Shiretoko National Park

Conduct on the Use of the Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region

Points of consideration and prohibited activities
in the use of the Apical Region

Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan
Kushiro Nature Conservation Office

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Table of Contents

Figure 1. Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region Location Map 1

Introduction 2

Conduct on the use of the Apical Region 4

A. Basic Rules 4
1. Consideration of the natural environment 4
2. Consideration of fellow users 4
3. Prohibition against the docking of powered vessels 4
4. Personal responsibility 4
5. Acquiring information, etc. 4

B. Common Points of Consideration 5
1. Points concerning the minimization of risk 5
2. Points concerning the conservation of natural environments 6
3. Other points of consideration 7

C. Points of Consideration Concerning Specific Types of Use 8
1. Coastal trekking 8
2. Use of mountainous areas 8
3. Sea kayaking 9
4. Estuarine area salmon fishing 10
5. Use of powered vessels in marine areas 10

Figure 2. Areas of concern 11

Figure 3. Areas where camping is not permitted (The Cape Shiretoko area) 12

Figure 4. Areas where entry and camping are not permitted (The Rusha area) 12

Figure 5. Areas where camping is not permitted (The Shiretoko Swamp area) 13

Annex 1. Restricted activities and rules in national parks under applicable laws 14

Annex 2. Information list for the minimization of risks in the use of the Apical Region 17

Annex 3. The Rausu Recreational Fishing Sub-group self-imposed rules 20

Annex 4. Shiretoko National Park Proper Use Committee Members 21

(1) Exploratory Members 21
(2) Relevant Regional Organizations 21
(3) Relevant Government Agencies 21
(4) Secretariat 21

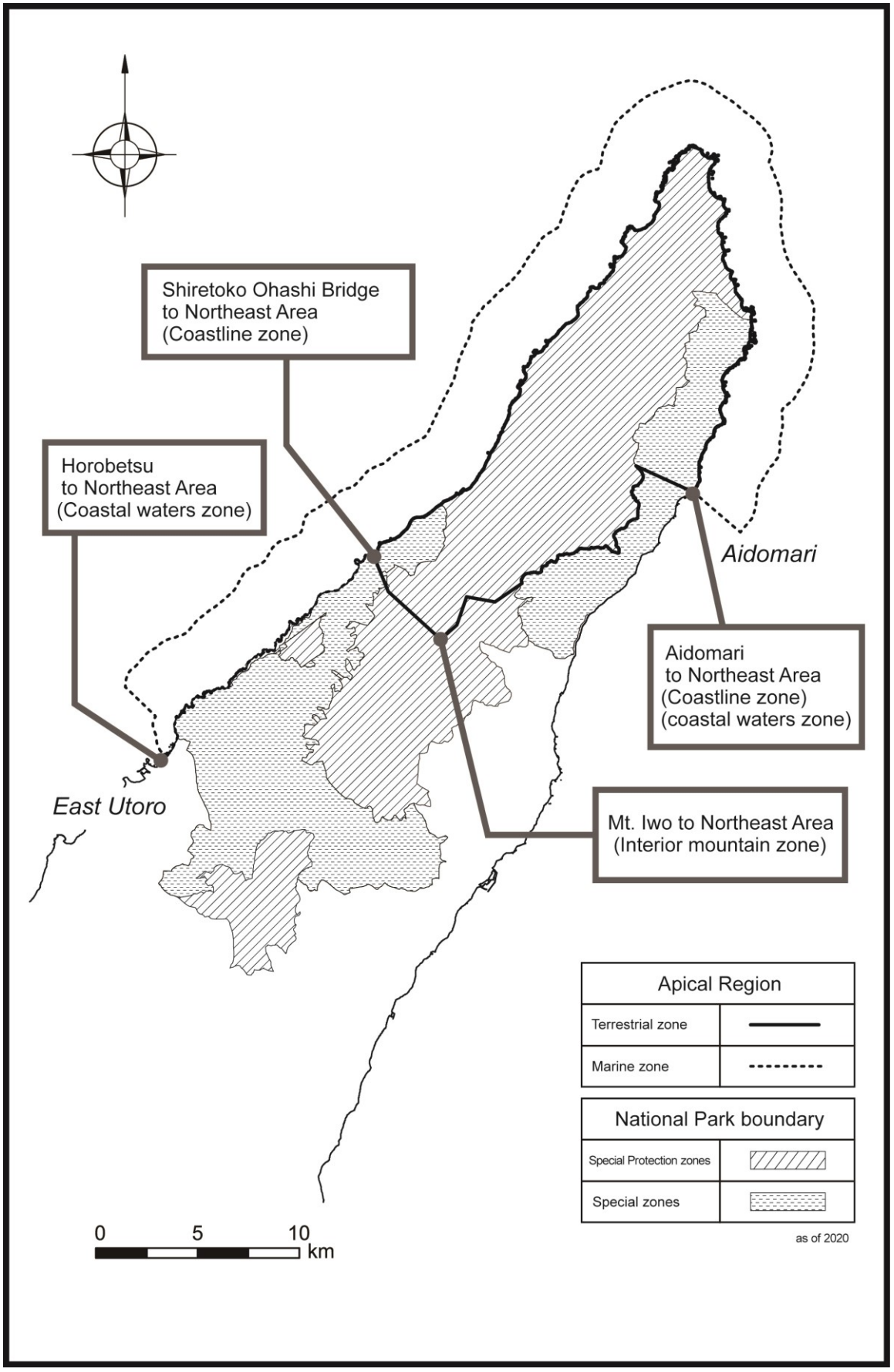
Annex 5. Background of studies regarding the use of the Apical Region 22

Annex 6. Prevention of accidents or injuries caused by bears or other wildlife (omitted)

Concluding remarks 26

The contents of this document were mutually agreed upon by members of the Shiretoko National Park Proper Use Committee.
A list of Committee members is included at the end of this document.

Figure 1. Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region Location Map



Introduction

The Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region of Shiretoko National Park (the "Apical Region"; see Figure 1, "Shiretoko National Park Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region location Map" and Figure 2, "Areas of Concern"), where the land stretches from the coast to high mountain ridges and includes coastal waters, is home to rich ecosystems formed by highly primeval natural landscapes and diverse wildlife. No roads, walkways or other facilities have been constructed for the use of visitors in this region that could be called a "backcountry", one of very few in Japan, where primeval natural environments are preserved on a large scale. These are also environments, such as at Cape Shiretoko and Mt. Shiretoko, that are used by mountain climbers and trekkers. In addition, the coastal terrace of Cape Shiretoko, the coastal cliffs and waterfalls (Kamuiwakka and Frepe) that can be seen on the Shari-cho side, as well as the natural coastline on the Rausu-cho side and the mountain range that includes Mt. Shiretoko, are important as scenery viewed from sightseeing boats and sea kayaks. It is therefore essential that the natural scenery in these areas be rigorously preserved.

There are also abundant fishing resources in the Apical Region where fixed-net and gill-net fisheries are active. In around 1970, more than 400 kelp fishing boats were in operation, and about half of the fishing population of Rausu spent the summer at "banya", or temporary outposts, along the coast east of Aidomari. Several of these "banya" remain today. On the Shari side, salmon and trout fixed-net fisheries are thriving, and there are several "banya" here, too. In the Apical Region, artifacts and relics, dating back to historical times between the Jomon period and the Ainu cultural period, have been found. At Cape Shiretoko in particular, the remains of close to 100 pit dwellings dating back to the periods of Epi-Jomon and Okhotsk culture have been found and are extremely valuable cultural assets. The Apical Region is thus also a place of human history where people lived in a harsh, primeval natural environment.

With the inscription of Shiretoko as a World Natural Heritage in 2005, its value as a natural heritage is being preserved in a better form for future generations. A Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Management Plan as been formulated to appropriately preserve and manage the natural environment of this heritage region with its abundantly rich diversity and unique value into the future. This management plan recognizes the need to ensure that the use of this heritage region for sightseeing, nature exploration, mountain climbing, fishing and other activities is conducted in a way that its value as a World Natural Heritage is not lost in the future. This plan outlines its approach to providing high-quality opportunities for visitors to appreciate the heritage region while preserving and maintaining its primeval natural environment, and describes rules of use that are well suited to Shiretoko's natural environment.

Based on this background, the Shiretoko National Park Proper Use Committee together with numerous individuals associated with Shiretoko have been spending considerable time and effort conducting surveys and exploring ways to achieve the desirable protection and use of Shiretoko National Park. With respect to the Apical Region, the Committee has worked on developing "Rules of Use" that emphasize both the "sustainable conservation of the highly primeval natural landscapes and diverse ecosystems unique to Shiretoko" and the "appropriate provision of opportunities for high-quality natural experiences."

Given that the Apical Region possesses rich ecosystems formed by highly primeval natural landscapes and diverse wildlife, there is a need to ensure that Shiretoko will be left in better condition for future generations and continually preserved as a common heritage of humankind. The fundamental principle of planning for the appropriate provision of opportunities for nature experiences and the sustainable use of primeval nature through a fixed set of rules was applied to the Apical Region in order to achieve sustainable conservation of the highly primeval natural

landscapes and diverse ecosystems unique to Shiretoko. At the heart of this principle is the idea that humans should enter the nature of Shiretoko, the home of brown bears, with a sense of humility and wonder.

The Apical Region lacks a “Facilities Plan” within the greater National Park Plan and thus possesses no pathways, roads or other facilities commonly found in parks. Furthermore, as a Shiretoko Forest Ecosystem Protected Area, the region is being “left to the processes of nature,” and thus from an institutional standpoint its active use by general users is not under consideration. This is further rationalized by the fact that the safety and comfort of general users cannot be absolutely guaranteed due to harsh natural conditions such as unpredictable tides and winds, low sea temperatures, and the high population density of brown bears, among other hazards found in the region.

For park users that do enter the Apical Region, it is requested that they possess a particularly high degree of skill and good physical condition to personally handle these harsh conditions, as well as the firm understanding that actions should be based on sound judgment and that personal responsibility be taken for them.

With its objectives for the sustainable conservation of scenic landscapes and ecosystems of the Apical Region through nature conservation and the minimization of risk, this document containing points of consideration and prohibited activities was created for users of the Apical Region for recreational purposes. Activities in the region are categorized as Coastal Trekking, Sea Kayaking, Mountain Climbing, Estuarine-area Salmon Fishing, and Power-driven Boating in Marine Areas, as outlined in the “The Basic Plan on the Proper Use of the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula”, which went into effect in December 2004.

This document summarizes the particularly important points of consideration and restricted activities in the Apical Region. In the future, should the need arise, this document will be revised and supplemented based on the analysis, evaluation and feedback concerning monitoring results of park use and its environmental impact.

Conduct on the use of the Apical Region

When users enter the Apical Region, points of consideration and restricted activities that must be observed from the standpoint of nature conservation and the minimization of risks are described below.

"Users" in this "Rules of Use" document refers not only to visitors entering the Apical Region for recreational purposes but also to personnel that guide visitors or transport them in vehicles on land or in boats offshore, as well as to reporters, photographers, and other such personnel. Not included in this definition of "users" are owners of "banya" and others engaged in the fishing industry, and personnel related to administrative bodies and other organizations who enter for purposes such as the maintenance of land and facilities.

A. Basic Rules

1. Consideration of the natural environment

Users should possess a high degree of awareness concerning nature conservation and minimize their environmental impact so that the primeval nature of the Apical Region is not damaged.

2. Consideration of fellow users

To ensure that other users may experience the pristine and tranquil nature unique to the Apical Region, users must leave no trace of their visit and leave the region in its original condition. Users must also not engage in behavior that undermines visits by fellow users.

3. Prohibition against the docking of powered vessels

The landing of powered vessels on shore in the Apical Region for tourism and other recreational purposes is prohibited under "The Agreement for Guidance on Restrictions on the Use of the Cape Shiretoko Area (1984)" in the interest of protecting valuable plant communities and the habitats of wild birds and animals in the natural environment of this region.

4. Personal responsibility

In addition to a lack of paths and other facilities, the Apical Region is characterized by harsh environmental conditions. It is therefore imperative that users possess a particularly high degree of skill and good physical condition to personally handle these conditions, as well as the firm understanding that actions must be based on sound judgment, and that personal responsibility be taken for what they do.

No communication systems or rescue operations are available in the region. Users must therefore be well aware that in the event of an accident, in addition to the considerable costs and time required to rescue them, they could be in a life-or-death situation.

5. Acquiring information, etc.

1) Users should become familiar with, understand, and adhere to all relevant laws and rules regarding the use of the Apical Region. Users should also acquire and understand in advance information on the minimization of risks (conditions of coastal detours, partially submerged areas, rocky shorelines and shallow waters; meteorological information on tidal flows, wind and waves; and minimization of impact while on sightseeing and other vessels, etc.) and use of the region (such as areas where they can wait for tides to change). This information is available from the Rusa Field house, the Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center, and the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center. Users should also acquire the necessary skills in order to handle these conditions.

Please also refer to Annex 1, "Restricted activities and rules in national parks under applicable laws" and Annex 2 "Information list for the minimization of risks in the use of the Apical Region".

2) In order to receive up-to-date information and revise and/or supplement this document, users entering the Apical Region are requested to cooperate with park management by participating in questionnaires and other surveys, as well as provide any other information regarding conditions of the environment, routes, etc.

B. Common Points of Consideration

1. Points concerning the minimization of risk

1) Preparation

a) In order to plan a feasible itinerary, users should take their health and physical ability as well as environmental conditions into consideration. Furthermore, users need to be prepared for unforeseen circumstances and avoid acting alone.

b) Family should be notified of destinations and itineraries. Advance procedures should be completed at relevant agencies prior to entry, if required.

c) Users need to be well aware of the great inconvenience caused to local stakeholders in the event they get lost or have an accident in the mountains or at sea. Coverage by insurance and other mechanisms, escape routes, rescue operations (including methods of communication from your location) and other emergency procedures must be considered well in advance.

d) Users need to prepare sufficient warm clothing and food as well as safety equipment to minimize risk and prevent accidents, depending on the type of activity.

2) Measures against brown bears

The Apical Region is home to one of the few high-density brown bear (Higuma) populations of the world, forever presenting the risk of encounter. In sharp contrast to other parts of Hokkaido, the stringent protection of wild animals in this region has resulted in numerous bears that roam freely without avoiding humans.

In order to minimize the risk of encounter and avoid changing the behavioral patterns of the bears, users must thoroughly consider the following measures.

More details concerning measures i), ii) and iii) below can be found on the Shiretoko Nature Foundation website as well as in Annex 6, "Prevention of accidents or injuries caused by bears or other wildlife" (in the Japanese version only), and should be referred to in advance to assist preparation.

a) Prevention

i) The Rusha area (concentrated around the Rusha River estuary and extending to the area between the Upushinotta and Takino Rivers; see Figures 2 and 4) has a high population density of brown bears and is not to be entered. Camping is also prohibited in this area.

ii) If camping, accidents involving bears are to be avoided by keeping tents, cooking areas, and food storage areas sufficiently separate. Food must never be brought into tents, and to ensure that food and food wastes are not accessible to bears, they must be stored in food containers and kept at a location sufficiently away from the tents. Bear-resistant food storage containers and bear deterrent spray noted below in item iii are available on loan from the Rusa Field House, the Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center, and the Shiretoko Nature Center. It is also advisable that campsites be protected with portable electric fencing (for more information, refer to the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center website).

iii) Bear deterrent spray and bells must be carried to minimize risks and prevent accidents.

iv) It is dangerous to bring food and other items with strong odors as these will attract bears. Food and other personal effects that do not have any odors should be selected.
v) Keep any luggage containing food, food waste, and other items that attract bears with you at all times. If bears get to any luggage like this that you have deposited somewhere, they will learn that there is food inside such luggage and possibly attack other trekkers. We also recommend that you refrain from depositing any luggage even if it does not contain food, as foxes could damage it, too.
vi) In the event you come across the carcasses of Yezo sika deer or marine animals washed ashore, you should not approach them but just leave the area immediately. This may be a feeding ground for bears, which may aggressively attack in order to protect their food.
vii) You should always be aware of your surroundings, and be especially cautious in areas where bears congregate in larger numbers (such as rivers where bears come to feed on salmon during the spawning season). In heavily overgrown areas and other areas of poor visibility, you should alert bears of your presence in advance by talking while walking. A sudden encounter with a bear at close range may cause an accident.
viii) Movement during times of poor visibility, such as nighttime, dusk or when there is thick fog, should be avoided as this may also lead to sudden encounters.

b) Procedures in the event of an encounter
i) If you notice a bear in your path, you should leave the area in a manner that will not provoke the bear.
ii) Bears should never be fed.
iii) In the event your food or rubbish is taken by bears, you should immediately turn back. Do not attempt to retrieve your belongings.

c) Procedure after an encounter

In the event your food or rubbish is taken by bears, or you are being intentionally approached or followed by them, or you are involved in an accident, please contact the Utoro or Rausu Ranger Office, the Rausu Town Hall, or the Shiretoko Nature Center as soon as possible in order to ensure the safety of other users.

2. Points concerning the conservation of natural environments

1) Consideration of vegetation, etc.
a) To prevent the introduction of invasive species, please check your clothing and wash the soles of your footwear to remove any seeds and other matter.
b) Please do not enter areas with fragile vegetation such as mires and wetlands or areas where topsoil is susceptible to erosion.
c) Please do not collect any soil, rocks or plants, and take care not to damage them.
d) Clearing of branches and other vegetation is prohibited.
e) Graffiti on rocks, trees and other areas is prohibited.

2) Consideration of wild animals
a) A large nest in the hollow or canopy of a tree is a probable nesting site of birds. To avoid disturbance to breeding activities, do not approach the nest and instead quickly leave the area as far away as possible. Users should also not approach or enter the nesting sites of rare birds, colonies of seabirds, or the breeding sites of swifts (Amatsubame) or Asian house martins (Iwa-tsubame).
b) Do not engage in behavior that disturbs wildlife, such as getting excessively close or staying for an extended time.
c) Do not feed wild animals. Also, ensure that any food or rubbish you have is not scavenged by wild animals.

d) Do not engage in behavior that startles or provokes wild animals.

3) Camping

a) Camping is not permitted in fragile mires, meadows, gravel beds, or other areas that serve as habitats for rare species or where vegetation may be affected.

b) Take care not to trample on or otherwise disturb vegetation surrounding campsites.

c) Do not leave any traces of your visit at campsites.

d) In order the protect the natural environment and as a measure against brown bears, camping is not permitted in the Cape Shiretoko area, the Rusha area (between the Upushinotta River and the Takino River, mainly around the Rusha River estuary), and the area in and around Shiretoko Swamp. The prohibition on camping does not apply, however, to the coastal gravel beds of Aburako Bay or to the designated site near the North Lake (Kita-numa) of Shiretoko Swamp. (See Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5.)

4) Campfires

Campfires are in principle prohibited. When absolutely necessary, fires should be small, built in coastal areas and not over vegetation, and built only with driftwood. Appropriate care must be taken afterwards to not leave traces of the fire.

5) Entry with pets.

Pets may not be brought into the park.

6) Noise

Acts that disturb the tranquil natural environment of the region such as making loud noises are not permitted, except for sounds that are for the purpose of avoiding brown bears.

7) Management of rubbish, waste water, human wastes, etc.

a) Carry all your rubbish out of the region. It must not be buried , burned, or dumped.

b) Soaps and other detergents may not be used.

c) Remove extraneous packaging, etc. from food. To minimize impact on the environment, food and preparation methods that produce waste water when cooking or washing up, etc. should be avoided as much as possible.

d) In principle, portable toilets should be used, and human, paper and other wastes carried out of the region. In the event a portable toilet is unavailable, paper waste should be carried out and human waste not concentrated in one area. Please follow the procedures below:

i) When along the coastline, dig a hole above the highest point at high tide, in an area without vegetation. Sufficient distance should be kept from fishing huts and other places associated with fishery activities.

ii) Avoid water sources, mires, and areas with fragile vegetation.

3. Other points of consideration

1) Do not engage in any behavior that interferes with local fishery activities, such as collecting seafood or entering fishing grounds or facilities (kelp drying grounds, set-nets, huts, etc.). Do not approach areas where fishing gear has been placed or where boats are operating.

2) Lodging in fishing huts (“banya”) is not permitted.

3) The handling of relics (pottery fragments, stone tools, etc.), entry into archeological features (depressions, pits, etc.) and other acts that impact artifacts are not permitted.

4) Please follow the guidance and instructions of park rangers, forest rangers, patrol officers, security personnel, and other park managers.

C. Points of Consideration concerning Specific Types of Use

In addition to the Common Points of Consideration, points of consideration concerning specific types of use of the Apical Region, outlined below, must also be followed. (See Figure 2.)

1. Coastal trekking

This section refers to coastal trekking at Cape Shiretoko or climbing Mt. Shiretoko or other mountains. In addition to strictly adhering to the following items, depending on the route, physical strength and skills capable of carrying luggage of more than 15 kg and walking up to 10 hours a day on large coastal rocks that will place a burden on knees and ankles are also required.

1) Minimizing risk

a) Along the coastline there are rock faces and steep inclines that will require the user to take vertical detours or cross partially-submerged areas to avoid. Thick fog and other poor weather conditions as well as a high density of brown bears further contribute to the severity of the environment. Only those who possess mountain climbing skills and are able to confront dangers with appropriate judgment may enter this area.

b) Users must exercise extreme caution to avoid falling rocks and slipping, etc. To further minimize risks, users should be equipped with necessary gear (helmet, climbing rope, map, compass, rescue gear, etc.).

c) Climbing ropes and other equipment are not to be left behind to secure routes.

d) There are some areas that can only be reached during low tide. Information on safe areas to wait for the tide to change should be acquired in advance from the Rusa Field House, the Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center, or the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center.

2) Mountain stream fishing

Species of fish inhabiting the rivers of this region play a major role in Shiretoko's ecosystems as components of nutrient cycling between marine and terrestrial environments and food sources for the Blakiston's fish owl (Shima-fukurou) and other rare species. The presence of the Dolly Varden trout (local name: Karafuto-iwana), which is the dominant species of the region and listed as "vulnerable"(Threatened II) in the Ministry of the Environment's Red Data Book, is further reason for users to keep fishing activities to a minimum.

3) Other

Users in principle should make their journey entirely on foot, except in cases of injury, illness, or physical deterioration that poses a risk of accident.

2. Use of mountainous areas

This section is for users climbing Mt. Iwo and other inland mountains northeast of Iwo. In addition to strictly adhering to the following items, users must have the ability to read maps to determine the route through dwarf pine (Haimatsu) that is taller than human height and where it is almost impossible for footprints to remain and be followed. Users must also have the physical strength to walk for long hours through the shrubbery.

1) Minimizing risk

a) In mountainous areas, users must rely on their own personal judgment to select appropriate routes. Thick fog and other poor weather conditions as well as a high density of brown bears further contribute to the severity of the environment. Only those who possess a high level of mountain climbing skills and are able to confront dangers with appropriate judgment may enter this area.

b) Users must exercise extreme caution to avoid falling rocks and slipping, etc. To further minimize risks, users should be equipped with necessary gear.

c) Climbing ropes and other equipment are not to be left behind to secure routes.

2) Mountain stream fishing

Species of fish inhabiting the rivers of this region play a major role in Shiretoko's ecosystems as components of nutrient cycling between marine and terrestrial environments and food sources for the Blakiston's fish owl (Shima-fukurou) and other rare species. The presence of the Dolly Varden trout (local name: Karafuto-iwana) , which is the dominant species of the region and listed as "vulnerable" (Threatened II) in the Ministry of the Environment's Red Data Book is a further reason or users to keep fishing activities to a minimum.

3) Other

The placement of markers (flags, tape, etc.) should be avoided and if used, promptly removed.

3. Sea kayaking

This section is for users going sea kayaking along coastal areas. In addition to strictly adhering to the following items, users must have considerable experience kayaking along coastal areas and be knowledgeable about the particular landforms and weather behavior of the Apical Region.

1) Minimizing risk

a) Along the coastline, strong gusts of wind in the Cape Shiretoko area and in the Rusha area on the Shari side, and unpredictable waves and wind on the Rausu side, present major risks to users. Thick fog and other poor weather conditions as well as a high density of brown bears further contribute to the severity of the environment. Only users who possess a high level of skill and are able to confront dangers with appropriate judgment may enter this area.

b) To further minimize risks, users should be equipped with necessary gear (lifejacket, bilge pump, paddle float, rescue gear, etc.).

c) Shiretoko is susceptible to strong winds and other poor weather conditions. To avoid getting lost, users should always stay as close to land as possible.

d) When traveling in groups, users should not make long lines that disrupt the course of other vessels.

e) In the event that another vessel approaches, kayaks should be stopped and brought together.

f) To prevent collisions, kayaks should be easily visible to other vessels.

2) Consideration of wild animals

a) Breeding sites of wild animals must not be approached.

b) Users must not engage in behavior such as approaching or chasing marine mammals (whales, dolphins, seals, etc.), seabirds or raptors (birds of prey), or brown bears, as this type of behavior impacts their movements in their habitats.

3) Other

a) Fishing port facilities may only be used in times of emergency.

b) Information on points of departure, destinations, and advisable docking areas should be acquired in advance from the Rusa Field House, the Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center, or Shiretoko National Park Nature Center.

4. Estuarine area salmon fishing

This section is for users who dock boats on shore in estuarine areas to fish for salmon. In addition to strictly adhering to the items below, especially since there is the possibility of impact on the types of use in sections 1, 2 and 3, users must assume complete responsibility to ensure that the fish they caught or their belongings are not scavenged by bears or foxes that might appear.

With regards to salmon fishing in the estuarine area on the Rausu side, for the time being "The Rausu Recreational Fishing Sub-group self-imposed rules" (Annex 3) are to be appropriately and strictly obeyed. Fishing zones and locations will be determined following the completion of surveys and adjustments.

Powered vessels are not to be docked in the estuarine area on the Shari side, as the vast majority of the area is strictly protected as a Special Protection Zone and subject to dangers associated with a particularly high concentration of brown bears when salmon spawn.

5. Use of powered vessels in marine areas

This section is for users who use powered boats for recreational purposes such as sightseeing, fishing, and pleasure boating. Strict adherence to the following items will make this type of activity relatively easier to use than other types of activities.

1) Safety management

a) To prevent accidents involving other vessels (fishing vessels, sea kayaks, etc.), users must be mindful of their traveling speed and vessel distance.

b) Sightseeing vessels must not stray from their authorized routes.

2) Consideration of wild animals

a) To protect wild animals, coastal areas should not be approached unless absolutely necessary.

b) Users are to reduce the speed of their vessels when in the midst of seabirds, raptors (birds of prey), or marine mammals that have come onto rocky shores. When navigating close to the shore, users must reduce the speed of their vessels to ensure they do not disturb seabirds, birds of prey, or marine mammals that have come onto the rocky shores.

c) Users must maintain a minimum distance of 100m from the rock face between Cape Puyuni and Cape Eeishiredo, which is a habitat with breeding sites of the spectacled guillemot (Keimafuri). Cape Puyuni, Zounohana, the cliffs on the right bank of the Iwaobetsu River, and the Goko cliffs are particularly important nesting sites and also must not be approached.

d) Users must maintain a minimum distance of 100m from Tako Rock, Kaparuwatara, Idashubewatara, and Takasarauni, which are the breeding sites of seabirds.

e) A distance of at least 100m must be maintained from rocky coastal areas used by white-tailed eagles (Ojiro-washi) as a perch site.

f) Marine mammals (whales, dolphins, seals, etc.), seabirds, raptors (birds of prey), and bears must not be approached, and whales and dolphins must not be chased.

g) When in the oncoming path of marine mammals, users should change the direction of their vessel or reduce their speed.

h) The calls of whales must not be disturbed with human noises.

Figure 2. Areas of concern

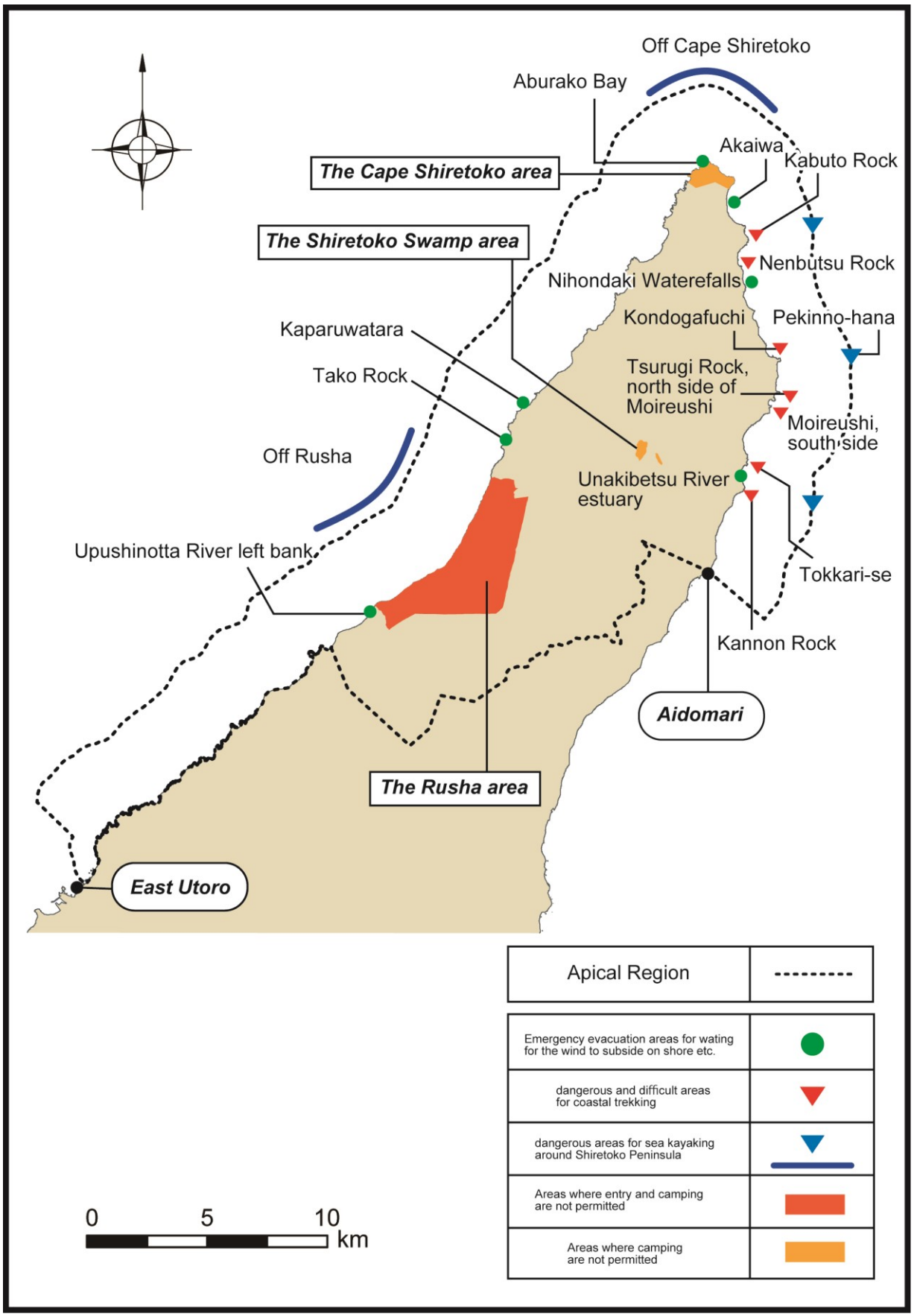


Figure 3. Areas where camping is not permitted

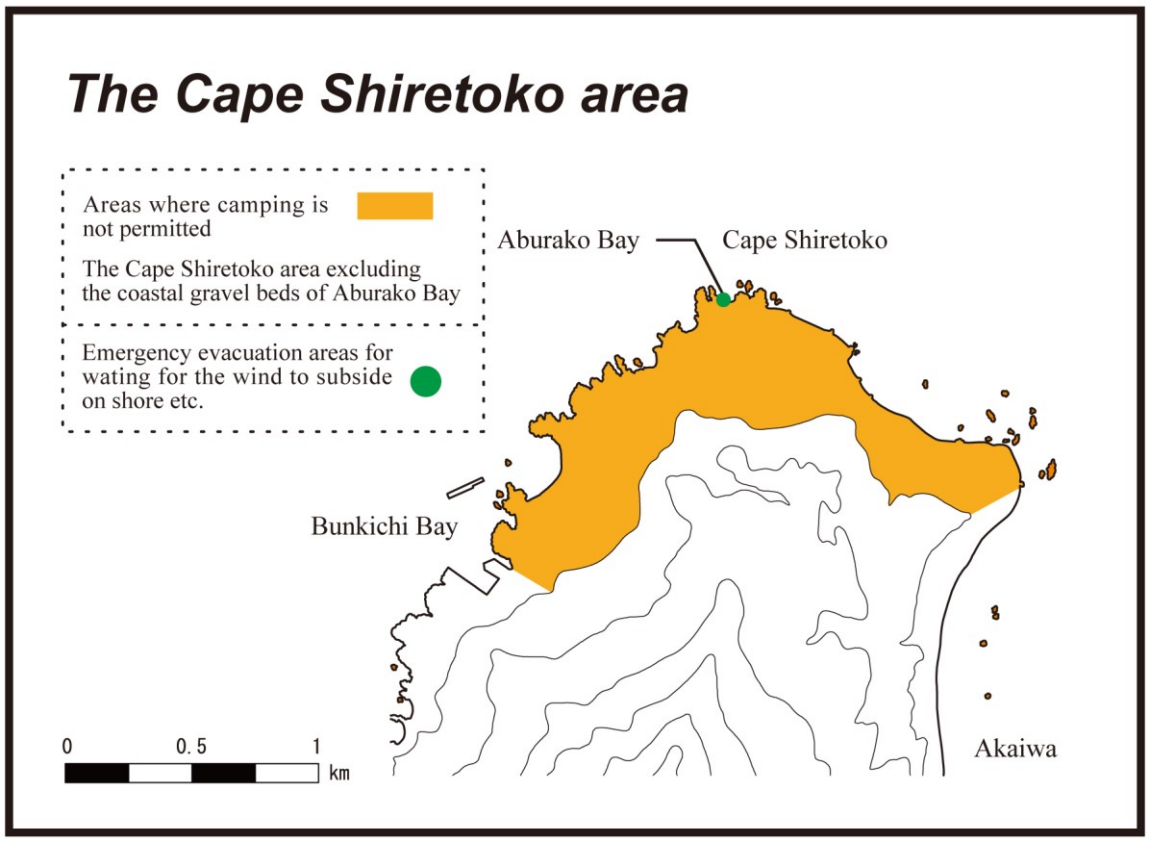


Figure 4. Areas where entry and camping are not permitted

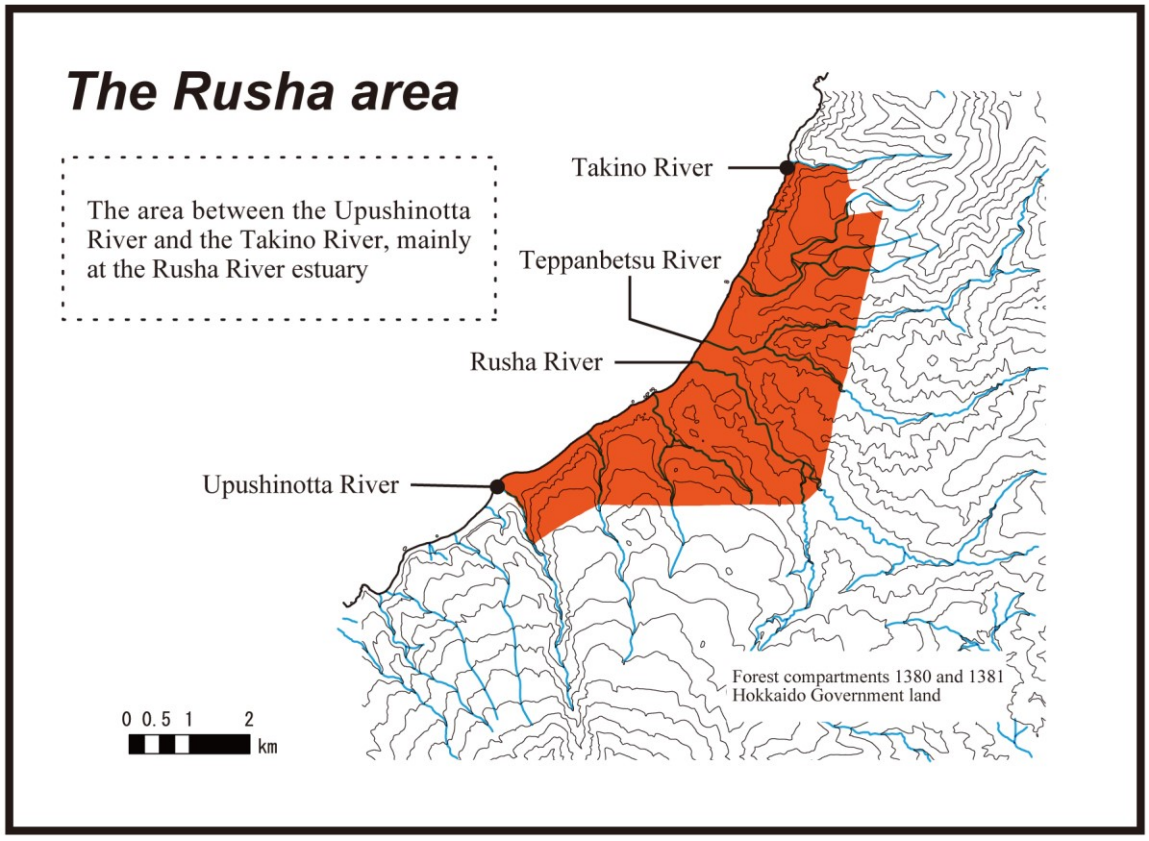


Figure 5. Areas where camping is not permitted

The Shiretoko Swamp area

Areas where camping is not permitted

The wetland along the shores of South Lake (Minami-numa) and North Lake (Kita-numa) and surrounding areas, except the designated site

The designated site

0 0.5 1 km

*Space for three or four 4-person tents.

*Take sufficient care not to damage vegetation outside the ropes.

If camping at Shiretoko Swamp is unavoidable, please camp at the site within the white ropes. If rules are not obeyed and damage to vegetation outside the ropes is recognized, camping will be forbidden in the entire area around Shiretoko Swamp, including the site inside the ropes.

Annex 1. Restricted activities and rules in national parks under applicable laws

1. Restricted activities under the Natural Park Act

	Zone	Type of Activity
Activities requiring permission	Special Zone	[1] New construction, renovations and additions [2] Tree felling [3] Extraction of minerals, earth and rock [4] Manipulation of water volume of rivers, lakes and ponds [5] Drainage of wastewater into designated lakes and ponds, etc. [Shiretoko Swamp, Shiretoko-goko Lakes and Lake Rausu] [6] Placement of advertisements, etc. [7] Accumulation or storage of designated objects [8] Land reclamation, etc. in bodies of water [9] Changes to land forms [10] Collection, etc. of designated plants [245 species including Geum pentapetalum] [11] Capture, etc. of designated animals [None in Shiretoko National Park] [12] Color alteration of roofs and walls, etc. [13] Entry into designated zones [None in Shiretoko National Park] [14] Entry into designated zones via vehicle or horse [All special zones(excluding roads and agricultural fields)] [15] Other activities by government decree [None]
	Special Protection Zone	In addition to activities in Special Zones: [1] Damage to trees [2] Tree planting [3] Livestock grazing [4] Accumulation or storage of objects [5] Starting/building fires [6] Collection, etc. of plants excluding trees [7] Capture, etc. of animals [8] Entry via vehicle or horse [9] Other activities by government decree [Planting plants excluding trees, seeding] [Release of animals (excluding livestock grazing)]

Activities requiring notification	Special Zone (ex post facto)	[1] Already commenced activities at time of "Special Zone" designation [2] Emergency procedures during emergencies and disasters
	Special Zone (prior)	[3] Tree planting and livestock grazing in designated zones [None in Shiretoko National Park]
	Special Protection Zone (ex post facto)	[1] Already commenced activities at time of "Special Protection Zone" designation [2] Emergency procedures during emergencies and disasters
	Ordinary Zone [Marine environments only in Shiretoko National Park]	[1] Large-scale new construction, renovations and additions [2] Manipulation of water level and volume of rivers, lakes and ponds within Special Zones [3] Placement of advertisements, etc. [4] Land reclamation, etc. in bodies of water [5] Extraction of minerals, earth and rock [6] Changes to land forms [7] Changes to sea bed in areas surrounding submerged park zones [No submerged park zone designations in Shiretoko National Park]

2. Rules under the Cultural Assets Preservation Act

There are numerous archaeological relics in the Apical Region. In the Cape Shiretoko area in particular, there are the Cape Shiretoko relics (at the two locations of the Shari Town side and the Rausu Town side), and relics at three additional locations: the base of the Cape Shiretoko lighthouse, the Bunkichi Bay Chashi (an Ainu fortification), and the Kamuipamoi relics. These are all buried cultural properties. In the event you come across a relic during a visit to the area, the location where you found it and its condition is important information for understanding the relic. You are permitted to take photos of it, but you are not permitted to take it as a curiosity or otherwise move it; please leave it there as you found it.

3. Restricted activities at Utoro Fishing Port (Bunkichi Bay of the Apical Region) under the Hokkaido Fishing Port Management Ordinance

The mooring of boats, rafts or other vessels at fishing ports managed by the Hokkaido Government is not permitted. Pulling up alongside fishing boats for any purpose other than fishing is also not permitted.

4. Restricted activities under ordinances by the Hokkaido Government for the protection of biodiversity

The feeding of brown bears (Higuma) is not permitted. This includes the planting of food or leaving food with the intention of feeding bears.

5. Strict adherence to self-imposed rules under the Hokkaido Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Ordinance

Visitors to the Shiretoko World Natural Heritage site must strictly adhere to items of compliance (self-imposed rules).

Important note: Users may be cited for violation if they do not strictly adhere to the above restrictions and rules.

Annex 2. Information list for the minimization of risks in the use of the Apical Region (Please also see Figure 2, “Areas of concern”.)

[Coastal trekking: dangerous places and obstacles]

- **Kannon Rock (vertical detour)**

The base of Kannon Rock needs to be scaled. There is a nearly vertical wall approximately 20m in height on the south end. As portions of the ground are composed of very slippery clay, passage is further encumbered during rainfall. Users without mountaineering skills will have difficulties in passing this point. Although there is rope installed, it has weathered considerably and thus relying on it to pass is extremely dangerous.

- **Tokkari-se (partially-submerged area, wall)**

The area can be passed at low tide, when exposed rock can be used as stepping stones. At high tide, however, these “stepping stones” are submerged, and even when the tide is going out, if the waves are high from a storm, passage can become extremely dangerous. Waves can be erratic and are sometimes higher than expected. People can be swept into the sea this way, and there have been fatalities in the past. There is also a nearly vertical wall that, although only a few meters wide, must be traversed over water and caution is essential.

- **Moireushi, south end (vertical detour, wall)**

The base of a rock outcropping on the south end of Moireushi Bay must be scaled. There is a nearly vertical cliff approximately 15m in height on the south end. Although a rope for fishery activities has been installed here, it has aged and it is now extremely dangerous to rely on the rope when climbing up and down the rock.

Approximately 200m south at the base of Takenoko Rock, there is an area of sea-eroded terraced rock that must crossed. At high tide, passage is possible only through water, which is made more difficult in poor weather. There is also a rock overhang over the water at this point, which must be traversed. Although only 3-4m in width, traversal with heavy gear will require skill. It is more difficult to traverse this point from the south to the north.

- **Tsurugi Rock north side of Moireushi (partially-submerged area)**

Tsurugi Rock is a precipitous cliff protruding into the north end of Moireushi Bay. At low tide, it may be passed by walking across the terraced rock at the cliff base just above water. At high tide, water depth in the area exceeds that of human height and thus passage is possible only by swimming. With a length of 200m however, this is difficult. Instead of the considerable detour, it is advisable that passage be timed with low tide. However, in poor weather, large waves may sweep over the terraced rock even at low tide, making passage impossible.

- **Kondogafuchi (partially-submerged area, vertical detour)**

Shaped by rock face, the bay has a nearly vertical wall on the north end. Although it is possible to traverse around the base by walking on the rocks above the water surface at low tide, passage at high tide is impossible. Since there is no above-water footing available for several meters on the north side, except for low-tide peaks during spring tides, you should be aware that you may need to traverse through the sea in water up to your waist.

At the rear of the bay, there is a precipitous terraced face, which can be passed by traversing and climbing a path created by deer. The path is narrow and fragile and thus may be dangerous for users with a poor sense of balance. There is a grassy area on a steep incline at the south end, which is dangerously slippery when bare during rainfall.

・**Nenbutsu Rock (vertical detour)**

Taking the vertical detour route on the south side involves traversing over a roof-like rock overhang. The vertical detour route on the north side requires you to traverse part of the way along a cliff with a drop of 20-30m. making the area dangerous if one should lose their footing. There are records of an accident here in which a user fell and suffered a serious skull fracture. There is also a section where you need to climb up or down an almost vertical surface.

There is a point on the lower portion of the steep incline where surface soil has seriously eroded away along sections of the vertical detour, exposing a rock foundation. It will be difficult for users without mountaineering skills to climb this point without a rope. Although ropes are installed on both the north and south sides, it has weathered considerably and thus relying on it to pass is extremely dangerous.

・**Kabuto Rock (vertical detour)**

There is a deep notch inland in this area, which cannot be passed even in low tide. Passage will require a detour 100m up. On the north side of the detour route is a steep incline shaped like a river embankment, which is a highly dangerous area for falls. Furthermore, there are numerous protruding rocks that are difficult to pass without coming loose. Because these rocks have a tendency to fall down the center of the "embankment" that people use as a route, rocks dislodged by members at the higher end of a climbing party will steadily gain speed with serious consequences for members at the lower end.

Therefore, attempting this area in large groups is considered extremely dangerous and should be avoided. The upper 20m of the north face is a steep incline with unstable ground that is difficult to pass without a rope. There are no ropes at the site, and there are no trees or other supports in the area where a rope can be attached.

[Sea kayaking: dangerous places around the Shiretoko peninsula]

・Off Rusha

With heights reaching 1000m, the folding screen-shaped Shiretoko Peninsula juts into the Sea of Okhotsk. Land in Rusha on the other hand only reaches heights of 300m, causing southerly winds to blow down the mountains with great ferocity. Although waters on the Shari side are predominantly calm in the summer season, strong gusts may suddenly blow into the area. Carelessness under such circumstances is extremely dangerous. With a U-shaped land mass there is the temptation to cut across the water, but those who do so risk being swept out to sea.

When they arise, the effects of strong terrestrial wind will extend widely from Takino River to the north to the Upushinotta River area to the south. If winds and whitecaps are observed in the distance, passage should be delayed until they subside. Recommended areas to wait onshore are the left bank of the Upushinotta River to the south, or Kaparuwatara or Porowatara to the north.

・Off Cape Shiretoko

The weather of the Cape Shiretoko area, which is situated at the tip of the vast Shiretoko Peninsula, can deteriorate quickly with the onslaught of winds either from the Utoro or Rausu side. These waters should not be entered unnecessarily, especially when choppy, and strong gusts blow from the back. Because the rocky shoreline extends far into the sea, it is tempting to trace along it, but this can be dangerous when waves are high. This area should be by-passed by taking the channels found along the shore.

It is advisable that users wait onshore, in Aburako Bay on the Shari side or Akaiwa on the Rausu side, for winds to subside.

・Kabuto Rock, Pekinno-hana and Kannon Rock

There are numerous small, cape-like formations such as Kabuto Rock, Pekinno-hana and Kannon Rock on the Rausu side. Wind direction can change suddenly and the weather often deteriorates at the tips of these formations. In summer, there are comparatively more southerly winds and thus caution is required when passing these areas with strong winds and waves coming from the back. It is advisable not to pass unnecessarily and to wait until the winds subside.

Annex 3. The Rausu Recreational Fishing Sub-group self-imposed rules

With its designation as a national park and World Natural Heritage, the marine waters of Rausu are governed by "The Basic Plan on the Proper Use of the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula (December, 2004)" in addition to other relevant laws and regulations. The following rules have been established for the sustainable provision of healthy and orderly recreational fishing opportunities only found in Shiretoko, and to ensure that accidents at sea are prevented, resources are protected, and nature is preserved.

Basic Rules

- Users should be well aware that Rausu, Shiretoko, is designated as a national park and a World Natural Heritage and thus conservation of the natural environment must be taken into consideration.
- Healthy recreational sea fishing only found in Rausu is to be promoted.

Safety management

- Vessel service will depend on weather and oceanic conditions. Decisions will be at the discretion of the Rausu Recreational Fishing Sub-group.
- Lifejackets are mandatory.
- Maritime transport rules must be followed to prevent accidents with other vessels (fishing vessels, sightseeing vessels, sea kayaks).
- Only day trips are permitted, and outings are not to exceed 12 hours. With the exception of emergencies, overnight stays are prohibited.

Protection of resources

- The enjoyment of fishing as a sport takes precedence over the amassment of fishing resources.
- With boat fishing, catches are limited to one ice chest per person. With salmon fishing in estuarine areas accessed by boat, catches are limited to 10 salmon and 5 trout per person. Fishing for the purpose of collecting roe is not permitted.
- With regards to salmon fishing in estuarine areas accessed by boat, the end of the annual fishing season will be decided by the Sub-group on a year-to-year basis for the protection of spawning adults. The season will extend to the last day of September at the latest.
- Salmon fishing in estuarine areas accessed by boat is permitted in the four areas of Moireushi Bay, Pekin Beach, Kuzuretaki Waterfalls (commonly known as Takinoshita), and Nihondaki Waterfalls.

Nature Conservation

- Rubbish, caught fish and their remains must not be disposed of on site, but removed from the area.
- Users who come onshore to estuarine areas to fish for salmon are to bear in mind and observe the following:
    1. Soil must be removed from footwear prior to boarding the vessel.
    2. Users must not wander away from their fishing sites.
    3. Campfires and the burning of rubbish are not permitted.
    4. All rubbish must be removed from the site.
    5. There is a danger of encountering bears.
    6. Because there are no restroom facilities on site, users should use those available prior to departure.
    7. Noise that disrupts the tranquility of the environment is not permitted.
    8. The consumption of alcohol is not permitted.

Annex 4. Shiretoko National Park Proper Use Committee Members

(1) Exploratory Members

・ Iwao Ogawa	President, EcoNetwork
・ Akihiro Kobayashi	Professor, Hokkaido College, Senshu University
・ Hisashi Shinjo	Senior Technical Manager of Wetland Ecosystems, Environmental Policy Division of Environmental Department, Kushiro City
・ Tatsuichi Tsujii (Committee Chair)	President, Hokkaido Environment Foundation
・ Hajime Nakagawa	Director, Shiretoko Museum
・ Kouichi Nakayasu	President, Hokkaido Forest Assembly Hall

(2) Relevant Regional Organizations

- Natural Environment Sub-group, Shari Town Environment Council
- Utoro Regional Council
- Utoro Fishing Cooperative
- Shiretoko Shari-cho Tourist Association
- Shiretoko Rausu-cho Tourist Association
- Rausu Town Shiretoko Natural World Heritage Council
- Rausu Fishing Cooperative
- Shiretoko Guide Council
- Shiretoko Nature Foundation

(3) Relevant Government Agencies

- Coordination and Public Relations Division, Hokkaido Regional Forest Office
- Abashirinanbu District Forest Office
- Konsentoubu District Forest Office
- Shiretoko Forest Center
- Kushiro Development and Construction Department, Hokkaido Development Agency
- Abashiri Development and Construction Department, Hokkaido Development Agency
- Abashiri Coast Guard Office
- Rausu Coast Guard Office
- Natural Environment Division, Bureau of Environmental Affairs, Department of Environment and Lifestyle, Hokkaido Government
- Environment and Lifestyle Division, Department of Regional Promotion, Abashiri Subprefectural Office, Hokkaido Government
- Environment and Lifestyle Division, Department of Regional Promotion, Nemuro Subprefectural Office, Hokkaido Government
- Kushiro District Public Works Management Office
- Abashiri District Public Works Management Office
- Shari Town
- Rausu Town

(4) Secretariat

Ministry of the Environment, Kushiro Nature Conservation Office

Annex 5. Background of studies regarding the use of the Apical Region (omitted)

Annex 5, Supplementary Material 1. The Basic Plan on the Proper Use of Shiretoko National Park (omitted)

Annex 5, Supplementary Material 2. Summary of the Shiretoko National Park Management Plan (omitted)

Annex 5, Supplementary Material 3. Agreement concerning Controls and Guidance on the Use of the Cape Shiretoko area (Summary)

1. Objective of Restrictions

Entry for recreational purposes is being restricted in order to preserve the natural landscapes throughout the Cape Shiretoko area which is a habitat for valuable vegetation and a variety of wildlife.

2. Target of Restrictions

The restrictions are aimed at sightseers and other visitors who enter the area for recreational purposes. These restrictions do not apply to personnel performing duties for administrative bodies or to members of the fishing industry who enter this area. Restrictions on entry for educational or research purposes will be assessed individually.

3. Scope of Restrictions

The restrictions apply to the National Park Special Protection Zone and the Class I Special Zone of the Apical Region.

4. Details of Restrictions

(1) The landing of recreational fishing boats in the Cape Shiretoko area is not permitted under applicable laws.
(2) Mountaineers are the main group of visitors who enter the Cape Shiretoko area over land, and while prohibitions are not in place for the time being, efforts are in place to disseminate awareness of the hazards along the routes and the prohibition on taking rides on fishing boats in order to restrict easy access as much as possible.

Annex 5, Supplementary Material 4. Shiretoko Ecotourism Strategy (Summary from Basic Policies)

(1) Basic Principles

Tourism use, including ecotourism, in Shiretoko will be promoted on the basis of the following three principles.

- Conservation of the natural environment in the Property and enhancement of its values
- Offering high-quality nature experiences that are specific to Shiretoko to international tourists
- Establishment of sustainable local communities and economy

(2) Required Perspectives in Promoting Tourism Use Including Ecotourism

- Local initiatives, autonomy, sustainability

In order to conserve the natural environment in the Property and establish a sustainable local community and economy, it is desirable for local stakeholders that have lived in Shiretoko and utilized its nature to spontaneously make commitment to the promotion of tourism use through the local initiatives.

Vis-a-vis local initiatives, relevant administrative organizations will provide integrated support to them, in close coordination among themselves, through the operation of laws, systems and respective projects.

In addition, when tourism use including ecotourism is promoted, it is also necessary to make sustainable contributions to the local community and its economy through efforts such as increasing repeaters through raising their satisfaction and procuring services from the local community, etc.

- Sharing, collaboration, coordination, and network

When tourism use, including ecotourism, is promoted in Shiretoko, it is necessary for diverse actors to coordinate and collaborate, in order to examine plans, make rules, manage and control, and provide high-quality nature experiences to tourists. Especially in Shiretoko, where guided tours are active and play important roles in proving high-quality nature experiences and conserving the natural environment, it is important to train guides and to coordinate and collaborate with guide business operators. In addition, since operators of sightseeing ships and sea kayaks also play similar roles, it is required for the land areas and the sea areas to coordinate with each other for both use and conservation.

Stakeholders will ensure close coordination and information sharing, by utilizing the Joint Committee and the network of volunteers across the country.

- Conserving the natural environment

In order to conserve the natural environment, tourism use will be limited within the environmental capacity of natural ecosystems. For this end, characteristics such as vulnerability of ecosystems in respective areas and utilization conditions including the number of tourists will be fully considered to examine concrete measures to be taken.

Tourism use must not have a significant impact on natural ecosystems, such as shrinking of habitats of wildlife, reduction of their reproductive rates, changes in their living environments by being used to humans, and decrease of habitats for alpine plants.

Specific types of tourism use particularly in wetlands and alpine zones where the restoration of vegetation is difficult and those targeting rare species such as Blakiston's fish-owl should be considered carefully, since these types of tourism use could have a significant impact on ecosystems even if the number of participants is small. Therefore, it is needed to establish relevant rules based on both local agreements and experts' knowledge, and to set utilization systems based on relevant laws. In addition, in order to maintain the primeval characteristics of the Property, limiting development of facilities and setting the period of use and number of users will be considered. Meanwhile, it is also important to scatter and diversify tourism use, for the purpose of preventing any impacts that the concentration of excessive tourism use might have on the natural environment.

- Promoting public understanding on natural ecosystems

It is important to raise public awareness on the natural values of Shiretoko, mechanisms of its ecosystems, and ecologies of wildlife, through the utilization of guides, for providing high-quality nature experiences. The promotion of understanding on the natural ecosystems will enable the public to know relevant rules that are required in coming in contact with nature, as well as to enhance their awareness of the conservation of the natural environment.

Shiretoko is one of the rare and precious areas in Japan in which the primeval natural environment is conserved, and effective public awareness activities could be implemented. In addition, it is expected that opportunities are offered so that visitors can challenge primeval nature by themselves and realize and feel its remarkable values.

- Respecting local cultures and historical backgrounds

Since ancient times in Shiretoko, Ainu people have lived with their own livelihoods such as hunting, fishing, plant collection, etc. and have nurtured their own culture in which they valued rich nature and worshiped Blakiston's fish-owls, brown bears, killer whales (*Orcinus orca*), and so on, as their *Kamuy* (divine being in Ainu mythology). In addition, management of fishing grounds started in the 19th century, which developed into the current diverse forms of fishery. With regard to promoting tourism use including ecotourism, these cultural and historical backgrounds that have been developed in contact with nature will be taken into full consideration. Appropriate consideration is especially needed for fishing activities.

- Self-responsibility and sharing of management responsibilities

Principles in accessing the natural environment include understanding possible risks that exist within the natural environment, taking actions based on our own judgements, and taking responsibilities for any accidents or damages as a result. Since this principle of self-responsibility has led to proper tourism use and enabled diverse forms of tourism, it is necessary to actively raise awareness of tourists.

With regard to promoting eco tours, it is necessary to inform tourists of full information regarding safety and risks as well as to provide them with due preparation for their security in advance, according to types of eco tours that are implemented.

When any accident takes place due to defects of facilities, those who manage the facilities will bear the responsibility. When a higher level of management is required due to an increase of tourists, not only will those who manage the facilities bear heavier responsibilities, but relevant administrative organizations may also be required to take responsibility for any accidents that are caused even by natural substances other than facilities. In such cases where heavier responsibilities are expected, it is necessary for those who promote tourism to share management responsibilities in order to expand effective management and use opportunities.

- Enhancing the values of the Shiretoko Brand

Shiretoko is a natural World Heritage. In addition to this, it is an area where natural conservation has been carried out since ancient times. There are many Shiretoko lovers around the country, and many tourists visit Shiretoko because they are attracted by Shiretoko's brand as a natural World Heritage. It will be possible to connect economy and environment in a positive circle, by promoting tourism use in a way to raise the values of the Shiretoko Brand including the Property and its neighboring areas, such as an introduction of a mechanism enabling part of the profits that are obtained from tourism use to be returned to the local nature and society, etc.

Some products, such as fishery products, have already established their own brand values. It is required to raise the Shiretoko Brand as a whole, without undermining individual brand values, in terms of the production of agricultural and fishery products as well as consolidation of social infrastructure, etc.

- Practicing adaptive management

With regard to promoting tourism use including ecotourism, relevant administrative organizations and those who promote tourism use will conduct the monitoring of possible impacts that tourism use may have on the natural environment as well as tourists' satisfaction, etc. The Joint Committee will assess and, according to the monitoring results, review methods of utilization and management.

Concluding Remarks

Of the many national parks found throughout Japan, Shiretoko National Park is the richest in terms of untouched nature and biodiversity. A national park of this distinction thus requires the development of particularly stringent regulations with regards to its use. Only through these efforts can the sufficient and continued use of this pristine nature be guaranteed for users now, and into the future.

In this document the words “Conduct of Use” are used, but these are in effect “manners”-manners that one learns and then follows without being told.

Rules or no rules, we must restrain ourselves from all activities that harm the environment, right down to catching one too many fish for personal enjoyment. We do not live in the far northern reaches of Alaska and thus do not need to stock enough salmon to last us through winter.

In principle, building fires in Shiretoko is prohibited but if for instance you are hit by waves whilst sea kayaking, warming and drying yourself off might save your life. If even then everyone has the manners to take the protection of plants into consideration when selecting a site to build a fire and cleans up after themselves, then this “Conduct of Use” would be wholly unnecessary. With hopes that the day will come soon, until then we present you this document.

Chairman, Shiretoko National Park Proper Use Committee

Inquiries

To receive a copy of the "Conduct on the Use of the Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region" and all other inquiries

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- Rausu Ranger Office
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- Rusa Field House
  TEL: +81-(0)153-89-2722 FAX: +81-(0)153-89-2722
  http://shiretoko-whc.jp/rfh/
  Open
  May-October: 9:00-17:00 (closed Tuesdays)
  Closed
  November-April
- Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center
  TEL: +81-(0)153-87-2828 FAX: +81-(0)153-87-2876
  http://rausu-vc.jp
  Open
  May-October: 9:00-17:00 (closed Mondays except in July-September)
  November-April: 10:00-16:00 (closed Mondays, Year-end/New-year holidays)
- Shiretoko National Park Nature Center
  TEL: +81-(0)152-24-2114 FAX: +81-(0)152-24-2115
  http://center.shiretoko.or.jp
  Open
  20 April - 20 Oct: 8:00-17:30 (daily)
  21 October – 19 April, 9:00–16:00 (Closed end of Dec to early Jan for Japan's New Year holidays)
- Kushiro Nature Conservation Office Website
  http//hokkaido.env.go.jp/kushiro/ (In Japanese only)
- Conduct on the Use of the Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region Website (shirecoco)
  http://www.env.go.jp/park/shiretoko/guide/sirecoco/index.html
- Shiretoko Data Center Website
  http://shiretoko-whc.com/index.html

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