Discovery of Raw Pounamu and Pounamu Artifacts

Occasionally erosion, land movement and development can unearth raw pounamu and pounamu artifacts. Any raw pounamu, such as a boulder, discovered outside the areas open to public fossicking and/or larger than what one can carry is the property of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and should be notified to the Pounamu Management Officer immediately.

Any artifact discovered, such as a Toki (adze) or Heitiki (stylized pendant) is the property of the Crown and is of particular significance to Ngāi Tahu. It is illegal to remove or interfere in any way with the artifact or the site where it was found.

If discovery of an artifact is made on DOC land, DOC should be notified and they will notify Ngāi Tahu. On all other land the local regional museum should be notified who will in turn notify Ngāi Tahu.

Ngāi Tahu works with DOC and the Department of Culture and Heritage to make sure that all artifacts are protected to safeguard heritage, cultural values and learning for future generations. That is why it is important to leave artifacts where they are found (unless they are under immediate threat such as erosion) and notify the appropriate government department who will work with the Kaitiaki Rūnanga to ensure the artifact’s conservation and safety.

Supply

Apart from allowing for public fossicking on West Coast beaches, Ngāi Tahu is also committed to supplying pounamu to the commercial pounamu industry and making it available for tribal cultural purposes such as koha or the gifting of mauri stones.

Kaitiaki Rūnanga will undertake all supply of pounamu to the commercial industry and will also make pounamu available to the Ngāi Tahu Pātaka Pounamu (tribal storehouse). Those interested in obtaining pounamu in this way should contact the Pounamu Management Officer.

The Ngāi Tahu Pounamu Trademark

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu is developing a pounamu trademark to guarantee authentic Ngāi Tahu pounamu and to protect pounamu from foreign imported jades that may be traded as pounamu. This trademark will identify Ngāi Tahu pounamu in the marketplace through stickers, swing tags and registered manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers.

Export of Pounamu

When taking pounamu out of New Zealand, it is important to be aware that pounamu in excess of 5 kilograms is prohibited from being exported. This is enforced by the New Zealand Customs Service at the border. Crafted articles such as pendants and sculptures are allowed to be taken out of the country along with raw pounamu and stones under 5 kilograms. Those wishing to take pounamu out of the country above this limit must apply in writing to:

The New Zealand Customs Service
PO Box 2218
Wellington

Further Information

Full copies of the Ngāi Tahu Pounamu Resource Management Plan are available to purchase at a cost of $30 each. For further information or to purchase your copy of the plan, please contact:

Bill Doland
Ngāi Tahu Pounamu Management Officer
PO Box 13046
Christchurch
Phone: 03 366 4344
Email: pounamu@ngaitahu.iwi.nz
Web: www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz
In September 2002 Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu approved the Pouamun Resource Management Plan – our blueprint of how best to look after pouamun to ensure its sustainability for the future. This plan is of considerable significance for Ngāi Tahu, it demonstrates our ability to manage a taonga, a natural resource and a commercially valuable commodity while upholding its cultural importance along with the mana and rangatiratanga of the iwi. It has taken five years and many hui but we now have a positive and powerful tool to move forward, mā tātou, mā kā uri a muri ake nei.

Mark Solomon (Kaiwhakahaere)

WHAT IS THE POUNAMU RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN?

Ngāi Tahu is the kaitiaki (guardian) of pouamun, the prized greenstone found in Te Waipounamu (the South Island of New Zealand). The Ngāi Tahu (Pouamun Vesting) Act 1997 formally made Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu responsible for the ownership and management of pouamun.

As a result, the iwi has developed a resource management plan that allows for the ongoing use and protection of this resource in a way that is sustainable and responsible: mā tātou, mā kā uri a muri ake nei (for us and our children after us). The plan is designed to inform all stakeholders about how Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and its Kaitiaki Rūnanga (sub-tribal councils) will manage the resource and covers the following areas:

• The Ngāi Tahu relationship and values associated with pouamun.
• The roles and responsibilities of, and relationships between, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Kaitiaki Rūnanga and other groups involved in pouamun management.
• The objectives, policies and processes covering the protection, collection, extraction and supply of pouamun.

Publicly occurring pouamun found within the Ngāi Tahu tribal area is the property of Ngāi Tahu, excluding the Arakura River Catchment area which is vested in the Moehau Incorporation, and is protected from theft under the Crimes Act 1961. The Pouamun Resource Management Plan therefore relates to all pouamun vested in Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu within the Ngāi Tahu tribal taking area, excluding the Arakura River Catchment, and explains what this means for the public regarding the collection of pouamun within this area.

WHO ADMINISTERS THE PLAN?

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu works closely with the Kaitiaki Rūnanga to manage pouamun. A Pouamun Management Officer is employed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to liaise between Kaitiaki Rūnanga and external agencies. This person is the first point of contact on all matters relating to the Pouamun management plan.

HOW CAN I COLLECT POUNAMU?

Public Fossicking
Ngāi Tahu recognises that fossicking for small amounts of pouamun is an important cultural activity for all New Zealanders. Public fossicking for pouamun is allowed on the beaches of Te Tai o Poutini (the West Coast of the South Island) and is limited to what an individual can carry on their person or backpack within a 24 hour period – this means what an individual can physically lift by themselves and take unaided to their mode of transport and the key is ‘can carry’ on their person.

Rūnui/Restrictions
Fossicking and collection can only take place in areas where the Kaitiaki Rūnanga have not placed a restriction to protect pouamun from over use or for heritage reasons. These restrictions can be temporary or permanent and restrict both activity and locations available for collection. These restrictions may be placed from time to time and will be notified if they affect public fossicking. Therefore it is sensible to contact the Pouamun Management Officer or the local Kaitiaki Rūnanga before fossicking.

The public is not entitled to fossick on land administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC). On all other land pouamun cannot be collected without the prior permission of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the appropriate Kaitiaki Rūnanga. If it is private land, the authority of the landowner to access the land is also required.

Customary and Cultural Collection
In areas outside those open to public fossicking, including rivers and lands administered by DOC, customary and cultural collection of pouamun may take place under the korowai (protective cloak) of the Kaitiaki Rūnanga. Ngāi Tahu who are not members of the Kaitiaki Rūnanga wishing to collect pouamun in these areas must first contact the Kaitiaki Rūnanga.

Cultural collection for other (wi) and the public will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis via the Kaitiaki Rūnanga.