

1925.
NEW ZEALAND.

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st August, 1925.

I have the honour to submit to you the report of the Tongariro National Park Board, covering its operations up to the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

Chairman, Tongariro National Park Board.

The Hon. A. D. McLeod, Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

IN submitting the third annual report of the Tongariro National Park Board it is pleasing to be able to refer to the rapidly expanding interest taken by the public of New Zealand in the administration and development of this park. The letters received from various citizens, together with published statements and Press comments, furnish abundant proof of the awakening of the people to an appreciation of this wonderful region.

Whilst appreciating at all times useful suggestions in connection with the development of the park, it is desirable that a warning note should be sounded against ill-considered or partisan criticism based upon a misunderstanding of the Board's policy or lack of knowledge of the local conditions prevailing. The controlling Board is composed of men who are capable of viewing the problems from every avenue of thought, who are giving their time and services in an honorary capacity, and who are fully alive to the importance of careful and prudent administration of the trust which has been placed in their hands to develop and safeguard on behalf of the public. That the Board fully realizes its responsibilities to the public of New Zealand there need be no fear, and a policy moulded on reasonable and safe lines will be vigorously prosecuted.

Accommodation and Visitors.—At Whakapapa there are three huts with fireplaces, providing bunk accommodation for forty-six persons, and there are also a number of tents for use of people who cannot be provided for in the buildings. Two bathhouses fitted with porcelain baths and wash-basins have now been erected, where hot and cold baths can be obtained as required. These huts are connected by telephone with Waimarino.

The Waihohonu Hut, on the eastern side of the Nga-Puna-a-Tama saddle, is a two-roomed building with a fireplace, and has accommodation for twelve persons. At Mangatepopo there are two huts with twenty bunks, but as there is no firewood in the locality Primus stoves have been provided in lieu of fireplaces. The Ohakune Hut is a three-roomed building, situated at the head of the Ohakune Track, 4,620 ft. above sea-level. This hut will accommodate twenty-two persons. There is also a small hut at Ketetahi.

During the year seven hundred persons visited the park.

Hostel.—The selection of the most suitable site for the proposed hostel is proving a difficult question, as the members of the Board are somewhat divided on the subject. At the February meeting it was decided to investigate the possibilities of a suitable site between the Haunted Whare and Whakapapa, and a report by the Government Architect is now under consideration in this connection. When the location of the site has been definitely settled the design and size of the building can be more closely gone into, and a decision can then be reached as to whether the Board will proceed with the

erection of the necessary building or advertise a suitable lease to enable such a building to be erected by private enterprise. Should the Board adopt the first alternative and erect the building, it will be necessary for considerable funds to be provided. The Board's present commitments in roading and development work will absorb all available present financial resources. If, on the other hand, it be decided to offer a suitable lease with appropriate conditions for a modern building, &c., to be erected by private enterprise, the Board would be absolved, if such a lease were taken up, from the necessity of providing capital moneys for this purpose. The question is a very important one of policy, and is receiving the closest consideration of the Board with a view to its determination without unnecessary further delay, as the Board recognizes that but little further development can be usefully done until a modern hostel is erected at the park, by which means the necessary accommodation and attractiveness will be provided alike to the people of the Dominion and to oversea visitors. In the meantime it will probably be necessary to provide further accommodation at the Whakapapa huts, and the question of erecting a central social hall and dining-room with kitchen, &c., and caretaker's quarters, is now under consideration.

Pamphlet.—A revised edition of the pamphlet containing notes and information of general interest to visitors was printed and circulated during the year. It is proposed later on to issue a more extensive publication, with illustrations of the many spots of beauty and interest within the park boundaries.

By-laws.—Comprehensive by-laws governing the internal administration of the park have been prepared, and will shortly come into operation if approved by the Government in terms of the Act. These provide suitable measures dealing with the preservation of the native fauna and flora, regulating of camping, fires, prevention of hunting, trespassing stock, &c.

Areas for Leasing.—The Board has under consideration the question of setting apart, with the approval of His Excellency the Governor-General, areas for leasing within the park with a view to subdivision and disposal of bungalow-sites. For this purpose three areas have been selected in suitable localities, and a preliminary survey is being made to determine the size and lay-out of the subdivisions. The terms and conditions under which it is proposed leases will be granted, regulating, *inter alia*, the design and size of the building to be erected, will receive careful investigation and consideration. It must, however, be clearly understood that it is not the intention of the Board to recommend the leasing of areas all over the park. The operations in this respect will be confined to a few spots near the main highways, where the scenic attractions and features of interest will in no way be prejudicially affected. The principle of leasing bungalow-sites has been well established in some of the Canadian parks with marked success, and there is no reason why such a scheme should not be successful at Tongariro. The rentals received from such leases will be wholly available to aid in the development of the park.

Bruce Road.—Excellent progress has been made during the year in the formation and metalling of Bruce Road. The construction to date is—Formation and culverts complete to 2 miles 50 chains from junction; metalling completed for 1 mile. A temporary structure to enable motor-cars to cross the Whakapapa is now in hand. This will be replaced later on by a substantial bridge. The length of Bruce Road from the junction with the Waimarino-Tokaanu Road to the Whakapapa huts is a little over 4 miles, and the total estimate of cost is £7,760.

Milling Operations at Hauhungatahi.—Prior to the constitution of the Board the Prisons Department had acquired from the State Forest Service certain milling-rights over a block of timbered land, containing 331 acres, situated between Erua and Waimarino, which was included within the boundaries of the park by the passing of the Act in 1922. To enable the Prisons Department to carry out the programme already formulated and commenced the Board was empowered by section 71 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1923, to grant to the Minister of Justice a permit to continue cutting operations. The estimated volume of timber is 4,582,000 superficial feet, the upset price of which was originally fixed at £7,395. A portion of this amount—viz., £957 7s. 4d.—was paid to the State Forest Service prior to the passing of the 1922 Act. The balance of the money accruing from the cutting of the timber will be payable to the Board in instalments spread over a period of nine years. It must, however, be mentioned that to avoid any unnecessary damage to the bush the Prisons Department is co-operating with the Board and felling the mature trees in accordance with an approved scheme. The original price will require to be reduced commensurate with the reduction in quantity consequent on the putting into operation of the scheme referred to.

Ohakune Mountain Track.—This track leads to the Ohakune Mountain hut from a point near the Ohakune Railway-station, the total length of track being approximately 8½ miles. Within the two points mentioned the track rises from 2,018 ft. at Ohakune to 4,620 ft. at the Mountain hut, a rise of 2,602 ft. During the year the sum of £100 8s. was spent on improvements to the track, consisting of "corduroying," draining, and some new formation work. Further improvements to this track are urgently required, and will be taken in hand as soon as funds are available.

Liberation of Trout.—The Warden reports that during the last fourteen years he has been successful in obtaining from the Department of Internal Affairs a regular annual donation of 100,000 rainbow-trout fry for liberation in the streams on the western side of the park. Last September 200,000 were liberated. The distribution of the fry is undertaken by the Waimarino Acclimatization Society.

Animal and Bird Life.—In connection with this subject the following extract from the Warden's report is of interest: "The native birds are fairly plentiful in the bush, but the sparrow-hawks, which have increased of late, are taking heavy toll of the tuis. The only native birds found in the open country are the hawk and the pihoihoi. Hares are very numerous and large. Rabbits are not in evidence on the western side, but are fairly abundant on the eastern and southern sides. Stoats and weasels are becoming numerous. Native pigeons appear to have increased during the last few years, and kakas appear to be holding their own. Parakeets, which were at one time plentiful in the bush back of my camp, appear to have been driven away by flocks of starlings, which have taken possession of their nesting-places. Red deer appear to be getting well established in the bush in the park. Several stags were roaming about in the open country between Waimarino and the Whakapapa huts. Two stags came right into the enclosure at the end of March."

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1925.

<i>Dr.</i>	£ s. d.	<i>Cr.</i>	£ s. d.
To Audit fees	5 5 0	By Park fees	320 19 6
Caretaker's salary	253 6 8	Government grant—Salaries	250 0 0
	£ s. d.	Interest—	£ s. d.
Depreciation, park buildings 30 19 2		Post Office Savings-bank .. 33 12 4	
Depreciation, park equipment 88 17 10		Government debentures .. 15 15 7	
	119 17 0		49 7 11
Expenses of Board meetings	55 1 4		
First-aid equipment	4 8 3		
Horse-feed, &c.	33 16 3		
Horse (written off)	11 0 0		
Insurance	8 10 0		
Maintenance of park buildings	11 1 5		
Maintenance of park equipment	1 14 1		
Miscellaneous expenditure	0 15 9		
Sundry debtors for park fees	5 12 6		
Printing and stationery	15 9 6		
Postages	9 0 10		
Travelling-expenses of Warden and caretaker	64 15 6		
Balance transferred to Capital Account	20 13 4		
	<u>£620 7 5</u>		<u>£620 7 5</u>

CAPITAL ACCOUNT AND BALANCE-SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH, 1925.

Capital Account.

—	Expenditure, 31st March, 1924.		Expenditure during Year.		Total.		—	Receipts to 31st March, 1924.		Receipts during Year.		Total.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.		£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Bruce Road			1,491	11 8	1,491	11 8	Trustees, Bruce Estate	1,150	0 0			1,150	0 0
Ohakune Track							Subsidies from local bodies			1,500	0 0	1,500	0 0
Improvements	148	3 6	116	10 0	264	13 6	Government grants and subsidies			2,500	0 0	2,500	0 0
Telephone-line construction			250	9 8	250	9 8	Miscellaneous receipts	100	0 0	35	8 6	135	8 6
Tracks, drains, &c.			31	15 3	31	15 3							
Park buildings	512	11 9	325	6 7	837	18 4							
Park equipment	110	3 1	99	16 7	209	19 8							
	770	18 4	2,315	9 9	3,086	8 1		1,250	0 0	4,035	8 6	5,285	8 6
Balance carried down					2,199	0 5							
					£5,285	8 6						£5,285	8 6

Balance-sheet.

Capital Account—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Balance, 1st April, 1924	7,633 1 7		
Balance brought down	2,199 0 5		
Revenue Account—Balance	20 13 4		
		9,852 15 4	
Depreciation reserve		129 17 0	
Sundry creditors		1,303 12 6	
		<u>£11,286 4 10</u>	
Park buildings taken over from Tourist Department			£ s. d.
Park equipment taken over from Tourist Department			1,005 0 0
Erua milling-timber			44 16 0
Horse			4,733 11 2
Maps			5 0 0
Sundry debtors			3 5 0
Government debentures			1,341 3 5
			3,000 0 0
			£ s. d.
Cash in transit			20 13 6
Cash in Bank of New Zealand			179 18 5
Cash in Post Office Savings-bank			952 17 4
			<u>1,153 9 3</u>
			<u>£11,286 4 10</u>

J. B. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Tongariro National Park Board.
J. H. O'DONNELL,
Hon. Treasurer, Tongariro National Park Board.

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