**The Origins of Oze National Park**

The Oze area was included in Nikko National Park in 1934, becoming part of Japan’s fourth national park. However, the two areas are very different environmentally, so Oze National Park was established as an independent entity in August 2007. It expanded to include areas around Mt. Aizukoma and Mt. Tashiro, becoming Japan’s twenty-ninth national park. Only 150 kilometers from Tokyo and right on the border of the Kanto and Tohoku regions, Oze is a popular destination for day visitors, campers, and hikers.

Oze National Park has long been at the forefront of conservation in Japan, thanks to public-led efforts that stopped the construction of electric power generation plants that would have flooded much of the area. Other initiatives included blocking road development into the park and launching programs against littering and other potential damage from tourism.