

9 Tapu Creek Farms
RD5, Thames 3575

25 January 2020

Hon David Parker
Minister of Oceans and Fisheries
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

*Whakamau te titiro ki Te Aroha-a-uta ki runga ki te kei o Te Tara-o-te-ika-a-Māui
Ka māwhitiwhiti rā te haere ki Te Moenga-i-haua-e-Poutama ki raro
E ko te ihu o te waka o Hauraki e!
Ngā tini nōhanga a Ati Tūrehu, a Ati Kōrakorako
Kei raro raka ngā poitō-o-te-Kūpenga-o-Taramainuku
Taka iho rā ki Whare-kai-atua ki Muriwaihou, ki Te Moana-Tīkapakapa-o-Hauraki
Te Wai Karekare o ngā tūpua tawhito a Ūreia me Papakauri
Rere tika te haere ki Motu-ārai-roa, ki Motu-wai-heke
Ko Maunganui te maunga, ko Awaawaroa te awa, ko Tīkapa-horuhoru te toka tūahu
Ko Ngāti Kapu, ko Ngāti Hura, ko Te Uri Karaka ngā hapū, ko Ngāti Pāoa taringa rahirahi te iwi
Tihei mauri ora!*

Tēnā koe e te tōtara pū Hon David Parker

Request for Rāhui to be Enforced by the Minister of Oceans and Fisheries

Overview

On behalf of Ngāti Pāoa I present this letter to the Minister of Oceans and Fisheries, Hon David Parker for URGENT action. On Friday 15 January 2021 a hui was held on Waiheke Island with members of Ngāti Pāoa, ngā mātāwaka (other tribes), and Pirihahi Marae, under the leadership of kaumātua. Those present were 100% in support of placing a 'rāhui', led by our hapū Ngāti Hura, Ngāti Kapu, Te Uri Karaka, and iwi Ngāti Pāoa. A Public Hui was held on Thursday 21 January and the outcome was an overwhelming 100% support by all those who attended. The Ngāti Pāoa Iwi Trust (PSGE) met on Saturday 23 January 2021 to confirm their full support for the rāhui. The Ngāti Pāoa Trust Board have also given their full support.

Rāhui

Ngāti Pāoa will be placing a customary tikanga practice of **Rāhui at Oneroa Beach, Waiheke Island on Sunday 31 January 2021 at 5.30am** and request a Section 186A Temporary Closure around Waiheke from the foreshore to 1 nautical mile offshore. The rāhui will be placed for a minimum of two years. The species in critical need of protection identified are tipa (scallops), kūtai (mussels), kōura (crayfish) and pāua (abalone). The rationale for placing the rāhui is due to the declining inshore biodiversity. We believe if nothing is done urgently our mātaitai, our kaimoana beds will not only be severely depleted, but will reach the point of collapse along our estuarine environment. Ngāti Pāoa and the Waiheke community are committed to implementing a future marine management plan so that the regeneration and restoration that takes place during the rāhui is not undone once lifted.

The community are committed to provide primary surveillance for the rāhui and report any offending to Fisheries Officers. We believe that with the support of the Ministry of Primary Industries, iwi and the community, the rāhui will be upheld and our goal will be achieved.



Te Motu-wai-heke, Waiheke Island

The strategic location of Waiheke nestled within Tīkapakapa Moana (Hauraki Gulf) caused many hapū and iwi to wrest control of its rich biodiversity and natural resources for their benefit. Towering stands of tōtara and kauri allowed hapū and iwi to construct waka tauā to check any incursions by neighbouring enemy tribes. The numerous estuaries and inshore waters held abundant shellfish, such as pipi, tuangi, tuatua, tipa, tītiko and pāua making an idyllic lifestyle for early toiwhenua (first inhabitants). These in turn attracted many fish to feed on these kaimoana beds.

After the arrival of Hotunui and his famous son Marutūāhu in the early 1600's, these Tainui ancestors committed themselves and their descendants in a protracted conquest over Hauraki toiwhenua. One of those areas included Waiheke, due to its strategic importance in launching new offensives in any direction throughout Hauraki, and to retreat during times of conflict. Therefore, Marutūāhu iwi utilised Waiheke Island to help subjugate their enemies. Although all the Marutūāhu iwi and some of their allies namely Te Patukirikiri and Ngāi Tai, could claim mana whenua over Waiheke, Ngāti Maru achieved overall ascendancy over the Island until the drowning of Ngāti Pāoa chief Rongomaurikura. Ngāti Pāoa accused Ngāti Maru of eating his body that washed up near Manāia. After two years of constant warfare between these two iwi, peace was concluded after Ngāti Pāoa hapū Ngāti Hura, Ngāti Kapu, and Te Uri Karaka acquired Waiheke Island.

Ngāti Pāoa

Ngāti Pāoa are descendants from the eponymous ancestors Tamaterā (Marutūāhu's second son) and Ruawēhea (Ngāti Hako), through the union of their son Taharua and Nokenoke (Ngāti Hako) who gave birth to Tukutuku. Tukutuku was Pāoa's second wife and between them had many children.

Ngāti Pāoa is one of 12 Hauraki iwi whom from the 1600's dominated the western shores of Tīkapakapa (Firth of Thames). Later, Ngāti Pāoa extended its footprint to the Tāmaki River – Te Wai ō Taiki, Kohimarama, Waitematā, Te Haukapua and Kiritai on the North Shore. Over many generations, Ngāti Pāoa (with support from their relatives Marutūāhu iwi) conquered whenua in Tāmaki-makaurau and further north up to Matakana near Mahurangi. These included many of the islands throughout Tīkapa Moana Waiheke, Pōnui, Rātōroa, Pakatoa and the wider Gulf Islands of Hauraki.

APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURE UNDER SECTION 186A

1. Request for the Minister to impose a temporary closure under s186A to prohibit the taking of four species namely; tipa (scallops), kūtai (mussels), kōura (crayfish) and pāua (abalone).

Customary use and management practices of tangata whenua

2. The purpose for closure is to replenish these taonga species to ensure the customary practice of gathering kaimoana for whānau (recreational take) and for tribal gatherings such as hui (meetings), tangihanga (funerals), wānanga (workshops) and marae hui.
3. The degradation and exploitation of Tīkapa moana has resulted in the loss of lived experiences with taonga species around Waiheke. Kaumātua have witnessed this loss over recent decades. The relationships with these key species are currently no longer available to tamariki and mokopuna or generations to come. It is well proven that the moana is in a dire state and on the brink of collapse. Kōura are now regarded as functionally extinct, tipa beds have been destroyed from recreational dredging, anchoring and overharvesting. Kūtai are emaciated and few in numbers. Pāua are rarely seen and are harvested undersize and therefore unable to replenish their stocks.
4. The customary practice of gathering kaimoana during the right season, has declined to the inavailability of sufficient kaimoana numbers and size.
5. The sacred ritual of rāhui will be performed by tohunga and kaumatua, will be conducted at Oneroa to restore balance and to allow for the replenishment of these taonga species. This cultural practice was carried out by our tūpuna to ensure the sustainable harvesting of the estuarine and inshore areas so that future generations would not suffer the catastrophic loss of cultural practice, biodiversity and ecosystem collapse we are faced with today.

Proposed area and boundaries

6. S186A Temporary Closure around Waiheke Island from the foreshore to 1 nautical mile offshore for a minimum 2-year period to allow these taonga species to restore and replenish.

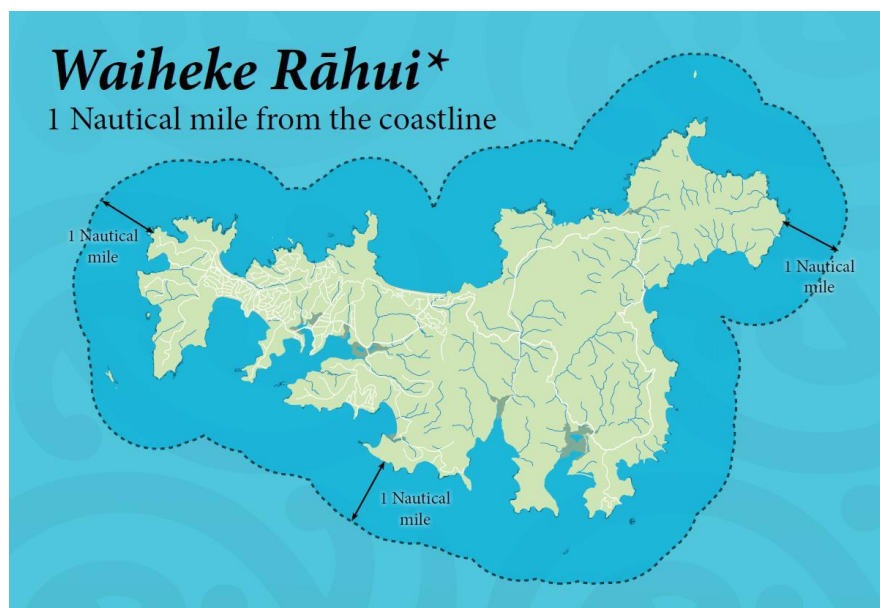


Figure 1 Map of Waiheke Island

7. Experience shows that when a rāhui is placed in one rohe, other rohe are affected as they are targeted for species no longer available in the rāhui area. There has been talk of other iwi within Tīkapakapa Moana, Te Moananui o Toi responding with rāhui in their respective rohe.

Species

8. Tipa (scallops), kūtai (mussels), kōura (crayfish) and pāua (abalone).
9. At the public hui held on 21 January 2021, full support for these species to be protected was unanimous.

Timeframe for Temporary Closure

10. The proposed timeframe we are requesting is for a minimum of 2 years.
11. It will require significant monitoring and compliance to restore our moana, therefore the likelihood of restoration within the first 2 years may not be feasible and will require more time. It is therefore proposed that resourcing is secured to establish a marine protected area to spawn a variety of species to restore and improve the marine biodiversity around Waiheke.

Education & Involvement

12. Education during the rāhui is critical to allow the community, recreational fishers and divers to understand the importance of protecting these taonga species and how they play a key role in improving the overall biodiversity of the moana around Waiheke.
13. There is an urgent call for the Minister of Oceans and Fisheries to implement the reduction of recreational bag limits as stated in 2019. If this is not achieved the species will again be targeted and their existence threatened once the rāhui is lifted.
14. Detailed signage, boundary markings, newspaper advertisements and social media will keep the public informed.
15. A cultural marine monitoring programme will be encouraged in Waiheke schools. Also the establishment of Pāoa Rangers to involve our rangatahi as kaitiaki of their moana.

Impacts of Covid-19 & America's Cup

16. The closure of the New Zealand border due to Covid-19 has provided safety for our people, however this has meant a change of holiday activity. There has been record sales of boats in New Zealand which we have witnessed here on Waiheke Island.
17. Waiheke's population growth has always been a concern for Ngāti Pāoa and the America's Cup event has created additional pressure on our limited kaimoana resource. The current harvesting onslaught during the Christmas, New Year's peak season has been devastating and continues as we observe more visitors coming from Auckland.

Support from the Community

18. Ngāti Pāoa have been overwhelmed with the level of support from whānau, hapū, iwi, and the wider community.
19. We will forward letters of support as we receive them.

Ngāti Pāoa's relationship to Tīkapakapa moana goes back over 400 years. Within a century, the coastal waters surrounding Waiheke and throughout Tīkapakapa Moana has been decimated and is near total collapse. My mokopuna (grandchildren) will not have the same experiences I had as a child growing up on Waiheke, in which the kaimoana was our main food source. Urgent action is required.

Hēoti anō, ngā tauwhiro tangā o te wāhi ngaro ki a koe.

Nāku noa nā



Herearoha Skipper

Ngāti Hura, Ngāti Kapu, Ngāti Pāoa | Ngāti Pāoa Iwi Trust - Trustee