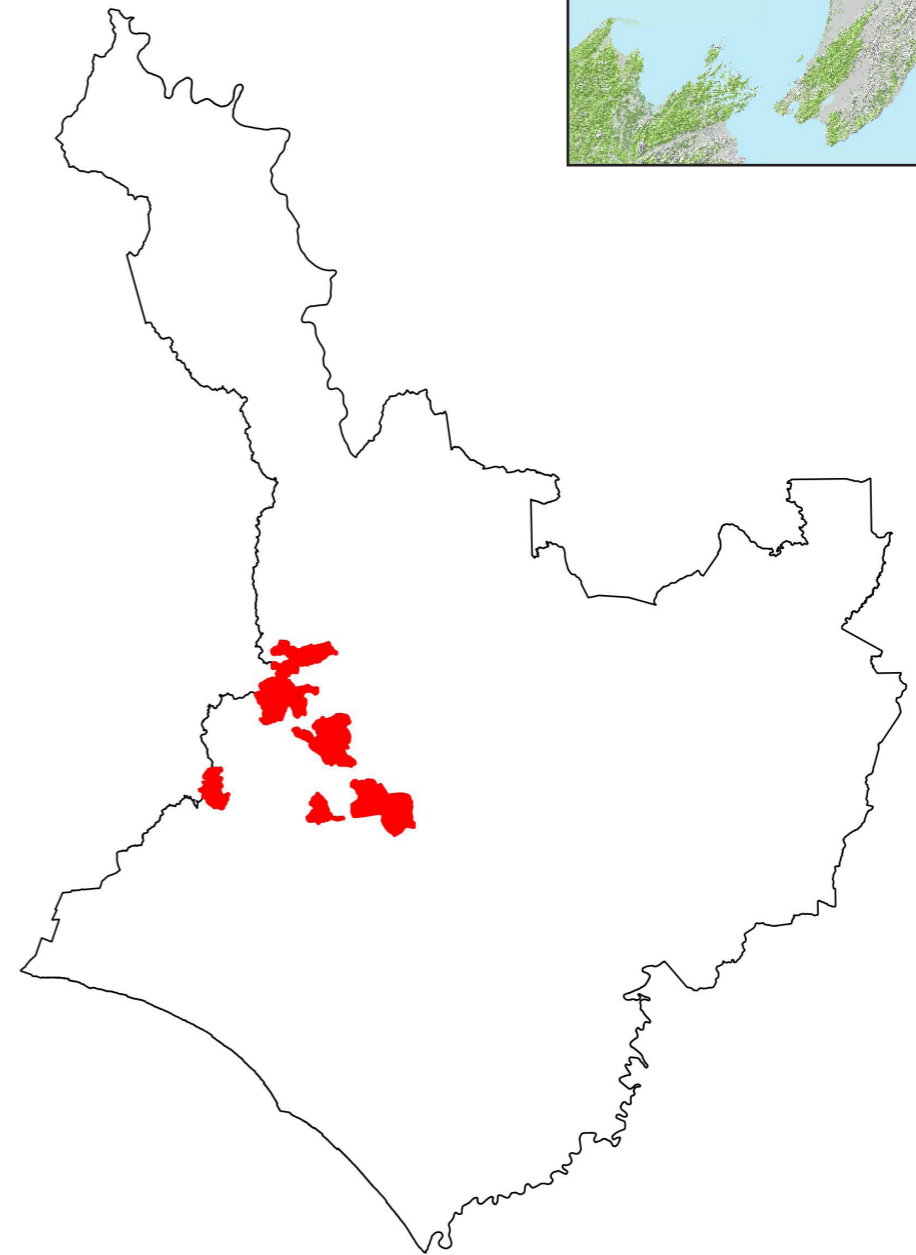
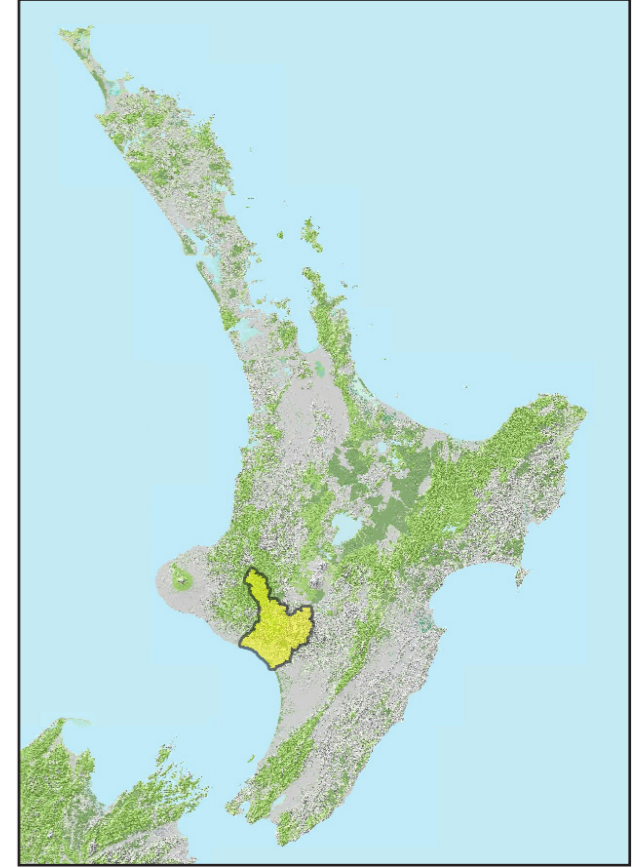
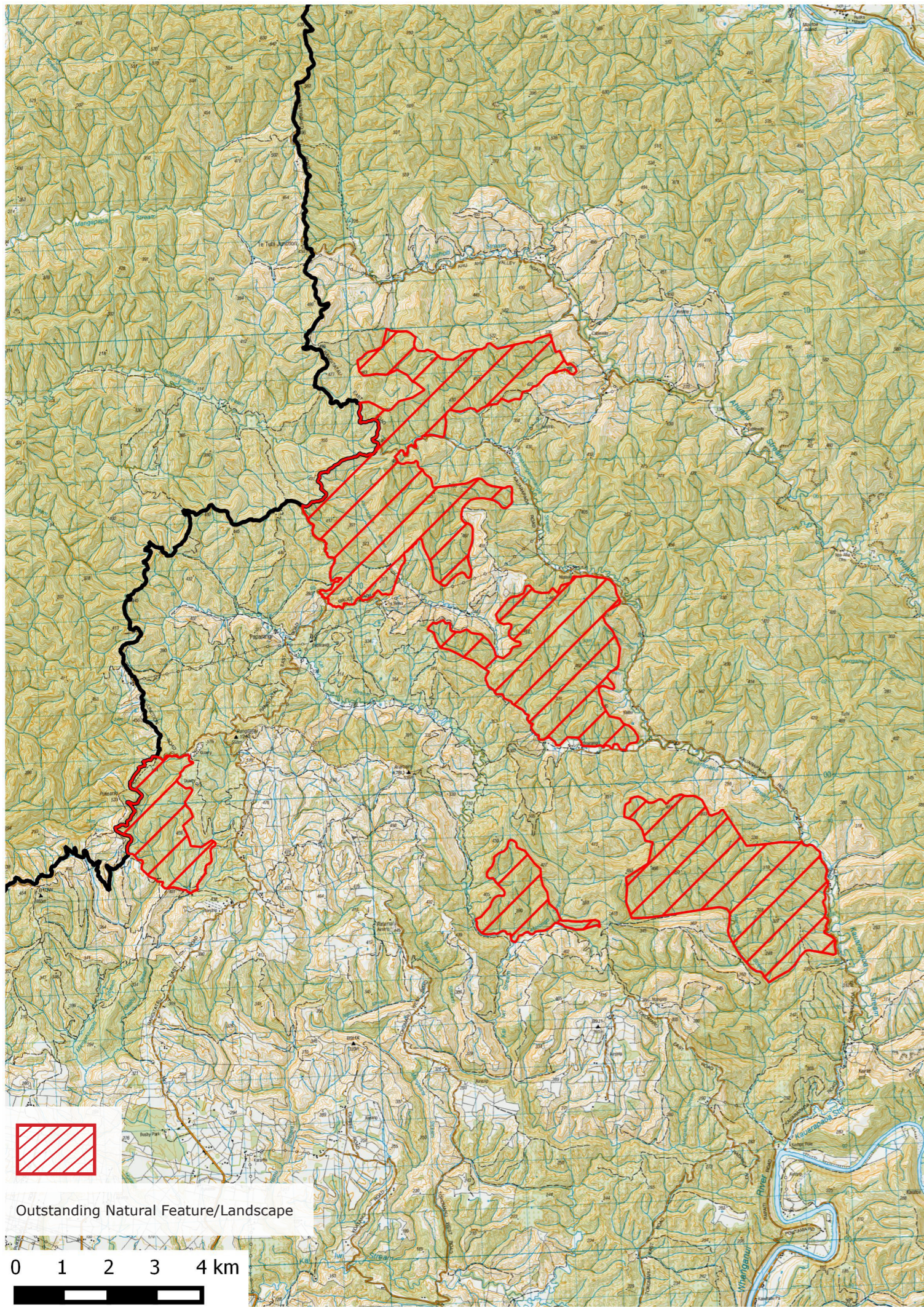
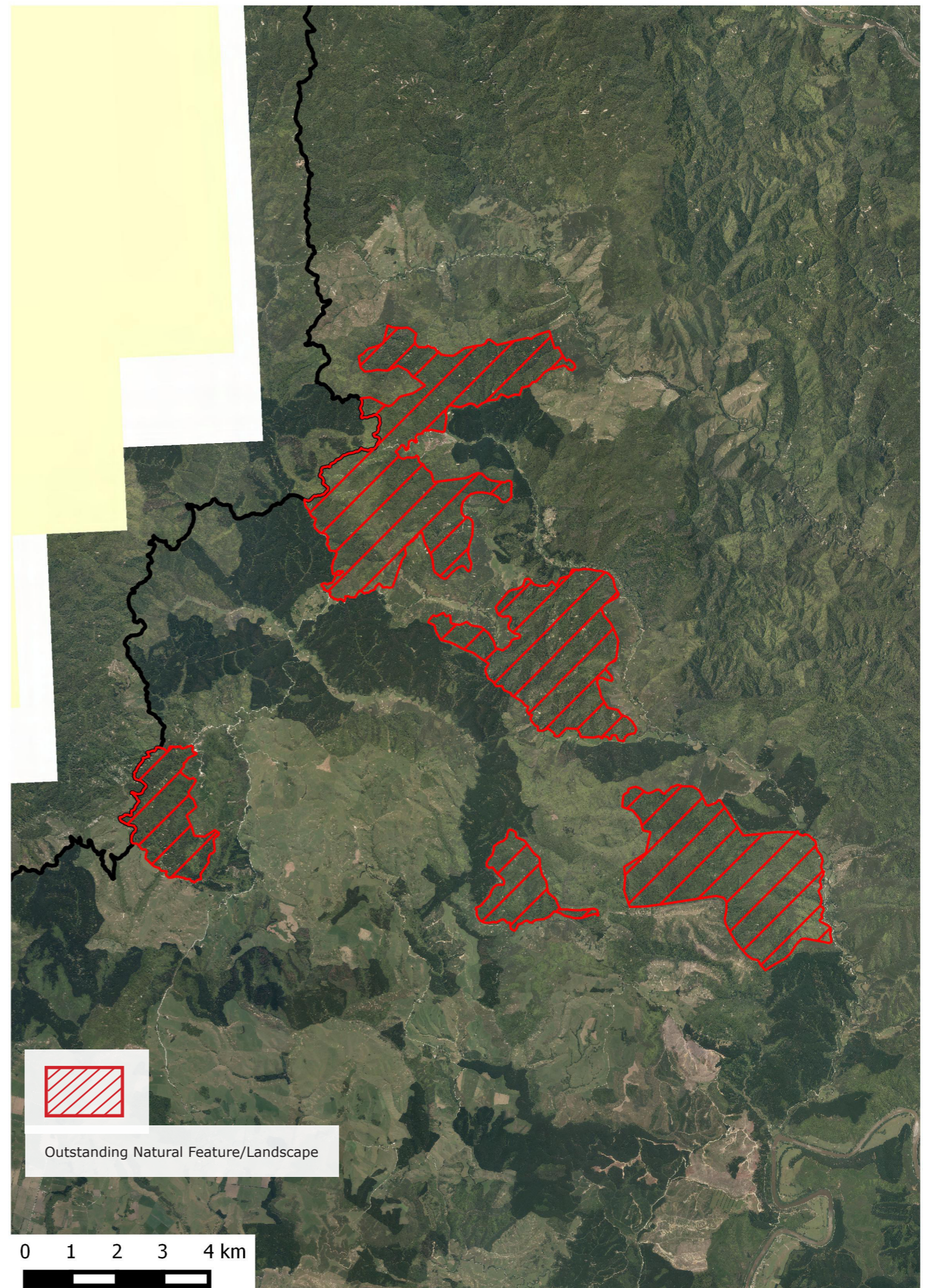


Area 4 North-West Inland Hills and Valleys





Name: North-West Inland Hills and Valleys

Location: NZ Topo 50 – BK32

Description: Five separate areas in hills and valleys south and west of the southern part of the Whanganui National Park to. Distinctive well-advanced regenerating indigenous podocarp forest over eroded landform of ridges, side-spurs and steep-sided, narrow-floored valleys.

ONL/ONF: Outstanding Natural Features

Natural Science	Geological/ Geomorphological	A pattern of defined ridgetops and side spurs descending steeply to narrow-floored valleys. Land form similar to the nearby steeply sloped hills of the Wanganui National Park that lies to the north and east of these areas. Soils comprise uplifted sedimentary mudstone and hard and soft sandstone with layers of volcanic ash and pumice that have been deposited following volcanic eruptions from the Taupō eruption 1850 years ago, and later from Taranaki and Tongariro.
	Biological/ Ecological	Regenerating Indigenous podocarp forest completely covers the folds of the land, enhancing the ecological value of these areas, and creating improved habitat for indigenous and exotic birdlife. Regeneration is approximately 20-50 years old and more, with emergent podocarp species beginning to dominate, particularly on moister south-facing slopes. Ecological values will continue to improve as the process continues over time.
	Hydrological	Water in stream tributaries has quality and quantity values as tributary to the Whanganui River, with recognition of the benefits that the indigenous land cover has on the rivers water quality.

Associational	Historical	Areas of regenerating forest originally felled for milling, as was much of the land now used for rural purposes throughout the district. Regeneration of the native forest has occurred to varying degrees, with the defined areas demonstrating more advanced regeneration and generally moving into or through secondary growth and in places emergence of tertiary species.
	Tangata Whenua	The entire river valley has great significance to iwi, particularly the river itself. Current and former marae and archaeological sites are liberally dispersed through the areas associated with the river.
	Shared/ Recognised	Similar vegetation and landscape characteristics as the adjacent National Park and many areas within the District recognised as reserves or as part of the DOC estate. Includes land within the Waitahinga Reserve, which contains the dam and water supply for the city.
	Recreation	Possible tramping activities and hunting potential or existing activities.

Perceptual	Memorability	Memorable landscape due to the land-cover (dense regenerating indigenous forest) and land-form (a series of ridges, side-spurs and steep narrow-floored valleys), providing a visual contrast with surrounding pasture and more gentle landform. The areas stand out visually as undeveloped and with a high degree of naturalness, contrasting with adjacent plantation forestry in places. The areas have a sense of naturalness, wildness and being distinct from their immediate more modified surroundings, adding considerably to memorability.
	Legibility/ Expressiveness	Landform is expressive of the natural geomorphic forces which shaped it, showing a rhythmic pattern of ridges and steep-sided, narrow-floored valleys. Landform reflects natural drainage patterns, and is also expressed through the patterns of regenerating vegetative cover. Steep v-shaped valleys and dense vegetative cover present here as untamed land, with the underlying eroded landform clearly expressive through the regenerating podocarp forest which in turn is clearly legible as remnant land cover distinct from their adjacent productive land-use. Vegetation patterns are expressive of slope aspect, with the moister southern slopes showing greater diversity and maturity in the regeneration process.
	Transient	The bush environment is secluded, enclosed and quiet, with extensive native bird-life and song, and the sound of waterways and streams and/or dripping rain.
	Aesthetic	High aesthetic value due to the quality of the regenerating indigenous vegetation, the pattern of the hills and valleys, and the quality of the experience from within these areas – isolated, quiet and natural. A contrast to the surrounding productive rural land-use, further emphasising the perception of naturalness of the defined areas.
Naturalness	Natural landscape with unmodified landform and dense indigenous vegetative cover with extensive areas of well-advanced regenerating podocarp forest. Natural value is significantly contributed to by the quality and stage of the forest regeneration.	

Summary of Key Values High landscape values derived from the high-quality regenerating indigenous vegetation cover over the eroded uplifted landform pattern. Contrast with the surrounding areas of plantation forest or pastoral land increases the value of such remnant areas of regeneration.

Potential Threats Clearance or degradation of native vegetation throughout any part of the area. Damage to flora and fauna by animal pests. Establishment of exotic weeds within the areas and along stream margins.

Potential Policies Maintain indigenous vegetation throughout these areas west of the Whanganui River. Control and remove exotic plants within the areas and along stream margins. Control animal pests. Maintain natural water flow and quality. Avoid earthworks and clearance or loss of indigenous vegetation or introduction of exotic vegetation.