

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name : CLOUDY PEAK

Lease number : PO 104

Conservation Resources Report - Part 6

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 SIX: Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand
Incorporates - Submission**

ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED

Upper Clutha Branch
PO Box 38
LAKE HAWEA

9th July 2003

Mr T Perrett
Manager
Tenure Review Programme
Department of Conservation
Lower Stuart Street
DUNEDIN

DEPT OF CONSERVATION
OTAGO CONSERVANCY
12 JUL 2003
RECEIVED

CONS	
A.M.	
C.R.M.	
B.S.M.	
T.S.M.	
H.R.A.	
H.C.T.R.M.	Dubie
K.A.M.	Tim
OTHER	

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Dear Tony

CLOUDY PEAKS
TENURE REVIEW - EARLY WARNING REPORT

This property was brought to our attention and discussed at the early warning meeting held in Alexandra on 19th September 2002. It was again discussed at the NGO meeting on 22nd May 2003. This report was compiled from some information gained at these meetings and an inspection carried out during the summer of this year.

We wish to thank Mr Anderson for allowing us to do so.

We would be pleased if you would take into consideration the issues we consider of importance and our comments on them when you make your own report to the Commissioner of Crown Lands as required under *Section 26 Consultation (3) - Part 2 of Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998*.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing us to have input at this stage of the tenure review process.

1. GENERAL;

- Cloudy Peak situated as it is on the southeastern side of the Lindis valley, together with two other properties, Ardgour to the south and Cluden to the north, appear to have a climate of their own.
- This side of the Lindis valley, which lies to the sun, has become in some parts degraded over 150 years, due to fire, rabbits, drought and haeracium. Rabbits could be a problem at the present time.
- For some reason it carries a lot more *Olearia odorata* than the properties both to the north and south. This has yet to be fully explained but it is considered to be due to an unusual set of managerial and climatic circumstances occurring some years ago. In places this plant it is more abundant than matagouri.
- The property is divided into three main catchments: Wainui Creek on the north side - which has a branch south of it which is equally as large as the main branch - and Dry Creek in the south.
- Dry Creek in the south is the south boundary and, the ridge north of Wainui Creek, is the north boundary.

2. PASTURE AND GROUND COVER:

- The property has been at times over-sown and aerial top-dressed up to about 1000/1200 masl.
- The dominant exotic grasses seen were sweet vernal and brown top. There are odd small patches of silver tussock on some of the lower sunny faces.
- There is heavy infestation of thistles on some of the dry sunny faces.

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- The tall tussock (although sparse and in no places heavy) comes in at about above 1100 masl; although a little lower on the dark faces.
- There is blue tussock in among the tall tussock and in and near sheep camps.
- The amount of *Olearia odorata* on the property is a cause of concern to the lessee. It, in places dominates matagouri and sweet briar. To develop or hold pasture it has to be aerial sprayed, and or burnt. This practice, even if followed by over-sowing and top-dressing, may not be ecologically sustainable. The darker sides, or faces, of the ridges carry most of the woody plants.
- The matagouri on the place seems healthy enough and its leaves are quite large. There not many young matagouri plants coming on as we would expect to see if the country was heavily top-dressed. Whereas many young *Olearia* plants were seen.
- *Olearia*, sweet briar and matagouri are the dominant woody plants. They extend up to about about 600 masl and even higher in some of the gullies.
- In parts of the lower catchments of Wainui and Dry Creeks these shrubs may occupy over 50% of the ground – see Photo (1).
- The lower parts of the *Olearia* are browsed. It is noted that under the larger matagouri trees the ground cover is better and carries more grass or herbs.
- Following Dry Creek to its source, where it turns from south east to northeast and the valley narrows – see Photo (2); the variety of woody vegetation is added to by the presence of bush lawyer, *Coprosma* and *Muehlenbeckia*. The cover is less modified from here on up the creek.
- Near the top of Cloudy Peak itself, above about 1200 masl, the vegetation becomes more diverse and alpine. *Cassinia*, *Dracophyllum*, *Celmisia*, spaniards, mosses, lichens, and some boggy areas. We believe Cloudy Peak to be very well named and the cloud it draws helps retain this alpine vegetation, especially on the south and eastern side.

3. THE LANDSCAPE:

- The overall landscape on Cloudy Peak itself is typical of the Lindis valley area. When it is added to the north Dunstan Range of mountains it becomes an outstanding feature. Cloudy Peak is the highest point on the south end of the range before it drops down to Thomsons saddle. The Dunstons are the backdrop to the Ardgour valley.
- Seen from a distance the change in colour of the exotic and short tussock grasslands to tall tussock is a feature of this landscape.
- Some of the rocky outcrops below and north of Mt Kamaka, above Dry Creek, and along to Cloudy Peak evoke comment as they are spectacular.

4. ACCESS:

- It was suggested at the early warning meeting that access be provided from the Ardgour valley road to Cloudy Peak itself. This is the most direct route to that peak and would be starting from the road just south of the homestead, then up Wainui Creek – which will have a marginal strip laid off – then up the Centre Spur. This would be a 10-12k, walk unless vehicles were allowed in part of the way.
- When the areas of conservation value from this review are added to those which came out of the Ardgour review; thus forming the North Dunstan conservation area; the shortest route to it will then be from the Thomson saddle road. Tenure review is forever and we must think that way; so we believe it will not be all that long before that road is upgraded for 2-wheel drive vehicles, certainly within the next 20 or so years. It is just over 3 ks to Mt Kamaka from Thomsons saddle, perhaps another 5 to Cloudy Peak. Also this route has the advantage of starting at just under 1000masl. The 4WD-track north from Thomsons saddle turns left and down into Ardgour after about 1k. The rest of the distance to Mt Kamaka and to a point just north of .1188 where two tracks come in from Thomsons Creek and Begg Creek is without a track. Which makes it a little different and a rather pleasant ridge walk.
- Having access by way of the two routes we mention will make an excellent round trip and could be covered in a day's walking.
- Another good walk will be from Thomsons Saddle right through to the Lindis runs via Cloudy Peak.

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Although this route will be through some freehold land this should not compromise any access to and beyond Cloudy Peak being agreed upon now.

- The route the Maoris used from the Lindis valley to the Manuherikia valley was up Dry Creek and across Thomsons Saddle. This should also be considered from an historic point of view.
- It has been brought to our attention that Contact Energy have an interest in some of the lower paddocks in the vicinity of the Ardour Valley road in this property. A detour might have to be arranged around this area for the route the Maori used.

5. LAND TO BE RETURNED TO FULL CROWN OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL:

- The land above 1200masl in and around Cloudy Peak itself has an interesting variety of vegetation and fell fields. This biodiversity has significant inherent values.
- If the headwaters of Dry Creek, from the aforementioned bend upwards, were returned to Crown ownership it would give depth to the North Dunstan Conservation Area. This valley contains some relatively intact shrublands and would be a valuable addition to that conservation area.
- The rock structures on the true left and above the head of Dry Creek have landscape value.
- The slopes to the north of Wainui Creek have vegetation worthy of protection.
- The fact that *Olearia Odorata* is so prevalent, almost a monoculture on this property, makes it of special interest. Therefore as much of it as possible should be included in the conservation area being created.

We believe these five areas, and for the reasons we have submitted, these five areas should be protected, " *...By the restoration of the land concerned to full Crown ownership and control...*"

6. LAND THAT COULD BE CONSIDER TO BE DISPOSED OF BY WAY OF FREEHOLD TITLE:

The true left of Wainui Creek from below about 1000masl, similarly the basin in the middle of the run draining into Wainui Creek from about the same altitude, and the true right of Dry Creek from below where it turns north east: we consider is capable of being economically viable and therefore ecologically sustainable and could be consider for disposal to the holder by way of freehold title.

While the above mentioned country may be considered as being degraded at present it does not follow that it will always be that way. Indications are that given the right treatment it will recover.

Where the lower country below about 500masl has been cultivated and is in smaller blocks (some of which can be irrigated), indications are that it is useful country.

7. PLAN AND LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS:

The plan shows the area we consider should be returned to " *full Crown ownership and control..*" outlined in green) That we consider could be ecologically sustainable and could be disposed of to the holder is outlined in Red.

The desirable access is shown in Blue

Photo (1) This show the density of the shrublands , say 50%or more, in Dry Creek. It is mostly *O. Odorata* and matagouri.

Photo (2) Looking into the northeastern branch of Dry Creek.

Yours faithfully



JL Turnbull and J McFarlane
For Upper Clutha Forest and Bird

4.2 PHOTOGRAPHS



Fig. 1 Dry Creek Shrublands

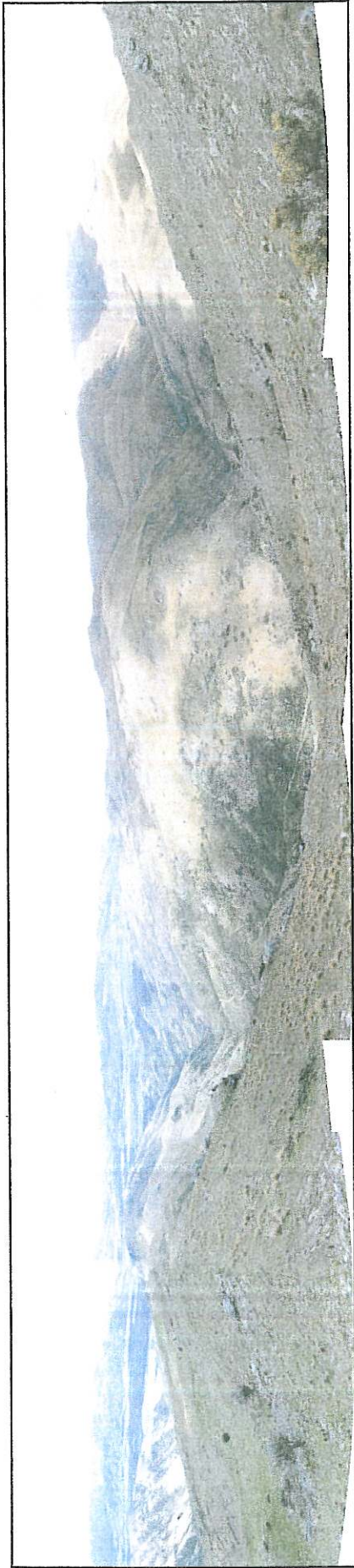


Fig. 2 Dry Creek left, tributary of Wainui Creek Centre, Centre Spur and Cloudy Peak Right.

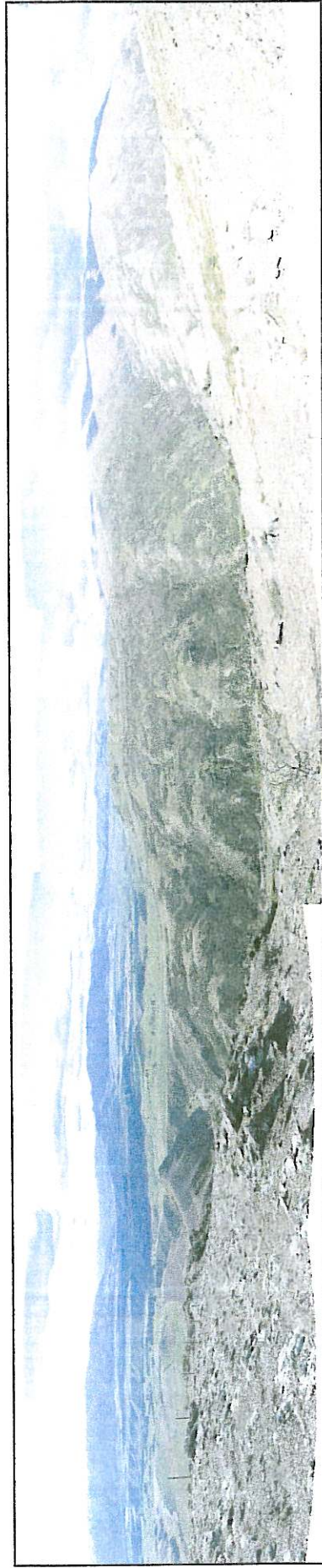


Fig. 3 Arid Sunny Slopes with bare ground. Shrubby Dark Faces of Wainui Creek

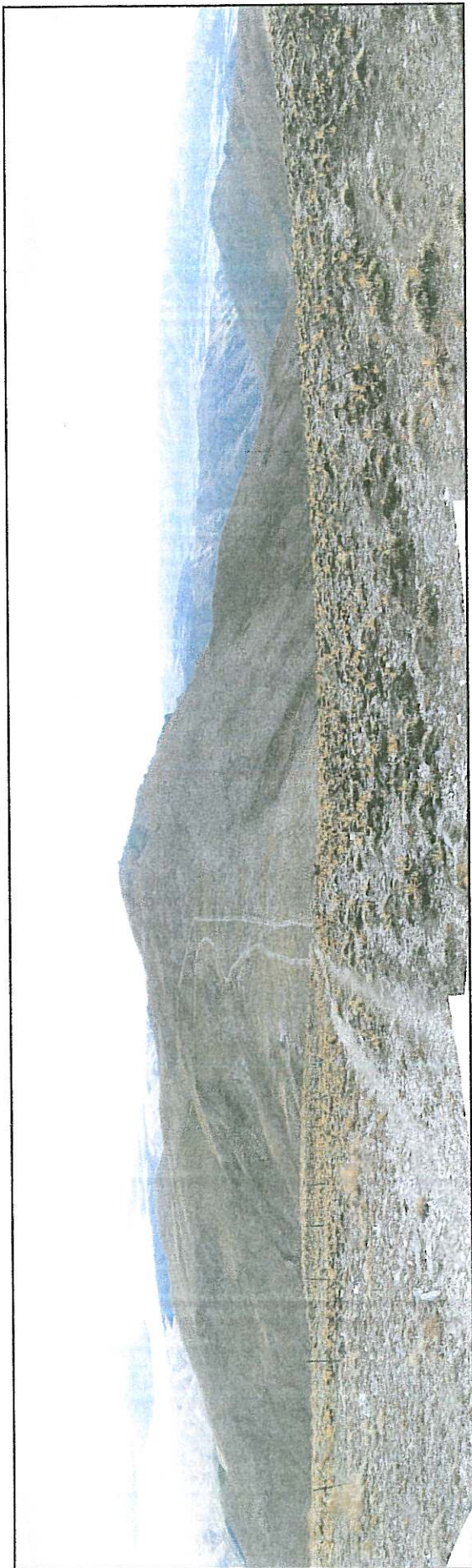


Fig. 4 Top of Dunstan Mountains (Back Boundary) – Looking towards Mt Kamaka

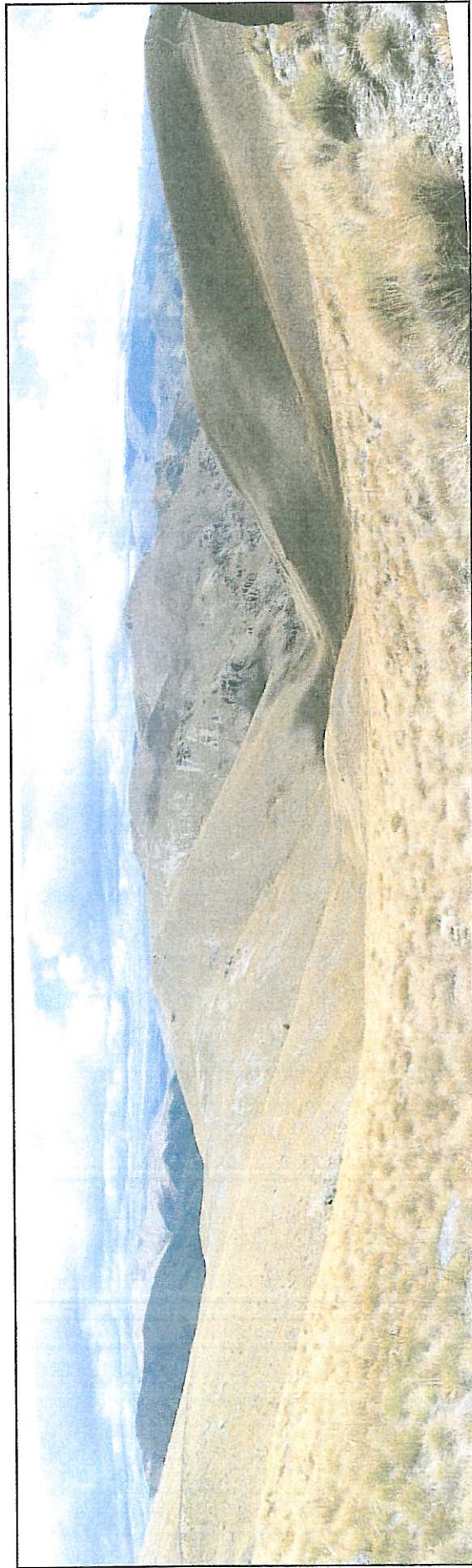


Fig. 5 Snow Tussock Basin below Cloudy Peak



Fig.6 Shrublands at the head of Dry Creek Gully



Fig. 7 Dry Creek Track – Boundary Fence on Right