Outstanding Natural Feature/Landscape

0   1   2   3   4 km

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0   1   2   3   4 km

	Name:	**Otoko**

	Location:	NZ Topo 50 – BK33

	Description:	Located beside State Highway 4 on the Mangawhero River, 40 km from Whanganui. Over 1,000ha of regenerating podocarp forest, much of it held as part of the DOC estate. Otoko Marae is located beside the river amongst the western area of vegetation. Several small lakes located between the road and river, enclosed by native vegetation.

	ONL/ONF:	Outstanding Natural Feature

Natural Science	Geological/ Geomorphological	A pattern of sharp or rolling ridgetops and side spurs descending to valley floors. Land form softer than the more steeply incised gorges and valleys further north, but still maintains steep side slopes and distinct ridges derived through erosion of its uplifted origins. The side slopes of the adjacent Mangawhero River reflect the lateral erosion that has occurred through the uplifted sedimentary sandstone and mudstone that underlies much of the district, being more intact in form (without the erosive action of the river) and overall less dramatic in gradient compared to the gorges of the Whanganui River through the national park.
	Biological/ Ecological	Regenerating Indigenous podocarp forest 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 30-50 years old and more, with emergent podocarp species beginning to dominate. Evidence exists of remnant pasture amongst the vegetation near the river, but this appears to be diminishing as regeneration progresses. Ecological values will continue to improve as the regeneration process continues over time.
	Hydrological	Water in lakes and stream tributaries have quality and quantity values as tributary to the Mangawhero River, plus associational values for iwi.

Perceptual	Memorability	Memorable landscape due to the land-cover (dense regenerating indigenous forest), the natural lakes within the regenerating vegetation, and the land-form (a series of ridges, side-spurs and steep narrow-floored valleys), providing a visual contrast with surrounding pastoral land cover. The areas stand out visually as highly undeveloped and with a high degree is naturalness. There is a sense of isolation, wilderness and being separate 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. The valleys and dense vegetative cover present here as a natural landscape, 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 rural 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 drama of the hills and valleys, the quality of the regenerating indigenous vegetation, and the quality of the experience from within these areas – isolated, quiet and natural. Beautiful lakes, offset by the setting, topography and surrounding vegetation. A strong 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 areas of well-advanced regenerating podocarp forest. Natural value is significantly contributed to by the quality and stage of the forest regeneration, the presence of the Mangawhero River and the adjacent lakes.

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	Otoko Marae is the only remaining kāinga (Māori village) of many that were once on the Parapara Road. Ōtoko's marae is a southern stronghold of the Ringatū faith. The meeting house was first built in 1870. Large DOC reserve east of the highway and smaller area of regenerating indigenous vegetation between the highway and river. Seven small lakes are located within the bush west of the highway, giving added aesthetic and spiritual values to the area.
	Shared/ Recognised	Similar vegetation and landscape characteristics as many areas within the District recognised as reserves or as part of the DOC estate. Particular iwi values associated with the seven lakes on the land.
	Recreation	Possible hunting potential or activity, and possible walking throughout the area within the DOC reserve.

Summary of Key Values	High landscape and visual values derived from the high-quality regenerating indigenous vegetation cover over the eroded uplifted landform pattern. Contrast with the surrounding areas of pasture increases the value of such remnant areas of regeneration. The seven lakes have particular values for iwi and high aesthetic values.

Potential Threats	Clearance or degradation of native vegetation throughout any part of the area. Establishment of exotic weeds within the areas and along stream margins. Loss of vegetation context and water quality in the lakes

Potential Policies	Maintain indigenous vegetation throughout these areas east of the Mangawhero River. Control and remove exotic plants within the areas and along stream margins. Maintain vegetation context and natural water flow and quality of the lakes. Avoid earthworks and clearance or loss of indigenous vegetation or introduction of exotic vegetation.