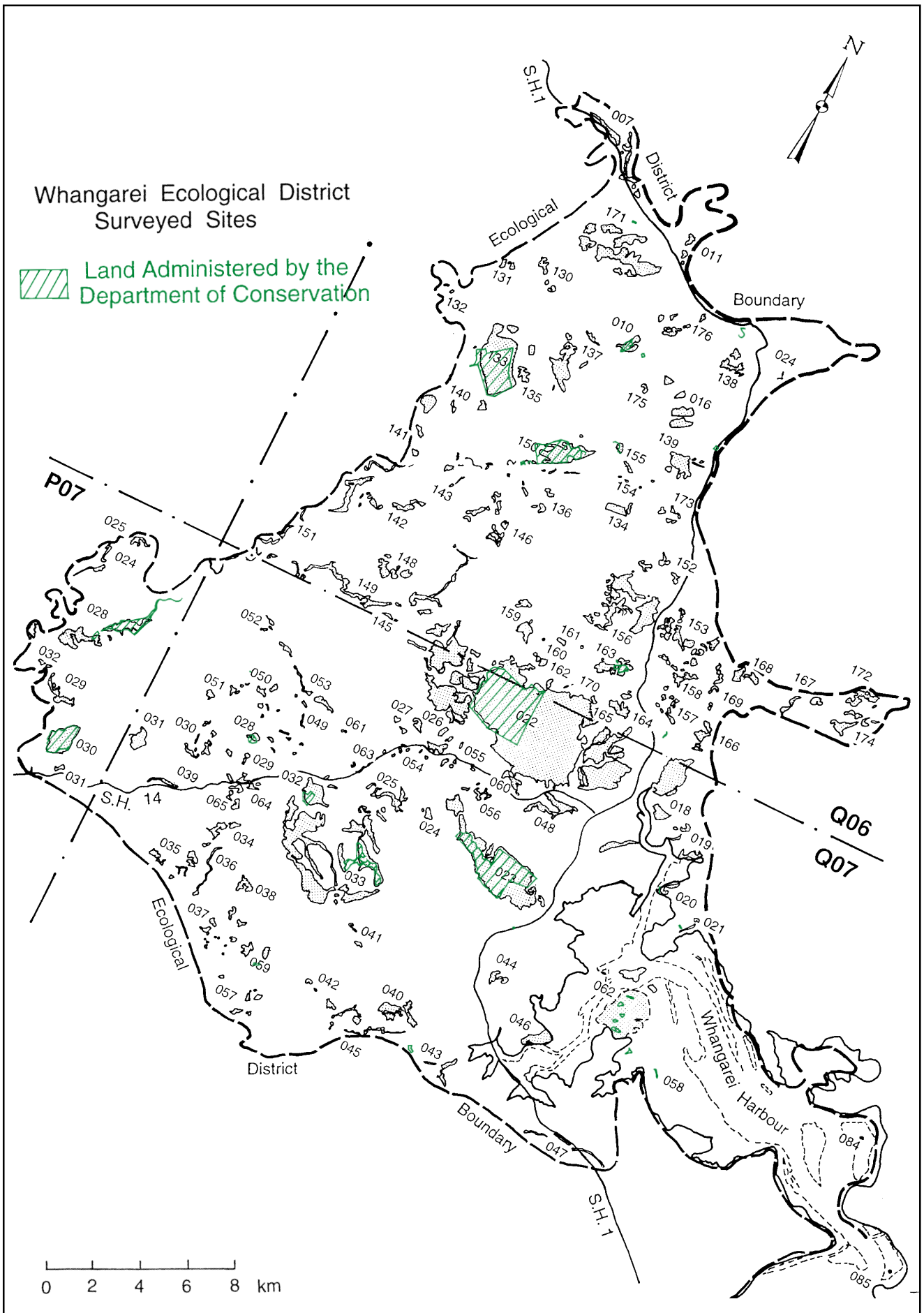


Figure 2. Map of surveyed sites, Whangarei Ecological District.

Land administered by the Department of Conservation shown in green.

