

Hon Dr Michael Cullen

Minister of Finance

Hon John Tamihere

Minister for Land Information



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For Immediate Release

Media Statement

Motatapu Station and Mt Soho Station lease sales approved

The Minister of Finance Michael Cullen and the Minister for Land Information John Tamihere have approved the sale of pastoral leases on Motatapu Station and Mt Soho Station at Wanaka subject to some strong conditions around public access and conservation values.

Robert and Eileen Lange (also known as 'Mutt' Lange and Shania Twain) applied to the Overseas Investment Commission to purchase the two high country pastoral leases.

Under the Overseas Investment Act the ministers are required to consider applications on the basis of 'national interest.'

Dr Cullen said, "the application satisfies all legal requirements. The conditions attached to the approval will enhance both conservation and public access in a beautiful part of the country."

"The land remains in ultimate Crown ownership. Under the conditions imposed on the sale of the leasehold all land above 1100 metres will be retired from farming and subject to a covenant with the Department of Conservation.

"The area under covenant is just over half the combined area of the two high country stations involved.

The purchasers have agreed to create a tramping track that is expected to form part of a nationwide hiking trail network known as Te Araroa plus are providing of huts and associated facilities.

Roughly 4000 hectares of the property adjacent to the track in the covenanted area will be open to public access.

The purchasers propose to undertake and complete a farm development programme over three years totalling \$1.6 million.

Mr Tamihere said “this is a win:win decision. The purchasers of the lease acquire a property while the interests of all New Zealanders are protected.

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