

1949
NEW ZEALAND

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY
SCENERY PRESERVATION

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1949, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE AND SCHEDULE OF LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED DURING THE YEAR UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT

Presented to Both Houses of the General Assembly Pursuant to Section 17 of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1908

Department of Lands and Survey,
Wellington, 22nd July, 1949.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on scenery preservation for the year ended 31st March, 1949.

I have, &c.,
D. M. GREIG,
Director-General of Lands.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation,
Wellington.

REPORT

PROCLAMATIONS issued during the year setting apart land as scenic reserves under the Scenery Preservation Act throughout the Dominion covered a total area of 3,902 acres.

In the North Auckland Land District an area of about 6 acres (formerly quarry reserve) comprising a bold bluff overlooking a main road and the Waikato River near Tuakau was set aside as a scenic reserve and placed under the control of the Tuakau Town Board. It adjoins the old Alexandra Redoubt and is clothed in light native bush. Scenic and historic values are happily intermingled in this instance. An exchange of areas was arranged in the Waipu District whereby the reservation over an open portion

of some 26 acres of an existing scenic reserve was cancelled and the land added to an adjoining Crown leasehold, while in exchange an area of 113 acres of steep, broken country reverting to native bush (with kauri predominating) was surrendered from the leasehold and added to the reserve. In this locality also an area of 53 acres of unoccupied Crown land covered in light bush with some kauri regeneration showing was set aside under the Act. The new reserve area lies just across the Waipu Stream from a reserve set apart in 1927.

Two areas in the Wellington Land District were made scenic reserves during the year. One was an area of 21 acres of bush-clad papa cliffs on the Rangitikei River near Mangaweka. The land was reserved many years ago as primary-education endowment, and special legislation (section 8 of the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act, 1948) was passed declaring it to be subject to the Scenery Preservation Act. The second area was an island of 26 acres of Crown land (Winter's Island) in the Wanganui River near Taumarunui.

Reservations totalling 1,115 acres were made in the Marlborough Land District, particulars being as follows:—

- (a) An area of 210 acres at Nydia Bay, Pelorus Sound, consisting of shady hillsides reverting to native bush, and adjoining an existing reserve.
- (b) Three areas totalling 741 acres in Kaiūma Bay, Pelorus Sound, partly in bush and partly in second growth. These areas were formerly held under lease, but proved unsuitable for farming, and as reversion is rapid on the shady faces it was considered they should be set aside as permanent reserves.
- (c) Three areas totalling 164 acres in the vicinity of Pelorus Bridge as extensions of the well-known reserves in that beautiful locality.

Nelson District reservations totalled 1,993 acres, made up as follows:—

- (a) An area of 457 acres of bush land on D'Urville Island purchased from a private owner.
- (b) An area of 283 acres of bush land on the Inangahua River. The Reefton-Lewis Pass Highway passes through this reserve.
- (c) An area of 90 acres of attractive bush on the main highway on the northern bank of the Mokihiaui River.
- (d) An area of 293 acres on Pelorus Sound near French Pass. This land is in bush and second growth, and lies alongside an existing reserve.
- (e) An area of 160 acres of steep country (mostly bush-clad) situated near the junction of the Inangahua and Buller Rivers.
- (f) An area of 530 acres of steep bush country on the Takaka Hill Road a few miles from Upper Takaka.
- (g) A number of small islands in the Gowan River alongside the road to Lake Rotoroa, totalling some 180 acres. They carry a good growth of native vegetation and form an attractive feature along the road to the lake.

Westland reservations were those of an area of 32 acres (formerly State forest) on the banks of the Kaniere River, and an area of 537 acres of broken limestone terraces and slopes covered with dense bush of great scenic value on the Punakaiki River (Westport Greymouth Road).

In the Port Levy district, Banks Peninsula, Canterbury, a small area of just under 2 acres of bush land was made a permanent reserve on the subdivision of the Port Levy farm settlement. Previous owners of the property had always treated this small patch of bush (now the sole remaining piece in the Port Levy Valley) as a scenic spot and reserve, and it is hoped that the bush will survive and prove of interest to many people as an example of the type of forest that existed in the valley in the early days of settlement.

The areas set apart throughout the Dominion during the year may be roughly classified as follows:

Class of Land.	Area (Acres).
Freehold land purchased by the Crown	457
Crown land areas	2,158
State forest land	32
Crown leasehold areas made available in various ways ..	1,228
Education-endowment land	21
Quarry reserve	6
Total	3,902

The reservation over six areas totalling 166 acres was cancelled during the year. In most cases the areas dealt with were small pieces of open land. In one case, however, the reservation over the whole of a reserve of 100 acres was revoked by special legislation. The land so dealt with was the Katikati Hot Springs Scenic Reserve, which, by section 13 of the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act, 1948, was declared to be no longer a reserve under the Scenery Preservation Act, but to be instead portion of the Katikati Domain administered by a local Domain Board under the provisions of Part II of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928. The hot springs on the reserve are very popular with local residents and visitors. Their development and control presented certain difficulties which it was considered could be better dealt with by a Domain Board than by a Scenic Reserves Board, and as some open land adjoining the reserve was being acquired as an addition to the Katikati Domain for development for camping purposes it was decided that the best interests of the scenic reserve would be served by adding it also to the Domain. This action will greatly simplify local administration, and will not endanger in any way the natural features of the reserve.

The number of scenic reservations in the Dominion is now 1,250, covering a total area of 926,495 acres.

AREAS ACQUIRED BUT NOT PROCLAIMED BY END OF YEAR

Several purchases of land of scenic value were arranged during the year, but for various reasons it was not possible to have the requisite Proclamations published by the 31st March. In last year's report mention was made of a bush area of 360 acres at Okiwi Bay, in the Croixelles, given to the Crown by Mrs. Perrine Moncrieff, of Nelson. During the year under review an adjoining area of 510 acres of similar country was acquired by purchase, and this, together with the gift block and a small piece of Crown land which is being added to improve the boundaries, will result in an extensive addition to the scenic reserves in that locality. An interesting acquisition during the year was that of a block of 14 acres of bush situated partly in the Birkenhead Borough and partly in Waitemata County. The situation is close to built-up areas in Birkenhead and the property had been maintained by the previous owner for many years as a private reserve. Circumstances dictated the disposal of the block, when representations were made that it should be acquired as a permanent reserve. The Department was happy to be able to assist in its acquisition by providing some five-eighths of the purchase-money, the remainder being contributed by the local authorities of the district, by public subscriptions, and by the Institute of Horticulture and the Auckland Branch of the Forest and Bird Protection Society. This case affords a good example of practical co-operation in the acquisition of land for scenic purposes, and as the year closed steps were being taken to appoint a controlling Board as representative as possible of all those interested

in the preservation of a valuable beauty spot. Other purchased areas awaiting Proclamation include about 100 acres of bush of splendid quality on the Taumarunui-Tokaanu Highway acquired from the Maori owners, a block of bush land on D'Urville Island, and an area of 96 acres near Horse-shoe Bay, Stewart Island, taking in the well-known Garden Mound and its surroundings. This last-mentioned area formed part of a Crown leasehold, but arrangements were made with the lessee for the surrender from his lease of the portion required for scenic purposes.

SUPERVISION OF RESERVES

Special Scenic Boards were appointed or reappointed during the year as follows: The New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Board to control nine scenic and historic reserves in and about New Plymouth; the Cape Kidnapper Bird Sanctuary Board to safeguard the famous gannet sanctuary at the southern tip of Hawkes Bay; the Hutchinson Scenic Board to control the Hutchinson Reserve in the Puketitiri district of Hawkes Bay; the Forest Hill Scenic Board to control the Forest Hill Reserves in Southland; the Mount Balloon Hut Scenic Board to control the Mount Balloon Reserve on the Arthur Tableland, Nelson; the Hundalee Scenic Board to control the Hundalee Reserves on the Kaikoura Coast; the Ship Cove Reserve Board to control the Ship Cove and other reserves in Queen Charlotte Sound; the Orari Gorge Scenic Board to control the Orari Gorge Reserve; the Pelorus Scenic Board to control the valuable reserves at and around Pelorus Bridge; the Papatowai Scenic Board to control some beautiful reserves on the South Otago Coast; and the Tukituki River Scenic Board to control a reserve near Waipukurau.

In addition, the control of the reserves listed hereunder was vested in the local authorities named:—

Name of Reserve.	Local Authority Concerned.
Raetihi	Raetihi Borough Council.
Waihi Falls	Weber County Council.
Stoney Creek	Taranaki County Council.
Rangiwaea	Rangitikei County Council
Edendale	Edendale Town Board.
Coronation	Whangarei Borough Council.
Kaihoka Lakes	Collingwood County Council.
Waiopahu	Levin Borough Council.
Gordon Park	Wanganui City Council.
Tuakau	Tuakau Town Board.
Evansdale Glen	Dunedin City Council.
Paremoremo	Waitemata County Council.
Birkenhead	Birkenhead Borough Council.
Kennedy's Bush	} Christchurch City Council.
Hoon Hay Park	
Cooper's Knob	
Cass Peak	
Ahuriri Bush	

Some additional reserves were placed under the control of the Pelorus and Punakaiki Scenic Boards.

Forty-four ladies and gentlemen were appointed as honorary Inspectors of scenic reserves throughout the Dominion.

The field staff of the Department have endeavoured to keep an eye on scenic reserves as far as possible, and have attended to the posting of notices on reserves in various places. Extreme pressure of work in connection with the settlement of service-men on the land has, however, prevented field officers from exercising as much supervision as would be possible in ordinary circumstances.

Good work has been done by the resident caretakers on the Trounson Kauri Park Reserve and the Ball's Clearing Reserve at Puketitiri, Hawkes Bay, and by the ranger on Stewart Island.

GENERAL

There was practically no fire damage to reserves during the year, weather conditions in general being such as not to create any undue fire hazards.

Stock trespass is still a problem in many cases, but cannot be altogether overcome under existing conditions.

Various reports indicate concern at the increase of opossums in bush areas. This pest is most difficult to control.

The Cape Kidnapper Bird Sanctuary maintains its popularity with the general public. Reports indicate that the gannet colony was considerably larger than for many seasons past. One of the honorary rangers whose occupation enables him to make frequent visits to the sanctuary has been appointed honorary caretaker, and will attend to minor track and fence repairs, &c., and generally maintain the public utilities provided in the Rest Hut area. During the year a telephone was installed at the residence of the caretaker of the Clifton Domain, who is also an honorary ranger of the sanctuary. This should prove most useful in the event of any mishap to visitors, and in checking vandalism and trespass by unauthorized persons on the sanctuary area.

A firebreak has been constructed along the road boundary and part of the northern and southern boundaries of the Ball's Clearing Reserve at Puketitiri.

The New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Board has in hand the establishment of a special kauri park as a memorial to the late William Henry Skinner, a former officer of the Lands Department and a recognized authority on old Taranaki.

Grants were made to various Scenic Boards for improvements to the reserves under their control. Further amenities have been provided at the Lake Kaniere and Lake Mahinapua Reserves near Hokitika. Large numbers of visitors patronize these easily-accessible reserves, particularly during the summer months, and some of the reserves in Marlborough on which camping amenities have been provided are also exceedingly popular with the general public. Reserves controlled by Scenic Boards and local authorities have generally been fairly well maintained, and it seems that where there is a measure of local control the public is more inclined to assist in the preservation and improvement of the reserves and to better appreciate their value.

A long-term plan of planting and other work to safeguard Trounson Park from fire and to protect the reserve from damage by gales has been adopted. The ultimate objectives are to bring the supervision of the park within the reasonable capacity of the resident caretaker by reducing all possible fire hazards to a minimum, and over a term of many years to gradually replace all exotics with indigenous species. It is proposed to grass down and maintain closely grazed a strip of at least 3 chains in width around the boundaries wherever there is any risk of fire from adjoining properties now in fern and scrub, or from passers-by on the public roads. The Trounson Kauri Park Rural Fire District has, by arrangement with the State Forest Service, been enlarged and reconstituted under the Forest and Rural Fires Act, 1947; an appeal has been made to adjoining owners for full co-operation in fire-protection measures; and close contact between the caretaker and the State Forest staff at Waipoua has been arranged for by telephone.

Applications are occasionally made to the Department for the granting of permission for the milling of green timber on scenic-reserve land. Such applications are invariably declined, as scenic reserves of bush land are set apart for the preservation of the forest and not as sources of supply of timber.

FUTURE OPERATIONS

There is a full programme of work ahead in the way of scenery preservation. Many areas have still to be acquired and Crown-owned areas reserved before there can be room for any complacency on the matter of the adequacy of the number of scenic reservations throughout the Dominion. So much natural beauty has been destroyed in the course of the settlement and development of the country that it is imperative that as much as possible of what remains should be preserved. Existing reserves must, where necessary, be protected by fencing and other means, and amenities must be provided so that the public may use and enjoy the reserves that have been set apart for their benefit and for the generations that are yet to come. Here many difficulties will arise, for it is exceedingly difficult in practice to provide amenities of various kinds without some sacrifice of natural beauty, and it is a fact that sometimes the great need of the people to enjoy the beauties and quietudes of nature tend to destroy or at least impair the very things they cherish. However, the Department will go forward in the work of preserving and extending the scenic reserves of the Dominion in the knowledge that these reserves have a great and increasingly important part to play in helping to provide for the rest, enjoyment, and education of the people.

APPENDICES

The Appendices to this report are listed hereunder: -

- A. Schedule of reserves made during the year together with a statement of expenditure.
- B. A short account of conditions on Kapiti Island.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESERVES MADE IN 1948-49 UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT, 1908

Local Name.	Description.	Area.	Date of Proclamation.
NORTH AUCKLAND LAND DISTRICT			
Tuakau	Section 81, Suburbs of Tuakau, Blocks IV and VIII, Onewhero Survey District	A. 5 3 12	19/6/48
Waipou	Allotment 534, Waipou Parish, Blocks I and II, Mangawai Survey District	113 2 29	8/11/48
„	Allotment 532, Waipou Parish, Block XII, Ruakaka Survey District	53 0 00	18/2/49
WELLINGTON LAND DISTRICT			
Hautapu	Part Section 4A, Block X, Hautapu Survey District	21 2 16	*
Winter's Island ..	Sections 25 and 26, Block I, Hunua Survey District	26 0 19	2/9/48

* Section 8, Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act, 1948

RESERVES MADE IN 1948-49 UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT, 1908--*ctd.*

Local Name.	Description.	Area.		Date of Proclamation.
MARLBOROUGH LAND DISTRICT				
Nydia Bay	Section 5, Block I, Tennyson Survey District	A.	R. P.	20/7/48
Kaikuma Bay	Lot 2 of Section 1, Block VIII, Wakamarina Survey District	210	3 00	20/7/48
.. ..	Section 7, Block V, Linkwater Survey District	70	2 00	20/7/48
.. ..	Section 2, Block V, Linkwater Survey District	367	0 00	20/7/48
Pelorus Bridge	Section 20, Block IX, Wakamarina Survey District	304	0 00	20/7/48
.. ..	Section 30, Block IX, Wakamarina Survey District	12	0 25	13/12/48
.. ..	Section 68, Block IX, Wakamarina Survey District	66	0 00	13/12/48
.. ..	Section 68, Block IX, Wakamarina Survey District	86	0 00	13/12/48
NELSON LAND DISTRICT				
D'Urville Island	Section 8B 1, Rangitoto Block, Block VII, D'Urville Survey District	457	2 20	30/8/48
Reefton-Lewis Pass Highway	Section 1, Block III, and Section 8, Block VII, Waitahu Survey District	283	3 04	20/7/48
Mokihinui	Section 45, Block XI, Mokihinui Survey District	90	0 00	20/7/48
Canoe Bay	Section 3, Block XI, French Pass Survey District	293	0 00	20/7/48
Inangahua Junction	Section 10, Block V, Inangahua Survey District	160	0 00	20/7/48
Takaka Hill	Section 3, Block XII, Takaka Survey District	530	0 00	20/7/48
Gowan River	Section 9, Block IX, and Section 7, Block XIII, Hope Survey District	180	0 00	20/7/48
WESTLAND LAND DISTRICT				
Kaniere	Reserve 1900, Block VI, Kaniere Survey District	32	0 05	5/5/48
Punakaiki	Reserve 1797, Block I, Punakaiki Survey District	537	0 35	19/6/48
CANTERBURY LAND DISTRICT				
Port Levy	Reserve 4537, Block V, Pigeon Bay Survey District	1	3 02	13/12/48
		3,902	0 07	

STATEMENT SHOWING EXPENDITURE ON SCENERY PRESERVATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1949

	£	s.	d.
Acquisition of land	9,141	3	0
General administration, maintenance charges, improvements, and grants to Scenic Boards	2,268	9	3
Trounson Kauri Park: Charges in connection with improvement, maintenance, and protection	1,879	11	2
	£13,289	3	5

The total expenditure to date since 1901 is £289,402, including £196,009 spent on the acquisition of land.

APPENDIX B

KAPITI ISLAND

Climatic Conditions.—Throughout the year the weather has, on the whole, been mild, and in particular there has been an absence of violent southerly storms. It is considered that these favourable weather conditions are the reason for the flourishing nature of the flora and fauna on the Island.

Birds.—In certain directions there has been a definite increase in the bird population. Kakas, whiteheads, bell-birds, tuis, robins, and red-fronted parrakeets have been more in evidence than during the past two years. Wekas are plentiful everywhere. For this increase, favourable weather conditions and the gradual extension of the forest covering with the consequent increase in food-supplies are, no doubt, responsible. A colony of red-billed gulls nested on the point at Rangitira. At the height of the breeding season more than fifty nests were in use.

Trees.—The bush continues to encroach rapidly on to the grassed area, and it will not be many years before the sanctuary is completely covered with bush again. Seedling miro, maire, and matai, with many smaller forest trees, are gradually extending the range of the main forest, and are even extending on to the coastal forest slopes. The manuka areas have passed their climax and are ceasing to regenerate. Small plantings of trees exotic to the island have been made, comprising southern rata, rimu, and kahikatea. One noticeable feature of the year was the complete failure of the rata to flower, not a single tree in flower being seen. It is thought, in the immediate future, planting should be concentrated mainly on trees which will provide food for bird-life fairly quickly.

Vermin.—There is no evidence of an increase in the number of opossums, which remains relatively small. Likewise there is no sign of an increase in rats, although they are still too numerous. Observations tend to establish the fact that they are mainly concentrated along the edges of the beaches and bush.

General.—There have been an exceptional number of visitors during the year, some of the most interesting being overseas members of the recent Science Congress. Photographic and sound records of the island and birds have been made by the National Film Unit and the National Film Studios. It is felt that the sanctuary is fulfilling the purpose for which it was created, and that, as time goes on, greater public interest will be taken in its welfare.

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