Agenda: Ruahine User's Group Meeting (RUG)

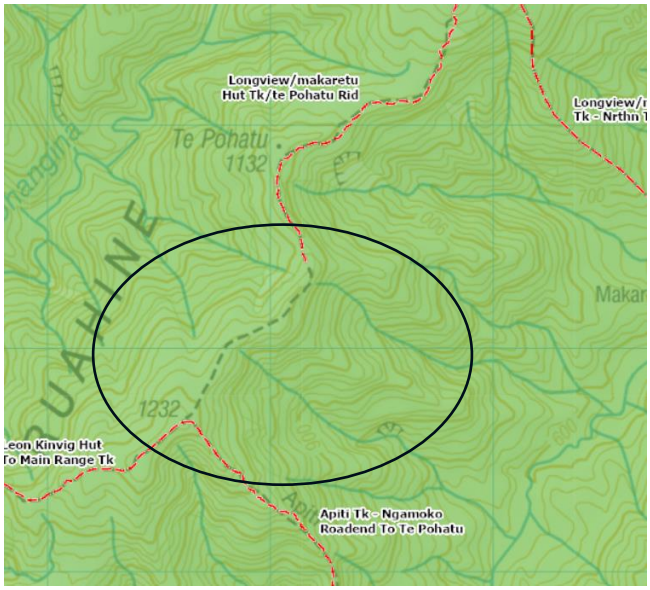
Date:	07/10/2024	**Chair:**	Demelza Low (DOC)
Time:	18:30-20:30	**Minute taker:**	Dan Tuohy (DOC)
Venue:	NZDA Dannevirke clubrooms		
Team Link:	**Join the meeting now** – by clicking the link		
Attendees:	John Trow, Julia Mackie, Gordon Kuggelijn, Mike Charlton, Shane Davis, Janet Wilson, Anthony Behrens, Karen, Sim Ritmeaster, Dave Mulinder. Online: Frances Walsh, John Beech, Chris Wootten, Peter Daly, Glenda Hooper		
Apologies:	Marcus Steeneken, Ian Patterson Nb. Not everyone received the email invite sent to rug@tarhc.org.nz – see comments under General Business.		

Agenda

- Welcome, Karakia, Introductions & Apologies
- Ruahine Deer Management Plan update
- Access update
- Community updates
- DOC updates
- General business
- Set next meeting
- Closing Karakia

18:30	Welcome, Karakia, Introductions & Apologies **Karakia** Kā toro ki runga, kā toro ki raro Kia mārangi mai ngā māramatanga Ā kui mā, Ā koro mā Hei aratakina i a tātou kia manawatītī Ki ngā mahi katoa Draw strength from above Draw strength from below Let the knowledge and understanding of our predecessors wash over us So, we may Follow their spirit of perserverance and apply it to our work today Acheiving great things

18:35	**Ruahine Deer Management Update** The iwi site visits have been completed. Everyone should have received an email regarding the process of setting up a deer recovery group within the framework of the deer management plan. Its important to understand what this means. Community engagement is the number 1 consideration in having a successful plan. The 3 actions we are looking at: 1. Looking at a review of the previous plan, 2. setting up an advisory group and 3. rolling out the year 1 plan with actions. We will also be reaching out to adjoining landowners. We have been in touch with the Wellington CB to bring them up to speed with the progress. It has been quite difficult to get contact details for some of the Ruahine user groups, so if you know that we have missed someone, please email Frances on fwalsh@doc.govt.nz **Questions** Gordon – Can we make suggestions direct to Chris regarding deer management? Yes, you can reach out to Chris directly on cwootton@doc.govt.nz. Gordon – Apparently dogs were not allowed on the managed hunts. Action - Chris to check out and talk to Trevor from NZDA.

18:45	**Community updates** NZDA Manawatu: • the pre work for the painting of Te Ekaou hut which will occur over summer. • Well done on the gate install up Takapari road. I've had positive feedback from our members. RWP / PNTMC: • Regular trapping, track to Iron Gate still not fixed, plenty of people going in and staying at the Iron gate hut. • Starting to count ducks so let Janet know of any ducks that you see while out in the bush • Janet would like DOC to investigate the rules about dogs in the Forest Park and hunting permits – Action for Demelza / Dan Manaaki Ruahine • Stoked about the Kashmir Pines, not so much about the lack of access. Forest 360 has been responsive and co-operative allowing access for trappers. Contact Anthony if you need access for trapping. • Going up the Makaretu to do trapping, will stay in the river corridor • The Longview trap line needs maintenance and the traps are overgrown. [Demelza – this track appears to have been removed as a DOC asset, unsure of why. Action for Demelza - will look to recut and reinstate.] 

Dannevirke NZDA

- Laws Road access is now open to the public from the end of the public road to the Forest Park – shout out to Gordon and John for working through the access challenges on this public road.
- Makaretu access – assisted DOC with a meeting with landowners.
- NZDA National Access committee – Gordon is involved with this. The committee is there to give advice to people who have access problems.
- There are a few sections on the Rokai track that need maintenance, but nothing too bad.

Julia Mackie (Napier Tramping Club)

- Concerned about dogs in parks and suggested we have mandatory muzzles. A kiwi was recently killed in Kaweka Forest Park that was apparently kiwi aversion trained.
- The Apiti track is not good for inexperienced trampers and needs some work. The waratah and rope have been removed. This is also a trapping track.
  [Demelza – the rope was removed as it was not to standard. We've heard from the community that the rope is missed and that the track is walked by many locals. As such, we will put in a replacement chain this summer. Thanks to those who provided this feedback].

John Beech:

- John went to Gold Creek hut for the first time since the BCT upgrade, looks good. Cleared some vegetation and added track markers to the Gold Creek Ridge tk. The section of track near river crossing will need to be rerouted due to erosion (after Cyclone perhaps) – John to look into this.

Peter Daly:

- Not too much to update, no issues.

Glenda Hooper (Heretaunga Tramping Club)

- The group went up to Waikamaka for a working group to clean the hut, the ash bucket hasn't made it up there yet.
- There is no track page for the Apiti track to alert you of any issues with the track network.
  [Demelza - the DOC website is not always comprehensive; it is mainly the popular tracks that have pages. Having better information online would make things easier for people wishing to use the huts and tracks. If anyone wishes to help set up track pages please reach out to Demelza – usually a bit of info on the track, timings, and photos are all that's needed].

19:00

DOC Biodiversity Update

- Northern Ruahine Aerial Operation

Still awaiting on the elusive weather window, looking at having this done before February 2025 (fact sheet attached to this agenda).

Goat Control

Two ground contracts were awarded this year, to continue the great work on the known populations in the Northeastern and southern sections of the park. The goal of this control is to keep goats from spreading to the Northwestern section. (operational areas are attached to this agenda for anyone interested).

Darwins Barberry

The DOC team are in at Wakarara this week completing the annual Darwins' control.
Kahikatea Contracting are doing Darwins' control on western side in Rangiwahia and Kaikawaka reserve. DOC are in discussions with Horizons to look at extending the area to the Forest Park to ensure we can keep it out of the park. This will depend on what weed money is available for next year. Last year's control effort is attached to this agenda.

Old Mans Beard (OMB)

The DOC / Horizons combined control seems to be working well, focusing on the OMB within the public conservation land and farmland that adjoins the park on the western side. Aerial surveys are used to identify plants within the park and this can then be planned as a priority to control either by ground or aerial as appropriate. A map of operational area is attached to this agenda.

Operational Area	Operational Area Codes
East Ruahine	DOCPN-001 East Ruahine
Pohangina	DOCPN-002 Southern Ruahine
Whanahuia	DOCPN-003 Whanahuia
Kawhatau	DOCPN-004 Hikurangi
Maropea	DOCPN-005 Maropea
Colenso	DOCPN-006 Colenso

DOC Reserves	
Pohangina	DOCPN-007 Makiekie R
Kawhatau	DOCPN-008 Rangitane R
Mokai	DOCPN-009 Makino R

Contorta

An aerial and ground contract was completed in May with over 1000 trees controlled. DOC received additional funding to control more trees, which really made a dent in the Contorta population on the south side of the Taruarau river. DOC Manawatu need to work with DOC Hawkes Bay and the Regional Council to try and control the seed source around the Comet area otherwise we will continue to throw money at the Northern Ruahine every year.

No Mans Contorta

A DOC crew controlled over 400 Contorta seedlings in the clay pans around Ruahine Hut and No Mans Road. We are looking at asking volunteers to come in with us next year to help in this mahi. We will drive in via No Mans Road. If you are interested, email Dan on dtuohy@doc.govt.nz

Kashmir Pines

Forest 360 have started harvesting the remaining 77ha of pines on Kashmir Road and are making good progress. The plan was to have the road closed during the week and open it up on Friday night from 6pm and close it again on Monday morning at 6am. However, due to theft and members of the public accessing active logging sites, the road has now been closed 7 days a week. This will be reviewed after a few months. The road will be open over the Christmas / New Years break. A photo montage is attached to the email with the minutes.

19:10	**DOC Heritage & Visitor update** **a. Work completed since the last meeting in June** • Sunrise and Longview huts – firewood flown in. • Cattle Creek hut – nearly full toilet moved. Wood burner replaced. Thanks to the volunteers involved. • Stanfield hut – Wood burner replaced. • Rangiwahia hut – repaired the leaking chimney. • Rangiwahia carpark – added a box drain outside the toilet to keep water outside of the building. • Kashmir Road end toilet – nearly full toilet moved. Now has a larger pit with a deck over, so will last longer. • Kashmir Road – culvert replacement • No Mans Road – road repaired. Will go onto the booking system shortly (aim for mid Nov), due to the excessive effort the current process takes. A suggestion was made to release the dates in tranches. • Takapari Road – gate has been put up to close access to Utes during winter/when very wet. Working with the Manawatu 4WD Club towards volunteers repairing the road to reopen during the drier months. Pedestrian and quad access possible all year round. • Pohangina Base – installed gate to keep vehicles away from the helipad. Pedestrian access possible. • Kawhatau Access – recut the track between Rangitane Reserve and the river. DOC direction signs are ready for installation. Track is being loaded to show on maps. • Top Maropea hut – measured up for new roof. • Volunteer hut wardens – visits and maintenance work at Sunrise, Triplex, Top Maropea, Rangi huts/tracks/carparks. Longview tried, but was too windy! • Sentry Box hut – built woodshed. Trackwork. Updated timing on sign at hut. Thanks to the volunteers involved. • Parks Peak hut – fixed tap. Thanks to the volunteers involved, and to John Montgomerie for raising this issue to our attention and sending videos (photos/videos and GPS points really help).

Rangiwahia hut carpark toilet boxdrain

Kashmir Roadend toilet

Takapari Road gate installed

Sentry Box hut

Parks Peak tap repair

Cattle Creek toilet

No Mans Road repair

b. Cyclone updates:

- Leon Kinvig hut – damaged during Cyclone Gabrielle, closed.
  Update: BCT have moved the hut. It is currently closed with work needed. The plan is to fix and reopen this summer (BCT).
- Iron Gate track – closed due to Cyclone damage. New routes found and flagged.
  Update: New track to be cut this summer.
- No Mans Road – Closed after the Cyclone after significant damage.
  Update: Road has been repaired. It will be added to booking system, expected go live late Nov.
- Yeomans track – nearly all bridges have gone or been completely upended. Damaged bridges to be reopened and track can then be reopened.
  Update: Bridges will be removed this summer and track reopened.

c. Updates

FENZ new requirement:

- Heat/smoke detectors required in huts/public accommodation with 6 or more bunks (heat detectors in the room with the heat source, linked smoke detectors in any other rooms).

Currently on hold.

	Personnel: • We've been carrying vacancies for some time now. But good news – now recruiting two new rangers, starting October. **d. Future Visitor Network/Visitor Network Strategy** There is national recognition that funding is inadequate to support the asset base. Waiting on more information. **e. Aranga hut** Suggestion made that a toilet at the hut site would be helpful for those camping there, as an interim measure. **New toilet will be added this summer.**
19:30	**Access to Forest Park** **Current Priority Sites** • **Makaretu River** – access to Hapi Daze & the Forest Park – met with the landowners on Wednesday 25th September, Gordon K came along to discuss his success with Laws Road access. Surveyed and pegged the Recreation Reserve at the start of the access. At the end of the meeting, there was consensus that access could stick to the river corridor all the way to the park to limit the amount of time people spend on private land. • **Mokai Road End** – Still with the legal teams. A meeting was held between DOC Regional Director, Alice Heather, and Jessamine Corpe. In the interest of resolving the current deadlock, the option of reverting to the ULR and closing the easement was discussed. There are several issues with this (i.e. the loss of direct access to Otukota hut), but a number of positives as well. We will now work through these with the relevant stakeholders. A walk of the ULR is planned for early November with FMC. • **Mid Pohangina access** – A second meeting with the new landowner is scheduled for this Thursday to discuss a possible access option over his private land. In the meantime, the river can be used when flow levels allow. • **Kelly Knight Access** – Awaiting a decision from the Maori Land Court.

	• **Kawhatau Access** – Nothing progressed yet on this, as other access matters are more pressing. However, access is available from Rangitane Reserve via the river.
20:15	**General Business** • Next meetings (Date and location) Today's meeting started earlier than usual (6.30pm rather than the usual 7pm). This did not seem to cause any challenges to attendees, including those travelling from Hawkes Bay, so we will stick to a 6.30pm start in future to allow people to finish and drive home earlier. After the meeting a suggestion was made that the cup of tea and chinwag take place before the start of the meeting rather than at the end, due to the late finish, particularly for those travelling. Let's consider that at the next meeting. It was also decided that the first meeting in 2025 would be held at DOC Palmy as the Hawkes Bay attendees at the meeting would not be able to join in person on that day. Meetings will be held on the first Monday of March, June and October. If that Monday is a public holiday, the meeting will fall to the following Monday. Provisional dates are below (invites will be sent once we have confirmation that the NZDA clubrooms are available): • Monday 3rd March, DOC, 28 North Street, Palmerston North • Monday 9th June, NZDA clubrooms Dannevirke. nb/ the 2nd June is a public holiday. • Monday 6th October, NZDA clubrooms Dannevirke. *Update from after the meeting:* After the meeting we were informed that not everyone received the email invite that was emailed out to rug@tarhc.org.nz (Megan, Elly, John Montgomerie, Emma, perhaps others). For some, the invite was found in spam folders. To prevent recurrence and to allow for better forward planning, DOC will send the email invites for 2025 shortly, allowing people plenty of time to alert if there are issues with the email address.

20:30	**Karakia whakamutunga** Ka whakairia te tapu Ki a wātea ai te ara Ki a ruruki whakataha ai Ki a ruruki whakataha ai Haumi e! Hui e! Taiki e! Clear the obstacles So, the path is clear To return to everyday activities Meeting finished at 9:00pm

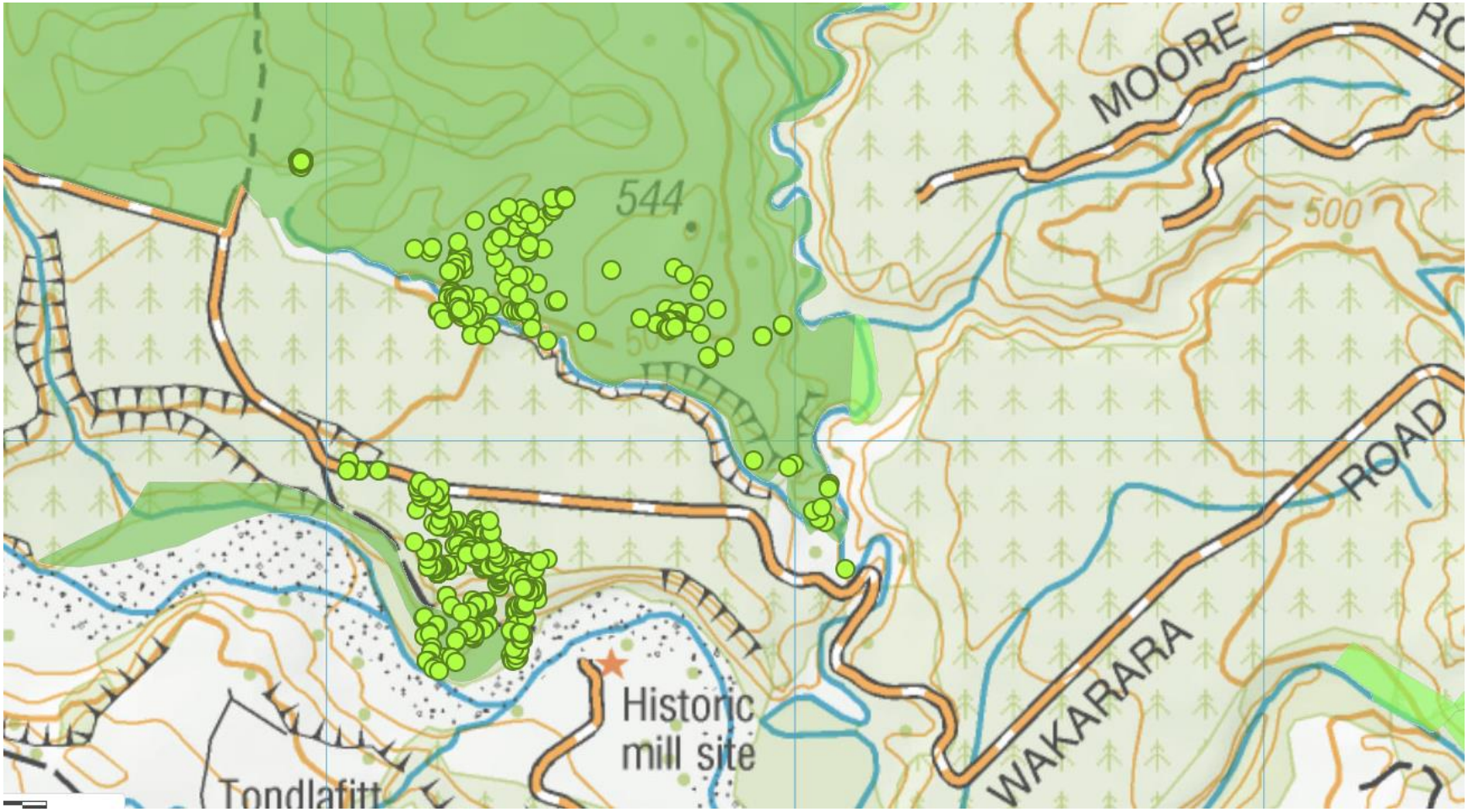
https://www.facebook.com/groups/481888953257892

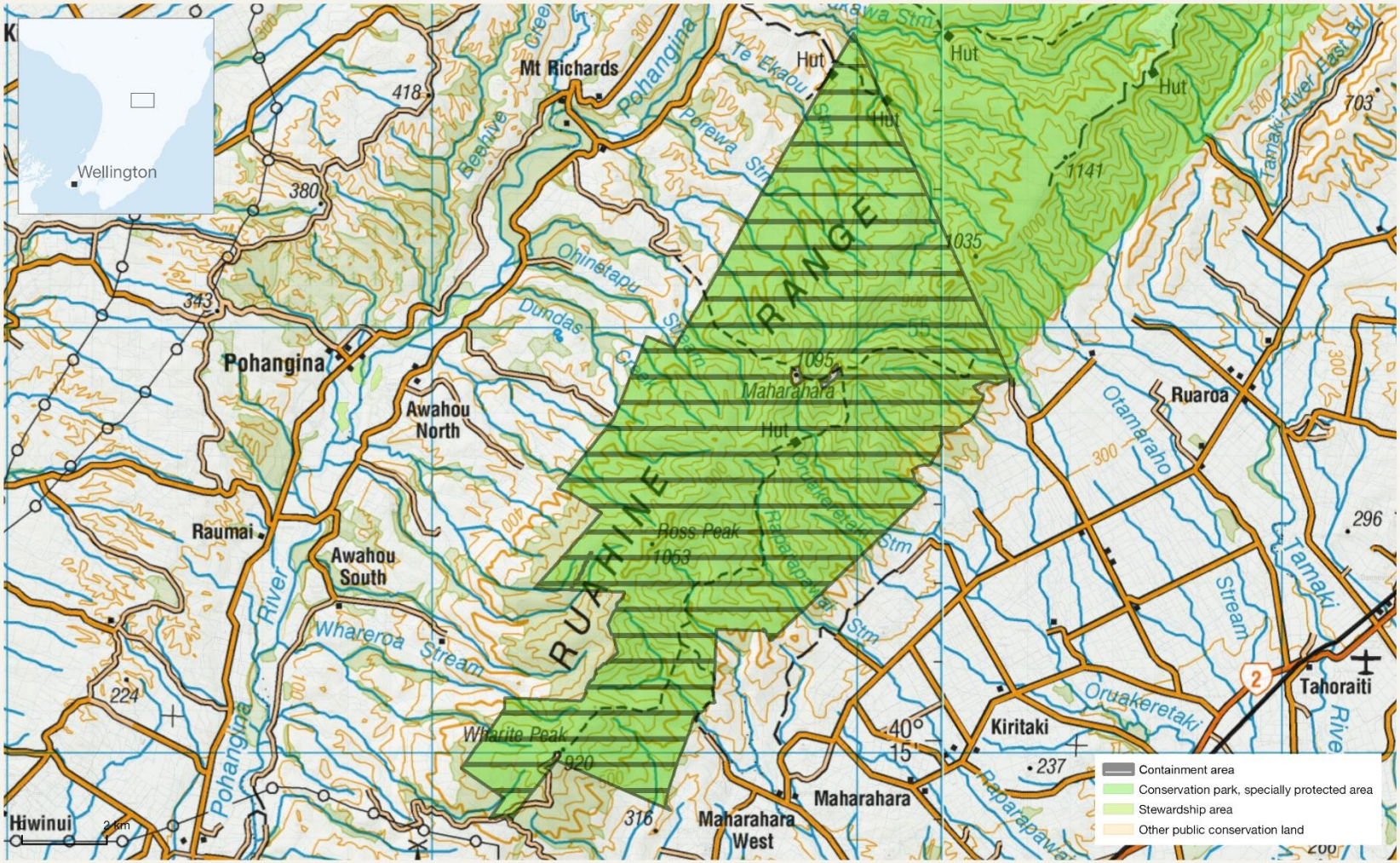
Find us on Facebook @ Ruahine User Group

Join the email discussion list by emailing: Ruahine User Group via rug rug@tarhc.org.nz

and ask to be added to the email list

Darwins Barberry Control – Wakarara 2023

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Mt Richards
Pohangina
Te Ekaou Stm
Porewa Stm
Beehive Creek
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Dundas Creek
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Maharahara
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Ross Peak
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Wharite Peak
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Pohangina
Awahou North
Awahou South
Raumai
Whareroa Stream
Pohangina River
Hiwinui
Maharahara West
Kiritaki
Ruaroa
Otamaraho
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Other public conservation land
Ruahine Forest Park
Goat Control
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Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai
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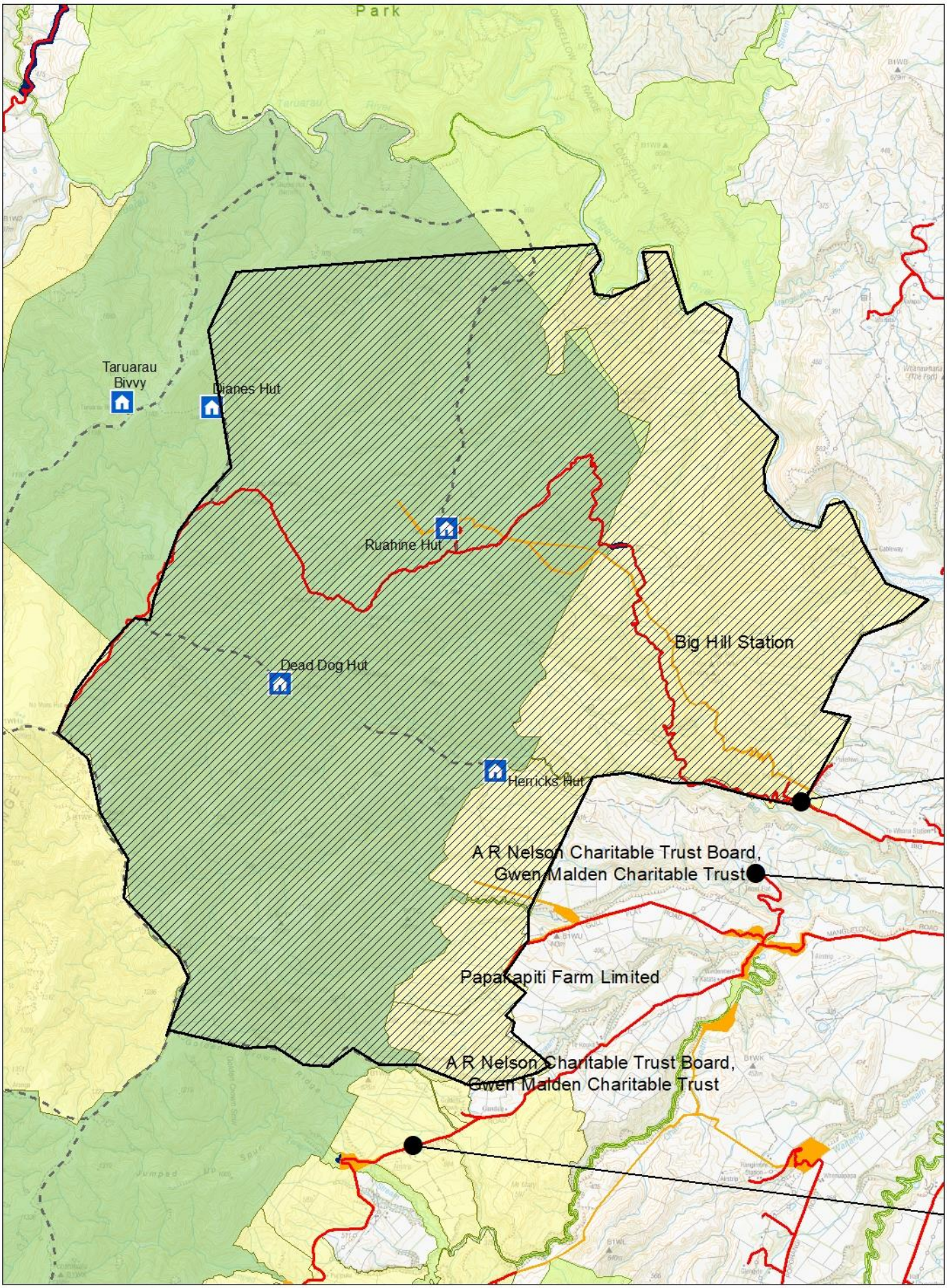
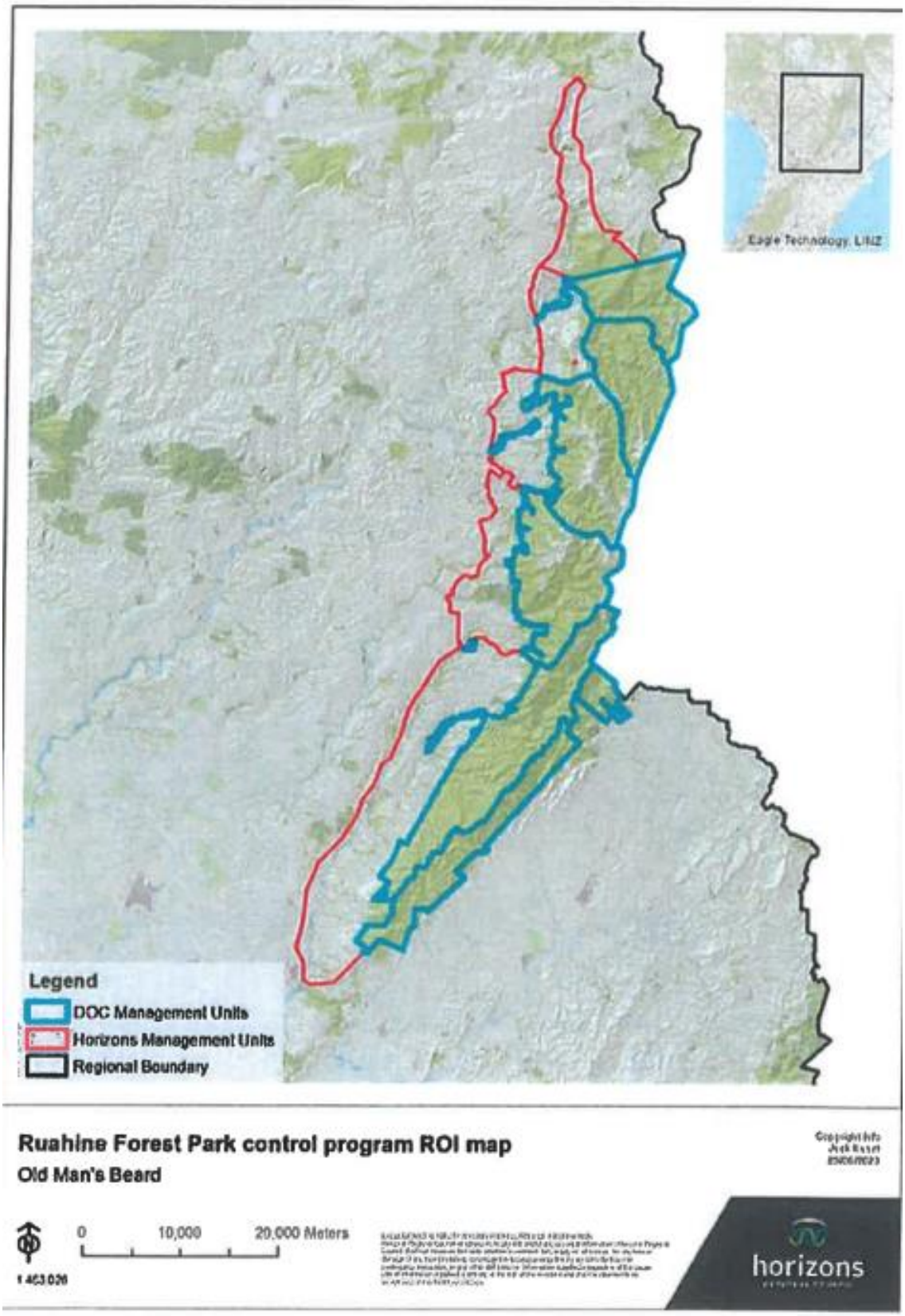
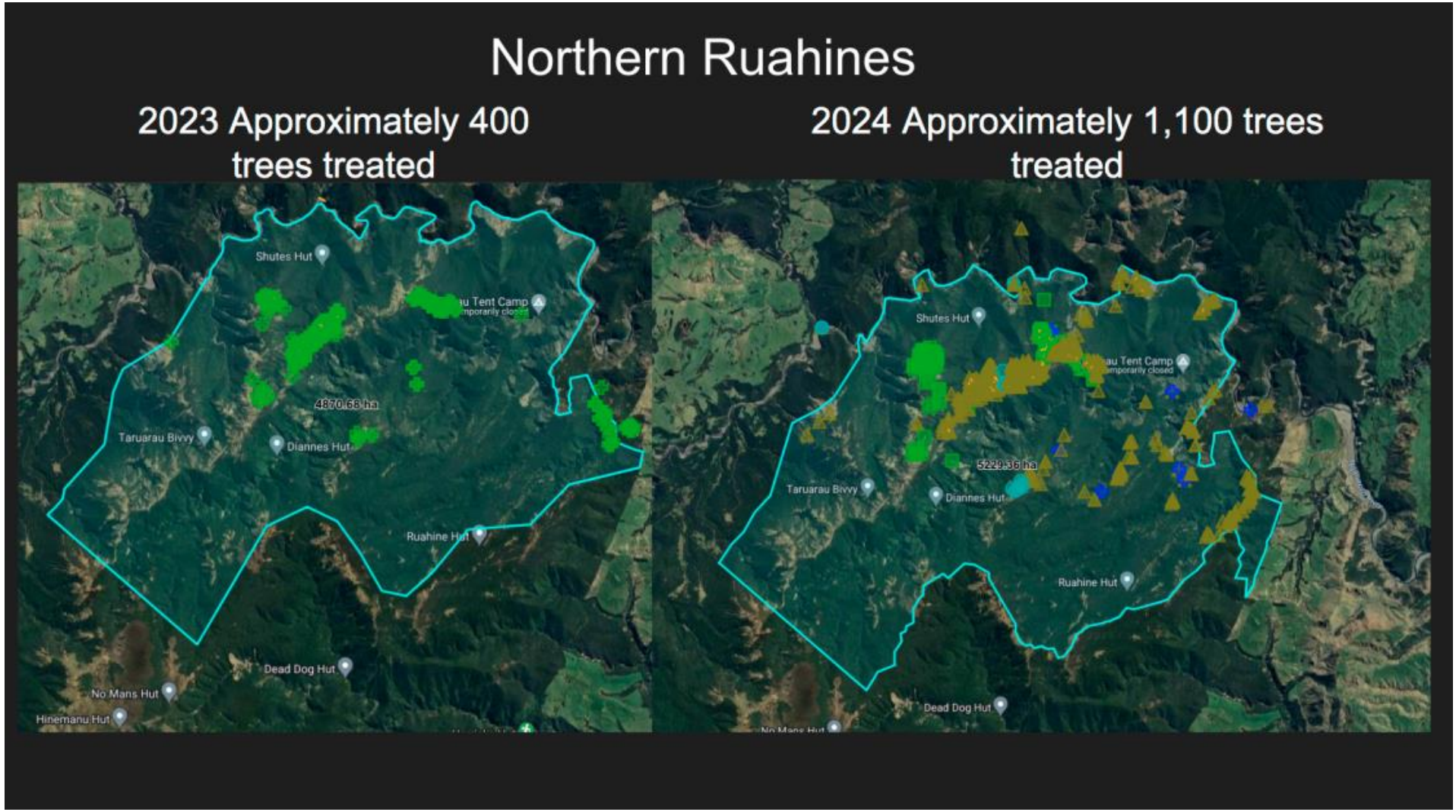


Ruahine Forest Park - North Eastern Control Block

Old Mans Beard Control



Contorta Control April May 2023 versus April May 2024