

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name: MORVEN HILLS

Lease number: PO 359

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.

March 05



Morven Hills Station Crown Pastoral Lease

Resource Report prepared by John Hollows for the Otago Fish and Game Council

1. Introduction

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

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

2. General Description

Morven Hills is large (~18 thousand hectares) high-country station located in the Lindis Valley. The property contains steep rolling hill country and a mixture of exotic and native grass species. Most of the property contains native grasses over-sown with exotic grasses, while some flatter areas are developed and contain predominantly exotic grasses.

Many of the small streams within the property are ephemeral or contain low flows during summer, limiting sports fish habitat values.

There appears to be Section 58 marginal strips in place on the Lindis River, although these do not align with the current river path in many places.

3. Sports Fish Values

The Lindis River, which defines the western boundary of Morven Hill is a recognised fishery (147 visits in 2001, National Angler Survey (NAS)) and provides excellent sports fish spawning and juvenile rearing habitat. The Lindis River is important to the Clutha River and Lake Dunstan fisheries in that it is a source of recruitment for these fisheries. The Clutha River received 36,650 visits in 2001 (NAS), with approximately half of these visits occurring in the upper catchment. Lake Dunstan received 19872 visits in 2001 and is the third most fished lake in Otago (NAS).

Lindis River tributary streams provide sports fish spawning and juvenile rearing habitat. Additionally tributaries of Dunstan Creek contain similar sports fish habitat values. The importance of these streams, including those that have reduced flow over

Statutory managers of freshwater sports fish, game birds and their habitats

Otago Region

Cnr Hanover & Harrow Sts, PO Box 76, Dunedin, New Zealand. Telephone (03) 477 9076 Facsimile (03) 477 0146

summer, cannot be overstated as they provide habitat that is generally more stable than that found in larger water bodies. Additionally, smaller streams provide refuge from larger fish predators.

4. Game Bird Values

Paradise shelducks (*Tadorna variegata*) were noted in places on Morven Hills. No information on the hunting of this species is available.

Several coveys of Quail (*Lophortyx californicus*) and several pairs of Chukor (*Alectoris chukar*) were recorded during the survey. The quail were noted in areas associated with scrubby vegetation such as that found in "Wrights" Block. Chukor were widely dispersed, but generally found in higher areas (>1100 masl). Upland game birds are widely dispersed throughout the Otago region, but generally in low abundance. The Morven Hills property is somewhat unique in that comparatively high numbers of upland game were present.

Game bird hunting is at the discretion of the landowner discretion.

5. Access

Access for game bird hunting is at the discretion of the landowner. We are not aware of any problems for access to the Lindis River for sports fishing.

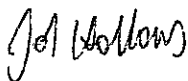
6. Fish & Game Perspective

Dip Creek, Spur Creek, an unnamed tributary flowing into the Lindis River at approximately E2232665 N5612090 and the Lindis River require Section 24 marginal strips to protect sports fishery values. Where these waterways do not qualify for marginal strip protection they should have covenant protection. The catchment encompassed in the "Dunstan" block contains tributaries of Dunstan Creek. These waterways require covenant protection.

The current recommended areas for protection (RAP A2, A3, A4, A6 & B5) contain suitable habitat for upland game bird habitat. We recommend that these areas get formal covenant protection to protect upland game bird values and the values identified by the Department of Conservation.

Fish & Game require access to the property for sports fish management purposes. The marginal strip, and covenant protection mechanisms outlined above should provide adequate access for these purposes.

Dated: March 31 2004.



John Hollows
Resource Officer