



# Taipā Estuary

## Intertidal vegetation mapping

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# Mapping process and purpose

A remote sensing method has been used to map wetland/saltmarsh and mangrove habitat in Northland. This mapping aims to improve spatial intertidal habitat data for Northland. Please refer to the separate methodology report<sup>1</sup> for details of the mapping process.

This is one of 19 worksheets that display the extent and location of mapped wetland/saltmarsh and mangrove habitats in the Northland region. The worksheets also identify intertidal saltmarsh habitat that exceeds the Regional Policy Statement for Northland (RPS) wetland area threshold of 0.5 hectare for significant saltmarsh (referred to below as significant saltmarsh). Oblique aerial images of all significant saltmarsh features and a summary of significant avifaunal values that are associated with this coastal wetland are also included in the worksheets. The saltmarsh and mangrove layers are available via an online viewer:

<https://localmaps.nrc.govt.nz/LocalMapsGallery/>

Where coastal wetlands extend inland, the degree of salt influence reduces until wetland transitions from saltmarsh to a freshwater wetland. In order to limit the identification of significant features to saltmarsh habitat and avoid mapping freshwater wetland, the landward extent of significant saltmarsh was delimited using selected LINZ hydro parcels. In a small number of instances (eg. Whangārei Harbour, Pātaua Estuary, Horahora Estuary and Kāretu River), where the hydro parcel clearly omitted areas of intertidal habitat, the LINZ NZ property parcel was used. By limiting the mapping of significant saltmarsh to areas within the LINZ hydro parcels, there is a high level of confidence that the significant saltmarsh mapped by this project is saltmarsh and not freshwater wetland.

During the validation process it was apparent from the oblique imagery that typically inland of the hydro parcels the saltmarsh transitions to freshwater habitat. By utilising the LINZ hydro layer, degraded habitat that may not have dominant indigenous vegetation has been avoided, as has wetland or saltmarsh on private title. However, by using the LINZ NZ property parcel and LINZ hydro parcels as the inland boundary, some saltmarsh habitat inland of these boundaries will have been omitted. Further work is required to develop a robust method to delineate the landward extent of saltmarsh habitat.

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<sup>1</sup> MacDonald, Griffiths, Griffin, Pene & Umuroa (2020). Northland Intertidal vegetation mapping methodology.

## Area description and map outputs

Taipā Estuary is a tidal lagoon on the east coast of the Northland peninsula. Seventy hectares of mangroves and 22 hectares of saltmarsh have been identified. A total of five saltmarsh habitats, with a total area of 8.6 hectares (Table 1 & Figure 1), have been identified in the CMA that exceed the Regional Policy Statement for Northland wetland area threshold of 0.5 hectare for significant saltmarsh.

**Table 1:** Significant saltmarsh identified in Taipā Estuary

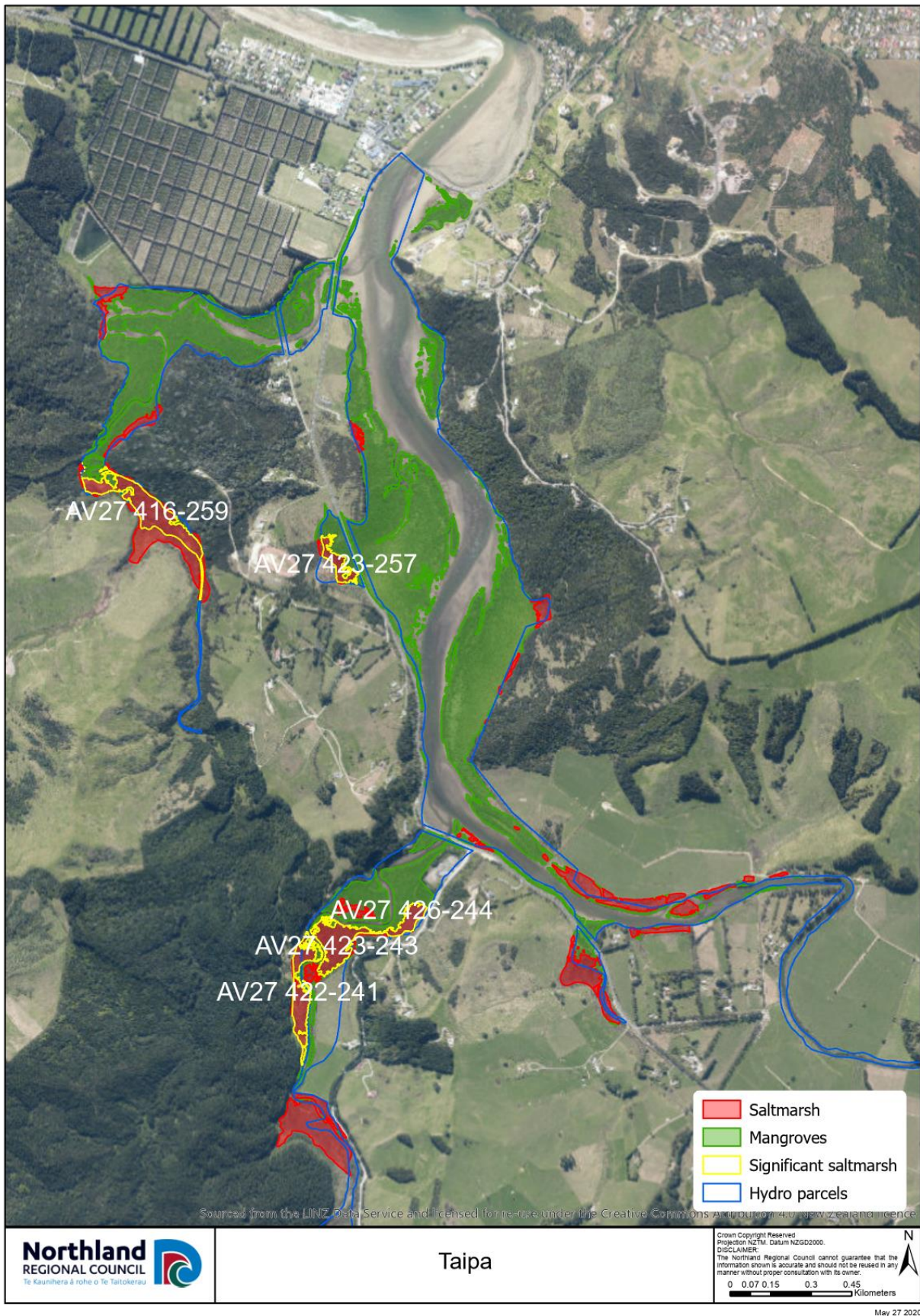
Reference	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
AV27 423-243	20,206
AV27 426-244	7,593
AV27 423-257	7,583
AV27 416-259	32,072
AV27 422-241	18,159
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,613</b>

Taipā is a small estuary with small areas of mangrove and saltmarsh, along creek margins. Low numbers of threatened species are present and breed and feed locally, including reef heron and pied shag, while Australasian bittern, fernbird and banded rail occur in the saltmarsh and upstream wetlands (Table 2).

**Table 2:** ‘Threatened’ and ‘At Risk’ birds using saltmarsh and adjoining mangrove habitat in the Taipā Estuary

Species Scientific Name	Species Common Name	NZ threat classification (2016)		Significance for species
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian bittern	Threatened	Nationally critical	Local breeding and feeding (saltmarsh/mangrove)
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian tern	Threatened	Nationally vulnerable	Local feeding (mangrove channels)
<i>Bowdleria punctata vealeae</i>	North Island fernbird	At Risk	Declining	Local breeding and feeding (saltmarsh/mangrove)
<i>Gallirallus philippensis assimilis</i>	Banded rail	At Risk	Declining	Local breeding and feeding (saltmarsh/mangrove)
<i>Limosa lapponica baueri</i>	Eastern bar-tailed godwit	At Risk	Declining	Local feeding (mangrove edges)
<i>Phalacrocorax varius varius</i>	Pied shag	At Risk	Recovering	Local feeding (mangrove and channels)

Figure 1: Mangrove and saltmarsh habitat in Taipā Estuary



**Figure 2:** AV27 426-244, AV27 423-243



**Figure 3:** AV27 423-257



**Figure 4:** AV27 416-259



**Figure 5:** AV27 422-241



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