

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name: INVERARY

Lease number: PC 054

Fish & Game report

As part of the process of tenure review Fish & Game councils may provide advice on significant inherent values within the pastoral lease, and the information may be incorporated in the conservation resources report. The advice is part of the information gathered and assessed for the development of a preliminary consultation document.

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

October 04



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14 July 1999

Manager
Knight Frank
PO Box 142
CHRISTCHURCH

Attention: R S Lough

TENURE REVIEW - INVERARY

Attached is our submission detailing sportsfish and gamebird interest values relating to this property. Please phone or fax me if you would like any further detail.

Yours faithfully



Frank Scard
Fish and Game Officer

TENURE REVIEW REPORT

PROPERTY Inverary

LOCATION Mt Somers

1. Brief Description of Property

Inverary Station, located about 10 km NE of Mt Somers township comprises some 4250 ha; mostly improved pasture tussock grassland. The lower flats around the homestead contain improved pasture, hay, and winter feed crops and shelterbelts.

The topography is flat to moderately steep ranging from 480 to 1350 m at the top of the Moorhouse Range. Rivers draining the property include Blondin Stream (into the South Ashburton River) and the North and South branches of the Hinds River. Public vehicle access to the property is limited to Quarry Road.

2. Rivers and Streams

The South Ashburton River bounds the eastern boundary of the property and has an average flow of 10.9 cumecs the river over this section.

Blondin Stream, a tributary of the South Ashburton drains the eastern part of the property. With a catchment area of about 7 km², the mean annual flow is estimated to be about 0.13 cumecs.

Except for a small area on the south west boundary the remaining 3,500 ha of the property drains to the North Branch of the Hinds River. Average flow at the point where the river exits the property is assessed to be 0.7 cumecs. Steeply dissected, the gorge of the North Branch Hinds contains remnants of native bush, principally coprosma. There are also a few scattered willows.

Willow trees dominate the riparian margins of Blondin Stream in its lower reaches and the South Ashburton.

3. Sportsfish and Gamebird Species

3.1 Sportsfish

The South Ashburton supports a brown trout fishery of importance to local anglers and the occasional visitor. The section bordering the subject property is quite steep (0.01 m/m). Long reaches of fast flowing water separate deeper pools in what is predominantly a single thread channel. Although not ideal as brown trout habitat, the section does support a small stock of larger fish which are targeted by the more experienced angler. Good access from Quarry Road and the Ashburton Gorge Road are one of the main reasons for higher angler useage over this section.

Salmon are also found in the South Ashburton. However numbers in this section of river are small and are seldom caught by anglers.

The North Branch Hinds contains a resident brown trout fishery. Adults rarely exceed 1.5 kg and 0.7 – 1.0 kg is considered to be the norm. With deep pools separated by steep rapids the gorge area provides good habitat for adults and juveniles alike. Spawning is likely concentrated in the shingles contained within the main channel and as such spawning success will be variable depending on the incidence of flooding during the spawning season; June – August.

This river also contains a brook char (*fontinalis*) fishery. The current status and health of this fishery is unknown and is scheduled for further research over the 1999/2000 financial year. In the past Fish and Game has removed juvenile stock from the river above Upper Downs Road for relocation to Lake Emily in the Ashburton Lakes area.

Angler use of North Branch Hinds and within the subject property is negligible. The nearest vehicle access is at Upper Downs Road which crosses the river about 8.5 km downstream from the property boundary. Between the bridge and the mouth of the gorge, 3 km from the boundary, the North Branch is a single thread braided or channel lined with willow trees. To access the upper North Branch involves a lengthy walk and for this reason is only for the really fit enthusiast. Even were the vehicle access to be improved it is doubtful the North Branch Hinds would attract an increased angler use.

3.2 Gamebirds

Paradise shelduck are found on and around the tarns, wetlands and developed pastureland within the property. The South Ashburton riverbed contains favoured habitat for grey and mallard ducks. The latter are targeted by game hunters during the game season; May-July.

Generally, the property contains a variety of gamebird species, but other than for the South Ashburton, game bird hunter use is negligible.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Access

Angler and gamebird hunter use of the Inverary property is low, except for the 4 km of the South Ashburton riverbed on the north eastern boundary of the property, part of which bounds freehold title (2 km). To secure public access along the river as of right, Fish and Game would wish to see a marginal strip along this river.

We do not consider there is any demand for public vehicle access to the upper catchment of the North Branch Hinds. The river is more than 3 m wide to about the junction with Browns Saddle Stream (J36:672220) over which a marginal strip will presumably be set aside in accord with the Conservation Act. This is supported for habitat protection reasons.

F Scarf
Fish and Game Officer