



Pukerua Bay Rahui **Creating a Sustainable Community Resource:** Ngati Toa / Pukerua Bay

The Honourable Phil Heatley
Minister of Fisheries
Parliament Buildings
Wellington





The Hon Phil Heatley Minister of Fisheries.

Dear Minister,

Ngati Toa Iwi and The Pukerua Bay community submit this joint proposal document regarding the Rahui at Pukerua Bay.

An earlier edition was sent to the then Minister of Fisheries The Hon Jim Anderton in 2008.

With the change of Government and your appointment as the new Minister of Fisheries, we are keen to present this Submission Document for your attention.

This proposal is supported and carries endorsements from

- The Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Ngati Toa Iwi
- The Mayor Porirua City Council / Jenny Brash
- The Mayor of Kapiti Coast District Council / Jenny Rowan

along with letters of support from three primary schools Titahi Bay North School, Plimmerton School and Pukerua Bay School.

We are now actively working with Ministry of Fisheries officials to secure protection measures which with Ngati Toa and your support will provide ongoing marine protection for the longer term.

Pat Hanley

Chair

Pukerua bay Residents Association

04- 2399 727

lawler.hanely@slingshot.co.nz



PUKERUA BAY RAHUI

Waikanae Beach

Wail

Kena Kena

Otaih

Paraparaumu Beach

Parapar

Raumati Beach

Raumati

Raumati South

Whareroa Beach

Paekakariki

Muri

Pukerua Bay

Paekakariki Hill

Karehana Bay

Plimmerton

Mana

Golden Gate

Moonshine

Onepoto

Paremata

Pauatahanui

Craigs Flat

Papakowhai

Judgeford

Takapuwahia

Waitangirua

Porirua

©2008 C



41°00.9'S
174°54.9'E

PUKERUA BAY RAHUI

41°01.7'S
174°52.2'E

41°01.8'S
174°52.3'E

WAIRAKA POINT

Pa Rd
Muri Rd
Muri
Clean Parade
Hawera Rd
Raroa Pt
Raroa Rd
Pukerua Bay



Pukerua Bay Rahui
Creating a Sustainable
Community Resource:
Ngati Toa / Pukerua Bay

Background

Pukerua Bay lies at the outer edge of the city of Porirua City District. It is a part of the Rohe of Ngati Toa Iwi.

Porirua City is home for many Pacifica, Asian and European Cultures. There is a great diverse cultural mix here, many challenges and exciting differences.

Equally diverse, is the rocky coastline and harbour inlet which defines the western boundary to the Porirua district. It is a significant and natural recreational resource over which the Mana of Ngati Toa authority rests. A constant and large number of peoples from within and beyond the Porirua district enjoy these beaches and rocky coastlines. The cultural expectations for fishing vary markedly amongst them.

The repercussions of this, along with unsustainable levels of casual fishing, overlaid with the impact of illegal fishing and poaching is stressing the marine environment to such a degree that many of our once abundant fish and marine plant life species will be unable to survive.

In 1989 The Pukerua Bay Community and Ngati Toa began working together to explore the establishment of a flexible marine protection area for the Pukerua Bay rocky foreshore.

The partnership was founded on the recognition of Ngati Toa's mana over the fisheries. Ngati Toa would be responsible for consulting with and making submissions to The Ministry of Fisheries, the Minister and also would work and consult with the Pukerua Bay community.

Initially an amount of good will and trust was required from both parties ... the rewards however have been numerous. This partnership has helped foster valuable insights between two different communities living in close proximity together.





Two stories

The first is about Ngati Toa Iwi and the community of Pukerua Bay involved and working together to address the unsustainable fishing practices occurring at Pukerua Bay.

- **Exploring flexible and effective methods for long term marine protection.**

The second story is about new connections being woven as the solutions for marine protection are explored and developed across the Porirua communities.

This dialogue between the various communities has to be seen as a worthwhile and valuable benefit in itself.

- **Seeking enduring solutions and sustainable recreational resources.**

Secure Marine Protection for Pukerua Bay

After some years of community discussion and consultation, Ngati Toa, in association with the Pukerua Bay Residents Association, succeeded in establishing protection for the local marine environment in the form of temporary restrictions made under Section 186A of the Fisheries Act 1996.

The closure, generally known as the Pukerua Bay Rahui, came into force in December 2002, for an initial period of 2 years. A two-year extension from continued the protection through until December 2006. Unfortunately, however, the closure lapsed at the end of 2006 and was only restored (for a further two year term only) in 2007 after strong representation from Ngati Toa.

Impacts of the Closure

The four-year Rahui was a resounding success. Populations of rock lobster and reef fish (notably snapper, blue moki, stingray and eagle ray) relieved from constant relentless set-netting and diving pressure, recovered spectacularly; paua and kina also showed definite signs of recovery.

Much as it was primarily a fisheries management and conservation measure, other benefits were also evident. Ngati Toa restored their Mana over traditional fishing grounds, while recreational fishers enjoyed improving catches and conservationists saw a recovery of depleted reef populations. Strongly supported by a majority of the community from the start, the concept of protection under the Traditional Fisheries Regulations now has almost unanimous support.

The popularity of the Rahui was such that its expiry at the end of 2006 was greeted with almost universal dismay, particularly when illegal gathering quickly decimated the hard-won gains of the previous four years.





A Community Vision for Permanent Protection

It is now clear that there is a shared vision for future protection at Pukerua Bay along the same lines as the Rahui closure. **The “customised” form of protection it offers – prohibiting the gathering of certain species and the use of certain methods, while allowing others to continue – has proved to be a winning formula that binds communities together instead of dividing them the way conventional Marine Reserves can.**

Ngati Toa and the Pukerua Bay community are strongly committed to permanent protection at Pukerua Bay that provides the same sort of customised restrictions that have been so successful under the Rahui. By permitting certain methods, and the taking of certain species, while prohibiting or restricting others, the Rahui has succeeded beyond expectations with its stakeholder buy-in and reef population recovery.

Options for Future Protection

There are several alternatives for ongoing protection at Pukerua Bay.

A Mataitai has become the favoured option, as it would provide long-term protection with the same flexibility as the existing Rahui. However, establishing a Mataitai requires that Ngati Toa must first formally establish its Mana over this section of coast, and this is currently contested by other Iwi. Ngati Toa consider that achieving recognition of its Mana will take considerably longer than the two year (maximum) term of the current closure.

Marine Reserves are strongly favoured by conservationists and some recreational diving groups. Well known examples such as Goat Island and the Poor Knights Islands have spectacularly demonstrated their benefits.

The downside, for a community beach such as Pukerua Bay, is the severe constraints they impose on legitimate recreational fishing activity. Pukerua Bay grew from a community of weekend batches and retains a strong recreational fishing culture; from children fishing off the beach and rocks, to evening and weekend enthusiasts fishing the inshore area from dinghies and kayaks. Removing this recreation opportunity would disrupt the social fabric of the community. Furthermore, policing of a Marine Reserve could prove extremely difficult and costly.

Marine Parks have been a successful solution in areas such as Taranaki’s Sugarloaf Islands. They offer similar flexibility to Mataitai but do not appear to be widely used now.





Existing Fisheries Regulations

In theory only, the existing recreational and commercial fishing regulations are able to provide the level of protection necessary to sustain reef populations.

However, these regulations have several shortcomings in such a popular area:

- Indiscriminate set-netting, whilst legal, has a huge effect on species such as butterfish, blue moki and red moki. Rock lobster are a regular, incidental, catch, as are less desirable species such as rays, marblefish, banded wrasse and kahawai. There has been a dramatic recovery in ray and blue moki populations since the inception of the Rahui.
- Although Pukerua Bay residents provide a valuable first-line infringement reporting service, their effectiveness is hampered by difficulty casual observers have distinguishing a legal catch from an illegal one: a fisher leaving the water with a sack could have an entirely legal catch of kina, or an excess quantity of undersize paua. As a result, by far the majority of illegal catches go unreported. Under the Rahui, it can be safely assumed that anyone leaving the water with a sack has an illegal catch.

A Solution for Pukerua Bay

There is a high probability that the current Rahui at Pukerua Bay will expire before Ngati Toa is able to establish its Mana over the Pukerua Bay coast. As Ministry of Fisheries officials have advised that the Rahui cannot be extended for a further term, pursuing a Mataitai at this time will almost certainly result in protection lapsing for an extended period, with reef populations quickly reverting to pre-closure levels.

Innovative solutions are desperately needed to cover the period from the impending expiry date in 2009 to when Ngati Toa is able to establish permanent sustainable marine protection at Pukerua Bay.

Against this background, the key community groups – Ngati Toa and the Pukerua Bay community – are seeking longer term protection that mirrors the provisions of the Section 186A Rahui. This may be achievable under the Traditional Fisheries regulations or it may require the introduction of special enabling legislation.

PROPOSAL

Ngati Toa and Pukerua Bay communities jointly request the Minister of Fisheries to extend protection of the inshore area at Pukerua Bay, by means of existing legislation if feasible, or by implementing new provisions to cover the period until Ngati Toa is able to establish sustainable protection over the coast.

To this end we would welcome an opportunity to meet with you and officials to discuss a way forward on this important issue.

Pat Hanley,
Chair - Pukerua Bay Residents Association





Endorsements.

