



The 1886 eruption of basalt scoria and ash from this long rift down the centre of a number of rhyolite domes that form Mt Tarawera is of international scientific importance. It is also of major significance to New Zealanders as the site of this country's most destructive eruption in historic times. It is of concern that the mountain and rift have no legal protection and it is already scarred by a bulldozed road to the summit and a cleared landing strip. Photo: Lloyd Homer



These 8000-year-old tree stumps poking out of the sea at the mouth of the Kaiwhata River on the Wairarapa coast provide an irreplaceable and visually striking record of an ancient totara forest that flourished here when the sea level was considerably lower than today. Following the last Ice Age, the advancing sea probably killed the forest. The totara remains are not protected.

Photo: Lloyd Homer



landforms is by retention or return of their original natural vegetation, although some smaller landforms will lose much of their educational and scientific value if forest is allowed to return.

Similarly, protection of examples of most of our active geological systems and features (eg, sand dunes rivers, glaciers) is best afforded by as little interference by humans as possible.

Many geological sites are natural exposures

of rock in bluffs, seacliffs and river banks that rely on a steady rate of natural erosion to retain a fresh face. These sites are threatened by developments that reduce the erosion or river flow rates.

Other important geological sites are in man-made exposures of rock, especially in quarries and rail and road cuttings. These often weather rapidly or are quickly obscured by vegetation, often promoted by hydroseeding. Old quarries are also favoured for rubbish

The Castlepoint area on the east Wairarapa coast features some spectacular coastal landforms composed of geologically-young (2-5 million years) fossil-rich marine sedimentary rocks. They are protected within the DoC estate.

Photo: Lloyd Homer