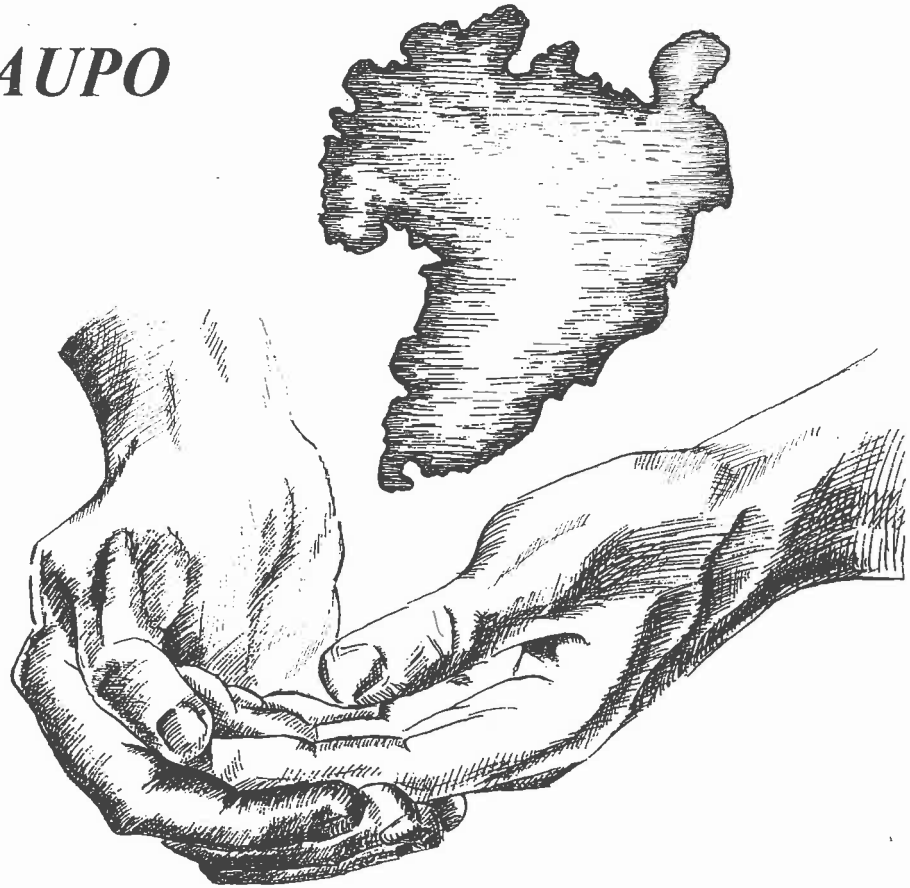


*LAKE TAUPO*



**HANDLE WITH CARE**

*"It is hereby declared that the provisions of this Act shall have effect for the purpose of preserving in perpetuity . . . for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand containing scenery of such distinctive quality or natural features so beautiful or unique that their preservation is in the national interests."*

*—N.Z. Statutes, Vol. 10, p. 737.*

# LAKE TAUPO

(Taupo-nui-a-Tia)



AN INVESTMENT FOR THE NATION

Proposals by the Taupo County Council for the preservation of Lake Taupo as a national reservation following a report by the council's investigating committee and a description of the areas.



*The peace and tranquillity of the Western Bays of Lake Taupo where native bush and scrub make an impressive back-drop to the jewel-like setting of the lake.*

A matter of increasing concern in the central lakes district of the North Island, and particularly in the Rotorua area, is the contamination of streams and lakes as a result of urban and rural settlement.

In some cases, the point of no return has been reached and there is now no possibility of achieving a return to satisfactory standards of clarity.

At present one of Lake Taupo's most priceless assets is its crystal-clear water. In view of what has happened almost imperceptibly over the years in Rotorua, every branch of Government and local government, every private landowner and citizen has a responsibility to protect Lake Taupo and maintain its unique quality.

It is not too late to adopt a firm policy on this question and the object should be preservation of absolute purity.

There can be no compromise if this is to be achieved.

## BOLD CONCEPT

The present reserves on the 120 mile shoreline of Lake Taupo total only 2000 acres.

This proposal envisages the establishment of a national Lake Taupo Reservation with areas of reserve, including stream edges, totalling 50,000 acres—a bold concept designed to preserve for all time the lake and shores in the public interest.

Large as this figure seems, it is minimal when compared with the staggeringly large areas planned to come into farm production—more than a quarter million acres

within a decade by the most conservative estimates.

It was because such a special wilderness area existed alongside Lake Taupo that the Taupo County, recognising the need for preservation, set up a committee of investigation. It was aware that a part of the lake shore lies within the Taumarunui County and Taupo Borough boundaries and sought a co-ordinated policy with those bodies. Each local authority has expressed itself as being in agreement in principle with the plan.



*This is a comparison to scale between the area of the present reserves around Lake Taupo and that of the proposed Lake Taupo Reservation.*

## AN INVESTMENT

It has been said that the proposals for the preservation of Lake Taupo are similar to a prospectus for an issue of shares in an investment company.

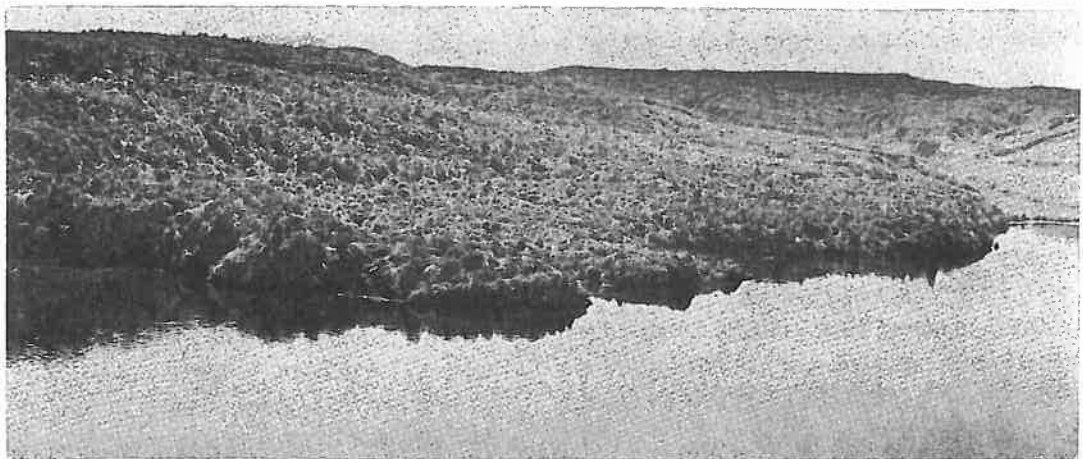
If so, the analogy is a good one. Because every New Zealander will share in the benefits from an investment of this nature.

Dividends will be paid in enjoyment of the clear, sparkling waters of the lake, in the guarantee that future generations will not blame the present one for lack of fore-

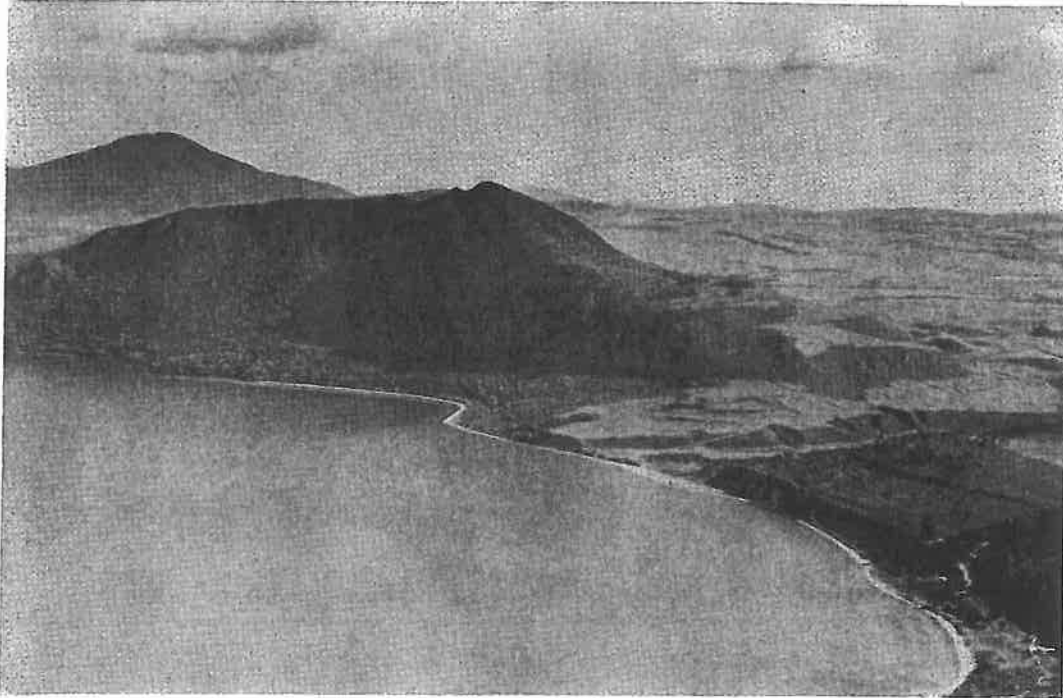
sight in the same manner as we criticise the pioneers for burning off hundreds of thousands of acres of native bush.

In cold hard cash, there will be dividends in the increased production from land which does not flood and erode; dividends from the growing tourist trade; dividends from the increased value of land throughout the Taupo catchment. Healthy, active people with a place in the sun will benefit from better access to the lake and New Zealanders as a whole will come to regard Taupo as their own special playground.

*Steeped in the clear, sparkling waters of Lake Taupo, this glorious bush-land should remain as an asset to the whole of New Zealand.*



## THE PROBLEM



*With stream-beds and lakeshore denuded of their natural cover, run-off into the lake automatically follows, as this aerial photograph of part of the Western Bays graphically shows.*

New Zealand's largest body of inland water—Lake Taupo—is the centre of a magnificent recreation and playground area, catering to sportsmen and beauty-lovers alike.

Ski-ing, climbing, boating, shooting, fishing, swimming and water ski-ing enthusiasts in their thousands use its facilities every year. More photographs are taken, more pictures painted and greater lengths of movie film shot of the Taupo-Tongariro area than of any other tourist centre in New Zealand.

Yet these attractions are doomed to slow and insidious destruction unless active measures are taken to preserve them.

Development of farmland round the shores of the lake, together with urban and industrial building, is accelerating the natural enrichment, encouraging weed growth and pollution of the water to the stage where most of the attractions could soon be lost.

Already shorelines and streambeds have begun to deteriorate. Huge areas of natural cover have been stripped from the lake's catchment.



Some reserves set aside for the benefit and enjoyment of the public have been converted to grassland.

Tons of fertiliser, weedkiller and poisons are spread along the lake's shores each year, bringing about unnatural changes in the cycle of underwater growth.

## THE SOLUTION

Progress cannot be stopped. Nor can damage be undone. But measures can be taken to prevent further inroads being made on the natural cover of the catchment.

Needless waste of beauty, unnecessary destruction of fish and bird life can be brought to an end.

It is the considered opinion of the Taupo County Council and of its investigating committee that the only way to preserve both the waters of the lake and the scenic beauty is to throw a ring of reserves around its shores.

These reserves will help to filter out the nutrients and poisons, provided they are continued up the banks of the rivers and streams. At the same time, they will add immeasurably to the beauty and usefulness of the area.

If New Zealanders (and overseas visitors) are to continue to enjoy the use of the lake, the proposals of the council must be carried to their logical conclusion.

Instead of farming the land in the lake catchment, making use of its every commercial prospect, there must be a careful, controlled plan of development with a leavening of appreciation of the value of the beauties of nature.

The land must be used. But it must be

The ugly scars of erosion have begun to deface the once beautiful valleys covered with nature's greens and golds.

Already the Waikato Valley Authority has had to plan the rehabilitation of some of the worst-hit areas within the lake catchment, repairing the damage done by man.

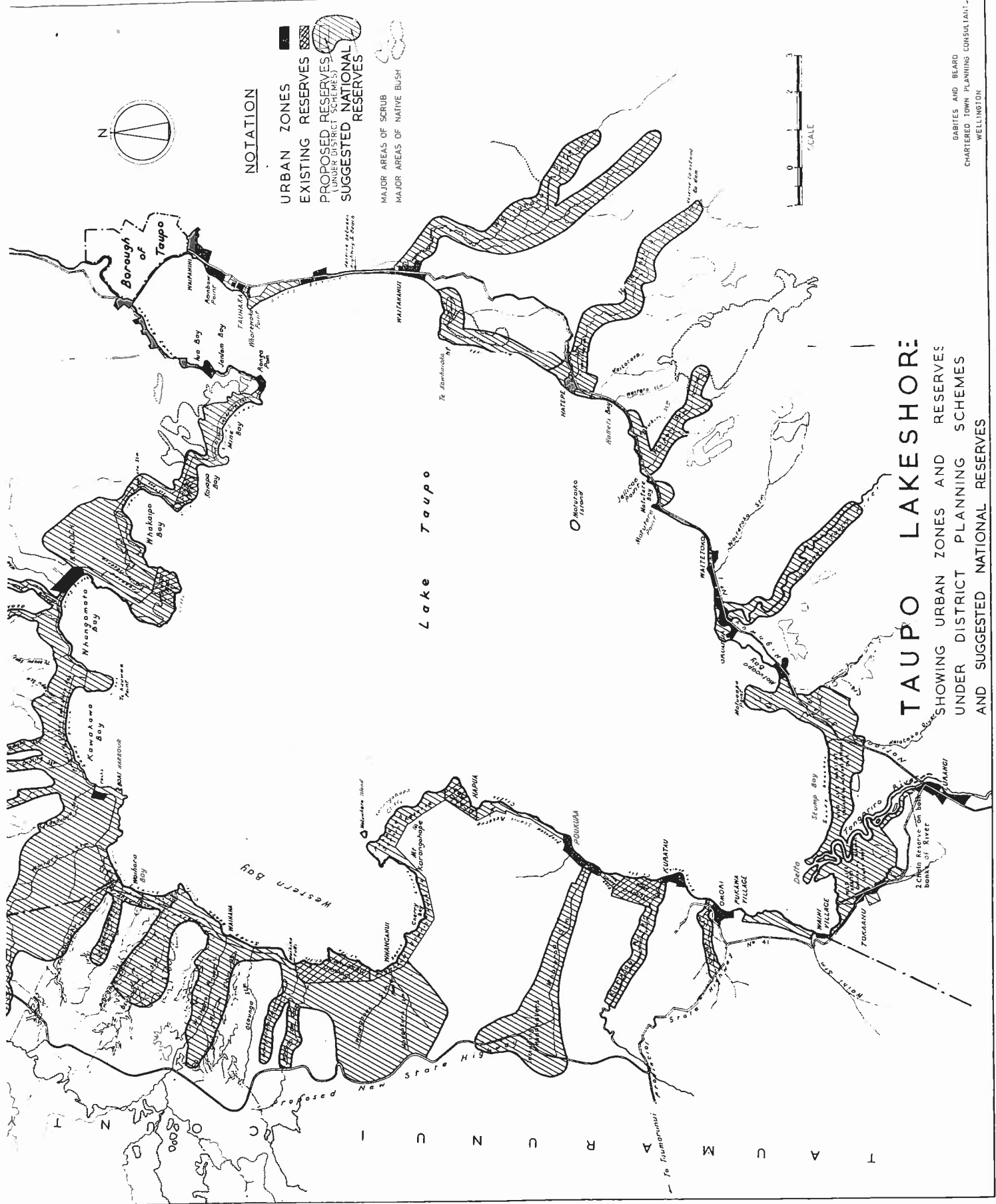
used wisely. Instead of bare grass, there must be areas which will protect the lake while they produce. In a word, this means timber. Forestry experts say the land will, over a given period, produce greater returns from trees than from grass—or at the very least the equivalent.

Reserves, forests, woodlots and bush areas are the answer to this problem. Trees will give back the lovely colours of foliage while producing timber for the nation.

This, then, could be the mainstay of the reservation scheme: small areas of forest alternating with open farmland would cut the cost of protecting the land and the lake to almost nothing.

Controlled growth, with subsequent cropping and replanting of timber, would be an asset in perpetuity. It would provide an income and occupation for many people, at the same time enhancing the scenic value of the area, while protecting the waters and life of the lake.

With reserves up the banks of the streams and with the whole shoreline of the lake set aside for the enjoyment of the public, we would never face the depressing prospect of Lake Taupo deteriorating in the same rapid fashion as have other New Zealand lakes.



**TAUPO LAKESHORE:**  
 SHOWING URBAN ZONES AND RESERVES  
 UNDER DISTRICT PLANNING SCHEMES  
 AND SUGGESTED NATIONAL RESERVES

**NOTATION**

- URBAN ZONES
- EXISTING RESERVES
- PROPOSED RESERVES (UNDER DISTRICT SCHEMES)
- SUGGESTED NATIONAL RESERVES

MAJOR AREAS OF SCRUB  
 MAJOR AREAS OF NATIVE BUSH

T  
 A  
 U  
 P  
 O  
 L  
 A  
 K  
 E  
 S  
 H  
 O  
 R  
 E

## STEEPED IN HISTORY

The surrounds of Lake Taupo are steeped in Maori history and lore.

After ousting the Ngati Hotu from the western side of Lake Taupo, the Kurapoto tribe set up a pa at Wai-pahihi. From there, a section of the tribe pushed on further south, capturing Te Taraotemarama and Otuteto at Roto Ngaio.

Later they went on to Hatepe, wiping out the Okehu pa and two at Motutere, Te Poporo and Poutu. They subjected Horotanuka at Tauranga-Taupo and sent the people to live in another pa, inland from Korohe settlement.

Several generations later, Tuwharetoa's sons came and took further land from the Ngati Hotu, settling themselves at Tokaanu, Waihi and Ponui.

There have been ten pas between Taupo and Rangitira Point since the Maoris came to Lake Taupo. Between Wai-pahihi and Motuoapa, there were 27 along the lake shore and 14 others inland, all occupied at different stages by the peoples of three tribes.

There were six pas along the lake between Motuoapa and Waihi and five inland. Beyond Waihi to the north were another six pas, the most important being Pukawa, Te Heu Heu's residential pa, where the Rev. T. S. Grace established a mission station. Te Heu Heu also had two fighting pas in the delta area of the Tongariro River.

It was at Pukawa that the Maori King movement was organised, but Te Heu Heu showed no interest. In 1859, the Maoris chose to set up Potatu Te Whero-whereo, a Waikato warrior, as king.

There were also large pas at Kuratau and Whareroa and three smaller ones toward Karangahape Heads. There appears to be no record of other pas inland around this side of the lake, but there were another fifteen between Karangahape and Rangitira Point.

In all, there were between 60 and 70 pas around Lake Taupo known to Europeans.

The site of the oldest known Maori occupation is at Whakamoenga, where the navigation light is near Rangitira Point. This is known to have been occupied by the Moa Hunters.

The land is now privately owned and a house has been built there within the past year. At this spot there is a cave of historical interest.

Perhaps the place of greatest historical interest around the lake is Motutaiko Island. Once another fortified pa of Te Heu Heu, it later became a tribal burial ground.

Its archaeological importance is due to the occurrence of rock-faced platforms, presumably built for living space, which is a link with the islands of Polynesia.

Next in importance would be another site in Whakaipo Bay where rock walls are to be found.

At Totara (or Orona), Halletts Bay, is the site where Tia likened the cliffs behind the bay to the border of his cloak, Taupo. The name Taupo-nui-a-Tia means the great cloak of Tia.

Halletts Bay is also the site of the first mission church. It was built of raupo by the Rev. Thomas Chapman, the first European discoverer of Lake Taupo, who walked over the Maori trails from Rotorua in 1839.

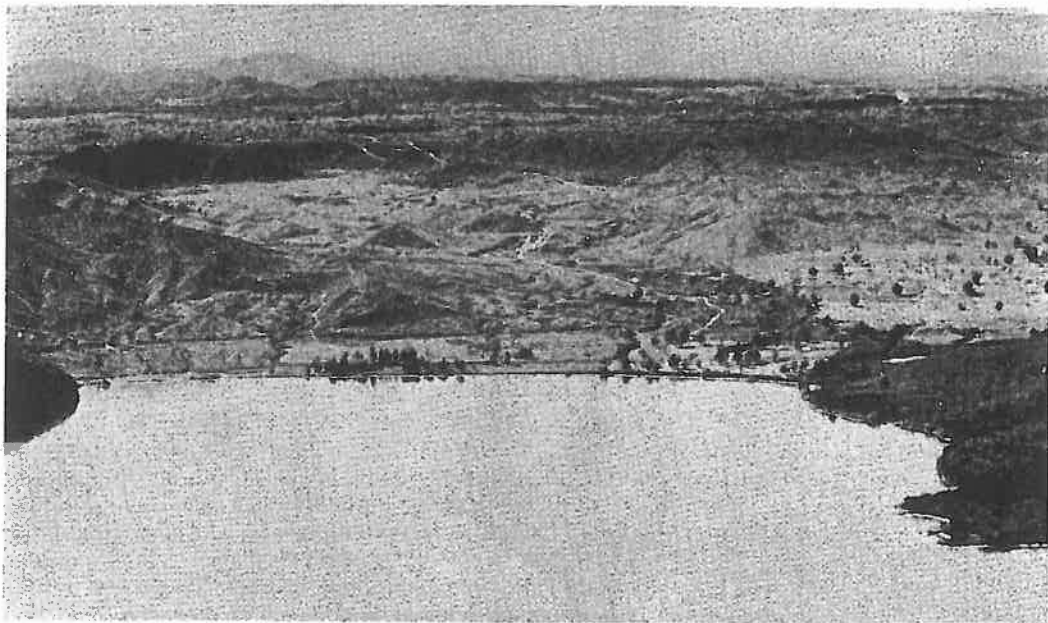
At Roto Ngaio, there is a spring beside which the rebel leader Te Kooti's son was born. This son is believed to have been the first Maori killed in World War I.

A series of ochre designs at Te Kauwae Point at the head of Kawa Kawa Bay probably mark burial places. There are others at Whakaipo Bay, near Mason's Rock, and Te Papa, near the Waikino Falls in the Western Bays.

The Dogs of Tamatea at the Karangahape Cliffs are also historically important. Because of their sacred nature they are tapu. Maoris do not like looking at them for fear of misfortune.



*Urban and industrial development and bare grassland right to the lake's edge are putting an impossible pressure on the ability of the lake to absorb the polluting wastes from these sources.*



## THE INESCAPABLE FACTS

*The pressure of people on the recreational facilities of the Lake Taupo area can be gleaned from some of the reports of Government departments, sports bodies and other groups.*

Last year, over 500,000 people visited the Tongariro National Park for one reason or another.

The State is currently spending £91 million on hydro, geothermal and land development projects within the Taupo area. This influx of public money brings with it people, people who want to—and do—use the facilities of the lake.

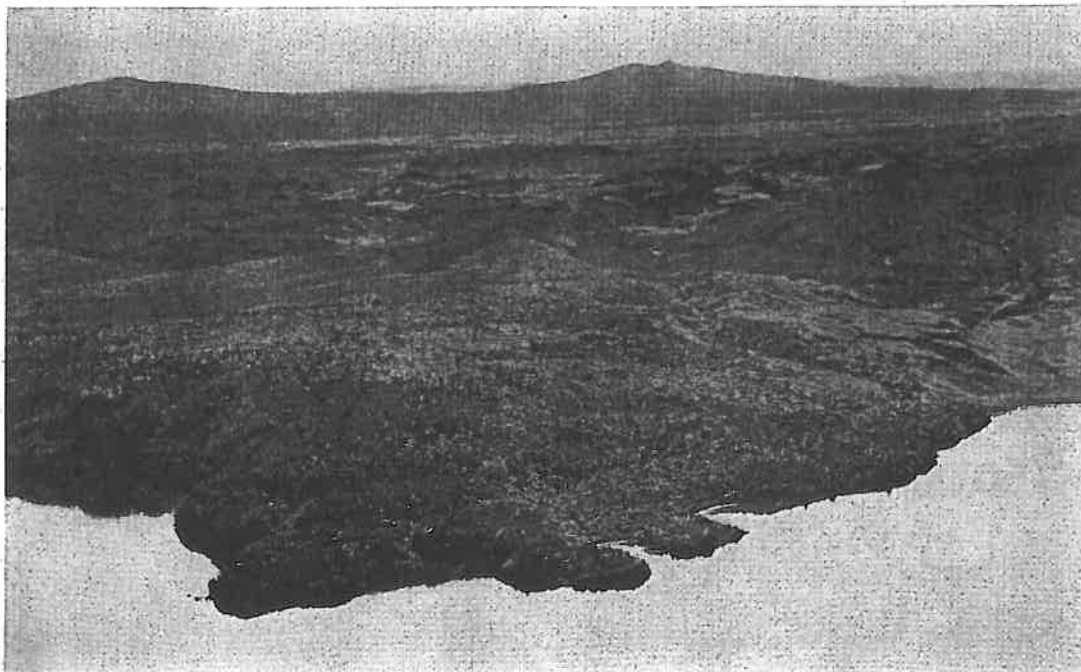
Taupo district population has risen dramatically in the area of the lake's watershed over the past five years.

Ministry of Works estimates a population in Turangi alone of over 12,000 people by 1968. Ancillary services will boost this total to more than 14,000 men, women and children.

Every Christmas—and indeed during every holiday period—the population around the lake increases sharply. At Christmas this figure reaches more than 40,000 by the most conservative estimates.

Over a quarter million acres of land are scheduled for development around the shores of the lake, a development which will result in 1400 farms being settled.

*And so the pressure on Lake Taupo goes on, a pressure which would result in disaster if development is allowed to continue unplanned.*



*The quiet beauty of Boat Harbour contrasts strongly with the photograph on the opposite page.*

## PRESERVATION AND THE TOURIST

Perhaps some New Zealand holiday-makers visiting the lake would not be upset at the possibility of man-made landscape replacing the natural cover. But the overseas tourist is generally much more sensitive to these matters.

He will appreciate unspoiled wilderness areas, but will react quickly against scenery despoilation through crude farm development methods. To develop tourism, we

must conserve that which can be found nowhere else in the world.

If the preservation of scenery were the only factor in retaining the native cover in the Western Bays of Lake Taupo, a comparatively narrow strip would suffice in some places where high cliffs rise out of the water.

But there are many more reasons than just tourism.

## TROUT AND THE FISHERMAN

Taupo is famous, not only in New Zealand, but throughout the world, as a resort for trout fishermen. It is estimated that 1,250,000 lbs. of fish are taken out of the lake and streams each year.

In the face of depletion on a scale such as this, Taupo must rely on the natural spawning grounds for restocking. It would not be possible to replenish the stock artificially and, indeed, Lake Taupo is the breeding ground for many other trout fishing areas in New Zealand and overseas.

The streams are of vital importance.

If the natural spawning grounds became silted up—and this is happening—washed

out, or denuded of vegetation and exposed to the direct rays of the sun, the output of fish from the lake would decline rapidly.

For this reason, the preservation of the headwaters of certain streams is essential. Already much has been lost through ignorance and neglect where streams have passed through developed farmland.

The number of streams which will allow fish access to headwaters for spawning is limited, particularly on the Western side of Lake Taupo. Nothing less than a complete reservation is satisfactory in these areas.

## WILDLIFE

With progressive draining and reclamation of swamps throughout the country, many thousands of acres of habitat for wildfowl have been lost with corresponding loss in the number of birds. It is important, therefore, that suitable swamp

areas be selected at intervals for reservation and permanent retention.

If left in private hands, they could be drained over a period and certain species already scarce could disappear entirely.

## SUBDIVISIONS

Access to the eastern lakeshore from the State highway has been relatively easy, so that the easy nature of the ground has led to the establishment of a number of holiday settlements. Provision is made for settlements at Poukura, Kuratau and Omori under the Taumarunui County's district planning scheme.

Access to the Western Bay area has, however, been limited to an approach by water, and, owing to the precipitous nature of the ground, is likely to remain restricted in spite of the new Western Access highway.

There is a strong case, therefore, for retaining this area in its natural state with

very limited road access and residential subdivision, planned to harmonise with the natural fall of the land. Access to the various beaches and fishing rivers could be by boat only as at present and visitors could be accommodated in camps, cabins and lodgings.

Substantial areas of residential zoning have been provided under the restricted district scheme at Whangamata in the Taupo County and at Poukura, Kuratau and Omori in the Taumarunui County.

It is expected that these areas will absorb the demand for holiday sections on this side of the lake for a long time to come.

## OWNERSHIP

The reserve areas suggested are at present mainly in Crown and Maori ownership.

Detailed valuations of the land concerned are being sought by a committee of Cabinet investigating these proposals.

It is clear the cost will be considerable and will increase as time goes by and the pressure on land for urban development builds up.

In many instances, full residential values for land in remote bays would only come about with improved access. However, the owners will expect—and be entitled to receive—a fair price at rather more than rural values.

There would be a clear advantage from the national point of view in the early purchase of the proposed reservation areas.

However much land was acquired for this purpose the residual blocks, held largely by Maori owners, would increase tremendously in valuation.

But it should be made clear that there is no intention to deprive the owners of their rightful heritage. Many are in accord with the scheme and appreciate the need to preserve the waters and shores of the lake, yet maintaining a source of productivity from the land.

Their interests will be aroused by the plan to establish forest farms, which will return as much per acre over a given period as the equivalent area in grass. However, this scheme can only be successful with the co-operation and goodwill of the Maori owners.

## SOIL EROSION

The disastrous result of denuding the land by farming and development practices are only too well known in this country. In some areas, indiscriminate burning-off and destruction of the natural cover over the years have increased the run-off to such an extent that the resultant soil-erosion and flooding are being brought under control only at the cost of considerable time and labour.

In special cases, where spawning streams are important, it is necessary to place a reservation over the entire headwaters of the streams and rivers entering the lake.

It is most desirable in the case of the untouched streams in the Western Bays to protect them from any sort of development activity.

Mistakes through burning and bulldozing so often occur.

An instance of silting-up in the lake itself has already occurred under the Waikino Falls as a result of road building activities

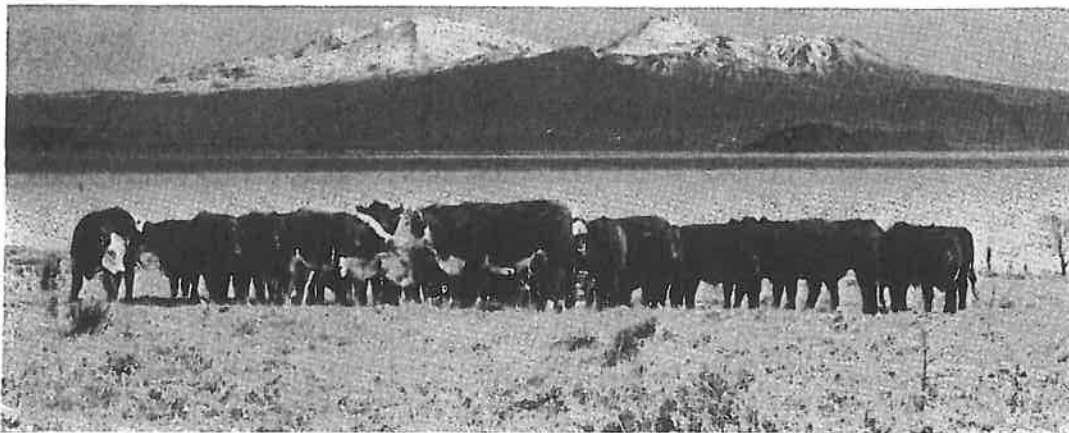
further inland. A sandbank now occupies water which was originally 15 feet deep.

Adequate reservations must be maintained on both sides of the streams to act as a buffer zone from farm areas and delay run-off so that the spawning areas are protected.

A buffer zone is also necessary at the top of the steep slopes covered with native bush, since the root structure of most native trees is not sufficiently fibrous to prevent serious slipping and erosion where run-off from adjacent farmland is excessive.

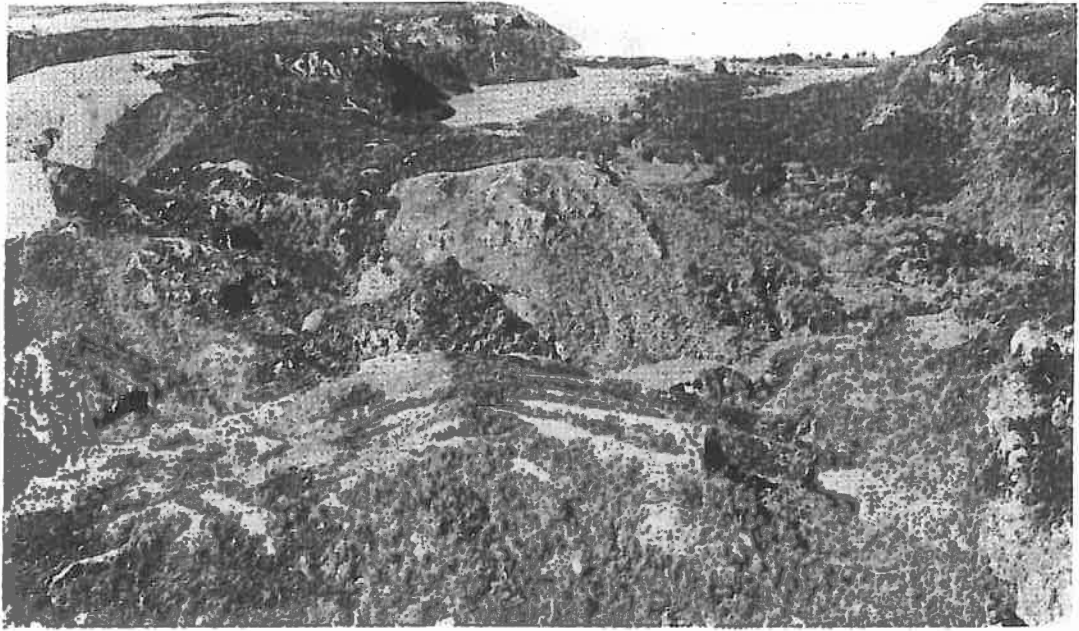
While planting and other water-controlling practices could correct mistakes from ill-considered development, the effects of even temporary removal of natural cover should not be risked in the Western Bay area.

There is no substitute for native bush and scrub from the point of view of conserving water resources alone. In some instances, reservation is justified for hydrological reasons alone.



*Good production now — but disastrous for the future.*





*Slow regeneration of native cover where man-made fire has passed.  
Below: The adjoining area still in its natural state.*



This booklet is dedicated to both European and Maori people and is published by the Taupo County Council for the purpose of preserving an irreplaceable natural asset—Lake Taupo and its surrounding streams. Very widespread support of the principle has been received from many institutions and a large section of the public throughout New Zealand and also from adjoining local bodies, Taupo Borough Council and Taumarunui County Council. Gratifying also is the foresight and co-operation evidenced by the Tuwharetoa Trust Board and other Maori leaders, who also agree in principle and, quite rightly, will seek just compensation for all affected. Appreciation of the initial work of the investigating committee and those who contributed to its report is acknowledged. A special "Thank you" to the Press and NZBC television crews for their New Zealand-wide publicity. Their continued support will, I am certain, see the proposals to a satisfactory outcome.

Last, and by no means least, tribute is due to the council and its executives, who have spent long hours on this project. Their unanimity augers well for the successful outcome of what may be termed a National Crusade.

H. M. BESLEY,  
County Chairman.

September, 1965.

Buy my English posies!  
Here's your choice unsold!  
Buy a blood-red myrtle bloom,  
Buy the Kowhai's gold  
Flung for gift on Taupo's face,  
Sign that spring is come—  
Buy my clinging myrtle  
And I'll give you back your home!

Broom behind the windy town; pollen o' the pine—  
Bellbird in the leafy deep where the ratas twine—  
Fern above the saddle-bow, flax upon the plain—  
Take the flower and turn the hour, and kiss your love again!

—*The Flowers*

RUDYARD KIPLING