Toitu te Land whenua Information New Zealand

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name : CattleFlat (Otago)

Lease number : Po 352

Conservation resources report

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.

The report attached is released under the Official Information Act 1982.

Copied November 2002

CONSERVATION RESOURCES REPORT

FOR THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS

CATTLE FLAT PASTORAL LEASE

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PART 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The lessee of Cattle Flat pastoral lease has applied to the Commissioner of Crown Lands for a review of the property's pastoral lease tenure.

Cattle Flat pastoral lease (4260 hectares) is located 24 km from Wanaka township on the Wanaka - Mount Aspiring road. The property lies on the eastern flanks of the Harris Mountains above the Matukituki River, and incorporates some 400 hectares of river flats. A number of minor catchments, flow through the property from the crest of the Harris Mountains to the Matukituki and Motatapu Rivers which form the eastern boundary. The southern bank of the Carmel Burn forms much of the northern property boundary. The current boundaries date back to 1983 when the property was split from the neighbouring Matukituki pastoral lease. At the time of subdivision an area known as the Little Big Boggy Burn wetland (3 ha) was removed and fenced from the lease and is now protected as a conservation area. A run plan for the property was completed in 1977 prior to subdivision. This plan did not involve retirement of land. The extent of the property is depicted on Map 1 (appendix).

Treble Cone ski field was surrendered from the lease in 1971 although this action was not registered on the title until 1974. The area is currently conservation land subject to a special lease under Section 67(2) Land Act. In 1987 the access road to Treble Cone Skifield was surrendered out of the pastoral lease and is currently Crown Land subject to a special lease to Treble Cone Skifield under Section 67(2) Land Act (1948). The land is in the final stages of gazzettal as conservation land.

The property is in the Lakes Ecological Region and the Wanaka Ecological District. No Protected Natural Areas survey (PNA) of the ecological district has been carried out. In 1985 when several pastoral lease renewals were conducted in the area, an informal document titled "Known Biological Values of the Wanaka Ecological District" was compiled by the Department of Lands and Survey. This report did not cover Cattle Flat pastoral lease. A variety of specialists from the Department of Conservation visited this property in February 1997 as part of this tenure review exercise.

PART 2

CONSERVATION RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

2.1. LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The property comprises steep north and east facing mountain slopes and river flats within the Matukituki and Motatapu Valleys from the Carmel Burn in the north to End Peak in the south.

Mountain Slopes

The mountain slopes are characterised by steeply dipping schist with very rugged rock outcrops and bluffs evident at all elevations. Other features include spectacular glacial landforms, e.g. ice plucked slopes, mammalated landforms and cirques. The mountain faces also exhibit extensive areas of downward creep, boulderfields and slot gorges.

Upper mountain slopes (above 1100 metres) support snow and alpine grassland herbfield, fellfield and scree. Below 1100 metres (approximately) is highly modified with predominately fern and pasture, with beech confined to tight gorges and gullies. Some lower shrubland areas have survived and are attempting to regenerate in places.

A narrow prominent arm of ice sculptured rock extends out from the base of the main range (south of the Carmel Burn) and is a significant feature.

Visually impressive peaks and alpine basins occur along the range, perhaps most notably Treble Cone and End Peak.

The Treble Cone Skifield Road has left a scar visible from many areas. Over the years, however, this has healed to the extent that its impact is not that great by comparison to some other skifield roads.

South of the Skifield Road, Twin Falls is a prominent feature.

The whole of the mountain slopes are of grand proportions and visually very impressive. It is not possible to highlight any one area as more significant than another - the whole is important.

Evaluation

Intactness:-	High above approximately 1100 metres
	Low below 1100 metres
Coherence:-	Moderately High
	Vegetation modification on lower slopes reduces overall level of coherence
Distinctiveness:-	Highly distinctive
	Scale, grandeur, schist basement rock contribute to distinctiveness
Visibility:-	High
Significance:-	High. Spectacular example of glaciated landform in an area that receives high public use

Flats

The flats comprise fans and alluvial valley fill on the true right of the Matukituki River. Areas of wetland on the northern most flats have mostly been drained and converted to farmland, although isolated pockets of wetlands remain in places (matooned backswamp areas) and scattered matagouri. The wetlands are important to landscape character and identity. Bands of willow and poplar occur between the river and the Mount Aspiring Road.

The southern portion of a small enclosed basin tucked in behind the protruding ice sculptured arm (referred to above) is within the property boundaries. This is also mostly pasture.

In comparison with neighbouring Matukituki Station where the flats have been more recently intensively developed for farming, Cattle Flat is a more agriculturally mature landscape with old poplar stands, mature English trees around the homestead and Douglas fir plantations.

The Motatapu River forms the eastern boundary of Cattle Flat Station.

Active fans with matagouri are a feature near the Skifield Road.

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At the southern end of the flats adjacent to the Motatapu River are low ice shorn hills, with steep sided bluffs separated by flats. The flats have groups of poplar, willow along the river margin plus scattered matagouri, fern and briar and background views of spectacular mountains and snow clad peaks. The whole forms a grand and highly scenic landscape.

Below End Peak are a series of low terraces and sloping fans. These haven't been cultivated and are a mix of native and exotic vegetation, including short tussock, matagouri, briar and pasture grasses. The Motatapu River is willow lined and snakes across the narrow valley.

Evaluation

Intactness:-	Low apart from isolated wetland pockets and matagouri shrubland associated with fans and terraces
Coherence:-	Moderate Low level of intactness but visually quite coherent
Distinctiveness:-	Moderate Flats on their own not distinctive but in their setting are very distinctive.
Visibility:-	High
Significance:-	Low

Overall Significance of Landscape

The Wanaka Hawea Landscape Study includes Cattle Flat pastoral lease within the Matukituki Landscape unit. The whole of this unit was included in the area identified as outstanding landscape of national significance.

2.2 LANDFORMS AND GEOLOGY

(a) Topography and Landforms

The lease lies on the eastern flanks of the Harris Mountains between 290 and 2100 m.a.s.l.

The lease can be divided into three broad topographic components.

1. The Matukituki/Motatapu Flats

These flats are mostly formed from material deposited by the two major rivers which bound the property. A small area of flats at the base of the Carmel Burn have formed from the deposition of material from that catchment. A series of small fans have formed where numerous streams enter the Matukituki and Motatapu valleys from the west. These elevated fans are comprised of coarser material than the main river flats and are consequently better drained than silty soils lying close to the Matukituki River.

Prior to farm development much of the Matukituki Flats were an extensive wetland. Although most of these have now been drained, one small intact wetland remains in the north eastern corner of the property. This 3 hectare area is formally protected and fenced (Little Boggy Burn Conservation Area). Although not part of the pastoral lease, the adjoining braided river bed of the Matukituki is an integral part of the valley ecosystem.

2. East facing flanks of the Harris Mountains above the Matukituki and Motatapu Valleys.

This topographic unit comprises moderately sloping faces dissected by numerous streams sourced from the Harris Mountains. At the northern end of the property (headwaters of the Carmel Burn and an un named catchment to the south), land above 800 m.a.s.l is mostly precipitous alpine terrain with deeply incised catchments. South of Treble Cone Ski Field, terrain is generally more moderate with alpine basins reaching the crest of the Harris Mountains. Slopes below 1000 m.a.s.l vary between ice cut bluff systems and moderate colluvial and alluvial deposition slopes. Perhaps the most spectacular bluffs are in the vicinity of Twin Falls which plummet 100 metres down to the Matukituki Flats in the vicinity of the Treble Cone Skifield road turnoff. In some areas slopes are subject to large scale slumping and slipping. This feature is apparent in the vicinity of the Treble Cone road, necessitating ongoing road repairs.

3. Glacial Schist Bedrock Features between the foot of the Harris Mountains and the Matukituki/Motatapu Flats.

Between the Matukituki and Motatapu Rivers and the base of the Harris Mountains lie a series of roche moutonees shaped by Pleistocene glaciers. Where these areas of bedrock face into the direction of historic ice flows they have been rounded and smoothed, whilst the lee sides have been subject to a plucking out of joint blocks and are characterised by steep bluffs and rough bouldery terrain.

(b) Geology

The underlying bedrock is strongly deformed defoliated quartzo feldspatic schist of chlorite subzone 4. Valleys have been over-ridden by glaciers to an altitude of 1370 m.a.s.l. Fan talus occurs on the valley floors, with slumps and partly collapsed solifluction slopes apparent in some areas. The Matukituki Valley is in filled with a substantial depth of alluvial material derived from the glaciated mountains of Mount Aspiring National Park.

(c) Soils

Soils are predominantly upland and high country Yellow Brown Earths. Dunstan Steepland soils formed from schist slope deposits, bedrock and loess cover approximately 80% of the property. Soils on wetter slopes are Moonlight Steepland Soils which have been subject to more leaching and are consequently less fertile. Recent soils (Matukituki) on the Matukituki and Motatapu River flats are formed from schist alluvium. Silt and clay layers impede natural drainage in the upper Matukituki Valley, however most resulting wetlands have been drained many years ago.

Significance of Landforms and Geology

The glacial features of the Matukituki Valley are of immense scientific interest, in that they provide evidence of periodic climatic fluctuations during the Quaternary. The braided river bed of the Matukituki Valley and adjoining wetlands are special physical features which contribute to the areas unique physical character.

The high peaks and alpine terrain above 1000 m.a.s.l form an important component of the areas spectacular alpine scenery.

2.3 CLIMATE

The property is in a transition zone between the wet mountains of the Main Divide and a rain shadow to the east. Most rainfall is from the westerly quarter and increases with proximity to the Main Divide. Rainfall at the homestead is approximately 1500mm. At high altitudes annual precipitation is in excess of 2500mm, much which falls as snow. The climatic gradient and varying aspects on the property are reflected in the flora and soils.

2.4 VEGETATION

Vegetation in the three topographic units previously outlined is described below, with particular emphasis on areas which retain their natural character. From a conservation perspective the only widespread problem plant is tussock hawkweed (*Hieracium lepidulum*).

1. The Matukituki Flats

With the exception of some small wetlands and disjunct areas of modified shrubland, this topographic unit has been converted into exotic pasture.

2. East facing flanks of the Harris Mountains above the Matukituki Valley.

Below ~ 800 m.a.s.l the majority of these faces are clothed in AOSTD grasslands or a mixture of exotic grasses, herbs and bracken in various stages of regeneration. Bluff systems retain small areas of native shrublands dominated by *Olearia avicenniifolia* and *Coprosma spp.* Some areas including land near to the Treble Cone Skifield Road would rapidly revert towards a mixed shrubland in the absence of burning. Beech forest would expand from present stands in protected gullies and gorges.

Forest remnants in several catchments including the Carmel Burn, Speargrass Creek (the next catchment to the south), below Treble Cone Skifield, above Twin Falls and in the catchment which forms the southern boundary to the property comprise mountain beech (*Nothofagus solandri var cliffortioides*), silver beech (*Nothofagus menziesii)*, red beech (*Nothofagus fusca),* mountain flax (*Phormium cookanum*), fuchsia (*Fuchsia exorticata),* pepperwood (*Pseudowintera colorata),* broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis)* and mountain ribbonwood (*Hoheria lyallii*). Prickly shield fern (*Polystichum vestitum)* is common at ground level. Several forest remnants, including an area below Treble Cone skifield are surrounded by an apron of regenerating beech saplings. Tussock hawkweed (*Hieracium lepidulum*) is common in and around forested areas.

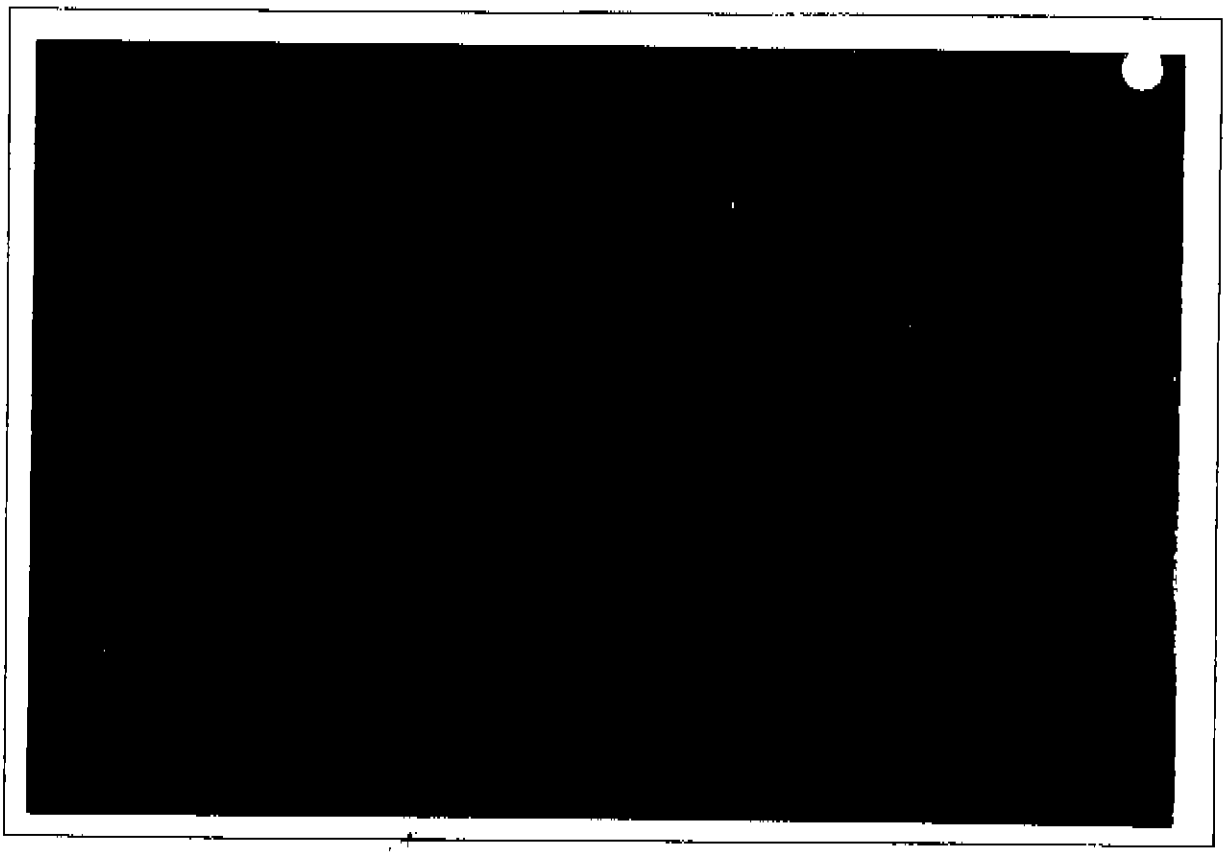

Photo 1. Beech Forest Remnant with Mountain Ribbonwood in Gully

Between 800 and 1000 m.a.s.l narrow leaved snow tussock (*Chionochloa rigida*) gradually becomes the dominant species. Above 1000 m.a.s.l narrow leaved snow tussock grasslands are home to a diverse range of native species including snowberry (*Gaultheria antipoda*), blue tussock (*Poa colensoi*), sedge tussock (*Shoenus pauciflorus*) patotara (*Leucopogon fraseri*), everlasting daisy (*Helichrysum filicaulae*) tauhinu (*Cassinia leptophylla*) and *Pimelea oreophila* shrubs. In flushes *Leonohebe pauciramosa* is common.

In the vicinity of 1200 m.a.s.l narrow leaved snow tussock gives way to slim leaved snow tussock (*Chionochloa macra*). False Spaniard (*Celmisia lyallii*) is the most common secondary species. The large Spaniard (*Aciphylla horrida*) is scattered at lower levels, whilst at high altitude *Aciphylla kirkii* is common. In other respects grasslands between ~1200 and ~ 1750 m.a.s.l are quite uniform although exposed rock becomes more prevalent with altitude. Wetlands including tarns are found on benches between 1750-1830 m. Typical wetland species present are plants in the genera *Oreobolus*, *Ranunculus*, *Plantago* and *Epilobium*.

At high altitudes vegetation forms an alpine fellfield. The summit ridge from End Peak northwards towards Treble Cone is a mosaic of bare schist rock pavement and short vegetation. Cushion plants, including *Raoulia hectorii*, *Phyllachne colensoi* and *Dracophyllum muscoides* are abundant

together with areas of low grasses including slim leaved snow tussock, *Kelleria cheesemanii* and *Trisetum spicatum*. Depressions immediately below the summit ridge support snowbank cushion vegetation including *Kelleria croizatii*, *Raoulia subulata* and *Anisotome imbricata*. Clumps of the small speargrass *Aciphylla montana* are abundant. Rockier areas are characterised by low shrubs of *Leonohebe hectorii*, *Hebe buchananii* and *Pimelea oreophila*.

Photo 2. Slim leaved snow tussock with *Aciphylla kirkii* (foreground) south of Treble Cone.

3. Glacial Schist Bedrock Features between the foot of the Harris Mountains and the Matukituki/Motatapu Flats.

Most of this topographic unit has been developed into AOSTD pasture or is a mixture of exotic grasses and herbs and bracken subject to periodic burning. The degree of regeneration into bracken is closely correlated to slope angle and blockiness of terrain. Some small pockets of native shrubland remain on bluffy areas.

Significance of Vegetation

Pristine and semi-pristine alpine and montane vegetation is of high conservation value.

The low to mid altitude portion of the property has been heavily modified through burning, AOSTD, wetland drainage and cultivation. Some areas which would revert towards a native state in the absence of burning are of high potential conservation value. Country surrounding the Treble Cone Road falls into this category.

2.5 FAUNA

(a) Invertebrate Values

No previous entomological survey of this area has been carried out on the property.

High Alpine zone

This zone is important for insects. Large-bodied weevils are a particular feature. The giant weevil *Lyperobius spedeni* (26 mm long) was found on *Aciphylla* and *Anisotome* species above 1900 m altitude. A possible new species of black and metallic-blue weevil (13 mm long) was found to be locally common at 2050 m in sparsely vegetated depressions of a sandy loam on cushions of *Raoulia subulata*. A variety of much smaller weevils and lygaeid bugs were also numerous on cushion plants in this zone.

Dark-coloured diurnal moths and the alpine black butterfly *Percnodaimon merula* were seen flying over the fellfield and surrounding steep screes. Moths included the stout *Tawhitia glaucophanes*, *Tauroscopa gorgopis* and *Aponotoreas orphnaea*.

The black flightless bug *Hypsithocus hudsonae* is known from only five alpine areas, all in Otago and is listed as a Category I (Indeterminate status) in Molloy and Davis's (1994) review of threatened species. The species was found from 1830-1955 m.a.s.l close to End Peak and is a significant range extension and conservation find. Everywhere at high altitude the small noisy black cicada *Maoricicada nigra* was found together with the elegant geometrid moths *Dasyuris austrina* and orange *D. catadees*.

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A rare plume moth *Stenoptilla lithoxesta* was to be found locally common around *Hebe buchananii* at 1950 m. This is the best site to date for the species.

Tussocklands

Small streams criss-cross these areas and are home to some significant aquatic insects. These streams are in good condition and support many aquatic invertebrates, including New Zealand's only scorpionfly, a suite of stoners in the genus *Zelandobius*, the largest New Zealand stoner *Holcoperla magna* (a western Otago endemic), the rarely collected caddis *Triphobiosis fulva*, *T. montana* and *Hydroblosella tonela*. Nearby rock faces support a rare geometrid moth *Helastia salmoni* (endemic to western Otago alpine areas), known from only three localities, including the Humboldt Mountains, the type locality.

Mirid bugs are common on shrubs whereas the tiny *Kiwianiris niger* inhabits grasses.

Significance of Invertebrates

The fellfield areas on the summit ridges, screes, wetlands, snowbanks and grassland slopes are of high conservation value for insect fauna. Several significant species are found in these systems including some potentially threatened species, uncommon species and a possible new species of weevil.

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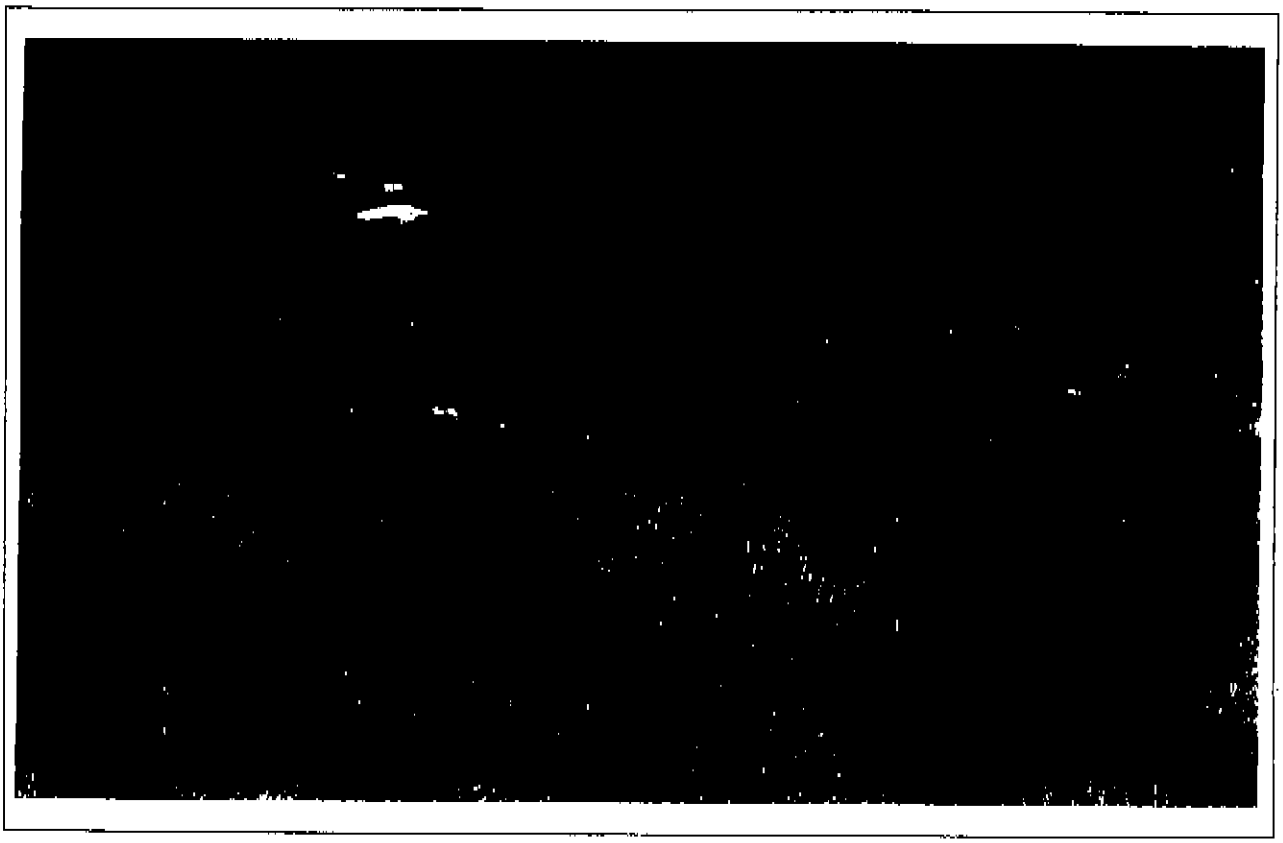

Photo 3. Diverse snow hollows, wetlands, herbfields and grasslands below End Peak. These areas support a diverse range of native insects.

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Photo 4. A new species of weevil in the genus Sargon pictured on *Raoulia subulata* at 2050 m.a.s.l on End Peak.

(b) Vertebrate Values

Avi Fauna:

Birds observed in various habitats during the tenure review survey are listed below according to habitat.

Open Mountain Slopes and High Valleys.

New Zealand Falcon, Kea.

Bush and shrublands:

Bell birds, grey warblers, fan tails and yellow breasted tom tits.

Braided River System on margin of pastoral lease:

The braided river system provides roosting and feeding habitat for a range of water fowl including the introduced mallard, Canada goose and the NZ shoveller, paradise shellduck , pied and black shag. These species are dependant on nearby swamps and ponds for feeding moulting and nesting purposes.

Significance of Avi Fauna:

Bush and shrubland remnants provide an important extension of habitat and food source for many bird species which are otherwise confined to the large forested areas in and adjoining Mount Aspiring National Park. The New Zealand falcon and kea are category B threatened species and as such are an important record.

(c) Aquatic Fauna

A comprehensive fish survey was conducted as part of the tenure review inspection. The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (N.I.W.A) fish data base contains no records for any of the numerous creeks which flow through the property. The mid reaches of the Carmel Burn, where reasonable numbers of juvenile and the odd adult koaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*) were found, was the only stream on the property to yield native fish. Construction of stream channels in the lower reaches of many streams appears to have destroyed fish habitat.

Stockyard Creek contained no fish, whilst brown trout were present in unnamed creek (Map Ref F40 GR 870 133) and Twin Falls Creek.

Significance of Aquatic Fauna:

Whilst koaro is a category C fish species (third priority for conservation protection) the population in the Carmel Burn is small in comparison to populations in a number of other streams in the Wanaka Ecological District.

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(d) Introduced Mammals

Chamois are present above 1000m.a.s.l and cause considerable damage to native vegetation at high altitudes. Goats are also a problem and have been the subject of DOC control programme. Localised hare damage is also apparent.

2.6 HISTORIC VALUES

There are no recorded archaeological sites on Cattle Flat. However the historic Maori village of Nehenehe was located at the mouth of the Motatapu River. Maori ovens were visible here in the 1860s but their location is now lost (Anderson 1986:20). It is not known on what side of the river Nehenehe was located. A brief survey of the Cattle Flat side revealed no sign of the site.

Maori Occupation: According to Anderson (1980:7) Lakes Wanaka and Hawea were customarily used by the people based on the lower Waitaki in the late historic and early historic period. In 1836 when the war party of northern Maori led by Te Puoho (Anderson 1986:17-26) passed through the area there were settlements at Makarora, the Neck (between the two lakes), at the southern end of Lake Hawea, between Roys Bay and Dublin Bay on Lake Wanaka and Nehenehe where the Motatapu entered the Matukituki (although at the time of the raid Nehenehe wasn't occupied). These sites were usually occupied seasonally while people gathered eels, ducks, wekas, fern root etc. During the 19th century the introduced potato was also being cultivated in some areas (ibid.:18).

Early European History: The first European to reach the lakes was Nathaniel Chalmers who set out to visit the interior via the Mataura valley guided by two Maori, Reko and Kaikoura (Roxburgh 1977:24-25). John T Thomson, the Provincial Surveyor, was the first European to use the Lindis Pass. In December 1857 he crossed the pass from the Waitaki valley and climbed Mt. Grandview. From the summit he was able to see from the lakes to the Cromwell Gorge (ibid.:33-34). He was quickly followed by pastoralists seeking grazing lands. The first run taken up at Wanaka was by Robert Wilkin in 1858 who had his homestead at what is now Albert Town (ibid.28-29). The following year John Roy and H S Thomson arrived at the lake. Roy took up land around the lake up to the Matukituki and Motatapu rivers while Thomson occupied the land along the west of the lake north of the Matukituki.

By the late 1880s the big sheep runs around the lake were beginning to suffer from the rabbit plague, falling wool prices, and falling production due to declining grazing because of the destruction of the native grass cover.

2.7 PUBLIC RECREATION

2.7.1 Physical Characteristics

Cattle Flat pastoral lease provides a scenic backdrop to those pursuing recreational activities in numerous locations, including driving up the Wanaka - Mt Aspiring Road and rock climbing on bluffs on and near the property. High altitude parts of the property are visible from Wanaka.

Alpine scenery along the crest of the Harris Mountains is spectacular, especially in the headwaters of the Carmel Burn and in the unnamed catchment to the south, where alpine terrain is as impressive as adjoining conservation lands and nearby Mount Aspiring National Park.

Gorges in the lower reaches of the Carmel Burn and in the unnamed catchment to the south are deep, narrow and spectacular.

2.7.2 Public Access

(a) Marginal strips

The Matukituki and Motatapu Rivers are subject to Section 58 (Land Act) Marginal Strips. The lower Carmel Burn, Speargrass Creek (also referred to as Emerald Creek) and unnamed creek (below Twin Falls) immediately adjacent to the base of the Treble Cone road are subject to marginal strips under Part IVA Conservation Act.

(b) Roads

The only public road on the property is the Wanaka - Aspiring Road which enters the property from the south at the Motatapu Bridge and exits from the north at the north eastern property boundary.

The Treble Cone ski field road has been surrendered from the lease and until gazettal as a conservation area is subject to a Section 67(2) Land Act Special Lease. Asides from safety, or reasons of misconduct the skifield (lessee) may not exclude the public from using the road (subject to paying a road toll) between 1 May and 30 September. Pedestrian access is free over this time. These dates can only be varied with written agreement from the lessees of Cattle Flat pastoral lease.

(c) Easements

There are no access easements registered against the pastoral lease.

2.7.3 Activities

From a recreation perspective this area is attractive in that the weather is drier and more settled than in the mountains closer to the Main Divide in Mount Aspiring National Park

The Treble Cone Ski Field was part of the property (prior to surrender in 1971). Visitors to Treble Cone drive through part of the pastoral lease to access the car park. Faces at the head of Stockyard Creek within Cattle Flat pastoral lease are regularly skied from the field. This area is effectively served by Treble Cone ski lifts.

Treble Cone Ski Field and surrounding areas within Cattle Flat pastoral lease are quite popular for walks outside of the ski season, although public access up the road is not available as of right during summer months. The ski field provides easy foot access to the Crest of the Harris Mountains and into the headwaters of the north Branch of the Motatapu River. Although not within the pastoral lease it is worth mentioning that the Treble Cone Road is utilised for mountain biking and as an access route and launching site for parapenting and hang gliding.

A popular and ever increasing recreational activity is rock climbing on two series of bluffs near the Wanaka - Mount Aspiring Road. 'Roadside Attraction' as it has been named by climbers, is located 150 metres up from the Motatapu Bridge on the eastern side of the road. This site is one of two original climbing areas in the district, with the first named route being climbed in 1983 (see Map 2b - appended). The area is deer fenced from the road. Ladders have been constructed to provide access. As of 1994, 23 named routes had been established ranging from grade 15 to 28. Most of these routes are bolted.

A second area referred to by climbers as 'Riverside' is located 100 metres upstream from the Motatapu Bridge and extends for a considerable distance upstream. While this area has only been established since 1995, it has rapidly become extremely popular due to the range of climbs available. Some of this area is located within a 20 metre marginal strip on the western bank of the Motatapu River.

Rock climbers have permission to access both areas from the lessees of Cattle Flat Station without seeking specific permission on each occasion. Numbers of rock climbers are steadily increasing.

The Wanaka Rock Climbing Club has developed a code of ethics concerning access, disturbance of stock etc. The club has liased with local lessees and the Department of Conservation.

The lessee currently holds a recreation permit over the whole pastoral lease for heli-skiing, heli-hiking and canyoning (Emerald Creek). The Recreation Permit is for a period of 5 years from 1st May 1995. The lessee owns and operates a helicopter for a range of purpose including transporting recreationists.

A picnic area near the Motatapu Bridge is a very popular spot during summer months. Legal public use of the area is currently confined to a 20 metre marginal strip.

Major streams are occasionally fished for trout. The Little Boggy Burn wetland is utilised for game bird hunting. Some duck shooting occurs along the entire length of the Matukituki River.

Significance of Recreational Values

Few properties contain such a range of high quality recreational activities in a spectacular natural setting.

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PART 3

CONSULTATION AND DISTRICT PLANS

3.1 CONSULTATION

An "early warning" meeting was held in Alexandra on the 30 April 1997.

A summary of points raised is as follows:

- High altitude areas to be restored to full Crown ownership as public conservation estate.
- Fern faces identified as having high conservation value on the basis that in the absence of burning, they will rapidly revert towards a native vegetation cover. FMC suggested that the lower faces should be retained in Crown ownership and leased back for grazing.
- Need for public access onto End Peak.

Written material supplied by Federated Mountain Clubs is appended.

3.2 DISTRICT PLAN (MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE)

Cattle Flat pastoral lease is situated in Queenstown Lakes District. The property is subject to the provisions of two planning documents; the Lakes Queenstown Wakatipu Section of the Queenstown Lakes Transitional District Plan and the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan. The transitional district plan remains the principle planning document at the present time. However, both documents are used when assessing activities involving the use of natural and physical resources in the district.

Under the provisions of the transitional district plan, the lower reaches of the property are zoned Rural B. The Rural B zone is a general rural zone which contains areas suitable for pastoral farming.

Permitted activities for the Rural B zone include:

- farming of any kind (and associated dwelling houses);
- horticulture;
- farm forestry for soil conservation purposes;
- parks and reserves and
- landing and takeoff strips for aircraft.

Controlled activities for the zone include:

- buildings other than dwelling houses on sites greater that 20ha (which are permitted activities) or on allotments created under certain circumstances prior to 1996; and,
- stalls for sale of produce.

Discretionary activities include:

- rural industries;
- camping grounds, halls and buildings and land for or connected with indoor and outdoor recreation;
- communications equipment;
- tourist accommodation;
- Hut sites and associated tracks; and,
- Commercial forestry

Subdivision is a discretionary activity for the Rural B zone and is limited to allotments of 20 ha or greater. Smaller allotments will be non-complying as is subdivision of areas of landscape importance except for allotments created for access, utilities, roads or reserves.

The balance of the property (mainly high altitude areas) not zoned Rural B in the transitional district plan is zoned Rural C.

Permitted uses in this zone include:

- the retirement of land for water and soil conservation purposes;
- scenic, nature and scientific reserves;
- forestry or revegetation for conservation or recreation purposes; and,
- periodic grazing.

Farming can take place with the prior approval of Council (which effectively makes it a controlled activity). Commercial forestry, tourist facilities, buildings, huts and tracks are discretionary activities. Subdivision is the same as for the Rural A zone.

Under the provisions of the proposed district plan, the entire property is zoned Rural Uplands. In addition, the portion of the property readily visible from the Wanaka - Aspiring road has also been identified as being an "Area of Landscape Importance".

In managing the use of natural and physical resources in the district, the plan seeks to implement a number of objectives and policies that relate specifically to rural areas including measures to:

- maintain and enhance nature conservation values;
- protect rural amenity values;
- safeguard the natural character and conservation values of riparian margins and associated ecosystems; and,
- encourage the retention and enhancement of wetlands and vegetation adjacent to and associated with waterbodies.

Buildings, earthworks, tree planting and mineral exploration are among the activities included in the plan as controlled activities within the Rural Uplands zone. However, these activities generally become discretionary if they are to be undertaken within the areas of landscape importance, and are generally required to meet and satisfy more rigorous environmental outcomes. Other discretionary activities in the Rural Uplands zone include mining and commercial recreation. Power generation facilities are non-complying.

It is intended that Council will process a significant percentage of resource consent applications for controlled and discretionary activities as non-notified applications.

The proposed plan also contains a schedule of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and habitat of indigenous fauna. The braided bed of the Matukituki River is included in the schedule. Council will test resource consent applications against the sites identified in the schedule and determine whether or not there will be any potential adverse effects on the values associated with each site. The status of an activity can change as a result of its actual and potential effects on a site identified in the schedule as being significant and Council will be required to take extra care to ensure that any of those effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

The plan is currently at the public hearing stage with decisions scheduled to be released early 1998. It is likely that some provisions currently contained in the proposed plan will alter as a result of decisions made by the Council's hearings panel.

3.3 CONSERVANCY CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Otago Conservancy of DOC has prepared a draft Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) which is nearing final approval.

The draft CMS identifies 41 special places of conservation interest in Otago Conservancy. Cattle Flat pastoral lease lies within the Matukituki Special Place (Special Place #34).

The North Motatapu Conservation Area Conservation Area (2620 ha) which adjoins Matukituki pastoral lease is part of the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area. The property bounds with the Treble Cone Ski Field which is subject to Section 62 Conservation Act.

The draft CMS objective for the Matukituki Special Place is :

"To protect the high landscape and ecological values of this major access corridor and buffer to Mount Aspiring National Park and provide for an appropriate range of recreational uses compatible with the character of the valley and surrounding mountains and with the maintenance of high quality visitor experiences.

The key implementation methods relevant to Matukituki pastoral lease are :

- An increase in the area of wetland under formal protection will be sought (f).

- Building controls and sensitive use of the valley will be advocated to protect the high landscape values (k).

- A freshwater fisheries survey will be carried out (n).

- Opportunities that may arise through pastoral lease tenure reviews, will be used to negotiate for the protection of areas of high landscape and biological importance and to secure recreational access to valued areas and to lead to more efficient or effective conservation management (v).

- Advocacy under the Resource Management Act and any other relevant statute will be maintained to secure protection of significant natural and historic resources (ca).

The draft CMS states that it will be a priority to improve "the security of and opportunities for enhanced public enjoyment of this Special Place".

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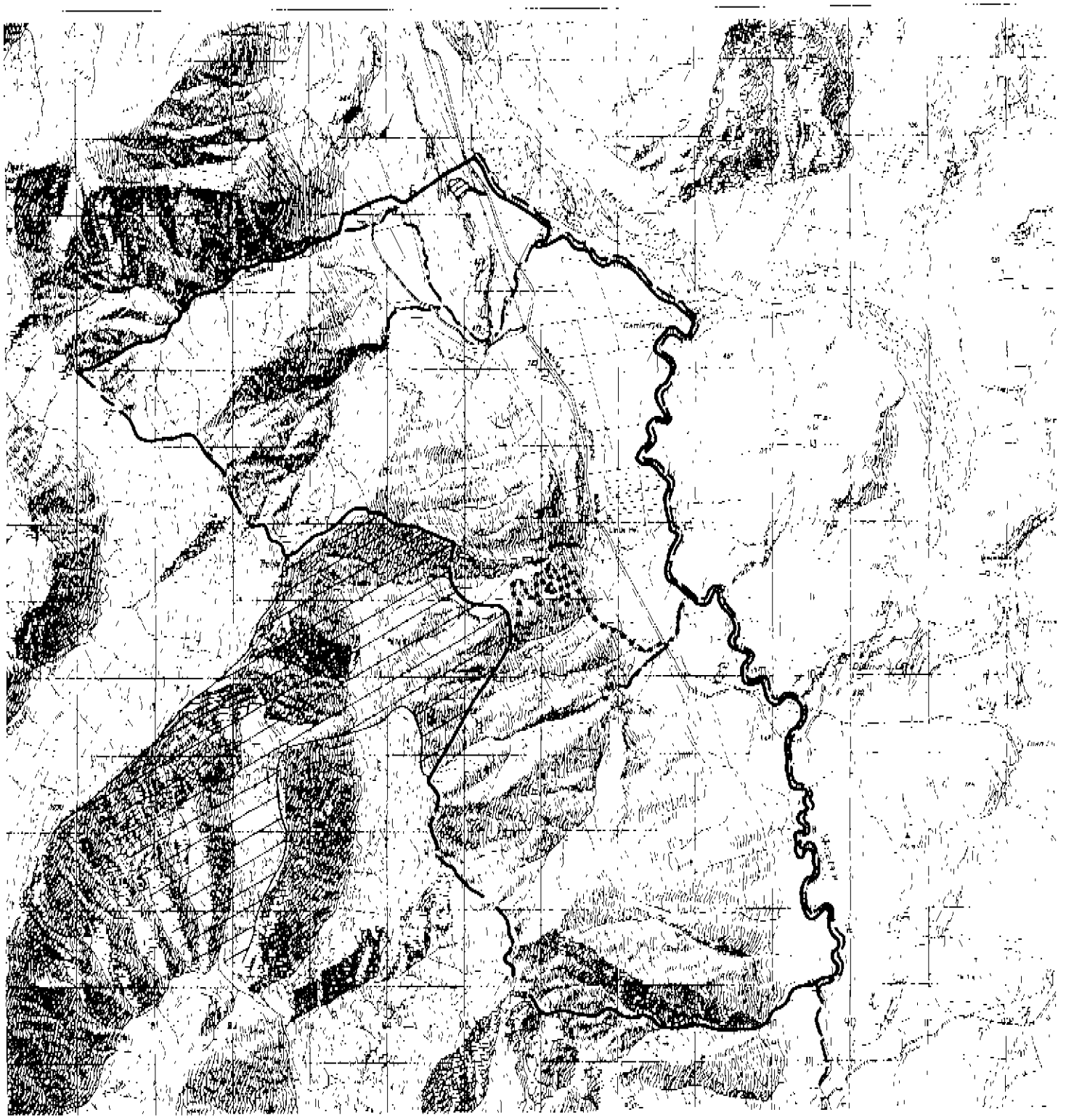

CATTLE FLAT

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Map 1 : Cadastral

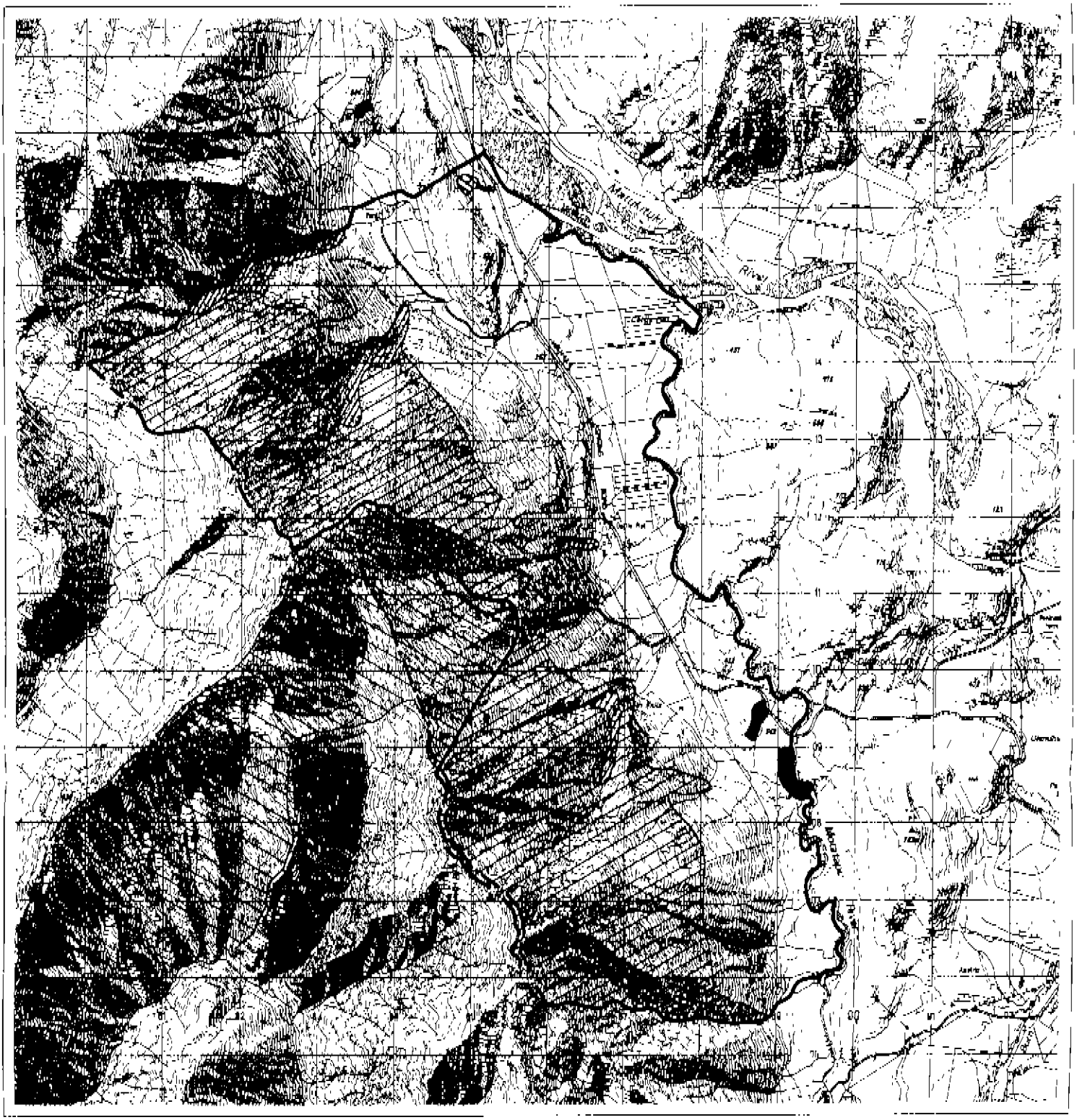
Pastoral Lease boundary

Freble Cone Skifield road (Special lease Sec 67(2) Land Act (Conservation Land)

Conservation Land

Movable marginal strips (Part IV Conservation Act 1987)

Marginal Strips (Sec 58 Land Act 1948)



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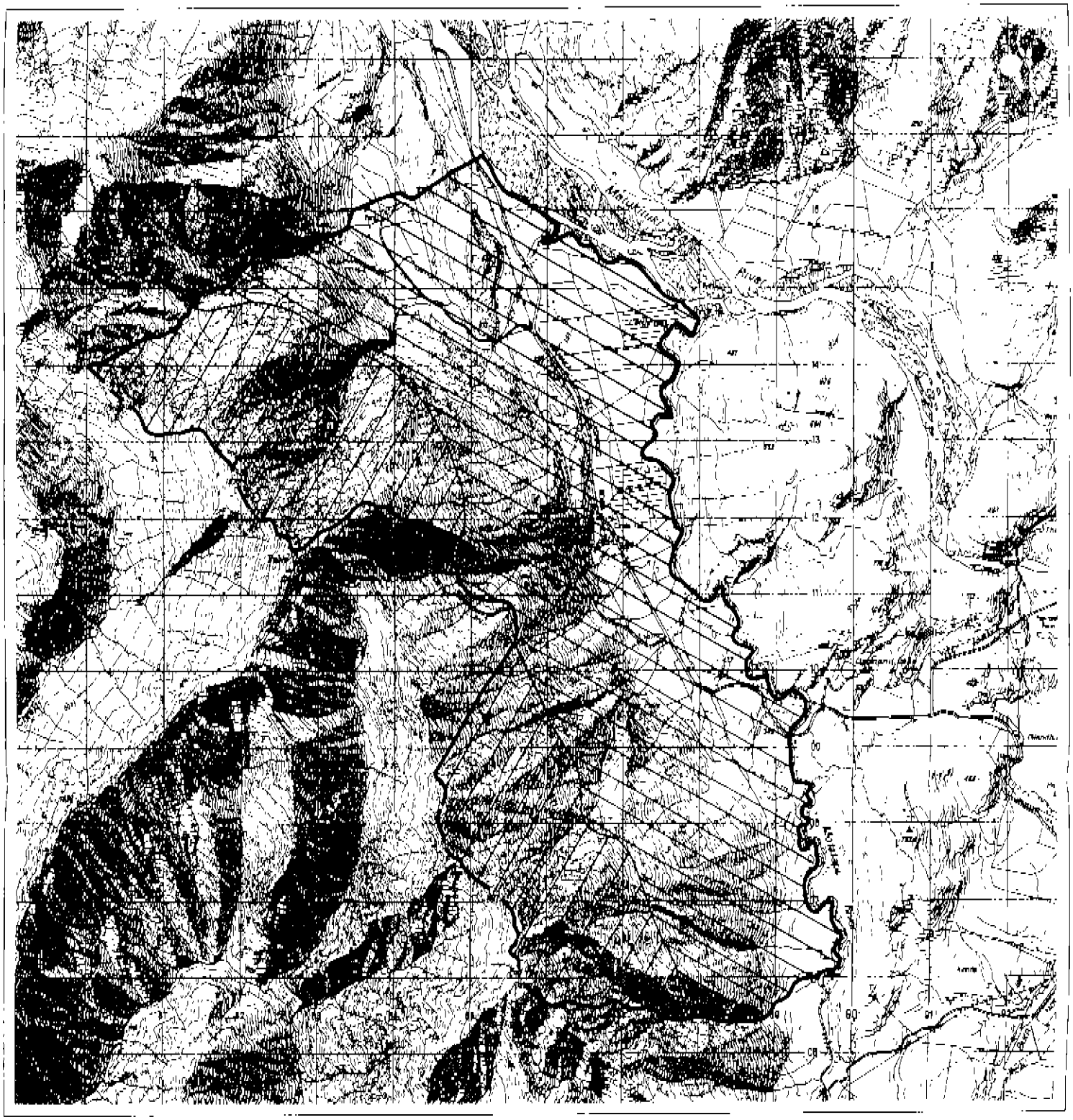
Map 2a : Conservation Values - Biological and Recreational

- Beech forest remnant
- Alpine shrublands, grasslands and herbfields
- Adjoining conservation lands
- Popular rock climbing areas
- Route of recreational importance
- Treble Cone Skifield road



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MAP 2b - Conservation Values : Landscape

Area of high landscape value
Natural and cultural component

Area of high landscape value
Natural

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