

NRGE Orchid Haven and Swamp Forests

At a glance

TRC Reference: BD/9742	LENZ:	H1.3b Under protected
Ecological District: Egmont	National:	Priority 4 - Threatened Species
Land Tenure: Private		Priority 1 - Threatened Land Environment
Area(ha): 7.5		Priority 2 - Sand Dunes and Wetlands
GPS: 1684214X & 5641815Y		
Habitat: Forest Remnant/Wetland	Regional:	Representative ecosystem type Key Native Ecosystem
Bioclimatic Zone: Lower Montane	Regional	Less reduced >50% left
Ecosystem Type: MF7.2: Rata, tawa, kamahi, podocarp forest	Ecosystem Loss:	Reduced 30-50% left
MF8.3: Kahikatea, rimu, kamahi forest	Protection Status:	Local Government
	Catchment:	Waiaua 2 (Waiaua) (364)

General Description

NRGE Orchid Haven Swamp Forest remnant is located on privately owned land, approx. 13.5km north east of Opunake. The site is in the Egmont Ecological District and located within the Waiaua river catchment. The remnant is comprised of native forest types that have been greatly reduced in Taranaki. The nearest protected sites include other Key Native Ecosystems in the area, such as Wiremu Road Wetland, Kaweora Road Forest and Te Papakura o Taranaki (Egmont National Park)

Ecological Features

Flora

Tawa, kamahi, rimu, raukawa, pigeonwood and hinau, along with rewarewa and a few emergent northern rata make up the majority of the cutover canopy. Swamp maire, pukatea and kahikatea can be found in wetter areas. The subcanopy is lacking due to many years of stock access and browse, however, tree ferns, ground ferns and seedlings and saplings of pate, hangehange, NZ fuchsia are plentiful where access is more difficult. Epiphytes and climbers are abundant. Recent myrtle rust threats have elevated potentially vulnerable native flora species to 'Threatened' 'At Risk' status. Notably, six of these vulnerable species are present at this site including four species of rata, swamp maire (also Regionally Distinctive) and manuka. 'Nationally Critical' poroporo is also present and 'At Risk' Kirk's kohuhu is growing just outside the KNE.

Fauna

Native birds present include tomtit, kereru, tui, silvereye, grey warbler, fantail, kingfisher, harrier and morepork. Bellbird and whitehead are likely to be present, but were not observed during the initial visit. There is very good habitat for a range of other notable native species including freshwater fish, reptiles and invertebrates.

Ecological Values

Ecological context - High	Contiguous with other priority ecosystems including Te Papakura o Taranaki. Provides connectivity to other KNE's including Kaweora Road Forest, Wiremu Road Wetland and many unprotected forest remnants nearby. Provides habitat for 'At Risk', 'Threatened' and 'Regionally Distinctive' native flora species.
Sustainability - Positive	The site will improve dramatically with appropriate management, especially stock exclusion. Without intervention, regeneration will be significantly altered and overall sustainability of this site will be poor.

Representativeness - High

The site has been identified as a priority for management to ensure a representative sample of all ecosystems in the region are maintained (MF8.3: Kahikatea, rimu, kamahi forest and MF7-2 Rata, Tawa, kamahi, podocarp forest). The indigenous vegetation in this area is classified as Underprotected (LENZ environment H1.3b). Less than 30% native vegetation cover remains in these areas and less than 20% are underprotected. More native habitats remaining in these areas require formal protection and conservation management to preserve remaining biodiversity values.

Rarity and Distinctiveness - High

Contains notable species including 'Regionally Distinctive' and 'Threatened' swamp maire, four species of 'Threatened' rata and manuka - all species susceptible to myrtle rust. 'Nationally Critical' poroporo is also present. The 'At Risk' Kirk's kohuhu is growing just outside the KNE boundary. Notable bird species which may be present include bellbird and whitehead, along with 'Threatened' New Zealand Falcon.

Other Management Issues

Habitat Modification - Medium

The understorey has been extensively modified by grazing stock. Stock-proof fencing is necessary to reduce the risk of continued modification.

Herbivores - High

Stock presently have access to the site and have been impacting on the bush by trampling roots and browsing young seedlings and saplings for decades - more so on the forest edge. The new landowners plan to fence to exclude stock in the near future.

Possum Self-help

Falls within the Egmont Stage 3 Possum self-help area. The landowners have recently taken over this property.

Predator Free signed up: Yes

Trap boxes present around the farm by TPFT contractors, but could be shifted to more suitable locations and away from stock.

Predators - Medium

Predators including rodents, mustelids, possums, hedgehogs and feral cats will be present in the wider landscape and impacting on native species at the site.

Weeds - Low

Blackberry is present on the edges of the bush along with small patches of African clubmoss. These weeds could become problematic after stock exclusion and may require management as the site regenerates.

