

## **Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review**

**Lease name :**

**GLENARAY/WHITECOMB**

**Lease number :**

**PS 008/PS 017**

### **Conservation Resources Report - Part 5**

As part of the process of Tenure Review, advice on significant inherent values within the pastoral lease is provided by Department of Conservation officials in the form of a Conservation Resources Report. This report is the result of outdoor survey and inspection. It is a key piece of information for the development of a preliminary consultation document.

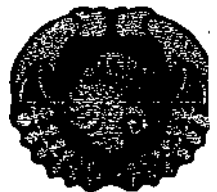
Note: Plans which form part of the Conservation Resources Report are published separately.

These documents are all released under the Official information Act 1982.

**February**

**06**

APPENDIX 11: Forest & Bird Report on Ecological Values

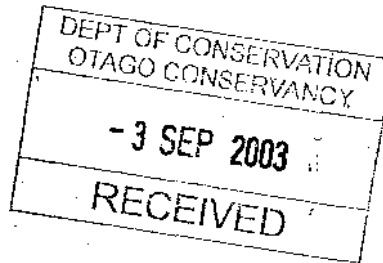


FOREST  
& BIRD

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PO Box 38  
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27<sup>th</sup> August 2003

Mr Tony Perrett  
Manager Tenure Review Programme  
Department of Conservation  
PO Box 5244  
DUNEDIN



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C.R.M.	
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Dear Tony

Glenaray and Whitecomb -early warning **tenure** review submit

These two properties were discussed at the early warning meeting of NGOs held in Alexandra on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2002, and again at the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2003.

We would be pleased if you would accept and give due consideration to our comments and suggestions on the various issues involved in this review to put alongside your own department's recommendations when you give to the Commissioner of Crown Lands your Conservation Resources Report:

This is a very large property and this report is based on four separate visits we made. We spent three days around the middle section and two days on the east side of the Garvie Mountains nearing the head of the Waikaia River system as well as travelling the Waikaia Bush Road. While we would admit that we only covered a small part of the area involved we believe we were able to get a good working knowledge of the whole property. This together with the PNA reports and other sources of information on the area, and with discussions we were able to have with other NGOs, enable us to be sure that what we give you in this report is a good assessment for the purposes of this review.

We would like to thank the Pinkney family for allowing us to go on to the property. We would also like to thank the manager and his wife, Mr and Mrs Miller, for their courtesy and help at all times.

General:

- These two properties are run as one unit for managerial purposes.
- The Waikaia Bush forms a division, or barrier; through which stock must be driven either up or down from the developed farm land in the vicinity of the homestead and the more native pasture north of the Canton Bridge.
- The high ground in the vicinity of the Titan Rocks and west to Mt Cameron and then on to the boundary with Nokomai Station will be another dividing line between the relatively lower country and the higher country. This will be more noticeable in winter with snow on the ground.

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- More than 80% of the property will be north of the above mentioned dividing lines.
- More than 90% of this division will be above 1000masl. Just a small corner bounded by the Canton Bridge, Bush Hut, Rock Top and the plateau above the Weaner Bridge and around to the airstrip being below 1000masl. (See photo #1)
- The land north of the junction of the East and West branches of the Waikaia River forms an island below a fence running over the spur from one branch to the other just north of spot height .1063. This block is sometimes known as the Weaner Block.
- This area of country has been developed to a certain extent by over-sowing and top-dressing. A large portion of this area is heavily infested with gorse and broom, which is a legacy of the mining days.
- Apart from a small portion of the property in the southwest, which drains into the Dome Burn, and another in the southeast which flows into the Pomohaka River, the bulk of the property drains into the Waikaia River.
- The whole property faces south, consequently is open to snow, most of which comes from that direction.

#### **Inherent Significant Values:**

- The landscape on this property is of considerable significance forming a "complete landscape unit" with the property largely occupying one catchment, the Waikaia. This is a rare and valuable attribute in present day New Zealand. It is outstanding with the more mountainous country of the Garvie Mountains in the north and west merging into the more rounded mountains of the Old Woman Range (see photo #2) in the north and the Old Man Range in the east (see photo #3) This merging of the two mountain systems makes it a unique and very special corner of New Zealand.
- The fact that there is very little roading or tracking on the property adds considerably to the remoteness value of the landscape and subsequently to its value for conservation.
- The amount of intact tall tussock on the property, especially in and around the Titan Rocks (see photo #4)
- Being so remote in its feel but in reality being reasonably accessible to those willing to walk or ski.
- The geology and land formation of the Garvie mountains.
- The vast as yet untapped potential for recreation. Mainly walking, perhaps bike riding or horse riding. The proviso in regard to mountain biking and horse riding that no new tracks should be formed, polled routes being all that is called for so as not to disturb the untouched peace of the landscape. Rock climbing - Rocky Mount. In winter cross-country skiing (see photo #5)
- The diversity of indigenous vegetation throughout the property from high alpine with treasures like *Parahebe trifida* to the mixes of the drier Central Otago Block Mountain species with the plants and shrubs found in the wetter areas of the south in the various tongues and islands of beech forest on Station Ridge and in and around the Canton Bridge area.
- There are numerous RAPs described as worthy of protection in the Nokomai, Old Man and the Umbrella Ecological District to be considered.

**Access:**

As the property already bounds land arriving out of tenure review in the north, east and south this is partly in place.

- a) In the north from Duffers saddle, through Carrick, Cairnmuir and Craigroy.
- b) In the north and east up Symes road and thence through Fraser Basin.
- c) In the east from Shingle Creek thence through Bains's Block.
- d) In the south via the Waikaia Bush road.

This leaves the western side without access. While the neighbouring property Nokomai is not in the tenure review process at present, access from this side will become important and must be kept in mind. The obvious line is from the Nevis road up to Mt Tennyson and then along the watershed between the Dome Burn and Roaring Lion Creek.

**Land to be Considered for Disposal on a Free-hold Basis:***North of Waikai Bush | Titan Rocks | Mt Cameron*

As a general rule, subject to aspect, soils and climate, land below 1000masl is regarded as being ecologically sustainable and therefore can be designated as land to be disposed of to the holder as free-hold

On Glenary and Whitecomb the only land below this altitude north of the Waikaia Bush, is that land north of Bush Hut. Bounded in the north by Gorge Creek and in the east by the west branch of the Waikaia River and part of the main river. On the west or high side of this, a boundary would be a fence; (there are several fences above Bush Hut crossing the track to Blue Lake). The top most one comes from the south and crosses the track in a broad saddle at spot height .1224 then drops into Gorge Creek and climbs out and heads north. The next one down is at about 900masl (see photo #6). Below that one' another at approximately .850masl. (see plan #1)

On Whitecomb that area bounded by the main Waikaia River at the bottom end, and the east branch at the top on the west side, and the fence running from about 800masl. to 1000masl. on the east side.

In area this is a very small portion of that land north of what we have described as a dividing line under the heading "General" above. (see photo #1)

All that other land above this division, or that land above 1000masl. has sufficient inherent conservation values to be returned to full Crown ownership and control - it is outstanding!

We would submit that the following four points are sufficient reason for this piece of land below 1000masl. we have described, i.e. in and around the Canton Bridge, land to be returned to full Crown ownership and control and become part of the total Conservation Area.

- I If this land is to be disposed of as free-hold, there will be the constant need to transfer stock from the land below the Waikaia Bush to the land above the Waikaia Bush. Fencing the road margins of the Waikaia Bush would be expensive and not aesthetically pleasing while allowing passing stock to graze will be detrimental to the bush margins.

- 2 Below the 1000m altitude there appears to be a great diversity of indigenous vegetation in an around the various tongues and islands of bush present. Phyllocladus, Olearia, Pseudopanax, Totara, to mention but a few. This type of diversity is worthy of protection. It is worth noting that under the Government's recently updated objectives for Tenure Review of pastoral leases a new "complementary objective" has been added to "ensure that conservation outcomes for the high country are consistent with the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy" (Cabinet Policy Committee, Minute of Decision, 6 August 2003 POL Min (03)1917). We would argue that although parts of this area are modified and weedy (broom) that the biodiversity values are sufficient to have this block included with what we propose is restored to full Crown ownership and control as a conservation area.
- 3 The tall tussock in the Weaner block goes right down to the river. See photo #7 & #8. While the tussock is thinner on the top we believe that given time with no grazing the tussock will recover its dominance. This block has significant inherent conservation values and should also be protected.
- 4 On the Whitecomb side there is a greater density of tall tussock in and around the airstrip, see Photos #9 & #10. While on the Glenary side the tall tussock is somewhat thinner due no doubt due to the fact that these smaller blocks have been used as holding paddocks. Given time however they would return to tall tussock.

Against our suggestion is the problem of the broom. If sufficient thought is given to the matter this need not be a real hindrance to it becoming conservation land; We understand that the broom infested block is the habitat to some rare invertebrates.

The present lessees have taken the matter seriously and have been attending to this on a regular basis. When examined more closely there is evidence of the perimeters being sprayed to create line to prevent the further spread of the plant.

If selected areas were sprayed and suitable indigenous seeds or plants introduced that would over-top the broom, over a period of time the broom would eventually be replaced. It would not be impossible.

#### *South of Waikaiti Bush Titan Rocks Mt Cameron*

This leaves the land south of the division we described above. This being the land in and around the Gow Burn, north of Fiddlers Point and west of Station Ridge. A lot of this land is in Crown ownership already (ex NZ Forest Service).

- The land on both the north and south side of the Titan Rocks to Mt Tennyson watershed have all been surveyed for their conservation values under the PNA programme and numerous areas have been described and numbered.
- What we would describe as the east branch of the Gow Burn has considerable conservation values in the forest land. This forest almost reaches up to the RAP NOK 2 which is described in the Survey Report for the Protected Natural Area Programme (Nokomai Ecological District) as an "... area with a range of outstanding natural values... "
- There is considerable beech forest in the main branch of the Gow Burn itself
- The land on the Station Ridge has been modified to some extent for farming but is bounded by Crown owned forest in the east and in the west. The two forest areas

practically meeting at point .587 on the ridge, See photo #11. There is considerable diversity in the vegetation at this point.

Here again we have a small area of modified farm land similar to that described above Canton Bridge, north of Waikaia Bush. However, here again we believe the land above .587 has sufficient significant conservation merit to be considered for being returned to the Crown for conservation purposes.

It would appear to us that the Murray Bum is a line to be considered for separating the land to be restored to Crown ownership and control from that to be disposed of to the holders. From the top of the Murray Bum at about 900masl come across into the next catchment following south down the east branch of the Steeple Bum as far as the fork and then the main Steeple Bum to the edge of the pastoral lease. Any land to the west and south of this would be best restored to full Crown ownership and control as conservation land. Lowland conservation values are poorly represented in the nations portfolio of protected conservation lands and this provides a valuable opportunity to reserve lower altitude land with high natural values giving the maximum possible altitudinal sequence particularly in the Dome Bum catchment from the Mataura River in the valley floor to the tops of the Garvie Mountains.

#### Conclusion:

We acknowledge that our submission would leave very little of the vast Pastoral Lease of Glenaray and Whitecomb for freeholding, but understand that this farming operation has in addition to the pastoral leases, 5,500 hectares of freehold land that has been developed for cattle and deer. We find the significant inherent values and the biodiversity of this property so outstanding that we feel we have no other alternative. We recognise that it has been the management of the Pinkneys that has preserved this beautiful part of New Zealand in such exceptional condition.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our ideas on this review.

Yours faithfully



John Turnbull and Jean McFarlane  
On behalf of the Upper Clutha Branch of Forest and Bird

#### list of photographs and plans on following pages

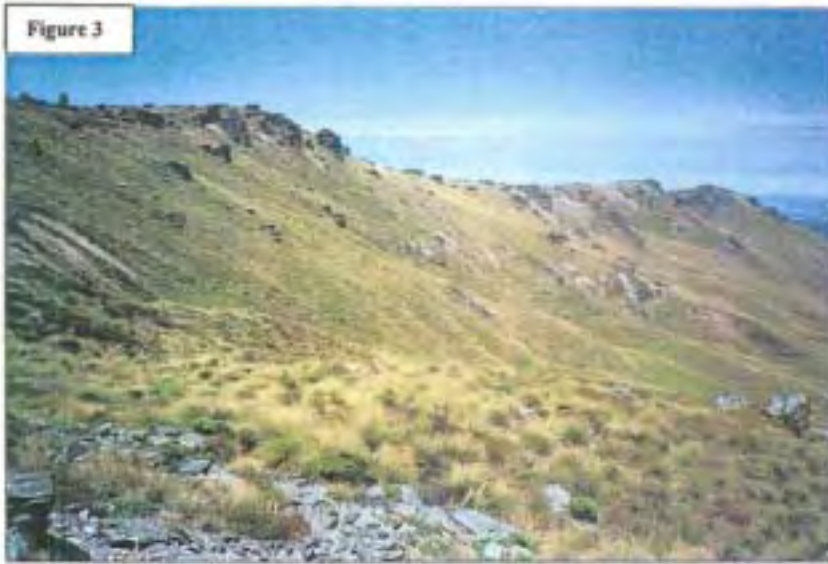
- 1 Land below 1000m above Canton Bridge
- 2 Old Woman Range viewed from Garvies
- 3 Old Man Range viewed from Garvies
- 4 Tussock cover looking across to Titan Rocks from Blue Lake track
- 5 Recreation potential- top of the Garvies looking south
- 6 Fence line above Bush Hut on the Blue Lake track
- 7&8 Tall tussock on the 'Weaner Block'
- 10&11 Tall tussock around airstrip on Whitecomb side
- 12 Diversity of vegetation on Station Ridge looking towards the east branch of the Gow Bum
- Plan 1 Lower altitude land fence lines north of Waikaia Bush

## APPENDIX 12: Photos



**Figure 1:** Beech forest and regenerating mixed hardwood forest in Lower Steeple Burn (Landscape Unit IA)

**Figure 2:** *Olearia lineata* treeland on alluvial flats of Steven Bum, with mixed shrubland on adjacent hillslopes (Landscape Unit IA).



**Figure 3: Rocky outcrops along Dome Ridge support a diverse lizard community (Landscape Unit IB).**

**Figure 4: Head of Steeple Burn (Landscape Unit IB).**

**Figure 5: Forested tributary of Dome Burn (Landscape Unit IB).**

Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



**Figure 6:** View across upper Patterson Ridge to Station Ridge (Landscape Unit 2)

**Figure 7:** Looking down the lower Patterson Ridge towards the Gow Burn and Flaxy Ridge (Landscape Unit 2)

**Figure 8:** Head Gow Bum tributary, from Patterson Ridge (Landscape Unit 2)



**Figure 9: Garvie Mountains – the notch is the "Remarkables Gap" (Landscape Unit 3A)**

Figure 10: Lake Laura (foreground) and Gow Lake (Landscape Unit 3A)

Figure 11: View from top of Patterson Ridge looking into red tussockland in Little Welslunan Creek (Landscape Unit 3A)



Figure 12: Ancient podocarp-celery pine forest in lower Gorge Creek (Landscape Unit 3A).

Figure 13: Tributary of Gorge Creek showing scree slopes and glacially-formed U shaped valley (Landscape Unit 3A).

Figure 14: Blue Lakes in early Winter. Old Man Range is in the distance. (Landscape Unit 3A).



**Figure 15: Looking down a tributary of the upper Waikaia River West Branch (Landscape Unit 3B).**  
**Figure 16: A wetland in this tributary (Landscape Unit 3B).**  
**Figure 17: From Rocky Mount (1 885m asl.), the highest point on the property. looking north-eastwards towards Waikaia River West Branch and Old Man Range in the distance (Landscape Unit 3B to 4B).**

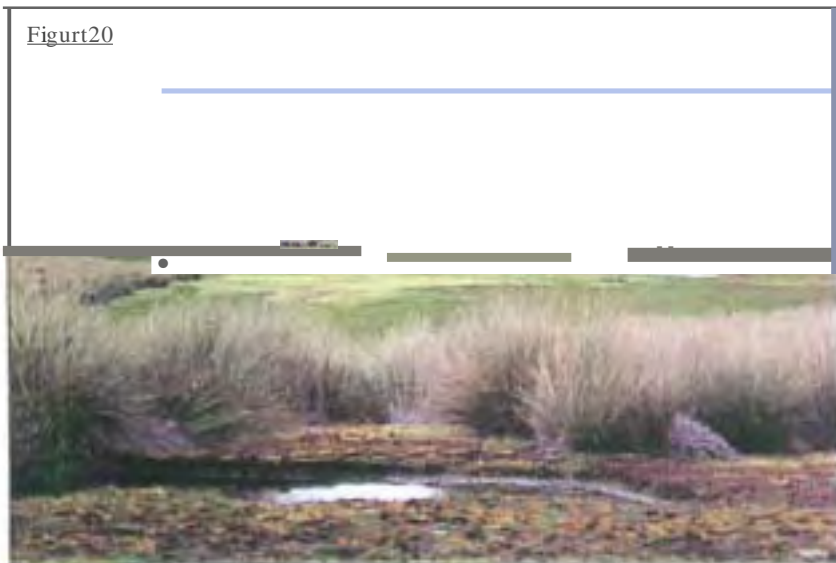


Figure 18: Waikaia River West Branch. The gorge supports Hall's totara, broadleaf, lowland ribbonwood, and rare tree daisies *Olearia hectorii*, *O. fimbriata*, *D. fragrantissima* (Landscape Unit 4A).  
Figure 19: Rare tree daisy treeland in lower gorge of Waikaia River West Branch - light green & grey patches (Landscape Unit 4A).  
Figure 20: Wetland along summit of northern Umbrella Range with sphagnum, red tussock and sedgeland. Waikaia tors and Waikaia Bush Road in distance (Landscape Unit 4A).  
Figure 21: Vehicle damage to vegetation beside Waikaia Bush Road (Landscape Unit 4A).

Figure 22



Figure 23



**Figure 22:** Tussocklands on eastern tablelands of the Umbrella Range, looking south into Island Creek (Landscape Unit 4A).

**Figure 23:** Broom infestation in lower Waikaia River (Landscape Unit 4A).



**Figure 24:** The lone miner's grave near Potters goldfield. The old gold miners hut and musterers hut are sited near Campbells Creek in the distance. (Landscape 4B).

**Figure 25:** Tussocklands on the alpine tablelands north of Potters goldfield (Landscape Unit 4B).

**Figure 26:** Cross country skiing above the Waikaia River East Branch headwaters- northern Garvie Mountains ridgeline to the left (Landscape Unit 4B).

## **4.2 ILLUSTRATIVE MAPS**

**4.2.1: Topo/Cadastral**

**4.2.2 Values - Landscape units and Landscape values**

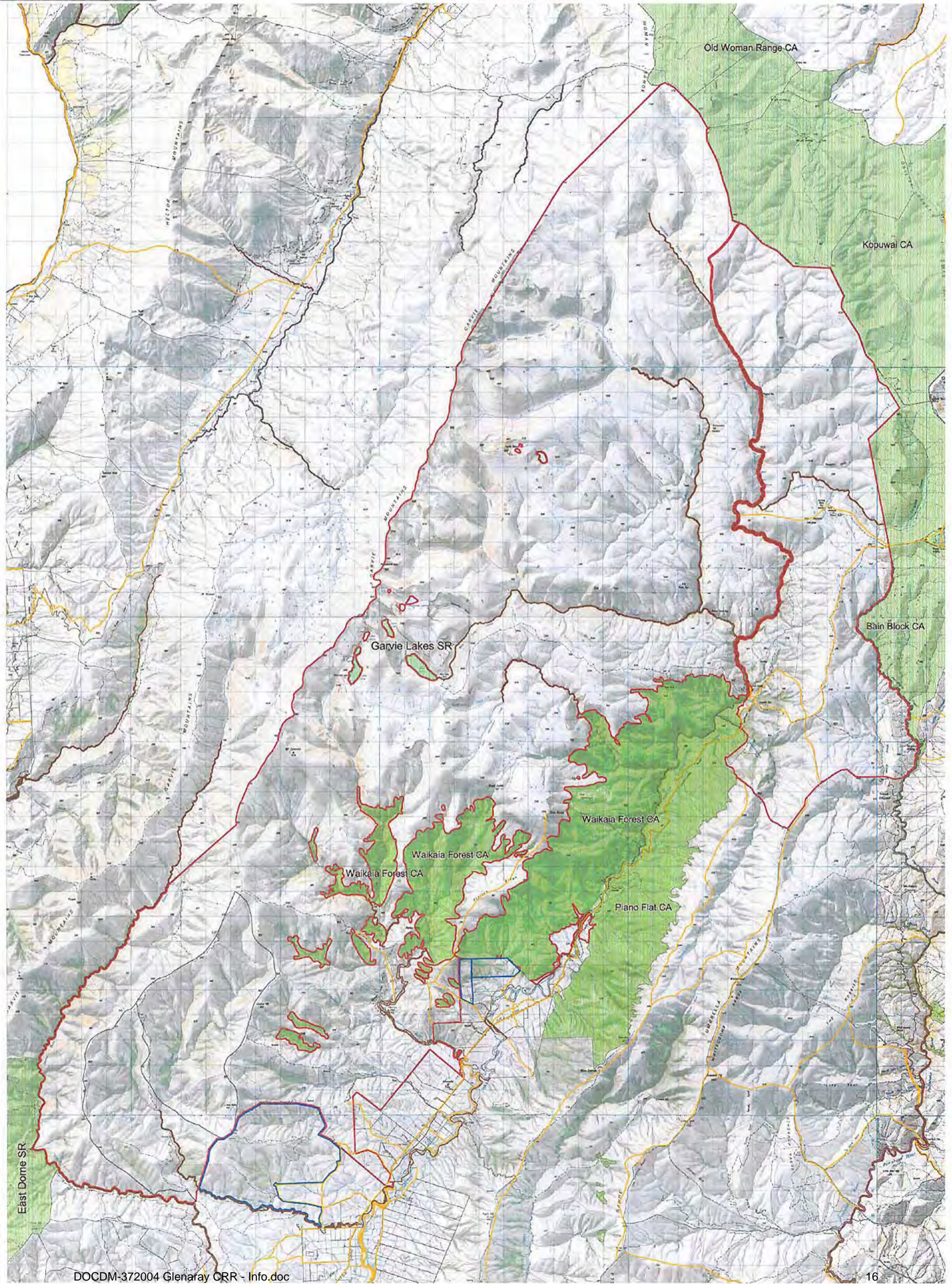
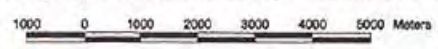
**4.2.3 Values- Botanical Land Units and Ecological/Historic/Recreation values**

### Map 4.2.1 Topographical / Cadastral Glenaray / Whitecoomb Pastoral Leases



**Legend**

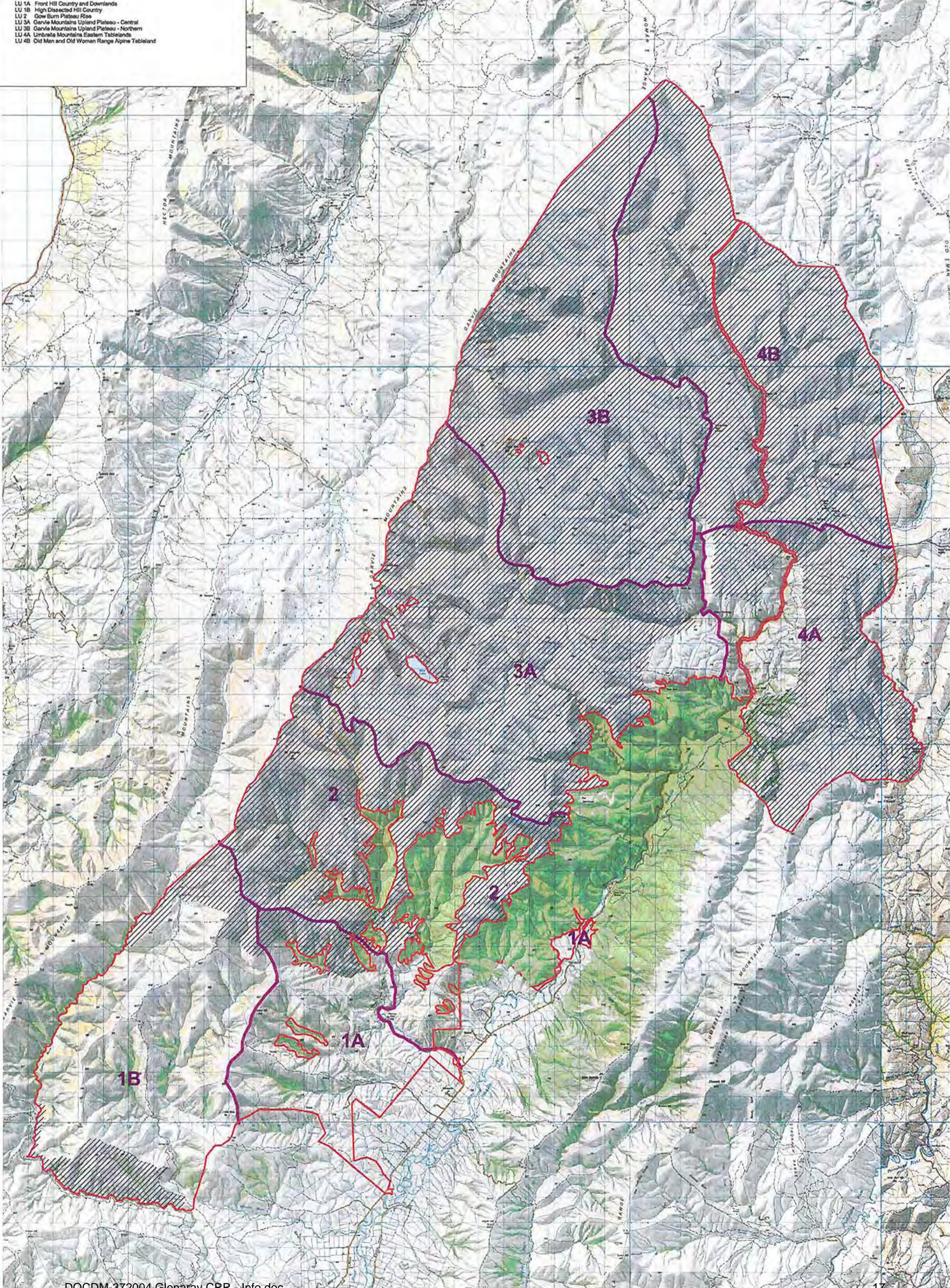
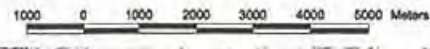
- Legal Roads
- Marginal strips
- Public conservation estate
- Property boundary
- Freehold land investigated in tenure review



Map 4.2.2 Landscape Units and Important Inherent Landscape Values  
Glenaray / Whitecomb Pastoral Leases



- Legend**
- ▬ Property boundary
  - ▬ Areas of Important Inherent landscape value
  - ▬ Landscape units
- LU 1A Front Hill Country and Downlands  
 LU 1B High Dissected Hill Country  
 LU 2 Gow Burn Plateau Rise  
 LU 3A Gairvie Mountains Upland Plateau - Central  
 LU 3B Gairvie Mountains Upland Plateau - Northern  
 LU 4A Umbrella Mountains Eastern Tablelands  
 LU 4B Old Man and Old Woman Range Alpine Tableland



### Map 4.2.3 Botanical Land Units and Important Inherent Ecological/Historic/Recreation Values Glenaray / Whitecoomb Pastoral Leases



- Property boundary
- Botanical land units
- Core broom infestation
- Area of Important historic value

- Areas of important ecological values on Pastoral Leases
- Area containing important ecological values but impacted upon by broom and weeds
- Area containing displaced natural values but of strategic value to viability of adjoining lands with important ecological values
- Important values on Freehold Land

Note:  
Approximately 80% of property has important recreational values.

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