

## **Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review**

**Lease name : CORA LYNN**

**Lease number : PC 116**

### **Public Submissions Part 1**

These submissions were received as a result of the public advertising of the Preliminary Proposal for Tenure Review.

These submissions are released under the Official Information Act 1982.

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**Public Submission for Crown Pastoral  
Land Tenure Review of the Cora Lynn  
Lease PC 116**

February 20, 2012

Submission made by James White

DARROCH LTD

20 FEB 2012

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**Table of Contents**

**Introduction ..... 4**

**Background ..... 4**

**Land to be returned to DOC for Public Access ..... 5**  
     **CC4 “Rainbow Forest” and “McKay Moa Forest” ..... 5**

**Logical Connection of Public and Private Assets ..... 7**

**Bealey Hotel to Bealey Spur Housing (Figure 1 points A-B) ..... 8**  
         Reason for the Public Access..... 8  
         Type of public access requested ..... 8  
         Why this route and not another..... 8

**Bealey Spur Housing to Cora Lynn Road (Figure 1 points B-G) ..... 9**  
         Reason for the Public Access..... 9  
         Type of public access requested ..... 9  
         Why this route and not another..... 9

**Bealey Spur Housing to Cass Lagoon Saddle Car Park (Figure 1 points B-C) .....10**  
         Reason for the Public Access.....10  
         Type of public access requested .....10  
         Why this route and not another.....10

**Cass Lagoon Saddle Track Car Park to Broad Stream (Figure 1 points C-D) .....11**  
         Reason for the Public Access.....11  
         Type of public access requested .....11  
         Why this route and not another.....11

**Cora Lynn Road and State Highway Junction to the Waimakariri River (Figure 1 points E-F) .....12**  
         Reason for the Public Access.....12  
         Type of public access requested .....12  
         Why this route and not another.....12

**The Historical Old West Road to the and Fishing Stream located below Paddys Bend (Figure 1 points H-I) .....13**  
         Reason for the Public Access.....13  
         Type of public access requested .....13  
         Why this route and not another.....13

**Conclusion..... 14**  
     **Writers Contact Details .....14**

## Introduction

This submission is about securing perpetual public access to recreational and conservational areas that are not currently presented in the Preliminary Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review for the Cora Lynn Lease (PC 116) dated December 2011. The submission proposes land be returned to DOC for public access and a number of public access tracks be granted so that farm, private tourism and public recreation activities can synergistically co-exist on this unique property. The submission proposes a logical connecting up of both existing public and private assets.

## Background

I have been visiting Cora Lynn Station for almost forty years and my parents since the Cora Lynn Station homestead (figure 1) was separated from the farm many years before I was born. My visits to Cora Lynn with friends and acquaintances have been enjoyable through participating in social, recreational, conservation and personal reflection activities, including meaningful friendships formed with past farm managers and their families. It is my intention that the positive life experiences I attribute to my time at Cora Lynn can be protected in perpetuity, so that my children, their friends and anyone else who makes the effort can benefit from this unique environment. This includes people that may not be able to afford the exclusive Wilderness Lodge per night rate of \$399 to \$649 dollars per person.

Prior to the Wilderness Lodge, users of the Cora Lynn homestead have been granted access to all streams and conservation areas from all previous farm owners and managers. This includes the farm owner and manager up until Gerry McSweeney recently purchased Cora Lynn Station, however since the opening of the Wilderness Lodge in 1996, Gerry McSweeney has at his every opportunity tried to deny access over farmland to Cora Lynn homestead users. The Cora Lynn homestead owners are responsible mountain and farm users that share the majority of Gerry McSweeney's conservation values.

Gerry McSweeney appears to intentionally to go out of his way to make life unpleasant for his intermittent, conservative and respectful neighbours, who use their Cora Lynn Station homestead property a few weeks each year. In my opinion his unpleasant disposition goes beyond a clash of personalities, as if he were to act in this manor with his staff and or guests, in my opinion it is unlikely he would operate a successful business, which I believe is not the case. To my understanding Gerry McSweeney operates a successful business and is respected for his conservation actions and values, which leads me to believe his unpleasant behaviour towards his neighbours could be commercially motivated for commercial personal capital gain.

For example, it is of my opinion that he believes if he is rude enough to his neighbours they will no longer wish to visit their holiday house and may choose to sell and he could have the opportunity to purchase, thus not having to share this beautiful unique environment with people other than his exclusive, wealthy predominantly foreign Wilderness Lodge guests.

Regardless of Gerry McSweeney's potentially deliberate lack of interpersonal skills or my perception of his motives, this submission is about formalising reasonable public access to this unique area, which prior to Gerry McSweeney's arrival has always been granted through gentlemen's agreements. Gentlemen's agreements may again after the departure of Gerry McSweeney be amicable and reasonable, but the tenure review process presents an opportunity to formalise access so others do not have to have their holidays unpleasantly interrupted by people with similar personalities and or motives to that of Gerry McSweeney.

## **Land to be returned to DOC for Public Access**

### **CC4 "Rainbow Forest" and "McKay Moa Forest"**

This land should not be sold and or leased to any private owners (non crown entities) as the land marked CC4 holds significant values of land that requires preservation and should be returned to the crown for all New Zealanders to access. Figure 1 shows land shaded in blue that in my opinion should be returned to DOC for public access.

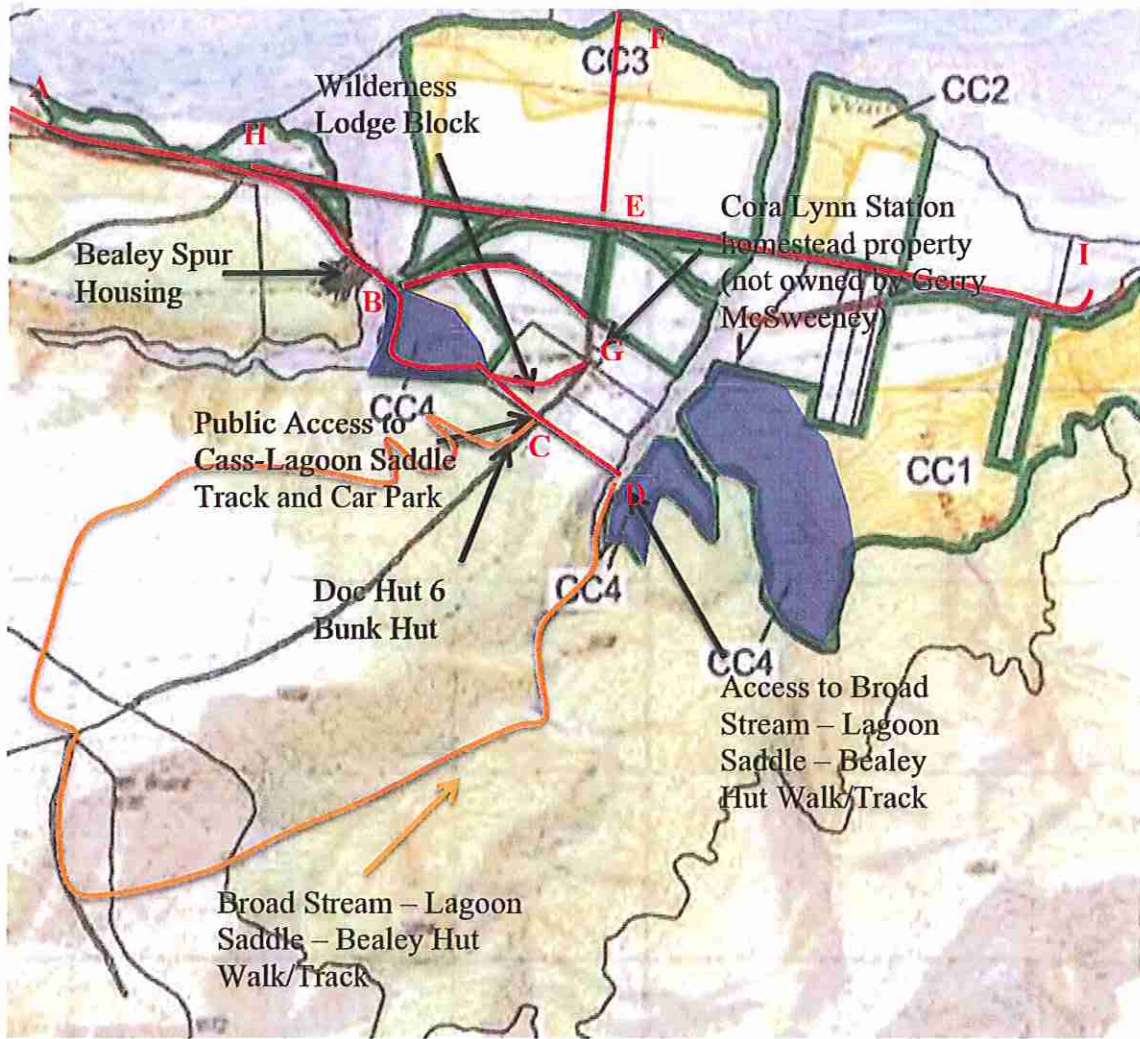
Schedule 1 CC4 and Schedule 2 CC4 of the document has identified that this land should not be farmed and therefore has no economic value for the purpose of farming. However, there is likely to be economic value created from the exclusive guests of the Wilderness Lodge who enjoy nature walking through this land.


In my opinion the Wilderness Lodge should be granted a DOC concession to access this land and share this land with other users, which to my understanding works well at Gerry McSweeney's other Wilderness Lodge located at Lake Moeraki. A former staff member confirmed that the sharing of land with other users has no negative effects on Wilderness Lodge guests or other land users.


This land can be enjoyed by more people more often than many parts of Arthurs Pass National Park, as it receives significantly less rainfall and the land is relatively flat compared to some of the more challenging walks closer to the Arthurs Pass township. For this reason public access to this area is likely to be more appealing to less physically active people. The land can be easily accessed from the State Highway (Bruce Stream Bridge and public car parking at the base of the Bealey Spur) and existing public access tracks including the Lagoon Saddle to Cass Track and the existing public car parking at the end of Corn Lynn Road.

This land provides an opportunity for all New Zealanders to learn about the ecology of the area including the threatened bird species and their breeding habitats and endangered plant species. The more users that are able to experience the ecology of this area, the more likely users will understand the areas conservation values, the more likely users will respect and promote the long-term protection of this area and other conservation areas both nationally and globally.

Figure 1: Proposed public access map for Corn Lynn Station



 Land to be returned to DOC for Public Access

 Proposed Public Access Tracks

## Logical Connection of Public and Private Assets

This submission proposes what is deemed to be a logical network of connecting public access tracks that will allow for recreational users, farm management and Wilderness Lodges guests to co-inhabit this unique environment in harmony.

The proposed logical connection of public access walking will connect existing public and private assets making the area more attractive to existing and new recreational users. Existing public assets include the:

- Historical Bealey Spur Hut
- Bealey Spur Track
- Bealey Hut
- Lagoon Saddle Huts
- Cass Lagoon Saddle Track
- Broad Stream (unique easy access to a beautiful big boulder gorge)
- Broad Stream to Lagoon Saddle to Bealey Hut Walk/Track
- Arthurs Pass National Park
- The Old West Coast Road (including historical milestone stones that are still visible where the old road once went)
- Craigieburn Forest Park
- Fishing and kayaking on the Waimakariri River and other small streams and ponds

Existing private assets include the:

- Bealey Hotel
- A cluster of private houses on the Bealey Spur
- Historical Cora Lynn Station
- The original Cora Lynn Station homestead (not owned by the Wilderness Lodge or Cora Lynn Station)
- Arthurs Pass Wilderness Lodge



The next section states the reasons for public access on the tracks identified in red in figure 1, where points in figure 1 are marked with red letters.

### **Bealey Hotel to Bealey Spur Housing (Figure 1 points A-B)**

#### **Reason for the Public Access**

- Safer traffic free access to and from the Bealey Hotel and the Bealey Spur Housing
- When not traveling by car you have more time to enjoy the natural beauty of the area
- Creating a fitness track

#### **Type of public access requested**

- Walk
- Bike
- Horse

#### **Why this route and not another**

- Walking, biking and horse riding is dangerous on the side of the State Highway where cars travel at approximately 100 km/h
- Walking on the side of the State Highway with young children is dangerous
- Currently, as no track exists other than walking along the side of the road. Drivers have to be vigilant of other road users, thus increasing the likelihood of serious accidents.

## **Bealey Spur Housing to Cora Lynn Road (Figure 1 points B-G)**

### **Reason for the Public Access**

- Create non-vehicle access from Bealey Spur Housing/Track to Cora Lynn Station
- Create non-vehicle link between Bealey Spur Housing, Bealey Spur Track and the Cass Lagoon Saddle Track
- Create a fitness track

### **Type of public access requested**

- Walk
- Bike
- Horse

### **Why this route and not another**

- Walking, biking and horse riding is dangerous on the side the State Highway where cars travel at approximately 100 km/h
- Walking on the side of the State Highway with young children is dangerous
- Currently, as no track exists other than walking along the side of the road. Drivers have to be vigilant of other road users, thus increasing the likelihood of serious accidents.

## Bealey Spur Housing to Cass Lagoon Saddle Car Park (Figure 1 points B-C)

### Reason for the Public Access

- This is identified as land that should not be farmed and PC 116 clearly states that there should be no stock access, therefore has no economic value for the purpose of farming. Therefore, should be returned to DOC for public access.
- The land can be easily accessed from the State Highway (Bruce Stream Bridge) and existing public access tracks including the Lagoon Saddle to Cass Track and public parking already exists at the end of Cora Lynn Road
- This is an opportunity for all New Zealanders to learn about the ecology of the area including the threatened bird species and their breeding habitats, and other endangered plants and species.
- The more users that can experience the ecology of this area the more likely users will understand conservation values of the areas and the more likely users will respect and promote the long-term protection of this area and other conservation areas both nationally and globally.
- Create high quality, high conservation value nature walk from Bealey Spur Housing/Track to Cass Lagoon Saddle Track
- Create a conservation orientated fitness track
- This area has less hills than many other tracks located in Arthurs Pass National Park and is likely to be more appealing to less physically active people

### Type of public access requested

- Walk

### Why this route and not another

- This route has unique conservation assets that are detailed in Schedule 1 CC4 and Schedule 2 CC4 of the PC116 document
- This track will connect Cass Lagoon Saddle Track to the Bealey Spur Track via conservation assets
- Walking is dangerous on the side the State Highway where cars travel at approximately 100 km/h
- Walking on the side of the State Highway with young children is dangerous
- Currently, as no track exists other than walking along the side of the road. Drivers have to be vigilant of other road users, thus increasing the likelihood of serious accidents.

## **Cass Lagoon Saddle Track Car Park to Broad Stream (Figure 1 points C-D)**

### **Reason for the Public Access**

- Create a loop track from the Cass Lagoon Saddle Track Car Park to Broad Stream, Lagoon Saddle, Bealey Hut loop track shown in orange in figure 1
- Create short walk access to the Broad Stream and the unique boulder gorge that is located within a short walking distance up the river in the Craigieburn Forest Park
- Create short walk access to unique conservation area of McKay Stream (McKay Moa Forest) details of which are identified in Schedule 1 CC4 and Schedule 2 CC4 of the PC116 document
- Create a unique conservation fitness track
- Arthurs National Park lacks quality low impact short walks

### **Type of public access requested**

- Walk
- Bike
- Horse

### **Why this route and not another**

- Currently, Gerry McSweeney insists that public cannot walk the 400m across the paddock to Broad Stream regardless if there is stock present or not. Gerry McSweeney insists public access to Broad Stream from the Cass Lagoon Saddle Track Car Park is down Cora Lynn Road to the State Highway along the State Highway to Broad Stream and from the Broad Stream Bridge up to point D in figure 1. Turning what could be a approximately 400m walk into an approximately 2.7km walk including a 1 km walk on difficult to walk on river boulders.
- Walking is dangerous on the side of the State Highway where cars travel at approximately 100 km/h
- Crossing the one-way Broad Stream road bridge on the State Highway is dangerous as there is no separate bridge for pedestrians
- There is no car parking at the Broad Stream road bridge
- Walking on the side of the State Highway with young children is dangerous
- Currently, as no track exists other than walking along the side of the road. Drivers have to be vigilant of other road users, thus increasing the likelihood of serious accidents.

## **Cora Lynn Road and State Highway Junction to the Waimakariri River (Figure 1 points E-F)**

### **Reason for the Public Access**

- Public access to the Waimakariri River (including fishing and hunting access)
- In conjunction with other tracks this track provides public access without the danger of walking on the side of the State Highway or the challenge of walking on riverbed boulders
- Create a fitness track

### **Type of public access requested**

- Walk
- Bike
- Horse
- Motorbike (including small ATV motorbikes)

### **Why this route and not another**

- Access from Cora Lynn Road means that people recreating in the area can use the Cass Lagoon Saddle public car park located on Cora Lynn Road to access the Waimakariri River.
- People staying in the Bealey Hut can access the Waimakariri River
- Walking on the side of the State Highway with young children is dangerous
- Walking is dangerous on the side the State Highway where cars travel at approximately 100 km/h

## **The Historical Old West Road to the and Fishing Stream located below Paddys Bend (Figure 1 points H-I)**

### **Reason for the Public Access**

- To provide alternative public access not via the State Highway to a popular fishing stream located opposite Paddys Bend
- Much of the proposed track follows the original Old West Coast Road of which the original milestones can still be seen
- Create a fitness track

### **Type of public access requested**

- Walk
- Bike
- Horse
- Motorbike (including small ATV motorbikes)

### **Why this route and not another**

- This route has historical value
- Much of the track is already formed as it was the former West Coast Highway
- Walking on the side of the State Highway with young children is dangerous
- Walking is dangerous on the side the State Highway where cars travel at approximately 100 km/h
- Currently, as no track exists other than walking along the side of the road. Drivers have to be vigilant of other road users, thus increasing the likelihood of serious accidents.

## Conclusion

This submission presents many reasons why the proposed changes to the Cora Lynn Tenure Review are likely to be beneficial and safer for all users. The benefits proposed are not just for the exclusive, predominately wealthy and foreign Wilderness Lodge clients. The Tenure Review process presents an opportunity to make significant positive changes to the area, with minimal impact on the economic productivity of existing farmland, and no negative impact on the experiences had by Wilderness Lodge guests.

It would be a shame to let an opportunity pass that could improve recreational opportunities to a wide range of people from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, and to build awareness to such a unique environment. It is with the public's best interest that my submission is carefully examined. I am happy to discuss this submission with all parties concerned and as this submission is for the greater public good, I will not hesitate to publicise this submission as required.

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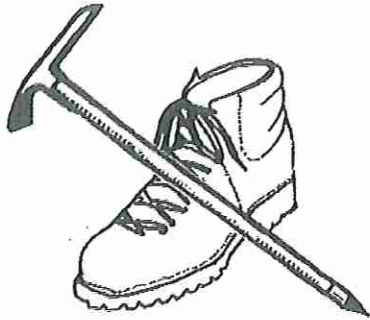
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# Christchurch Tramping Club Inc.

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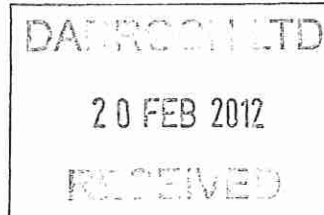
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The Commissioner of Crown Lands  
c/o Darroch Ltd  
PO Box 27  
Alexandra 9340



17 February 2012

Dear Sirs

## Tenure Review – PC116, Cora Lynn

Thank you for supply of the preliminary proposal document for this review.

Please note that we are the Christchurch Tramping Club Inc., not “Canterbury Tramping Club” as your covering letter.

Our club has had a long association with this property and we are regular visitors to the Cass Saddle-Lagoon Saddle tramping route which has both ends adjacent to the present lease. We also undertake more difficult tramps to various parts of the Black Range in the public conservation estate behind the lease. An ascent of Mt Bruce, often combined with a return down Broad Stream, is also a popular excursion both for us and other tramping groups. Mt Misery and Mt Horrible are appealing minor summits to climb (despite their unappealing names) because they provide outstanding viewpoints.

The present lease is much reduced from the original Cora Lynn run. Prior to passing of the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998 (CPLA), substantial areas of land unsuitable for pastoral use were added to Craigieburn Conservation Park and Bealey Spur Conservation Area under earlier land retirement schemes. The present proposals deal with the last of the original lease.

Consequently we consider the broad tenor of the various tenure changes to be reasonable. We welcome the addition of several areas to the Conservation estate including CA1 and CA4 which will aid recreational use and access. The smaller areas including CA2, CA3, CA5 and CA6 also protect various natural and scenic values and therefore achieve some of the aims of the CPLA.

As recreational users of this land one of our main concerns re leases in tenure review is ensuring secure and enduring access to existing and new public estate beyond the property in review. The primary access to Cora Lynn's hinterland is already protected with access via:

- Cora Lynn road and DOC tracks beyond,  
and
- Along Cass River

However there are several local but still important access points that will not be secured by the present proposal. The complex geography of this review makes it essential that this additional access be provided. We discuss these issues under three headings below.

## 1. Access to Broad Stream

**A.** There is no direct legal access from the public parking area (at the foot of the Lagoon Saddle Track) to the entry point of Broad Stream. The practical route is across freehold land owned by the lessees of Cora Lynn. The only legal access to and from Broad Stream is down this stream to the main West Coast Road and then back up the formed Cora Lynn Road or vice versa. This is approximately four times longer than the direct access. We understand that present owners allow use of the direct access subject their permission. Also they have constructed a track for several kilometers through the public estate up Broad Stream and use other parts of the estate (subject to a DOC concession) for their business. While this is commendable the public should have similar ease of access on a secure basis.

**B.** We understand that Wilderness Lodge use their freehold land adjacent to the Cora Lynn Road for demonstrations of NZ farm culture. If an easement along the track they have constructed across their freehold conflicts with this activity, we suggest a suitable alternative easement would be immediately under the toe of this hill close the boundary of the public estate. This would require a stile from the parking area and poling to the stream entry.

**C.** The CPLA, S.40 (2) states that protective mechanisms may create:

- (c) public access across or to the land concerned:
- (d) public enjoyment of the land concerned

We note that S.30 of the Act allows for the inclusion of linked freehold land as part of the review.

**D.** We submit that a foot easement should be created from Cora Lynn Road across the freehold owned by Wilderness Lodge Arthurs Pass Ltd as a condition of the tenure review.

## 2. Access to Mt Horrible

**A.** CA4 is a useful addition to the public estate but here also there is a lack of viable access. The DOC Conservation Resources Report states:

*"A roughly-marked route from the West Coast Road west of Paddys Bend provided (before the 2001 wildfire) access to Pylon Gully and the summit of Mt Horrible. This part of the property has considerable potential for walking. The summit of Mt Horrible offers spectacular views of the Waimakariri valley and Cass basin".*

The Tenure Review proposes access b1 – d. This only allows access to the eastern end of Pylon Gully. From this point there are formidable barriers to public access to the mountain itself in the form of bluffs and scrub along Pylon Gully. However an easier DOC management access is proposed via route a-e-f.

**B.** We submit that the route a-e-f should be defined as additional public access to Mt Horrible. This will also allow a traverse of the mountain to the route near Paddys Bend recorded by DOC above if this can be cleared again.

### 3. Marginal strips

A. The position regarding provision of marginal strips following tenure review remains unclear. The Due Diligence Report states:

*"No memorial under Part IV Conservation Act 1987 has been registered on CBD/1359. It appears that the statutory process of advising the Department of Conservation of the disposition of the land and pastoral lease has been overlooked. Furthermore it appears that this may have happened as a result of advice received from the Chief Surveyor"*


The letter from the Chief Surveyor dated 21 January 1998 did not give any grounds for failing to note marginal strips at time of lease renewal in 1999. In fact it states:

*"Streams subject to marginal strips require identification. A new plan is required ..... Incorporating the identification of streams subject to marginal strips pursuant to Section 24, Conservation Act"*

B. The streams that qualify for strips appear to be Broad Stream, McKay Stream, Bruce Stream and the Waimakariri River where it bounds with the lease.

**C. We submit that both LINZ and DOC should follow due process to ensure marginal strips are provided on disposal of the lease following tenure review**

Yours sincerely

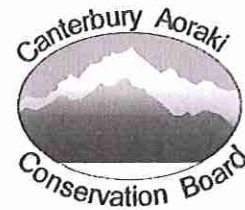


Jenny Harlow

Secretary

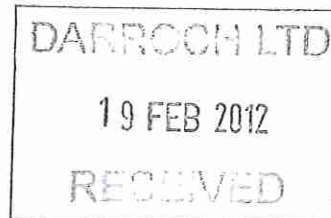
cc: Mike Clare, DOC, Private Bag 4715, Christchurch 8140  
FMC, PO Box 1604, Wellington 6140

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19 February 2012

The Commissioner of Crown Lands  
C/o Darroch Limited  
PO Box 27  
ALEXANDRA



Dear Luana

**Cora Lynn Tenure Review Preliminary Proposal**

The Canterbury/Aoraki Conservation Board appreciated the opportunity to comment on the Cora Lynn Tenure Review Preliminary Proposal. Thank you.

The Board concluded that overall the Proposal has comprehensively identified the significant inherent values (SIVs) of this property and clearly delineated where and how such values will be protected. Such decisions are particularly important because Cora Lynn is an integral and significant part of a unique alpine environment with broad vistas capturing the full sequence of landscapes from braided riverbeds (outside the property boundary), valley floors, gentle-sloping fans and terraces, steep mountain slopes and mountain tops.

The Board recognises the strong parallels with the Poplars Station with its strategic location at the confluence of the Hope and Boyle Rivers and as a gateway to the Lewis Pass and the Main Divide. Similarly, Cora Lynn is a gateway to Arthurs Pass and the Main Divide via the Bealey and Upper Waimakariri Rivers. Few parts of New Zealand's high country will be so frequently viewed in passing along a highway or visited through the Wilderness Lodge operation. Very few areas in New Zealand offer such a mosaic and balance of production and protection landscapes; Cora Lynn landscapes and their stewardship have national and international significance. Consequently, this Tenure Review must provide the best possible balance of landuse designations.

The Cora Lynn landscapes provide a complex mosaic of exotic and natural grassland, shrubland, scrub, hardwood forest, beech forest and wetland. The ecology of a significant proportion of the lease has been modified by both ancient fires and recent uncontrolled burns, leading to many induced plant associations and communities.

The conservation resources of Cora Lynn and its adjacent landscapes ..... Its landscape values, visual values, flora and fauna, geology, landforms and soils have been comprehensively evaluated and described in many research papers and reports. This area has been the domain of scientists over many decades.

The Board compliments the partners for their enlightened recommendations on landuse designations, on the proposed land exchange and on fencing and easements.

### Covenants

The value of protecting the SIVs on the Crown covenant areas has been clearly explained and backed up by a comprehensive and relevant range of practices which the owner must not carry out or allow to be carried out unless agreed to in writing with the partners.

The Board is firmly convinced that the SIVs will be protected well by the leaseholders who are skilled stewards of the contrasting Cora Lynn landscapes and ecosystems. However, we believe that further management practice details should be negotiated prior to finalising the covenant conditions in the Substantive Proposal; such knowledgeable, skilled stewardship may not follow an ownership change. The long term future of Cora Lynn's SIVs must be safeguarded. The following is a list of management practices and decisions that should be negotiated and clearly defined for each covenanted area:

- Where conventional oversowing and topdressing is not an option,
- where spray/oversow/topdressing is not an option,
- where conventional overdrilling is not an option,
- where spray/overdrilling is not an option,
- where cultivation is not an option,
- where further subdivision is advisable to enable greater control of grazing pressure,
- where only low grazing pressure = low stocking rates are permitted,
- where native vegetation clearing/replacement is not permitted,
- where herbicides can only be used for spot spraying of weeds,
- where some stock classes are not permitted.

Yours sincerely

---

John M Keoghan  
Canterbury/Aoraki Conservation Board

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