

# Shiretoko National Park

## Conduct in 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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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 in the end of this document.

## **Introduction**

With the inscription of Shiretoko on the World Heritage List in 2005, the Shiretoko National Park Proper Use Committee (hereupon the “Committee”) together with numerous individuals associated with Shiretoko currently conducts surveys and explores ways to achieve the desirable protection and use of Shiretoko National Park. With respect to the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula, the Committee has worked on developing its “Rules of Use” which 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.”

The Shiretoko National Park Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region (hereupon the “Apical Region.” Diagram 1- Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region Location Map and Zone Map) possesses rich ecosystems formed by highly primeval natural landscapes and a diverse wildlife. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that Shiretoko will be left in better condition for future generations and continually conserved as a common heritage of humankind.

With respect to the use of the Apical Region, the fundamental principle of “planning for the appropriate provision of opportunities for nature experiences and the sustainable use of primeval nature though a fixed set of rules,” to achieve the “sustainable conservation of the highly primeval natural landscapes and diverse ecosystems unique to Shiretoko” was applied (The Basic Plan on the Proper Use of the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula (2001)). This was based on a way of thinking 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 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 objectives for the sustainable conservation of the 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 park users of the Apical Region and for the “use of powered vessels in marine areas”. Use of the region is categorized as “Coastal trekking”, “Sea kayaking”, “Mountain climbing” and “Estuarine area salmon fishing” 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 prohibited activities in the Apical Region. These will be enforced on a trial basis and in the future, should the need arise will be revised and supplemented based on the analysis, evaluation and feedback concerning monitoring results of park use and its environmental impact.

## **Conduct in the use of the Apical Region**

When “users” enter the “Apical Region”, points of consideration and prohibited activities to be observed from the standpoint of nature conservation and the minimization of risks are as follows.

### **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**

So that other users may experience the pristine and tranquil nature particular to the Apical Region, users should leave no trace of their visit and leave the region in its original condition. Furthermore, users should not commit any acts that undermine visits by fellow users.

#### **3. Prohibition against the docking of powered vessels**

The docking of powered vessels onto land in the Apical Region for tourism and other recreational purposes is not recognized under “The Agreement for Guidance on Restrictions on the Use of Shiretoko Cape (1984)” and thus is prohibited.

#### **4. Personal responsibility**

In addition to a lack of paths and other facilities, the Apical Region is characterized by harsh environmental conditions. It is thus requested 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 should be based on sound judgment, and that personal responsibility be taken for them.

There are neither communication systems nor rescue operations available in the region. Users should thus be well aware that in the event of an accident, in addition to the vast costs and time required that they are in a life or death situation.

#### **5. Acquiring information, etc.**

- 1) Users should learn, understand and obey all relevant laws and rules regarding the use of the Apical Region. Users should also acquire, learn 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 whilst on tourism and other vessels, etc.) and use of the region (areas to wait for the changing of tides, etc.). Such information is available from either the Rausu Visitor Center or 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- Controlled activities in Shiretoko National Park under the Natural Parks Law and Annex 2- Information list on the minimization of risks and use of the Apical Region.

- 2) “Providers” such as nature guides, as well as recreational fishing, tourism and other vessel operators should always be up to date on information and acquire new skills as needed. In addition to taking personal responsibility for their actions, they should also participate in the education and dissemination of the contents of this document to others.
- 3) In order to receive up to date information and revise and/or supplement this document, it is requested that users entering the Apical Region 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, they should be prepared for unforeseen circumstances and avoid acting alone.
- b) Family should be notified of destinations and itineraries. Prior procedures should be completed at relevant agencies prior to entry, if required.
- c) Users should be well aware of the great inconvenience caused to local stakeholders in the event they get lost or have an accident at sea. Coverage by insurance and other mechanisms, and escape routes, rescue operations and other emergency procedures should be considered well in advance.
- d) Sufficient warm clothing and food should be prepared as should safety equipment for risk minimization and accident prevention, 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 populations of the world, forever presenting the risk of encounter. In sharp contrast to other parts of Hokkaido, the stringent protection of wild animals here 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, the following should be taken well into consideration. These can be found in greater detail on the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center website and other sources and should be referred to in advance to assist preparation.

##### a) Prevention

- i) The Rusha area (the area concentrated around the Rusha River estuary and extending to the area between the Ubushinotta and Takino Rivers. Please refer to Diagram 1), which has a high population density of brown bears is not to be entered. Camping is also prohibited in this area.
- ii) If camping, accidents involving bears is to be avoided by keeping tents, cooking and food storage areas sufficiently apart. Food is never to be brought into tents and to ensure that food and food wastes are not accessible to bears, they should be stored in food containers (available on loan from the Shiretoko National Park 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 should be carried to minimize risks and prevent accidents.
- iv) It is dangerous to bring foods with strong odors as these will attract bears. Food and other personal effects with minimal odors should be selected.
- v) In the event of coming across the carcasses of Yezo sika deer or marine animals washed ashore, users should not approach them and leave the premises immediately. This may be a feeding ground for bears, which may aggressively attack in order to protect their food.
- vi) A sudden encounter with a bear at close range may cause accidents. In heavily overgrown and other areas with poor visibility, bears should be alerted of human presence in advance by speaking whilst walking, etc.
- vii) One should always be aware of their surroundings, and be especially cautious of areas where bears congregate in larger numbers such as rivers where salmon spawn.
- viii) Movement in times of poor visibility such as nighttime, dusk or when there is thick fog should be avoided as this may lead to sudden encounters.
- ix) Bears should never be fed.

##### b) Procedure in the event of an encounter

- i) If a bear is spotted in one's path, they should leave the area in a matter that

- will not provoke the bear.
  - ii) In the event of having one's food or rubbish taken by bears or being intentionally approached by them, the premises should be left immediately. Attempts to retrieve belongings should not be made.
- c) Procedure following an encounter
  - In the event of having one's food or rubbish taken by bears, being intentionally approached or followed by them, or being involved in an accident, the Utoro or Rausu Park Ranger Offices, Rausu Town Hall or the Shiretoko Nature Center should be contacted 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) In order to prevent the introduction of invasive species, clothing should be checked and soles of footwear washed, etc. of seeds and other matter.
  - b) Areas with fragile vegetation such as that of mires, etc. and topsoil susceptible to erosion should not be entered.
  - c) Earth, rock and plants should be neither collected nor damaged.
  - d) Clearing of branches and other vegetation is not permitted.
  - e) Graffiti on rocks, trees and other areas is not permitted.
- 2) Consideration of wild animals
  - a) A large nest in the hollow or canopy of a tree is a probable nesting site of birds. In order not to disturb breeding, the nest should not be approached and one should remove themselves from the premises as quickly and 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 apodiformes or house martins.
  - b) When taking pictures of, or observing nature, acts that disturb wildlife are not permitted.
  - c) To ensure that food and rubbish is not scavenged by wild animals, food containers and other appropriate storage devices should be used.
  - d) Wild animals may not be fed.
  - e) Act that startle or provoke wild animals may not be committed.
- 3) Camping
  - a) Camping is not permitted in fragile mires, meadows or gravel beds, etc. that serve as habitats for rare species, and other areas where vegetation may be affected.
  - b) Actions that impact vegetation surrounding campsites such as trampling should be taken into consideration.
  - c) Traces of one's visit should not be left at campsites.
  - d) In order to conserve natural environments and as a measure against brown bears, camping is not permitted in the Shiretoko Cape area (with exception to the coastal gravel beds of Aburako Bay), Rusha area (the area concentrated around the Rusha River estuary and extending to the area between the Ubushinotta and Takino Rivers) and the area in and around Shiretoko Swamp (Please refer to Diagram 1).
- 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 should be taken afterwards to not leave traces of fire.
- 5) Entry with pets, etc.
 

Pets and other animals 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, with exception to those that are for the purpose of avoiding brown bears.
- 7) Management of rubbish, waste water and human wastes, etc.
  - a) Rubbish may not be buried or burned and thus must be carried out of the region.
  - b) Soaps and other detergents may not be used.
  - c) Remove extraneous packages, etc. from food. To minimize impact on the environment,

foods and preparation methods that produce waste water when cooking or washing up, etc. should be avoided as much as possible.

- d) 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. Furthermore, the following procedures should be followed.
  - 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) Sources of water, mires and other areas with fragile vegetation are to be avoided.

### **3. Other points of consideration**

- 1) Acts that interfere with local fishery activities such as collection of seafood or entry into fishing grounds or facilities (kelp drying grounds, fixed nets, huts, etc.) should not be committed.
- 2) Lodging in fishing huts 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) The guidance and instructions of park rangers, forest rangers, patrol officers, security personnel and other park managers are to be followed.

### **C. Points of Consideration concerning Specific Types of Use**

In addition to the Common Points of Consideration, the following points of consideration concerning specific types of use of the Apical Region are to be followed.

#### **1. Coastal trekking**

- 1) Minimization of 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 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 equipment (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 tide change, etc. should be acquired in advance from the 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 and other rare species. The presence of the Dolly Varden trout, 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 argument for users to keep fishing activities to a minimum.
- 3) Other

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

## **2. Use of mountainous areas**

- 1) Minimization of 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 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 equipment.
  - 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 and other rare species. The presence of the Dolly Varden trout, 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 argument for 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**

- 1) Minimization of risk
  - a) Along the coastline, the strong gusts of Shiretoko Cape and Rusa 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 environment. Only those 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 equipment (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 to avoid disrupting the course of other vessels.
  - e) In the event that another vessel approaches, kayaks should be stopped and brought together.
  - f) In order to prevent collisions, kayaks should be easily visible to other vessels.
- 2) Consideration of wild animals
  - a) Breeding sites of wild animals are not to be approached unless absolutely necessary.
  - b) Acts of approaching and chasing, etc. marine mammals (whales, dolphins, sea otters, etc.), seabirds and birds of prey and brown bears that impact their habitat movements are not permitted.
- 3) Avoidance of impact on fishery activities
  - a) Areas where fishery equipment is installed are not to be approached.
  - b) Users should not linger near fixed nets and should leave the premises quickly.
  - c) Fishing vessels at work are not to be approached.
- 4) Other
  - a) Fishing port facilities may only be used in times of emergency.
  - b) Information on points of departure and destinations and advisable docking areas should be acquired from the Rausu Visitor Center or Shiretoko National Park Nature Center in advance.

## **4. Estuarine area salmon fishing**

With regards to salmon fishing in the estuarine area on the Rausu side, for the time being "The Rausu Recreational Fishing Sub-group voluntary rules" (Annex 3) are to be appropriately and strictly obeyed. Surveys and other activities will be conducted to establish fishing zones.

Powered vessels are not to be docked in the estuarine area on the Shari side as the vast majority of the area requires strict protection as a Special Protection Zone and due to the dangers associated with a particularly high concentration of brown bears when salmon spawn.

**5. Use of powered vessels in marine areas**

- 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) Tourism vessels may not stray from their authorized routes.
- 2) Consideration of wild animals
  - a) In order to protect wild animals, coastal areas should not be approached unless absolutely necessary.
  - b) Users should not approach, and should maintain a 100m distance from the rock face between Puyuni Cape and Eishiredo Cape, which is the habitat and breeding sites of the spectacled guillemot. Puyuni Cape, Zounohana, the cliffs on the right bank of the Iwaobetsu River and the Goko cliffs are particularly important nesting sites and thus should also not be approached.
  - c) Users should not approach and should maintain a 100m distance from Tako Rock, Kaparuwatara, Idashubewatara and Takasarauni, which are the breeding sites of seabirds.
  - d) A distance of 100m should be maintained from rocky coastal areas used as a stopping site for white-tailed eagles. Furthermore, acts of approaching and chasing, etc. marine mammals (whales, dolphins, sea otters, etc.), seabirds and birds of prey and brown bears that impact their habitat movements are not permitted.
  - e) When in the oncoming path of marine mammals, users should change the direction of their vessel or reduce their speed depending on the situation.
  - f) The calls of whales are not to be disturbed with human noises.
  - g) Users are to reduce the speed of their vessels when in the midst of seabirds and birds of prey and marine mammals that have come onto rocky shores.
- 3) Avoidance of impact on fishery activities
  - a) Areas where fishery equipment is installed are not to be approached.
  - b) Fishing vessels at work are not to be approached.
- 4) Noise

The use of loud megaphones, playing of music and other acts that disturb the tranquil feel of the natural environment and impact the movements of wild animals are not permitted.
- 5) Other

The disposal of rubbish from vessels is not permitted.

## Annex 1

### Controlled activities in Shiretoko National Park under the Natural Parks Law

	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 <i>Geum pentapetalum</i> ] [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 Specials 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]

## Annex 2

Information list on the minimization of risks and use of the Apical Region

(Please also refer to Diagram 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. However, passage becomes difficult at high tide with a nearly vertical wall that although only a few meters in width, must be traversed over water.

- **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. A rope installed for fishery activities can be used to scale the rock.

Approximately 200m south at the base of Takenoko Rock, is an area of sea-eroded terraced rock that must be 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.

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

**Ken 剣** 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 the area can be passed over protruding rock at the base at low tide, passage at high tide is impossible. Even at low tide, there is one point in which the rock is submerged, which can be difficult to locate at times.

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 where bare during rainfall. Although there is rope installed, it has weathered considerably and thus relying on it to pass is extremely dangerous.

- **Nenbutsu Rock (vertical detour)**

Taking the vertical detour route on the Takinoshita end involves traversing over a roof-like rock overhang. The upper portion on the Shiretoko Cape side is a nearly vertical rock face and other parts of the route are situated on a cliff with a 20-30m drop, 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 a point on the lower portion of the steep incline on the Takinoshita end in which the ground surface has eroded away considerably to expose a rock foundation. It will be difficult for users without mountaineering skills to climb this point without a rope. Although there is rope installed, 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 Akaiwa 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 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. Although there is rope installed on the Akaiwa side, it has weathered considerably and thus relying on it to pass is extremely dangerous.

**[Sea kayaking: dangerous places around the Shiretoko peninsula]**

- **Off Rursha**

With heights reaching 1000m, the folding screen-shaped Shiretoko Peninsula juts into the Sea of Okhotsk. Land in Rursha 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 Ubushinotta 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 Ubushinotta River left bank to the south and Kaparuwatara or Tako Rock to the north.

- **Off Shiretoko Cape**

The weather of Shiretoko Cape, 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 sides. 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 for winds to subside in Aburako Bay on the Shari side and Akaiwa on the Rausu side.

- **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 voluntary rules**

With 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. With objectives for the sustainable provision of healthy and orderly recreational fishing opportunities only found in Shiretoko, and to ensure the prevention of accidents at sea, resource protection and nature conservation the following rules have been established.

#### Basic Rules

- Users should be well aware that Rausu, Shiretoko is designated as a national park and 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 morals will be followed for the prevention of accidents with other vessels (fishing vessels, tourism vessels, sea kayaks).
- Only day trips are permitted and outings are not to exceed 12 hours. With exception to emergencies, overnight stays are prohibited.

#### Protection of resources

- Rather than the amassment of fishing resources, the enjoyment of fishing as a sport will be promoted.
- With boat fishing, catches are limited to one ice chest per person. When 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<sup>†</sup> and Nihondaki Waterfalls.

#### Nature Conservation

- Rubbish, caught fish and their remains are not to be disposed of on site, but removed from the area.
- Users who come onshore to estuarine areas for salmon fishing are to bear in mind and observe the following.
  1. Soil is to be removed from footwear prior to boarding the vessel.
  2. Users are not to stray from fishing sites on foot.
  3. Campfires and the burning of rubbish are not permitted.
  4. All rubbish is to be removed from the site.
  5. There is a danger of encountering bears.
  6. Because there are no restroom facilities, 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.

<sup>†</sup> Commonly known as Takinoshita

**Reference**

**Association with “the Basic Plan on the Proper Use of the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula”**

**The Conduct in the Use of the Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region was created based on Articles 3 (Designated Zones) through 6 (Management Principles for Specific Types of Use) in “the Basic Plan on the Proper Use of the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula (Ministry of the Environment East Hokkaido Regional Office for Nature Conservation (December, 2004))”.**

## **The Basic Plan on the Proper Use of the Apical Region of Shiretoko Peninsula (excerpt)**

### **3 Designated Zones**

As mentioned before, the terrestrial area of Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region (hereupon, 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. Therefore, from an institutional standpoint its active use by general users is not under consideration. With areas such as Shiretoko Cape and Mt. Shiretoko as destination points, users will depart from Shiretoko Ohashi Bridge or Aidomari and travel along the coastline, rivers and mountain ridge over land, or depart from Utoro or Aidomari over water by vessel. As this requires users to select types of regional use and access routes, the following general zones have been established.

(Please refer to Zone Concept Map for range)

- Coastline zone
  - Rausu side: Aidomari to Northeast Area
  - Shari side: Shiretoko Ohashi Bridge to Northeast Area
- Coastal waters zone
  - Rausu side: Aidomari to Northeast Area
  - Shari side: Horobetsu to Northeast Area
- Interior mountain zone
  - Mt Iou to Northeast Area

### **4 Basic Principles**

For the proper use of the relevant zones within the Apical Region, the following basic principles were established based on the concepts of the Concept on the Proper Use of the Shiretoko National Park(2001) and contents from the Management Plan for the Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Nominated Site (2004).

1. As the docking of powered vessels cannot be considered appropriate use of the zone and as the protection of its nature is undermined the rule that “docking is not recognized” still stands and will be further enforced.
2. Some terrestrial portions of the designated zones are the habitats and breeding sites of rare animal species, breeding sites of seabird colonies, habitats of fragile vegetation and archeological sites, etc., all of which require protection and conservation. With regards to entry into the area by human power (on foot, kayak, etc.), use will be restricted depending on the characteristics of the area and type of use in accordance with specific “rules of use”. Through fixed restrictions, these rules are to be established to ensure that issues concerning the protection of natural environments and maintaining the quality of nature experiences do not arise.
3. With respect to the use of the Coastal waters zone, there are concerns that acts such as travel by tourism and leisure vessels and personal watercraft, disorderly feeding of animals and nature observation may have a negative impact on seabirds and sea mammals inhabiting and breeding in the area. To prevent this in a way compatible with the region’s salmon fishery activities, “rules of use” are to be established and promulgated.
4. With respect to the safe use of the region, efforts are to be made to improve the safety of users and raise a sense of “personal responsibility” amongst them by providing information and holding lectures in advance.
5. In order to achieve the conservation of the region’s primeval nature, environmentally-friendly

actions and activities that provide nature experiences whilst minimizing pressure on the environment are desirable. Thus, the provision of guidance during patrols, etc., outreach, lectures held in advance and other activities will be enhanced.

6. It is important that locals, relevant service providers and others that interact with users on a daily basis provide guidance on and promulgate the “rules of use”. Thus a network and other measures will be established to effectively strengthen links between locals, other internal and external stakeholders and relevant government agencies.

## **5 Definition of User**

Under the aforementioned Basic Principles, “Users” in this Basic Plan are defined as individuals entering the Apical Region falling under the following use type categories. Included in the “users” are individuals such as guides, vessel operators and other service providers who enter the region to direct, lead, guide, transport, etc. others as well as those who enter for media coverage, photographic and other purposes. Excluded are owners of fishing huts and others partaking in fishery activities as well as those who enter to manage land or facilities.

## **6 Management Principles for Specific Types of Use**

The basic management principles for specific types of use are as follows.

### **1. Coastal trekking**

Coastal trekking on foot to climb Shiretoko Cape, Mt. Shiretoko and Shiretoko Swamp is considered an activity that is compatible with the conservation of primeval natural environments. However, because a high degree of skill is required on the part of users entering the Coastline zone and the unchecked entry by numerous users may impact precious vegetation and animals, current use levels should be minimized and controlled under “rules of use” to ensure that nature conservation is not undermined.

### **2. Sea kayaking**

Currently, the number of users partaking in sea kayaking is comparatively low, with minimal environmental impact. However, because users must possess knowledge and understanding of the weather conditions, etc. of the Coastal waters zone and a high degree of technical skill and also have unrestricted access to the Coastline zone, there are instances in which impact on the natural environment and fishery activities, etc. is a concern. In order to prevent this, use should be controlled under “rules of use”.

### **3. Use of Interior mountain zone**

The Interior mountain zone ranging from Mt. Iou to the northeast is characterized by steep terrain and harsh weather conditions. Because a particularly high level of mountaineering skill is required to enter this area, and there are cases of campsites and campsites built in areas of fragile mire vegetation that negatively impact precious natural environments, current use levels should be minimized and controlled under “rules of use” to ensure that nature conservation is not undermined.

### **4. Estuarine area salmon fishing**

Although salmon fishing in estuarine areas accessed by boat are comparatively restricted in terms of season and range, disorderly entry, littering and other acts that impact that environment are of concern. Therefore, current use levels should be minimized and controlled under “rules of use” to ensure that nature conservation is not undermined. Specific management principles for beach and valley fishing will be explored in the future upon review of current conditions.

### **5. Use of powered vessels in marine areas**

With respect to the use of the Coastal waters zone for recreational purposes using powered vessels (tourism, fishing, pleasure cruise, etc.), there is concern that these will impact seabirds and marine mammals as well as fishery activities. In order to prevent this, use should be in accordance with a fixed “conduct of use”.

**6. Docking of powered vessels**

The docking of general tourism and other vessels for recreational purposes in the Shiretoko Cape area is currently not recognized under a former “agreement” between relevant government agencies. Because there is a risk of great negative impact on the natural and appropriate use environments by the arrival of high numbers of people and goods at once by powered vessels in the terrestrial area of the Apical Region not limited to Shiretoko Cape, the docking of vessels regardless of type for recreational purposes will continue to not be permitted, through the further enforcement of the “agreement”. However, the docking of vessels for the transportation of users for 1. Coastal trekking and 3. Use of interior mountain zone, and recreational vessels for 4. Estuarine area salmon fishing will be considered separately for “coordination of use”.

**7. Other uses**

With respect to personal watercraft, diving, activities on ice flows in winter and other recreational uses of the region, specific management principles will be explored in the future upon review of current conditions.

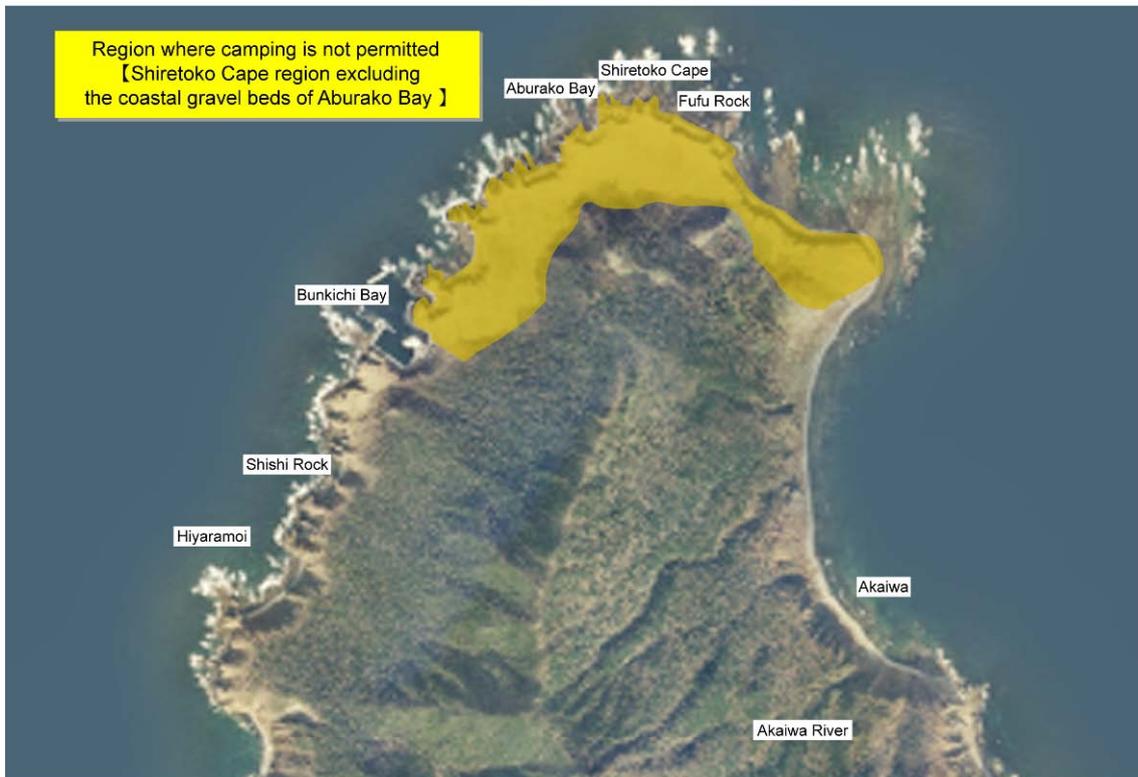
As low-flying aircraft carry the risk of having a negative impact on wild animals and the enjoyment of other users, requests for their discontinuation will be made to relevant stakeholders if necessary.

In areas where the need to prevent conflict between users and brown bears has increased (Rusha, etc.) a management system further restricting entry will be explored.



Zone Map

Regions where entry and camping are not permitted  
 Regions where camping is not permitted



Region where camping is not permitted  
 [Shiretoko Swamp area]



Diagram 2 Areas of Concern





#### 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 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” is 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 in the Use of the Shiretoko Peninsula Apical Region” and all other inquiries

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<http://hokkaido.env.go.jp/kushiro/> (In Japanese only)