

## **Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review**

**Lease name : GLENROY**

**Lease number : SO 445**

### **Conservation Resources Report - Part 2**

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.

**March 07**

Appendix 11: Written Submission Forest & Bird – Upper Clutha Branch

20th April 2006

Mr Tony Perratt  
The Manager Tenure Review  
Department of Conservation  
77 Stuart Street  
PO Box 5244  
DUNEDIN

Dear Tony

**GLENROY- An early report.**

This property was introduced to us at meeting of stake holders held in Alexandra on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2005 and again discussed at another meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

We thank you for inviting us to comment on this property: as per section 26 of the CPL Act 1998 - Consultation. We believe as the Tenure Review process is in effect the final disposition of New Zealand's pastoral land, every endeavour should be made to get it right.

Glenroy went through the tenure review process some ten years ago. On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1996 this branch of our society made a submission on the Preliminary Proposal for the property, one of the outcomes of which was the special lease; which we are now asking you to accept further comments on.

In our submission of 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1996 we supported the granting of a special lease for this area now under scrutiny again. Since that time members of our branch have passed through the special leased area via the water race public access route to the land returned to the Crown above this lease, to become part of the Remarkables Conservation Area. Also some have used the road to the left branch of Doolans Creek.

While there have been visible changes to the area itself, which we will come to later in this report, there have also been significant changes in Government policy regarding tenure review; in particular we refer here to the policy statements of February of 2005. These are:

- *To promote the management of the Crown's high Country in a way that is ecologically sustainable.*
- *To promote the significant inherent values of reviewable land by the creation of protective mechanisms; or preferably, by the restoration of the land concerned to full Crown ownership and control.*
- *To secure public access to and enjoyment of high country land for the public to enjoy.*
- *To ensure that conservation outcomes for the high country are consistent with the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy.*
- *To progressively establish a network of parks and reserves.*

**General:**

- The lease of this 562ha area was for a period of 20 years subject to a review after 10 years.

Upper Clutha Branch  
Box 38  
LAKE HAWEA

|            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| COM'S      |                    |
| A.O.       |                    |
| G.F.A.     |                    |
| B.S.M.     |                    |
| I.S.M.     |                    |
| H.R.A.     |                    |
| H.C.T.R.M. | <i>[Signature]</i> |
| K.A.M.     |                    |
| OTHER      |                    |

*PRR - 14 - 12 - 07 (14)*

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OTAGO CONSERVATION  
24 APR 2006  
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**FOREST & BIRD**  
ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND INC

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- We take it that the area has been properly monitored in accordance with the lease and that the results of this monitoring will be considered at the time of this 10 year review.
- While the review of tenure of Glenroy was conducted under the 1948 land act and the special lease arrived at under that act, we see that this special lease as perhaps being the forerunner of the requirements of a Sustainable Management Covenant in the name of the Commissioner under Section 97 (Part 4 of the 1998 CPI Act), except that in the 1998 Act the land under consideration becomes freehold.
- We quote from the Preliminary proposal, page 11, last paragraph: "...The special lease will be designed to maintain land use options for the future in the face of uncertainty about the sustainability of the present use. In the event of new legislation which would allow the free holding of such areas and with an improved understanding of sustainability issues associated with such country, the Crown's need to retain the area may be reassessed." We also see this as an opportune time to re-assess the values and if possible return the land to full Crown ownership and control.
- Since the special lease was drawn up the appreciation of significant inherent values has altered considerably, in particular the values contained in a "high country tussock landscape". While the landscape was taken into consideration at that time of drawing up the lease, and a study made and reported on, we believe that in today's climate the ratings given to the landscape on this lease would be considerably higher.
- Today we must now take into consideration the recoverability of the inherent conservation values in an area. The recoverability of the tussock and other herbage in an area must now be taken into consideration. This will in turn affect the landscape.
- Since the special lease was drawn up Mt Rosa tenure review was finalised with an area of approximately 800ha being returned to the Crown for protection. This 800ha is on the eastern boundary of Glenroy special lease area. The Mt Rosa area returned to the Crown for protection comprises land of a similar contour although it has more woody shrub cover lower down Doolans Creek than this area.
- Consequent to this, this leased area is now placed between two areas of conservation land - the other being the land returned to the Crown ex Glenroyal on the western side and now part of the Remarkable Conservation Area. This to us is something of an anomaly as similar land of similar values on both sides has now been returned to the Crown for management purposes. This reflects a change in assessment methods.
- While the land to the south of this block is freehold after coming out of the Wentworth review it is sunny country; this block under consideration is dark lying and therefore colder and will cause snow to lie longer after winter. Which is now a matter to be taken into consideration.
- After another inspection of the area carried out this last week it is noted that the lower altitude country on this block is mostly browntop between the tall tussock and the tussock, becomes dominant the higher up the slope one goes, where it is in good order. It appears to us that the country has not been grazed to any great extent in recent years (See photo # 1).

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- Cassinia is spreading up the boundary to the land ex Mt Rosa. There are also a few wilding pines in this area. In spite of warning notices motor bikes have been used on this block from behind the crossing point of the track at Doolans Creek up a spur towards the water race. This has caused considerable damage and will cause scouring after rain. This is also a discordant note in a predominately "high country tussock landscape" (See photo # 2).

**Discussion:**

1. Since the special lease on this property came into being there has been an increased awareness of the significant inherent value contained in a landscape. We believe the landscape on this property has assumed greater importance in the overall picture of Otago and is of higher value now, and deserves greater recognition than it was accorded 10 years ago.
2. In the last ten years greater knowledge has been gained on the recoverability of tussock in our tussock country; this should now be taken into consideration.
3. Over the years our branch of Forest and Bird has been involved in tenure review. We have made many submissions and reports on various properties throughout Otago; and when we go back and visit the land (which we often do) which became freehold some years ago because it was considered then to have insufficient inherent conservation values to be returned to the Crown for protection and compare that with the of outcomes of reviews of tenure today, we see that many mistakes have been made. Let us not make any more mistakes.

**Recommendations:**

1. This special lease covers land in between two important conservation areas. This land should now be returned to the Crown and become part of the larger Remarkable Conservation area. If this were done it would give an ecological sequence from approximately 400ms at the Kawarau river to the top of the Remarkables which would be highly desirable. It would then also fit in with Government's intentions to "... To progressively establish a network of parks and reserves..."
2. If returned to the Crown there would be some chance of reducing the damage being done to the country by powered wheeled vehicles.
3. Returning the land to the Crown may be legally difficult when half way through the term of a lease drawn up under the 1948 Land Act, but if it cannot be done now it should be done after the lease has expired in ten years time.

We thank you for allowing us to make these comments on this special lease on Glenroyal and await with interest the outcome.

Yours faithfully



John L. Turnbull  
For Upper Clutha Branch

Attached are two photographs



Photo # 1 Shows the nature of the tussock and brown top cover on the centre of the block - the tussock is rather thin lower down and the brown top dominant at the moment. The tussock is in better order on the higher ground.



Photo # 2 This shows the nature of the country which is capable of blending in with the landscape of the Remarkable Conservation Area behind. It also shows the damage being done by motor bikes to the spur in the lower centre of the photo.

**Appendix 12: Written Submission From Alan Mark – Botany Department – Otago University.**

**Glenroy Special Lease.**

This ~ 500ha property is virtually surrounded by conservation land with very significant inherent values. It has emerged as a special lease following the tenure reviews of the adjoining Wentworth, Mt Rosa and Glenroy pastoral leases. There is a strong case for the entire area to become conservation land. The undoubted inherent values on much of the property: tussock grasslands; shrublands; cushionfields, among certain threatened LENZ categories, certainly justify this designation, as do the landscape, recreation, historic (mining relics) and strategic (location among some disconnected areas of existing areas of conservation lands that could later be usefully added to the proposed Remarkables Conservation Park) values.

These values seem to clearly and substantially outweigh the value of this limited area of land being used for grazing under a continuation of the special lease.

## Appendix 13: Written Submission Central Otago Deerstalkers Club

DOC - 14 - 12 - 05

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### PROPOSED SUBMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

#### RE: TENURE REVIEW GLENROY

Submitter: Central Otago Deerstalkers Club

April 2006

#### Introduction

A new habitat type is developing on the additional conservation lands within the ranges throughout Central Otago. Destocking of these areas is going to form a clean pastoral grassland attractive to the small numbers of deer now residing in the surrounding farm land.

Without the necessary access placing hunters within a reasonable distance, (about 5km) red deer numbers on the newly created Conservation land are going to:

1. rise undisturbed.
2. If left for long enough will impact on the very flora and fauna the Department of Conservation (DOC) is trying to preserve.
3. Require late control intervention (which would cause public controversy)

*With DOC's aims to "preserve and protect" –changes caused by deer are not desirable.*

#### Red Deer Habits

This submission will show the potential threat to the biodiversity of the new conservation areas.

Central Otago Department of Conservation (DOC) consider the small numbers of deer scattered in pockets about the ranges are of little significance to the natural bio-diversity and present flora. With the habitat change about to take place within that range it is easy to overlook the potential deer movement which will have impact in the future on the vision for the new conservation lands.

On the un-stocked conservation areas there is always going to be abundance of clean food.

When sheep are moved to the same area that red deer are grazing, deer will move, looking for clean pasture.

Deer are going to move into the unstocked areas of conservation land. If these deer are left out of reach of the recreational hunter their numbers will grow. This will in the future be a cause of concern for the bio diversity that DOC wish intact and regenerating, for the enjoyment of users.

*Under the above scenario the Department is going to be accumulating deer on their lands*

#### **How could hunters help?**

In the words of K.W Frasers

"Status and conservation role of recreational hunting on conservation land"

1. "recreational hunters take a very large number of deer each year and as this is not based on any economic return, is on going"
2. "Costs associated with recreational hunting are only a small fraction of what state funded control would cost."
3. "most important advantage of enhanced recreational hunting is its public acceptability"  
ie. hunters using the venison is more acceptable than leaving the carcass.
4. "is the most stable tool "(there is more consistency with the recreational harvesting)

*If DOC and hunters can work together, experience and expertise from both sides will limit deer numbers.*

#### **Allowing hunter vehicles to access the conservation lands –**

(alluded to in the " Wild Animal control act 1977) would :

1. limit the ability of deer movement to the back of these blocks beyond hunter reach.
2. limit any modifying of significant inherent values of that area.



3. Be seen as encouragement for our particular recreational pursuit. An invitation to participate and enjoy our special Central Otago Conservation areas.

4. Deer taken from the new conservation area will reduce numbers across the total range. (Animals coming from adjacent farms while stock are out on summer pastures.)

5. We'll fulfil DOC obligation. Re: Biodiversity our corner. Natural habitats and ecosystems will be maintained in, or restored to, an indigenous natural character, through effective control of deer and other pests. \*

\* DOC Policy Statement on Deer Control

### Conclusion

Financed recreational hunting will be most cost effective where the enhancement can be achieved through a few time limited actions such as provision of more access (eg roads, tracks, legal rights-of-way access across private land). KW Fraser "Status and conservation role of recreational hunting on conservation land."

AWD access for hunters should be

1. limited to dry periods (November, December, January, February and March)
2. a cheap, stable publicly acceptable management tool available to DOC.
3. at DOC's discretion

With an easement already written into the final Proposal for DOC management purposes, it may only need DOC to look into the legality of having this encompassing deer management by hunters or make small changes to that easement.

*After highlighting these issues, we trust the Department will consider our submission ----- as a request to help them keep deer numbers below levels when they have adverse environmental effects. ----- by implementing the strategies stated in this submission the need for a controversial emergency cull will be non-existent.*

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to have input to this tenure review.

Central Otago Deerstalkers Club  
Secretary  
Alan Mackie

## Appendix 14: Written Submission Central Otago Recreational users Forum

### GLENROY SPECIAL LEASE, Gibbston Valley / Nevis

#### Recommendation:

- We strongly feel that this block of land should become Conservation land at an appropriate time, sooner rather than later if possible. This action will link two existing Conservation areas and would create a continuous strip of conservation land between the Kawarau / Nevis River and the Remarkables.
- The continuity of conservation land is of obvious benefit and interest for natural values and biodiversity, and for the feeling of freedom in those who wish to walk in or otherwise access widely contiguous areas of public land.

#### Access:

- The ridge-line track that runs along the northern boundary, from Coal Pit Reserve via Mt Edwards towards the Remarkables, could be placed entirely within the Special Reserve, instead of meandering as it seems to do from one side of that boundary to the other. As a designated track it would provide foot access (bike and horse), following west from a car park at the Coal Pit Saddle Historic Reserve, and could loop back via a part of the existing disused water race. We feel that this would be a walk of great interest, because of its open nature and the extensive views to be gained, and would not impinge on the natural and historic values of the property, nor intrude unnecessarily on the neighbouring private section of Glenroy.
- Vehicle access is already available via the public road to Coal Pit Saddle and should be maintained down to the locked gate at the Stock Bridge on Doolans Ck; access beyond that point, further into the Nevis valley, thus becomes possible, by permission of and prior arrangement with the private landowners.

*Central Otago Recreational Users Forum April 2006*

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### **RE: TENURE REVIEW HAPPY VALLEY**

Submitter: Central Otago Deerstalkers Club

April 2006

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### **Conclusion**

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Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to have input to this tenure review.

Central Otago Deerstalkers Club  
Secretary  
Alan Mackie

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**FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF NEW ZEALAND Inc.**

**PASTORAL LEASE TENURE REVIEW**

**Preliminary Report on the Recreational, Landscape, Historic  
and other Conservation Values, and Recommendations  
for Outcomes of Tenure Review**

**HAPPY VALLEY**

**April 2006**

**Compiled for Federated Mountain Clubs (FMC) of NZ (Inc.)  
by Dr Michael J S Floate, High Country Consultancy,**

**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE RECREATIONAL, LANDSCAPE, HISTORIC  
AND OTHER CONSERVATION VALUES OF HAPPY VALLEY, WITH  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OUTCOMES OF TENURE REVIEW.**

**A Report for FMC based on Field Inspections and other research  
to assist in the Crown Pastoral Lease Tenure Review Process**

**April 2006**

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## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Fig.1. The homestead and the best of the farm land on Happy Valley is situated in the Bannock Burn valley. It is well seen why Bannockburn is sometimes called 'the heart of the desert'. The semi-arid landscapes in the background (mainly on Hawksburn Station) illustrate the twin problems of drought stress and rabbit infestation.

Fig. 2. The back boundary of Happy Valley rises from 1,173m at Duffers Saddle (middle distance in this view) to 1,473 at the highest point on the boundary with the Old Woman Conservation Area. The land is classified LUC Class VIIe with severe limitations for pastoral use but its natural and landscape values are much higher. It is unlikely that such land could be managed in a way that promotes ecological sustainability.

Fig. 3 Much of the lower country is steep, semi-arid and has only low pastoral value (LUC Class VII) because of frequent drought stress and rabbit problems, as seen in this view of Round Hill. If the rabbit problem can be contained it may be possible to manage this land in a way that promotes ecological sustainability. If this can be done the land may be suitable for freeholding.

Fig. 4. A sequence of soils with increasing moisture status extends from the semi-arid lower slopes in Duffers gully to the tussock tops on the skyline. The mid-altitude country, with Arrow and Blackstone Hill soils (LUC Class VI), offers the best prospects for pasture improvement. This land should be able to support ecologically sustainable pastoral use, thus making the land suitable for freeholding.

Fig. 5. Most of the higher country, above about 1,000m, is either tussock grassland or sub-alpine herbfield and cushionfield characterised by Carrick Hill and Dunstan Steepland (LUC Class VIIe). Such land has severe limitations for pastoral use but has highly significant inherent values.

Fig. 6. Protected Natural Area (PNA) survey identified an area in the upper reaches of the Bannock Burn as a first priority RAP. The survey report stated that "*The vegetation contains a full altitudinal sequence of communities from montane tussock and scrub through to high alpine cushionfield. Cushionfield is widespread across the upper plateaux and east around the head of the Bannock Burn.*" This view shows part of the upper plateau at the head of the Bannock Burn.

Fig. 7. The track from the Nevis Road down to Duffers Saddle and along to Mount Black is well used by cross country skiers in the winter and could be more popular with trampers and mountain bike enthusiasts in the summer months. Public access to and along the Old Woman Range from the Nevis Road is one of the most critical issues in this tenure review.

Fig. 8. Beyond the yards at the SW corner of Happy Valley, the access is through the Old Woman Range Conservation Area and is therefore available to the public. The hut illustrated here is situated in the Conservation Area and is particularly important for enjoyment of the Old Woman Range in winter.

Fig. 9. The historic remains in Duffers Gully include a charming old stone cottage which has been kept in good repair and which could be enjoyed by recreational users as a lunch stop on either sweltering hot days, or cold wet days. The whole area including the hut and gold mining relics should be designated Historic Reserve with public access. Controlled grazing might be permitted to continue.

Fig. 10. This area in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully gives the feeling of an 'oasis' among a 'desert' of semi-arid hills and is clearly a special destination for those privileged to go there. It is not only in stark contrast to its parched surroundings, but also abounds in history, dating back to the goldmining days of the 1870s. FMC believes this would be a great destination for day trips from the Hawksburn Road.

Fig. 11. An easy walking trip for locals would be to follow the historic Carrick Race, which would give access to the well known Young Australian water wheel on the neighbouring Carrick Station. The race passes below the big tor in the centre of this view and continues around the contour, northwards to the Carrick Station boundary (off to the left of this view).

Fig. 12. Exploration of the water race in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully would add another dimension to the day walk to the stone cottage in Duffers Gully. Such exploration would enhance the public knowledge and appreciation of the efforts made by the early gold miners. This race passes through the saddle between Duffers Gully and Tucker Gully.

Fig. 13. The lower reaches of Bannock Burn are enclosed within a steep-sided gorge. There are native shrublands in the gorge, albeit invaded by briar, which are traversed by a pair of water races. A contoured road gives easy access which the public might enjoy if an easement could be provided across the farmland.

Fig. 14. This is an area of high natural and landscape value in the top block of Happy Valley between the Nevis Road and the rim of the Bannock Burn catchment. It consists of tussock grasslands and fellfield with cushion and snowbank communities and tors, very similar to that described in the RAP1/5. This area should also be returned to full Crown ownership and control to be managed for conservation and recreation purposes.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report has been prepared following the Early Warning Meeting in September 2005 at which the properties entering the tenure review process in 2005 were introduced. An inspection of the property by the author of this report was carried out in February 2006 with the permission of the runholder. This report is based on that inspection and other material listed below. The report is offered as a contribution to the statutory consultation process undertaken by the Department of Conservation.

Happy Valley (Po 361) is a relatively small pastoral lease of 3,277ha at the northern end of the Old Woman Range. This report focuses on those features of Happy Valley which are important for public recreational interests. It should be noted that while some of this interest focuses on access, the natural and historic values and landscapes of the place have a fundamental impact on the recreational value of the property and greatly influence the quality of recreational experience enjoyed. It is for this reason that reference is made to natural, historic and landscape values in this report. The landscapes and views to be seen from the high country overlooking Lake Dunstan, the Clutha valley and the Hawksburn country are outstanding and add greatly to the enjoyment of visiting this property.

The higher country of Happy Valley is situated in a commanding position overlooking Cromwell and Lake Dunstan. It includes the entire catchment of Duffers Gully and most of the catchment of the Bannock Burn. Its northern boundary is close to the Nevis Road while its western boundary runs along the crest of the range, bordering Craigroy Station on the Nevis side. The high country at the back of the property includes Duffers Saddle and the Carrick Water Race. In fact, water races are a characteristic feature of the property with races used during the gold mining era and more recently bringing irrigation water out of the Bannock Burn for farms in the Bannockburn area.

Protected Natural Area (PNA) surveys conducted in the 1980s identified an area in the upper reaches of the Bannock Burn as a first priority Recommended Area for Protection (RAP). This will be considered below in the section on significant inherent values.

## **METHODS OF SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT**

This report is based on the author's February 2006 field inspection and in part, on information gathered from other sources. The other sources include studies of topographical and Land Use Capability (LUC) maps, consultation with recreational user groups and a knowledge of the landscapes seen from the Bannockburn/Cromwell area and from the Nevis Road. A study of "Outdoor Recreation in Otago" was undertaken by Mason (1988) and published by FMC. Reference is made to this Recreation Plan for Otago in the recreation section below. The Conservation Management Strategy for Otago and the Survey Report for the Protected Natural Area Programme, Old Man Ecological District (1986) have also been used as sources of reference.

## **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF HAPPY VALLEY**

Happy Valley (Po 361) is a relatively small pastoral lease of 3,277ha situated at the northern end of the Old Woman Range between the Nevis Road and Hawksburn. It extends from about 450m at the homestead on the Hawksburn Road (Fig. 1) to 1,280m just above Duffers Saddle and 1,473m at the highest point on the back boundary on the Old Woman Range (Fig. 2).

Happy Valley was subdivided out of the original Kawarau Station in 1910 and has been occupied by the Henderson family since 1946. At that time there was little pastoral development on the land which was seriously degraded and rabbit infested. The Hendersons have carried out a significant amount of pasture improvement by oversowing and topdressing up to about 1,000m and have conducted rabbit control with shooting and poisoning both before and since the introduction of the virus RHD in the 1990s. Much of the lower country is steep, semi-arid and has only low pastoral value because of

frequent drought stress (Fig. 3). The most productive (irrigated) land occupies less than 100ha of Land Use Capability (LUC) Class IV Waenga Brown Grey Earth soils (Fig. 1).

The valley floors (Bannock Burn and Tucker and Duffers Gullies) and lowest slopes (especially on shady faces) are characterised by a small area of Fraser Recent alluvial soils and Blackstone Hill and Arrow Steepland Yellow Grey Earth soils which have been classified as LUC Class VI land with medium suitability for pastoral use. As indicated above there is a small area of irrigated LUC Class IV land on a gently sloping fan in the vicinity of the homestead.

The drier and more eroded slopes of Round Hill and an unnamed hill a little to the west of Round Hill are characterised by Alexandra Steepland semi-arid Brown Grey Earth soils which have been classified LUC Class VIIe. Class VII land is defined with low suitability for pastoral use. This is the semi-arid area which was so badly rabbit infested and which was such a problem for pastoral use in the early days of the forties and fifties. If the rabbit problem can be contained it may be possible to manage this land in a way that promotes ecological sustainability. If this can be done the land may be suitable for freeholding.

South of Duffers Gully and west of the former gold mining area in the mid reaches of the same gully there is a sequence of soils of steadily increasing moisture status (Fig. 4). The driest Conroy soils (Brown Grey Earths) have been classified LUC Class VIIe and are very similar to the Alexandra Steeplands. The mid slopes above, up to about 1,000m are characterised by Blackstone Hill and Arrow Steepland Yellow Grey Earth soils, classified LUC Class VI with medium suitability for pastoral use. The higher country above about 1,000m is mainly tussock grassland on Carrick Hill and Dunstan Steepland High Country Yellow Grey Earth soils classified LUC Class VIIe (Fig. 5). Thus about 90% of the property is of very limited suitability for pastoral use.

Most of the high country is either tussock grassland or sub-alpine cushion-field and herb-field in a semi-natural state (Fig. 5) having been much less modified by pastoral farming than the mid-altitude country. In contrast to its low pastoral value, the high country land has highly significant inherent values. These natural values were recognised by the Protected Natural Area (PNA) survey conducted in the 1980s (Fig. 6). That survey recognised an area of some 900ha in the catchment of the Bannock Burn as a recommended Area for Protection (RAP 1/5 Bannock Burn – Old Woman Range).

In order for any land to be managed in a way that is ecologically sustainable in the long term, any losses from the soil of essential nutrients in animal products (meat and wool) must be replenished. The alternative is that sooner or later the ecosystem will be depleted and degraded. LUC Class VIIe land may not be capable of being managed in a way that is ecologically sustainable because it may not be justifiable economically to replenish (in the form of fertiliser) the nutrients which are lost through grazing and burning. On lower country where pasture growth rates are higher, topdressing is worthwhile, but at higher altitudes (above about 1,000m), pasture growth and hence response to fertiliser is limited by climate. Under these circumstances conservation values should be assessed and considered as an alternative to unsustainable pastoral use.

Public access to the Old Woman Range and shorter walking opportunities in the Tucker and Duffers Gullies, together with the protection of associated areas of high natural and landscape values are likely to be the main recreational issues in this tenure review.

## **RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND POTENTIAL**

Mason (1988) stated that “*the primary winter recreational potential of the area (Old Man, Old Woman and Carrick Ranges) is for cross country skiing.*” He went on to explain that this was largely due to the ease of physical access with road access to the snowline, and the possibility of day trips from Dunedin or Invercargill. Mason also stated that “*the major natural limitation to utilising the vast*

*extent of easy rolling terrain is the severity of weather conditions.....A 40km traverse the length of the Old Woman and Old Man Ranges is possible, with an overnight camp. However, no quick escape to low country is available in the event of being overtaken by storm conditions.”*

The recreational significance of Happy Valley lies in its strategic position giving access to the northern end of the Old Woman Range. The track from the Nevis Road down to Duffers Saddle and along to Mount Black is well used by cross country skiers in the winter and could be more popular with trampers and mountain bike enthusiasts in the summer months (Fig. 7). Public access to and along the Old Woman Range from the Nevis Road starts over Craigroy pastoral leasehold land: this is currently under review in the tenure review programme. Although the track through Craigroy is technically legal road, it may not precisely follow the legal alignment. If this is the case, public access is not secure and will depend on the outcomes of tenure review. Beyond the yards at the SW corner of Happy Valley, the access is through the Old Woman Range Conservation Area and is therefore available to the public (Fig. 8). The doubtful section is restricted to that section through Craigroy, along the back boundary of Happy Valley. If the high ground within the back boundary of Happy Valley became conservation land through the tenure review of this property, at least walking access to the Old Woman Conservation Area would be assured. The future status of the high country within the back boundary will be discussed in the section on significant inherent values.

We understand that some local walking groups have been permitted access to the hut and old mining area in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully (Fig. 9). This area gives the feeling of an ‘oasis’ among a ‘desert’ of semi-arid hills (Fig. 10) and is clearly a special destination for those privileged to go there. Using existing farm tracks, which are steep in places, a round trip involving climbs over saddles into and out of the mid reaches of Duffers Gully can be made from the boundary with Carrick Station (in Tucker Gully). This would make a good day trip of about 10km from the Hawksburn Road. Although use of this round trip would depend on gaining permission from the owners of Carrick Station and Pisa View, it is recommended that public access over Happy Valley land for foot and mountain bike travellers should be established through the tenure review of Happy Valley.

FMC has made an important point in other tenure review submissions: *“The fact that a right of way across other [neighbouring] properties does not yet exist should not be a reason for not making provision for access over [this property]. Provision should be made now in anticipation of further public access becoming available through future tenure reviews or other access arrangements.”*

Another possibility for easy walking trips for locals would be an opportunity to explore some of the many water races on the property. Starting from the high country, these include the Carrick Race (Fig. 11), the races in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully (Fig. 12), and the races coming out of the Bannock Burn catchment (Fig. 13). As stated above, the future status of the high country block will be discussed in the section on significant inherent values, but if it becomes conservation land, access along the Carrick Race would be assured. Exploration of the races in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully (Fig. 12) would add another dimension to the day walk (round trip) discussed above. Such exploration would enhance the public knowledge and appreciation of the efforts made by the early gold miners.

Finally, it is argued that the recreational significance of Happy Valley should be assessed not only on present usage but also on potential. This is because current usage is less than its potential for a number of reasons. Because of the current land tenure, and because access to the Old Woman Range and the little known area in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully has not been easy in the past, the recreational use of the tracks described in this report is less than it might have been if access was freely available. There is significant potential for greater use, particularly by foot and mountain bike, and it is the full range of possibilities which should be considered during this tenure review.

In summary, this assessment indicates that there is scope on Happy Valley for day walks and longer trips along the Old Woman Range. These are likely to include tramping and mountain bike trips in addition to forays into the Bannock Burn and along the water races.

### **SIGNIFICANT INHERENT VALUES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE FOR RECREATION**

This report focuses on those features of Happy Valley which are important for public recreational interests. It should be noted that while some of this interest focuses on access, the natural and historic values and landscapes of the areas concerned have a fundamental impact on the recreational value of the place and greatly influence the quality of recreational experience enjoyed. It is for this reason that reference is also made to both natural, historic and landscape values of this pastoral lease.

The Protected Natural Area (PNA) surveys carried out in the 1980s recognised the significance of natural values and identified certain Recommended Areas for Protection (RAPs). On Happy Valley one important area was identified. This area is defined as RAP 1/5 Bannock Burn – Old Woman Range and occupies some 900ha in the catchment of the Bannock Burn (Fig. 6).

The PNA Report for RAP1/5 states:- *“The landform comprises high summit plateaux, outlier cirque basins and deep NE trending gully. Across the summit plateaux a pattern of regular and deflated surfaces occurs on exposed dry sites, and bogs/flushes on more sheltered low lying areas. Solifluction and nivation features are prominent on eastern aspects of shallow gullyheads. Eastwards, the plateau is lightly glaciated: a regular pattern of low buttresses and wide joint-controlled depressions with tarns.*

*Below the periglacial summit area the Bannock Burn catchment deepens abruptly in mid-upper reaches and is slumped on both flanks. Tors stud the regularly sloping ridge crests. The deep valley profile is much reduced in the lower reaches.*

*The vegetation contains a full altitudinal sequence of communities from montane tussock and scrub through to high alpine cushionfield. Cushionfield is widespread across the upper plateaux and east around the head of the Bannock Burn..... Dracophyllum muscoides dominates exposed pavement of the Old Woman Range, continuing down southeast-facing ridge crests of the Bannock Burn catchment. Pockets of slim snow tussock and blue tussock are confined to sheltered depressions and north-facing slopes. Diverse cushion-herbfield communities over the hummocky eastern plateau occur in a mosaic with wetland species around tarns and string bogs.*

*The upper Bannock Burn catchment has a mosaic of fellfield, cushion and snowbank communities across wide, gentle slopes. Wetlands along stream-side slopes are dominated by moss and Carex.*

*Slim snow tussock and blue tussock dominate the upper Bannock Burn valley but are replaced by dense narrow-leaved snow tussocklands below 1,350m. Areas of alpine fescue and golden Spaniard are prominent on upper exposed slopes.*

*Below 1,050m the catchment is extensively oversown. Silver tussock maintains 50% cover over most of lower slopes with patches of matagouri, Coprosma propinqua and Carmichaelia petriei amongst boulders and scattered outcrops. Briar and hemlock become abundant towards the base of the catchment.”*

There is also an area of high natural and landscape value in the top block of Happy Valley extending from the Nevis Road to the rim of the Bannock Burn catchment (Figs 2, 5 and 14). This area extends from the high point at 1,473m down to a fenceline which roughly follows the contour between about 1,000 and 1,100m. This area (Fig. 14) consists of tussock grasslands, fellfield, cushion and snowbank communities and tors, very similar to that described in the RAP1/5.

Because of the highly significant inherent values recognised by PNA Survey it is recommended that the entire area of RAP 1/5 within Happy Valley should be returned to full Crown ownership and control to be managed for conservation and recreation purposes. It is our considered opinion that the natural values of the adjacent top block of Happy Valley (Figs 2, 5 and 14) above the contour fence which is situated at about 1,000 to 1,100m, are essentially comparable with the values within the RAP. We therefore recommend that this block, down to the contour fence at about 1,000 to 1,100m should also be returned to full Crown ownership and control.

It should be noted that in the General Description section above, doubts were expressed about the ability to manage this area in a way that promotes ecological sustainability as required by the Crown Pastoral Land (CPL) Act 1998. The reasons for this doubt were explained above. We argue that the inherent values are significantly greater than the marginal pastoral value and that the land should therefore be returned to full Crown ownership and be managed for conservation and recreation purposes.

There are important historic values in the mid-reaches of Duffers Gully. These values are centred on a short length (a few hundred metres) of the gully which includes an historic miner's stone cottage (dating back to the start of gold mining in the 1870s) and well stacked heaps of stone tailings (Figs 9 and 10). These tailings are quite extensive and represent a great deal of physical manual labour. These features add considerable interest for recreational visitors and should be protected. It may not be necessary to preclude grazing, and recognition as an Historic Reserve with grazing rights and public access could be appropriate.

### **AREAS TO BE PROTECTED**

There are a number of areas on Happy Valley with significant natural, historic or landscape values which deserve protection in terms of the CPL Act 1998.

An important area with highly significant inherent natural values was identified in PNA surveys as RAP 1/5 Bannock Burn – Old Woman Range: Because of the highly significant inherent values in that area, which are briefly described above, the area described as RAP 1/5 should be returned to full Crown ownership and control to be managed for conservation and recreation purposes.

There is also an area in the adjacent top block of Happy Valley extending from the Nevis Road to the rim of the Bannock Burn catchment which also has highly significant inherent values comparable to those of RAP 1/5. This area extends from the high point at 1,473m down to a fenceline which roughly follows the contour between about 1,000 and 1,100m. It consists of tussock grassland and fellfield, cushion and snowbank communities and tors, very similar to that described in the RAP1/5. We have expressed the opinion above that it is unlikely that this area could be managed for pastoral use in a manner which would promote ecological sustainability (as required by the CPL Act 1998). We therefore recommend that this block (adjacent to RAP 1/5) down to the contour fence at about 1,000 to 1,100m should also be returned to full Crown ownership and control.

The historic features in the mid reaches of Duffers Gully, including a miners stone cottage and heaps of stacked stone tailings which date back to the 1870s, add considerable interest for recreational visitors and should be protected. It may not be necessary to preclude grazing and recognition as an Historic Reserve with grazing rights and public access may be appropriate.

### **ACCESS REQUIREMENTS**

One of the main issue in this tenure review is public access to and along the Old Woman Range, particularly for cross country skiing.

Although the track to the Old Woman Range through Craigroy is technically legal road, it may not precisely follow the legal alignment. If this is the case, public access is not secure and will depend on the outcomes of tenure review. Beyond the yards at the SW corner of Happy Valley the access is through the Old Woman Range Conservation Area and is therefore available to the public. The doubtful section is restricted to that part of the track through Craigroy, along the back boundary of Happy Valley. If the high ground within the back boundary of Happy Valley became conservation land through the tenure review of this property, at least walking access to the Old Woman Conservation Area would be assured. The CPL Act 1998 requires that provision be made for secure public access. It is therefore recommended that public access to the Old Woman Range along the back boundary of Happy Valley should be assured as an outcome of tenure review, either by designation of a Conservation Area or an easement for public foot and non-motorised vehicle access.

Public access is also required to the historic gold mining area in the mid reaches of Duffers gully. Ideally this would be in the form of an easement (for foot and non-mechanised vehicle use) on the tracks leading to and from Tucker Gully over the saddles to the north and south of the historic mining area.

The lower reaches of Bannock Burn carry two water races which traverse the shrublands in the Gorge. A contoured road gives easy access which the public might enjoy if an easement could be provided across the farmland.

## **OTAGO CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

In the Otago Conservation Management Strategy for (CMS) the Old Man - Garvie area is recognised as a Special Place. The objective for this Special Place is:

*“To protect the entire high altitude range crests for their landscape, nature conservation, cultural, and recreational importance, to improve legal access to them, and to ensure that recreational and commercial uses are managed to sustain resources and ensure quality recreational experiences.....”*

It should be further noted that the CMS states that *“Protected areas boundaries will be rationalised by disposals, acquisitions, swaps and other means (including tenure review) to link as far as practicable the existing inland protected areas and areas of indigenous vegetation between them.”* [underlining our addition].

It is also noted that the CMS includes the following statements: *“Pastoral lease tenure review on adjacent properties will provide opportunities to negotiate to protect the entire range crest.”* and *“Continued identification of key natural and historic resources to enable well informed decision making in the pastoral lease tenure review process.”*

Finally, it should be noted that the CMS priority for the Old Man area states that *“Completion of protection negotiations, including tenure reviews, will be a priority in this Special Place.”*

From statements in the CMS, it is clear that DOC is committed to achieving its objectives for the Old Man – Garvie Special Place and that significant progress would be made towards achieving the objectives if this tenure review can be successfully negotiated.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. The tenure review of Happy valley is a one-off opportunity to enhance the recreational opportunities of the Duffers Saddle - Old Woman range area, and to increase the recreational value of those lands by recognising the significant inherent natural, historic and landscape values described



above and in the PNA Surveys carried out in the mid 1980s.

2. The higher country of Happy Valley is situated in a commanding position overlooking Cromwell and Lake Dunstan. It includes the entire catchment of Duffers Gully and most of the catchment of the Bannock Burn. Its northern boundary is close to the Nevis Road while its western boundary runs along the crest of the range, bordering Craigroy Station on the Nevis side.
3. The high country at the back of the property includes Duffers Saddle and the Carrick Water Race. In fact, water races are a characteristic feature of the property with races used during the gold mining era, and more recently bringing irrigation water out of the Bannock Burn for farms in the Bannockburn area. Some of these may be suitable for recreational use.
4. A high proportion of the property has been classified LUC Class VIIe. The lower altitude steep slopes on Round Hill and similar areas are characterised by semi-arid soils which are prone to rabbit infestation and have low pasture potential due to frequent drought stress. The higher country, above about 1,000m is characterised by Dunstan and Carrick high country soils of inherently low fertility and has also been classified LUC Class VIIe.
5. High country LUC Class VII land may not be capable of being managed in a way that is ecologically sustainable because it may not be justifiably economic to replenish the nutrients which are lost through grazing and burning. Conservation values should be assessed and considered as an alternative to unsustainable pastoral use.
6. Public access to the Old Woman Range and shorter walking opportunities in the Tucker and Duffers Gullies, together with the protection of associated areas of high natural and landscape values are likely to be the main recreational issues in this tenure review.
7. Mason (1988) stated that "*the primary winter recreational potential of the area (Old Man, Old Woman and Carrick Ranges) is for cross country skiing.*" He went on to explain that this was largely due to the ease of physical access which includes road access to the snowline, and the possibility of day trips from Dunedin or Invercargill.
8. The track from the Nevis Road through Duffers Saddle and along to Mount Black is well used by cross country skiers in the winter and could be more popular with trampers and mountain bike enthusiasts in the summer months. Public access to and along the Old Woman Range from the Nevis Road starts over Craigroy pastoral leasehold land. Although the track is technically legal road, it may not precisely follow the legal alignment and public access is probably not secure and will depend on the outcomes of tenure review.
9. PNA surveys carried out in the 1980s recognised the significance of natural values and identified one RAP on Happy Valley. This area is defined as RAP 1/5 Bannock Burn – Old Woman Range and occupies some 900ha in the catchment of the Bannock Burn.
10. Another area of high natural and landscape value is situated in the top block of Happy Valley extending from the Nevis Road to the rim of the Bannock Burn catchment and which FMC asserts is of comparable conservation and recreation value to the RAP.
11. FMC recommends that both these areas should be returned to full Crown ownership to be managed for conservation and recreation purposes. If this recommendation is adopted, public foot and non-motorised access along the back boundary to the Old Woman Conservation Area will be secured as required by the CPL Act 1998.

12. If public access is not secured as recommended above, then an easement for public foot and non-motorised vehicle access along the back boundary will be required.
13. Significant historic values (a stone hut and stacked stone tailings relating to early gold mining) have been recognised in the mid-reaches of Duffers Gully. These features add considerable interest for recreational visitors and should be protected. It may not be necessary to preclude grazing, and recognition as an Historic Reserve with grazing rights and public access would be appropriate.
14. Access would be best provided by an easement for public foot and non-motorised vehicle access on farm tracks leading to and from Tucker Gully over the saddles to the north and south of the historic mining area in Duffers Gully.
15. The fact that rights of way may not yet exist across neighbouring properties should not be a reason for failing to make provision for access over Happy Valley. Provision should be made now in anticipation of further public access becoming available through future tenure reviews or other access arrangements.
16. The recreational significance of Happy Valley should be assessed not only on present usage but also on potential. This is because current usage is less than its potential for a number of reasons including ease of access in the past.
17. The outcome of the tenure review of Happy Valley could contribute significantly to the achievement of the objectives declared for the Old Man - Garvie Special Place in the Otago Conservation Management Strategy.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

FMC is grateful for assistance from authorities in making the assessment possible. The site inspection was carried out in February 2006 and FMC is grateful to the runholder for co-operation and granting permission for access, and to Opus staff for making the appropriate arrangements.

## CENTRAL OTAGO RECREATIONAL USERS FORUM

25 April 2006

Helen James,  
Administrative Officer  
High Country Tenure Review  
Department of Conservation  
PO Box 5244  
DUNEDIN

*Submission by NGO, Central Otago Recreational Users Forum, to DoC's preliminary report on Tenure Review proposals for Robrosa, Happy Valley, Glenroy Special Lease and Lauder.*

Dear Helen,

The Central Otago Recreational Users Forum thanks you for the opportunity to comment on DoC's planned submissions to the Tenure Review process for the above properties.

Having attended the NGO meeting held in Alexandra on April 12<sup>th</sup>, we would like to offer the opinions outlined below on behalf of our members.

With thanks,  
Yours faithfully,

Jan Kelly

Secretary  
Central Otago Recreational Users Forum

186 Faulks Road, RD 2, Wanaka 9192  
email [ejkelly@clear.net.nz](mailto:ejkelly@clear.net.nz)

phone (03) 443 4337

**HAPPY VALLEY**, Bannockburn

**Recommendation:**

**1. Easement**

- A valuable loop-walk for foot or bicycle could be created on this property, beginning from a parking area on the adjacent public road to the Nevis Valley: following the disused water-race through Duffers Gully, with explanatory material on the historic remains there; exiting up the ridge to the side road that leads towards the Old Woman Range, and returning downhill again via the public road.
- The property would also lend itself to a mountain bike route for enthusiasts. We are aware that bikers have used the property already, with permission, and feel that if the owner was agreeable, designated areas on this land could probably stand this activity.

**2. Historic values**

- If the Duffers Gully historic area is to be properly preserved and protected, then limited access to it is an advantage, and is to be recommended.

*Central Otago Recreational Users Forum April 2006*

Dear Tony,

My response to the recent meeting in Alexandra on the 2005-06 tenure review program follows:

2. Happy Valley

Although somewhat degraded, the upper slopes of this property contain many significant inherent values, particularly botanical and ecological, and given its proximity to the much-used and historical Nevis Road, should be formally protected and managed in the public interest. The important conservation values in this area would complement significantly the intrinsic values in the existing Conservation Area which adjoins it to the south of the upper boundary.

Although the entire catchment of Bannockburn Creek was recognised as having high conservation values in the PNA Survey of the Old Man Ecological District in the mid 1980s, the lower reaches have since degraded to the point where it can no longer be justified. Accordingly, my recommendation is for the upper slopes to be transferred to full Crown control and management; the lower boundary being demarcated by the existing fenceline across the upper Bannockburn, down the ridgeline between this and the upper southern branch of Duffers Creek and across these branches in the vicinity of the Ford, to the northern boundary of the property about one km below the roadside airstrip.

I trust these comments and recommendations will be of value in the further evaluation of the future options for these four properties.

Sincerely, Alan F Mark FRSNZ.