



Access to Lake Rotoaira Forest – Covid Alert Level 2

Trustees are very pleased to announce a further opening up of the forest to access at Alert Level 2. From Thursday 14 May 2020, owner access to Lake Taupō Forest, including for hunting, will return to normal access hours. The decision is again in line with the national guidance on behavioural expectations at Level 2. As most owners are aware, we recently increased the permit period to six months, both to minimise contact and to make access arrangements less onerous for our owners. We will continue with this 6-month permit policy.

The forest has now moved to its 'winter hours', meaning that access is available:

- From 4pm to 8pm on week-days; and
- From 7am to 8pm on weekends

Trustees do want to remind all owners accessing the lands that while the access hours have returned to normal, the country is still at Alert Level 2 and so the way we are expected to behave has not fully returned to normal. In particular, we encourage all our owners to still practice personal distancing where possible, to remember to wash your hands, particularly after touching objects that others have touched – such as gates and gate locks. We recommend you bring hand sanitiser or at least water with you for this purpose.

Like all New Zealanders, the Trustees are hopeful that the national Covid response will prove to have been successful in protecting us all. We have all made sacrifices and had significant disruption to our lives, and it would be disappointing to have that effort wasted through careless actions. Accordingly, we encourage continued vigilance and safety to ensure there is not a further outbreak of the virus, which could have a disastrous impact on our people and in particular our kaumatua and kuia.

Owners should also be aware that it is likely there will be some forestry work happening on weekends – mainly land preparation and spraying for the upcoming winter planting season, and some log transport. If these do occur, there will be clear signage to inform owners of where it is happening, to minimise the risk of interaction, and we ask that you take extra caution in these situations.

Otherwise, access rules will be the same as usual – you will need a permit and a fob-key. At present permits and fob-keys are only available from NZFM in Turangi, but from 1 June the Tuwharetoa Māori Trust Board office in Taupō will re-start issuing permits and updating fobs (though not issuing new or replacement fobs). Fob-keys and permits that were issued before the shut-down will still be valid.

Ngā mihi
Bubs Smith
(LRFT Chairperson)