

# Road to Discovery at WKP, New Zealand

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## Abstract

Wharekirauponga (WKP) lies within the Hauraki Goldfield, a classic epithermal mining district where approximately 50 epithermal veins have produced over 12 million ounces of gold and 62 million ounces of silver since its discovery in 1862. Located on the Coromandel Peninsula in New Zealand these veins are hosted mainly in Miocene to Pliocene andesites or dacites overlying a Jurassic aged metasedimentary sequence.

Early attempts to prospect and mine WKP from 1893-1899 were abandoned with only 19 oz of bullion recovered from a 14 tonne test parcel. Modern exploration at WKP undertaken by Amoco, BP and others from 1978-1993 included 5,500 metres of drilling in 23 holes along the main stream outcrop. Newmont acquired a controlling interest in the property in 2005 and undertook outcrop mapping, rock chip and soil sampling and a CSAMT resistivity programme. Interest quickly moved from previously explored areas to additional areas of alteration and veining mapped in the field.

Newmont drilled WKP24 in 2010, intersecting the main T-Stream vein and 156m at 1.6 g/t Au in the vein footwall, including higher grade intervals up to 1.6m at 30.1 g/t Au. Additional CSAMT followed by wide spaced drilling identified at total of three prospective vein zones at WKP, each striking more than a kilometre in length. Newmont ceased work in 2013 after drilling 7,000 metres in 15 holes, intersecting strong and locally high grade mineralisation in all holes.

The prospect remained idle until 2016 when the work was resumed by OceanaGold after acquiring Newmont's New Zealand assets. The first hole targeted the Eastern Graben vein and intersected a 7 metre quartz vein averaging 10.84 g/t Au and 12.3 g/t Ag. A second follow-up hole intersected 10.0 metres at 24.35 g/t Au and 32.0 g/t Ag. The key to discovery at WKP included looking at the prospect without preconceived ideas, following a persistent methodical approach and a strong understanding of epithermal systems.