

## **Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review**

**Lease name : LOWBURN VALLEY**

**Lease number : PO 256**

### **Fish & Game Report**

As part of the process of Tenure Review, Fish & Game councils may provide advice on significant inherent values within the pastoral lease, and the information may be incorporated in the Conservation Resources Report. The advice is part of the information gathered and assessed for the development of a preliminary consultation document.

This report is released under the Official Information Act 1982.



## **Fish and Game Resources Report for the Lowburn Pastoral Lease.**

Prepared by the  
Otago Fish and Game Council

### **Section One - Introduction**

#### *1.1 Purpose*

The purpose of this report is to advise the Commissioner of Crown Lands on the sports fish and game values present on the land included in the Lowburn Crown pastoral lease. The lease is being considered for land tenure review and disposal under the provisions of the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998. As well as habitat values the report covers angling and hunting values and associated access issues.

Information for this report has been researched and prepared by Otago Fish and Game Council staff.

#### *1.2 Location*

The Lowburn pastoral lease is located on the eastern side of Roaring Meg Creek. Mount Michael and the Cardrona Cromwell Pack Track approximately define the south and north boundaries respectively, while the eastern boundary is near Stratford.

### **Section Two - General Resources Information**

#### *2.1 Sports Fisheries Values*

The headwaters of several small streams originate in the Pisa Range within the lease and flow south-east into the Clutha arm of Lake Dunstan or west into the Kawarau River. Several of these streams contain populations of brown trout and while their importance in maintaining fish stocks in the Clutha River and Lake Dunstan is not well understood, they are not considered to be significant spawning tributaries. Lowburn is an important spawning tributary for brown and rainbow trout and its headwaters do extend into the lease area. Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) are found in Roaring Meg Creek upstream as far as the Plank Creek confluence and Brook Char (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) are found upstream of the confluence.

It is unlikely angling occurs on the property because of the small size of streams involved.

Otago Fish and Game is supportive of the need to keep sports fish out of streams on the property where they are not currently present, in order to preserve indigenous fish values.

### *2.2 Game Values*

The mid to lower terraces of the property provide good habitat for Californian quail and there are possibly some remnant populations of Chukar partridge in an area this large as well.

Mallard and grey duck and paradise shelduck occur on the property on a regular basis and breeding and rearing has been observed adjacent to irrigation races.

The area provides good upland game hunting opportunities and hunting is known to occur there during the upland game season.

### *2.3 Other Recreational Values*

Big game hunting on the tops of the Pisa Range

### *2.4 Access Information*

Hunter access is presently at the discretion of the lessee.

## **Section Three – Consultation**

### *3.1 Consultation Undertaken*

Not applicable

### *3.2 Issues Identified Through Consultation*

Not applicable

## **Section Four - Fish and Game Perspective**

### *4.1 Habitat Views*

Three waterways within the pastoral lease require Section 24 marginal strip protection where they are greater than 3-metres in width or conservation covenants where the streams are less than 3-metres in width. These are:

- Lowburn Creek, upstream to approximately NZMS 260 F41 N7550 E0760
- Roaring Meg Creek, upstream to approximately NZMS 260 F41 N7860 E9825
- Mitre Creek, upstream to approximately NZMS 260 F41 N7825 E9945

### *4.2 Water Yield*

The Department of Conservation conservation resources report (dated October 2003) has indicated that the Lowburn Face contains significant areas of natural tussock. This will be contributing substantially to the base flow in the Lowburn in summer months, and as such, this deserves protection for this ecosystem service value. This water yield value will have an economic value for downstream water users.

A conservation covenant relating to tussock height and condition may be the most appropriate form of protection.

The alpine wetlands on the summit plateau will also contribute to the base flow in rivers. These wetlands are now classed as Regionally Significant Wetlands, under the Otago Regional Plan:Water, as a result of plan change 2, which was adopted in 2011. This should be noted as part of the review process.

#### *4.2 Access Views*

Fish and Game recommends that public access easements created over land identified for freeholding accommodate hunter access from public roads to higher altitude conservation land. We wish to see the existing legal road that roughly follows the formation of the Cardrona Cromwell Pack Track realigned to the pack track boundary, or, failing this, an easement placed on the existing formation to provide guaranteed foot access for hunters with dogs.

There are three existing legal roads that bisect the lease and which would allow suitable access to other areas within the property and beyond the property. These are, from west to east, the Cardrona-Roaring Meg Pack Track, a road extending north from Mt Michael (and south to the state highway), and a continuation of Swann Road extending approximately west-northwest across the lease. It is our understand that the roads across the lease are signposted and available for foot access. The Roaring Meg Road has a locked gate placed across it above the state highway by its manager, Pioneer Generation Ltd.

Dated: Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Signed

Peter Wilson  
Environmental Officer  
Otago Fish and Game Council