

(b.) We recommend that the whole of the drainage area of the Wairau River and its tributaries should be constituted a district or districts in respect of which a rate may be levied.

(c.) Your Commissioners consider that the whole of their findings as set forth in this report should be enacted in special legislation, to be called the "Wairau and Opawa Rivers Improvement Act."

(d.) At present there are no less than five River Boards directly controlling different portions of this river and its branches, and also six other local bodies more or less interested in the operations of the former. Such a multiplicity of governing bodies has in the past led to much misdirected and wasted effort, with the result that no definite or comprehensive scheme of works as a whole has ever been formulated, and that works have been designed by rule-of-thumb and carried out piecemeal, and further that as a consequence of this divided control one body has sought and obtained an injunction against another body carrying out work which the former considered would have a harmful effect on themselves. It has been suggested that all these bodies at present controlling the river should be amalgamated and formed into one elected River Board for the whole district. Although such an arrangement might be an improvement on the existing state of affairs, yet there appears to your Commissioners to be certain objections thereto. In the first place, it may be stated that between the residents of Blenheim and the settlers on the banks of the Wairau or of the lower Spring Creek district there can be no community of interest whatever so far as river-protection is concerned. Blenheim is mainly concerned with the overflowing of the Opawa, the Fairhall, and the Taylor Rivers, while the settlers along the Wairau are mainly concerned about the floods in the Wairau, and are in no way interested in what takes place in the Opawa. Rating for flood-protection works would be on the capital value and also in the ratio of benefits to be derived, in which case Blenheim, the capital value of which is not far short of £1,000,000, would be the largest contributor, and it may therefore be safely assumed that Blenheim would expect the greater share of expenditure to be in the direction of protecting Blenheim.

We are of the opinion that in this particular case the river might be treated as in two parts—viz., the Wairau River proper, including all its tributaries with the exception of the eastern half of the Waihopai River, and also excluding that portion of the southern half of the Wairau River between the Waihopai River and the existing Renwicktown traffic-bridge, as the one part; and, as the other part, the eastern half of the Waihopai River, the southern half of the Wairau River between the Waihopai and the Renwicktown traffic-bridge, the Omaka, Opawa, Fairhall, and Taylor Rivers with their tributaries, together with Rose's Overflow channel.

In this case the rating district as above recommended would be divided into two, which might be referred to respectively as the "Wairau River District" and the "Opawa River District," each district to be represented by a separate River Board or River Trust, as hereinafter described.

The Opawa River Trust should have control of those rivers or portions of rivers, together with their tributaries, lying south of a line running down the centre of the Waihopai River to its junction with the Wairau River; thence down the centre of the Wairau River to below the Renwicktown traffic-bridge; thence in a south-easterly direction to the main Spring Creek Road, and along this road in an easterly direction to Trig. J; thence south along the road-line to the south-west corner of Section 97; thence generally in an easterly direction along the southern boundaries of Sections 97, 88, 79, 71, 66, 62, 58, and 54 to the main road; thence along the main road in a south-easterly direction to Rose's Overflow; thence along the north side of Rose's Overflow to its outlet into the Wairau River; and thence along the centre of the Wairau River to its outlet into the sea: all as indicated by dotted red line on the accompanying Plan No. 1.

The Wairau River Trust should have control of all the other portions of the Wairau River, with its tributaries lying to the north of the above-described boundary-line, and as indicated on Plan No. 1.

Your Commissioners recommend that two River Trusts controlling the above areas be formed, each River Trust consisting of five elected members and two