

Park-specific management and policies  
**Wainuiomata Recreation Area**



## 6.8 Wainuiomata Recreation Area

### 6.8.1 Legal status

Title held:	Wellington Regional Council
Legislative status:	Administered under Local Government Act 2002, Wellington Water Board Act 1972

Territorial Authority: Hutt City Council

The land is held fee simple for the purposes of recreation, forestry and water supply, vested pursuant to the Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972, and subject also to the Wellington Regional Council (Water Board Functions) Act 2005.

Refer to Appendix 2 for a legal description of the land parcels.

### 6.8.2 Background

While the Wainuiomata Recreation Area has always been used for recreation by the public, this is the first time the area has been considered as part of the network of parks and forests and included in the management plan.

Wainuiomata Recreation Area is a short drive from Wainuiomata township at the foot of one of the largest pristine lowland forest areas in the lower North Island. The Recreation Area is smaller than the other parks and forests in the network at around 340 hectares. The narrow valley has some mown flats and eucalyptus stands, while the valley sides are regenerative native bush. The map indicates the end of unrestricted public access. Beyond this point are the Morton Dam, the water treatment plant and the beginning of the Wainuiomata / Orongorongo Water Collection Area to the northeast, where restricted access is maintained

for public safety and security reasons<sup>22</sup>.

In 2012 the Wainuiomata Recreation Area will be extended to include the Lower Dam and surrounds. This extension is shown on the Wainuiomata Recreation Area Projected Future Changes map. The Lower Dam has been developed as a wetland and provides a significantly sized habitat for native wildlife. An environmental education centre is being developed adjacent to the dam.

At the main entrance, the Triangle Paddock and its surrounding area are currently well used by local residents, especially in the summer. The swimming holes on the Wainuiomata River are particularly popular with teenagers and the tracks are regularly used by walkers and people exercising their dogs. The area has plenty of space for family outings and picnicking in the shade. Upstream, Māori sites of significance are limited, as there were few early permanent Māori settlements in the area. Māori used the hills and valleys to travel between the Wairarapa and Te Whanganui a Tara (Wellington Harbour). It was an area of mahinga kai, used extensively for hunting birds and fishing, as well as gathering forest foods and materials. Ngāti Toa Rangātira and the Wellington-based Taranaki iwi retain mana whenua over the lands.

Some of the lower valley was logged for timber and the valley has been used as a source of Wellington's drinking water. In 1884 a concrete-faced earth dam known as the Lower Dam was completed. It is one of New Zealand's earliest construction sites. The Morton Dam was constructed in 1912 for water storage and decommissioned in 1991. Water is now taken instream from weirs in both the Orongorongo and Wainuiomata Rivers, upstream from the Wainuiomata Recreation Area.

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<sup>22</sup> Since 2001 Greater Wellington has allowed controlled access above Morton Dam, running a small number of organised group walking tours in the water collection area.

Recreational activities in this area will generally be of a low key nature, providing opportunities for a range of walks for different abilities and experiences.

For more information refer to the resource statement documents.

### 6.8.3 Park key characteristics

#### *Land*

- Gateway to Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water catchment area
- Regenerating native forest
- Lower Dam wetland.

#### *People*

- Easy access to recreational opportunities including dog walking, short walks, picnicking and swimming
- Location of historic dam
- Environmental education and interpretation opportunities around water supply.

### 6.8.4 Management focus

The focus for the Wainuiomata Recreation Area is to:

1. Ensure fresh, clean water for the region, continuing to restrict access to sections adjacent to the recreation area for water supply purposes.
2. Habitat restoration.
3. Enhancing short duration walking opportunities that are family friendly.
4. Enhancing recreational facilities that are suitable for those with limited mobility.
5. Providing educational opportunities (water supply and environment).

### 6.8.5 Specific policies

#### *Biodiversity and ecosystems*

- a. To develop a table of high priority indigenous areas to help determine ecosystem protection and enhancement.

#### *Cultural heritage*

- b. To maintain the Lower Dam as a significant heritage feature.

#### *Land management*

- c. To ensure the water treatment facilities adjacent to the Wainuiomata Recreation Area are sufficiently protected.

#### *Visitor services*

- d. To maintain the Hine Road/Triangle Paddock as the main entrance to the park, with an activity node at the Lower Dam.

#### *Partnership in parks*

- e. To recognise Ngāti Toa Rangatira and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust's relationship to the park through:
  - Participation in assessment of significant features of the park
  - Identification of traditional trails through the park.
- f. To support a partnership approach in maintaining the Wainuiomata catchment through:
  - Maintaining water quality of the Wainuiomata catchment
  - Protecting and enhancing the indigenous forest cover and insect and bird life
  - Maintaining the habitat for indigenous fish.

- g. To liaise with, in regard to decision making, Hutt City Council and the Department of Conservation on the management and use of the land to provide an integrated approach to environmental management programmes and recreational activities.
- h. To ensure that any new partnerships contribute to advocacy, restoration or education outcomes for Wainuiomata Recreation area.

### 6.8.6 Projected changes

Refer to Map 19 (following pages).

- Work towards improvements in indigenous forest health.
- Open access to the Lower Dam area as associated facilities in 2012 including an educational centre for small groups to be based.
- Develop interpretation based on the history and present day development of the water supply function and the local ecology and conservation management.
- Continue to restore the habitat in Lower Dam wetland area.
- Link a route to the Rimutaka Forest Park tracks, providing more options for walkers in the area.
- Develop recreational opportunities for those with limited mobility.

### 6.8.7 Park maps

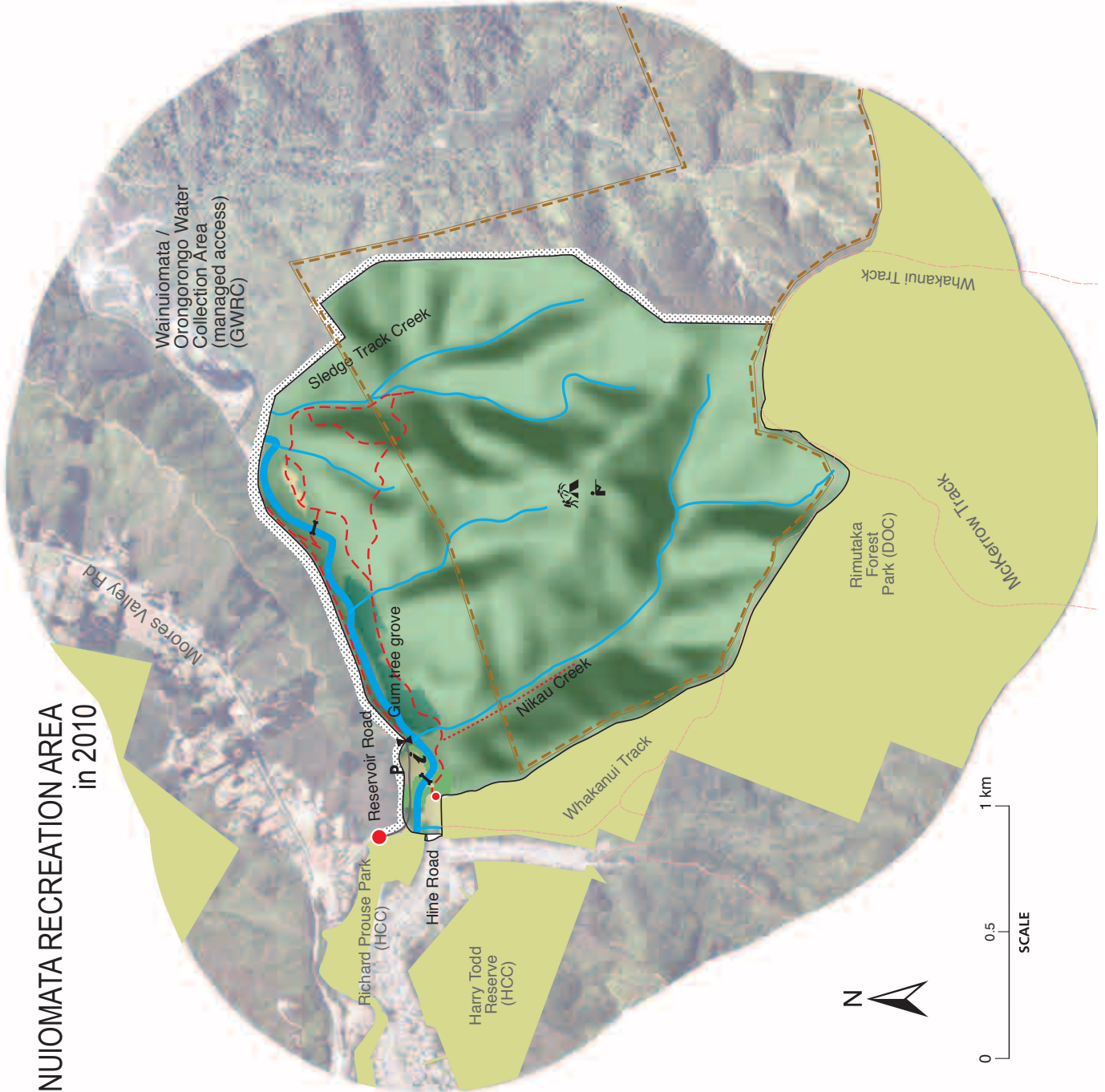
The following pages contain:

- Map 18: Wainuiomata Recreation area in 2010
- Map 19: Wainuiomata Recreation area projected future changes.

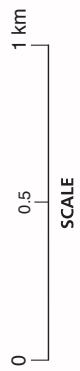
### For more information

*Wainuiomata Recreation Area Draft Concept Plan*  
(Greater Wellington, March 2002)

# WAINUIOMATA RECREATION AREA in 2010

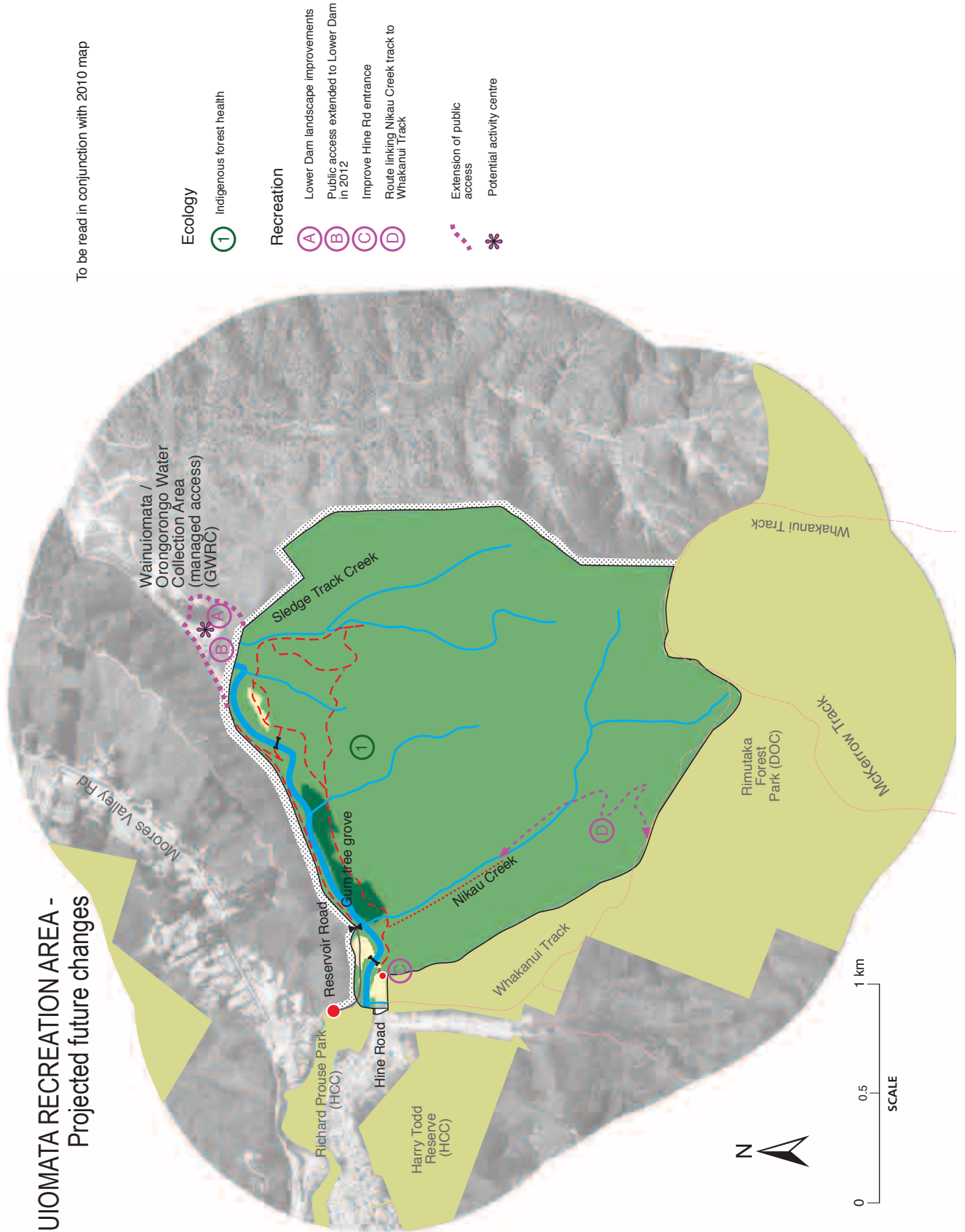


- Natural Features**
- Natural vegetation
  - Plantation forest
  - Pasture / grass
  - Rivers and streams
- Park Facilities: Tracks**
- Shared track (refer to Rules)
  - Walking track
- Park Facilities: General**
- Major Entrance with sign
  - Minor Entrance with map board
  - Car park
  - Information kiosk
  - Wilderness camping
  - Hunting (refer to Rules)
- Other Features**
- Public Road
  - Gate
  - Bridge
  - Managed public access to Water Collection Area
  - Public Reserves (external to park)
  - Buildings
  - DOC tracks



# WAINUIOMATA RECREATION AREA - Projected future changes

To be read in conjunction with 2010 map



### Ecology

① Indigenous forest health

### Recreation

- Ⓐ Lower Dam landscape improvements
- Ⓑ Public access extended to Lower Dam in 2012
- Ⓒ Improve Hine Rd entrance
- Ⓓ Route linking Nikau Creek track to Whakanui Track

- Extension of public access
- \* Potential activity centre

