

**CONTEXT:** Accelerate 25, the 'Manawatū-Whanganui Economic Action Plan,' identified nine opportunities for significant growth across the region. Tourism and visitor services in the Ruapehu area were viewed as one of the highest priority sector opportunities for development.

**DRIVER:** Community prosperity is what Ruapehu needs. The area has been losing jobs at a steady rate for many years. Nominal GDP dropped from a 2011 peak of \$540m to \$475m in 2013 but recovered to \$506m in 2016. Resident population currently sits at just over 12,500 persons. This population dropped by more than 17% between 2001 and 2016.

**BACKGROUND:** The Ruapehu Regional Visitor Development Plan project team was established by Ruapehu District Council and Visit Ruapehu to explore how to add dimension, support and variety to existing visitor sector offerings. A second purpose of the project was to refine how the destination may be best communicated to the market.

**OPPORTUNITY:** Ruapehu is clearly a destination with the natural 'greater outdoors' and nature-based resources, landscapes and assets sought by visitors. It has good proximity to over three million New Zealanders and is close to the international gateways located at Auckland and Wellington Airports.

# RUAPEHU REGIONAL VISITOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN



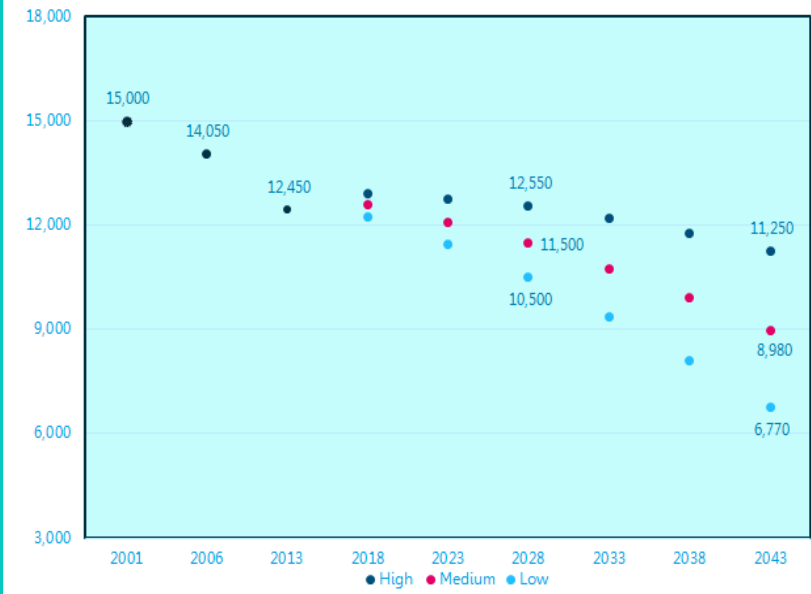
Realising a sustainable, prosperous future

**CRITICAL TARGET:** Double the combined total of international and domestic visitor expenditure from \$181 to \$388m by 2025 i.e. achieve an annual cumulative growth rate in expenditure of 10%. Greater seasonal dispersal; grow iwi participation; sustain environmental and heritage value.

Year	Total spend (m)	Spend increase (m)	Total visitors (k)	Visitor increase (k)
2017	\$181.0		800	
2018	\$199.1	\$18.1	880	80
2019	\$219.0	\$19.9	968	88
2020	\$240.9	\$21.9	1,065	97
2021	\$265.0	\$24.1	1,171	106
2022	\$291.5	\$26.5	1,288	117
2023	\$320.7	\$29.2	1,417	129
2024	\$352.7	\$32.1	1,559	142
2025	\$388.0	\$35.3	1,715	156

- More domestic and international visitors staying longer.
- More expenditure in the region by these visitors.
- More permanent skilled workers and residents servicing the needs of these visitors.
- More monetised services, products and experiences.

## RUAPEHU PROJECTED RESIDENT POPULATION SCENARIOS 2013 – 2043



Source: Stats NZ

### TOP SIXTEEN NEW AND EXPANDED EXPERIENCES



- 1 Whakapapa Alpine Aerial Tram and assoc. developments
- 2 Turoa to Ohakune MTB track (Te Ara Mangawhero)
- 3 Tongariro Alpine Crossing (TAC)
- 4 Ruapehu Alpine Walk (RAW)
- 5 Pipiriki lodge and café
- 6 Ohakune Celebratory Park Entranceway - Waharoa
- 7 Turoa Chondola
- 8 Taumarunui canoe launch area and information centre
- 9 Whanganui River experiences
- 10 National Army Museum (NAM)
- 11 Ruapehu Events
- 12 Tongariro Great Walk, Northern Circuit Great Walk and Tukino to Whakapapa Great Walk
- 13 Horopito to National Park MTB
- 14 Tongariro and Pureora Forest Parks
- 15 Ohakune to Turoa transit options, etc.
- 16 KiwiRail Ruapehu experiences

### DELIVERY:



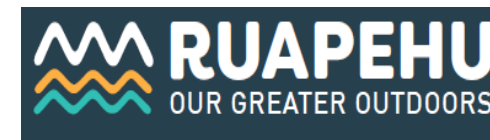
**CRITICAL ENABLERS:** Provide the potential market with increased awareness of the extraordinary range and attractiveness of what the region has to offer - by significantly investing in market development. Provide additional training and skills development programmes to make Ruapehu a centre of excellence in tour guiding and hospitality. Assist iwi and owners of small and medium sized visitor sector businesses to increase capacity. Work with local partners to prepare applications for funding from the Tourism Infrastructure Fund to overcome Ruapehu visitor sector infrastructure pressure points - particularly park and ride/visitor shuttle transport systems.

**OTHER PRIORITY PROJECTS:** Work with KiwiRail to establish end-to-end rail-tourism experiences. Support RAL, DOC and iwi in their negotiations for the Turoa ski-field lease renewal. Assist proponents of the National Army Museum at Waiouru to make this facility a world class centre. Explore low impact ski-field transit options.

**DOC FEATURES IN FURTHER PROJECTS.** These include: rewriting the Tongariro National Park Management Plan to make it more suited to the current era; working with others to further develop and promote awareness of the many unique short walk experiences available in the area; preparing a Whanganui river destination plan to avoid the future need to confront concerns about the deterioration of the quality of river recreation experiences; work with the Ministry of Culture and Heritage and lease holders to restore Whakapapa Village.

**GOVERNANCE:** Pilot, fund, and apply a new and integrated visitor sector growth delivery model involving iwi, national and local visitor operators and local / national government leaders.

### DESTINATION PROPOSITION



*"Escape to Ruapehu and you'll arrive in a living landscape that's home to ancient rainforests, active volcanoes, sacred mountains, tranquil rivers, and two of our cherished national parks. On foot, by bike, on skis or down the rivers, Ruapehu is your ideal base."*