

APPENDIX F

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOIL CONSERVATION AND RIVERS CONTROL COUNCIL

The Hon. MINISTER OF WORKS.

SIR,—

In accordance with the requirements of section 33 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act, 1941, the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council has the honour to submit its third annual report for presentation to Parliament.

The report covers the period 1st April, 1944, to 31st March, 1945.

GENERAL

The Council met on seven occasions during the year, and as was the case last year it is necessary to report that the restriction imposed by wartime conditions has limited constructional activities to works of particular urgency and to the maintenance of existing works. Details of the more important of these works and of the Council's general activities are referred to under their respective headings.

CATCHMENT BOARDS

The election of members for the six catchment districts referred to in the last report was held in conjunction with the 1944 local-authority elections, the first meetings of the Boards being held shortly afterwards, and were attended by representatives of the Council. These Boards have since been busily engaged in preliminary administrative detail and in making a thorough reconnaissance of their respective districts. As is the case in most new activities, some administrative difficulties have arisen, and the Council has decided to hold a conference of delegates from all Boards and to discuss these difficulties and also policy questions bearing on future activities. The conference is to be held shortly.

CATCHMENT DISTRICTS

The following catchment districts were constituted during the year in terms of section 34 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act :—

Rangitikei, comprising generally the whole of the area embracing the catchments of the Rangitikei, Turakina, and Wangaeahu Rivers.

Poverty Bay, comprising generally the area bounded in the north by the northern watershed of the Waipapu River and including the catchments of all rivers to the south down to and including the watershed of the Maraetaha River.

Westland, comprising the whole of the counties of Grey and Westland, together with that part of the Inangahua County which drains into the Grey River.

Southland, comprising generally the area draining into the sea from east of Waikawa Harbour to the west coast and including the whole of the catchments of the Mataura, Oreti, Aparima, and Waiau Rivers and extending to the west to include all Fiord County.

The following is a complete list of the districts which have been constituted :—

Name.	Area (approximate).	Capital Valuation (approximate).	Population (approximate).	Headquarters of Board.
	Square Miles.	£		
Rangitikei	2,756	16,200,000	26,470	Marion.
Manawatu	2,680	40,000,000	75,800	Palmerston North.
Hawke's Bay	3,070	28,550,000	57,800	Napier.
Wairarapa	2,230	17,770,000	26,250	Masterton.
Poverty Bay	2,097	15,100,000	31,500	Gisborne.
Nelson	2,460	9,515,000	30,570	Nelson.
Westland	6,254	4,525,000	26,820	Not fixed.
North Canterbury	4,290	56,700,000	162,750	Christchurch.
South Canterbury	4,326	29,500,000	61,850	Timaru.
Southland	11,000	27,300,000	71,850	Not fixed.

The Council's proposals for the setting-up of catchment districts throughout New Zealand provide for not more than twenty-four districts. The most urgent areas are being dealt with first, and it may be some years before all the districts are constituted.

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Regulations have been issued covering the administration of soil conservation districts, which may be constituted in terms of section 13 of the Act. No districts have as yet been declared, but investigations are proceeding into the matter of the selection of suitable areas. For the most part these will be the more sparsely populated areas where there are no large river catchments and where Catchment Board control is not warranted.