

1930.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.
PUBLIC DOMAINS AND NATIONAL PARKS OF
NEW ZEALAND
(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 31st July, 1930.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on the public domains and national parks of the Dominion for the year ended 31st March, 1930.

I have, &c.,
J. B. THOMPSON,
Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. E. A. Ransom, Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

PART I.—PUBLIC DOMAINS.

THE established policy of providing suitable areas for the recreation and enjoyment of the general public has received careful attention, and sixteen new domains, covering a total area of some 117 acres, were brought under the provisions of Part II of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, during the year. Boards have been appointed to control eight of the new areas, and arrangements will be made in due course for the control and management of the remainder. Additions totalling 595 acres were also made to fifteen existing domains. The total number of domains administered under Part II of the Act is now 718, comprising an aggregate area of approximately 71,700 acres. The various Commissioners of Crown Lands administer forty-two of these domains, 257 are controlled by local authorities acting as Domain Boards, and the remaining 419 are under the care of local Boards appointed from time to time.

Orders in Council were issued appointing forty-seven Boards to control domains for further terms, while over seventy vacancies on some fifty-two Boards were filled by the appointment of suitable persons nominated by the residents of the particular districts concerned. Two additional members were appointed to each of the Ongarue, Hector, and Ahaura Domain Boards. Nine gentlemen were appointed to control the Horowhenua Lake Domain pursuant to the provisions of section 2 of the Horowhenua Lake Act, 1905, and section 97 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1916. Three appointments were made to the Christchurch Domains Board under section 4 of the Christchurch Domains Amendment Act, 1913.

Miscellaneous documents issued included a Proclamation adding certain closed roads to the Mackenzie Domain; a Warrant authorizing the erection of a public hall on the Hyde Domain; and an Order in Council uniting the Morven and Waikakahi Domains.

Permission was granted fourteen Domain Boards to increase the charges for admission to their respective domains on special occasions during the year.

The appointment of the Matata Domain Board was revoked owing to lack of interest locally in the reserve, and the domain placed under the control of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland. The appointment of the Coal Creek Flat Domain Board was also revoked. In this case no use was made of the domain, which had been allowed to become overrun with noxious weeds. Steps are being taken to revoke the reservation, with a view to the land being disposed of to the best advantage. The Niho Domain, the reservation over which was cancelled by the passing of section 16 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1926, was sold during the year, and the purchase completed of a more suitable area to take its place. An exchange was arranged of an area of 2 acres 2 roods 15 perches of the Avondale Domain for an area of 2 acres and 1.79 perches of an adjoining education reserve. The domain area was required as a site for an open-air classroom to be erected by the

Auckland Education Board, and the land was taken under the Public Works Act for the purposes of a public school by a Proclamation dated the 15th March last. Arrangements are being made to set apart the education reserve area for the purposes of a recreation-ground, and the exchange will then be completed by bringing this area under the provisions of Part II of the Act as an addition to the domain.

With a view to assisting Domain Boards to frame by-laws suitable for the management of the areas under their control the Department has drawn up a model set, the provisions of which, with minor alterations to suit any special circumstances, are applicable to almost any domain in the Dominion. Up to the 31st March by-laws have been adopted and published by eight Boards, while several others have the matter under consideration.

The provisions of section 52 (1) (e) of the Act, under which any Domain Board may, with the consent of the Minister of Lands, appropriate portion of its domain for camping-sites, or parking-places for vehicles for the convenience of persons using the domain, were availed of by seven Boards during the year. A tendency has, however, been noted to ask for approval to the setting-aside of camping-sites and parking-places where the circumstances do not warrant such action. In this connection it may be stated that it is not proposed to approve of any case where the setting-apart of a portion of a public domain as a parking-place or camping-ground would absorb too much ground and interfere unduly with the free and unrestricted use of the domain by the public for general recreation purposes.

The Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1929, dealt with two matters affecting public domains and requiring special legislation.

The reservation was cancelled over an area of 1 acre and 25 perches of the Herries Memorial Park Domain. In 1913 a residence-site license over this particular area was granted under the provisions of the Mining Act, and the holder of such license lately exercised his right to acquire the fee-simple pursuant to the Te Aroha Crown Leases Act, 1920. The legislation therefore excluded the land from the domain, and validated the issue of the residence-site license. It was provided that the purchase money is to be paid into the Domain Account for expenditure upon the remainder of the domain. The Domain Board (the Te Aroha Borough Council) approved the proposals.

An area of 1 acre and 25·7 perches was vested in the Dunedin Ocean Beach Domain Board constituted under the provisions of the Ocean Beach Public Domain Act, 1892. By an agreement between the Domain Board and the Defence Department it was arranged that a portion of the domain amounting to 2 acres and 37·5 perches should be added to the adjoining Defence Reserve, in return for which the Defence Department would relinquish the area first referred to above for inclusion in the domain. The area being given in exchange by the Defence Department was declared Crown land, and the special legislation made it subject to the provisions of the Ocean Beach Public Domain Act, 1892, in order to complete the arrangement.

By section 39 of the Local Legislation Act, 1929, an area of 13 acres 3 roods 22 perches, with a good beach frontage to Manukau Harbour, was vested in the Crown as a public domain. The land was owned by the Auckland Harbour Board, which body desired that it should be made available for the use of the public for recreation purposes. It is proposed to appoint the Mount Roskill Road Board as a Domain Board to have the control and management of this fine reserve.

A perusal of the annual reports furnished by the controlling Boards shows that in the great majority of cases the public domains of the Dominion are fulfilling the purposes for which they were set apart, and are being maintained and improved in a satisfactory manner. It should be added that a splendid public spirit is shown by the members of the various controlling Boards in carrying out the administration of the areas placed under their care. Their services are given gratuitously, and in many cases the amount of time and work involved is very considerable. The Department recognizes this, and is always willing in various ways to assist the controlling Boards to administer their domains in the best interests of the general public.

PART II.—NATIONAL PARKS.

The national parks of the Dominion at present comprise the following areas :—

Name of Park.	Area in Acres.	Reference to Constitution.
1. Tongariro	149,470	The Tongariro National Park Act, 1922.
2. Egmont	79,000	The Egmont National Park Act, 1924.
3. Arthur Pass	117,000	Part III of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928.
4. National Park in Minchin, Bealey, Davie, and Hawdon Survey Districts	94,060	Reserved under the Land Act, 1892.
5. Sounds (Fiordland)	2,266,000	Reserved under the Land Act, 1892.
In addition to the above the following areas are also commonly regarded as national parks :—		
6. Peel Forest Park	1,305	The Peel Forest Act, 1926.
7. Hooker Glacier	38,000	Reserved for recreation purposes under the Land Act, 1885.
8. Tasman Park	97,800	Reserved for recreation purposes under the Land Acts, 1885 and 1908.

NOTE.—The original area of No. 4 was 150,000 acres ; but approximately 56,000 acres are now included in No. 3.

The Tongariro, Egmont, Peel Forest, and Arthur Pass Parks are controlled by special Boards appointed under the provisions of the Tongariro National Park Act, 1922, the Egmont National Park Act, 1924, the Peel Forest Act, 1926, and Part III of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, respectively. Prior to the passing of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, there were no statutory provisions (with the exception of the enactments relating to Tongariro, Egmont, and Peel Forest) dealing specifically with national parks; and those parks in respect of which a special Act had not been passed were accordingly subject to the general reserves law contained in the Public Reserves and Domains Act, 1908. However, Part III of the 1928 Act contains special provisions for the creation and protection of national parks, and the appointment of Boards of control, and these provisions will be made use of in the future.

The Arthur Pass Park was constituted during the year under the provisions of the said Part III, and was placed under the care and management of a strong and widely-representative Board of control. The area dealt with comprises the whole of the old Otira Gorge National Park of 17,000 acres and approximately 56,000 acres of the area originally reserved as a national park in Minchin, Bealey, Davie, and Hawdon Survey Districts (see No. 4 above), together with various areas of forest reserves and Crown land in the locality. The development of this magnificent bush and alpine resort will be watched with great interest.

The annual report of the Egmont National Park Board for the year ended 31st March, 1930, and the report of the Arthur Pass National Park Board for the period from its inception in September last to the 31st March, are published hereunder, together with the relative statements of accounts of the latter Board. The annual report of the Tongariro National Park Board is published separately in parliamentary paper C.-13.

APPENDIX A.

REPORT OF THE EGMONT NATIONAL PARK BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1930.

(W. D. ARMIT, Acting-Chairman.)

During the past twelve months the Egmont National Park Board has continued to carry out its duties of conservation and administration over the park area, and it is fitting to refer to the major activities of the Board in this connection.

Valuable financial assistance was available from the trustees in the estate of R. C. Bruce to the extent of £250 by way of grant, conditional on a similar sum being raised from local-body contributions and also conditional on the sum being utilized for afforestation or the making of tracks. This assistance enabled the Board to apply its funds derived from opossum royalties and sale of trapping rights, together with the Government grant, to the vigorous prosecution of a campaign on the goats infesting the mountain. The great damage to native flora from these animals must be seen to be thoroughly realized, and the denudation of the park lands of the valuable forest cover can be measured in a comparatively short period unless these destructive agents are removed.

The Board has employed two and sometimes three men, who have had the assistance of specially selected and trained dogs. The usual procedure followed is to have the dogs round up the goats in the bush or sub-alpine scrub and the animals are then killed by guns or other means as the occasion requires. For the period under review a total of 2,214 goats have been destroyed, making a total of 2,989 altogether destroyed from the date of commencement of operations to the 31st March, 1930. It is imperative that this work continue, and it is estimated by the Board's Chief Ranger that the pest will not be thoroughly under control until three more years' operations have been completed. An area of approximately 10,000 acres has been worked over, miles of tracks have been cut to enable the rangers to move quickly across country and also to give a range of tracks from centrally situated camp-sites. The goats are found over most of the reserve, but are more numerous on the northern slopes of Mount Egmont and the adjacent Pouaki Ranges than in other localities. The menace of these animals to the flora of Mount Egmont and the ultimate effects on the stream-flow in Taranaki over the whole of the dairying pasture-lands cannot be overemphasized, and it is the desire of the Board to proceed with this work until such time as the danger is removed.

AFFORESTATION.

During the past winter the work of afforesting the remaining weed-infested area, comprising 84 acres on the foot-hills of the Kaitake Ranges, was completed, an experienced foreman being utilized and unemployed labour carrying out the actual clearing and planting operations. As most of the country is very hilly and is covered with heavy fern and gorse 4 to 10 ft. high, *Pinus radiata* has been used, as this tree makes rapid growth, and does not require the extra clearing which is necessary for slower-growing trees. Portion of the land, which was in a more open state, although badly infested with ragwort and fern, has been ploughed where possible, and planted in eucalyptus and *Acacia decurrens*, var. *mollis*; the varieties of eucalyptus used being *fastigata*, *Macarthuri*, *Maidenii*, *botryoides*, and *saligna*.

In an area of about 12 acres (Lucy's Gully), which was completely surrounded with Native forest and is naturally perfectly sheltered and moist, large-growing permanent timber-trees have been planted, such as *Sequoia sempervirens* (Californian redwood) and *Pseudotsuga Douglasii* (Oregon pine), whilst on another area macrocarpa has been planted with the idea of not only suppressing weeds, but providing posts for the Park Board's own fencing. The total trees put in this area is 670, which makes a total for last year's planting of approximately 80,000 trees.

During the summer fire lines and boundaries have been cleared, and all trees cleaned where necessary.

It will be necessary that at least £50 be spent during the coming summer, about January, to reclean the slower-growing trees, also to keep open the fire lines. For the next two or three years an expenditure of £25 will be required annually to keep the fire lines open.

The tree-planting on this area has been of great value to the district, as the area was a mass of weeds, ragwort seed being blown from the high ground to all the neighbouring farms. Total area now planted at Kaitake during the last four winters is over 260 acres, unemployed men being used during the last three winters.

The work has been well carried out, and with the exception of this year, when a dry spell came on after the eucalypts and acacias had been planted, the loss on transplanting has been only about 5 per cent.

BY-LAWS AND LETTERS OF DELEGATION TO LOCAL COMMITTEES.

These matters have been receiving the attention of the Board, and it is anticipated that new by-laws will be submitted for gazettal at an early date. Letters of delegation of certain powers of the Board to the various local committees constituted under the provisions of section 24 of the Egmont National Park Act, 1924, have also been agreed upon as between the Board and committees, and it is expected these letters will be also operative at an early date.

LOCAL COMMITTEES.

The various local committees have co-operated with the Board in catering for the many thousands of visitors to the park. The revenue from admission charges and house charges shows an increase at North Mount Egmont. At South Egmont (Dawson's Falls) the previous year's traffic and revenue has been practically maintained. The decrease in the East (Stratford) is due to the access road being under reconstruction and repair during the year.

NORTH EGMONT LOCAL COMMITTEE.

This committee has erected a small lodge at the Egmont Road entrance to the park for the purpose of ensuring improved control of motor traffic. The great improvement in the North Egmont Road, due to the tar-sealing of the upper three miles, has resulted in a marked increase in motor traffic. The old house at North Egmont has been repaired and the facilities improved.

SOUTH COMMITTEE.

This committee has experienced a successful year, and practically maintained the excellent return of the previous season. The various buildings have been extended, repaired, and renovated. A notable event is the co-operation of the Mount Egmont Alpine Club with the South Egmont Local Committee in the erection of the Syme Hut at Fantham's Peak. The South Committee in purchasing the materials enabled the Alpine Club to proceed with erection. During the present period under review the whole of the material was carried to the site by members of the club, and accommodation for ten to twelve people will be available when the hut is completed.

EAST EGMONT LOCAL COMMITTEE.

This committee has experienced a difficult year owing to the partial stoppage of traffic on the Pembroke Road access. The completion of metalling is in sight, however, and in addition a road giving access to the plateau above the house is under construction by relief workers, and will provide a great attraction to this section of the mountain when the work is completed.

WEST EGMONT LOCAL COMMITTEE.

This Committee has assisted the Board in general conservation, and the members have always displayed a very keen interest in dealing with the affairs of the mountain. The tracks have been improved at the western end, and although this committee is only in receipt of a very small revenue, the best results can be relied upon in giving service to the public visiting this section of the park. A hut (Kahui) has been furnished for visitors wishing to spend the night.

NORTH EGMONT HOSTELRY, LTD.

This company has, by improving the Hostel accommodation and grounds, done everything possible to provide up-to-date and comfortable accommodation for visitors to Mount Egmont.

New walks have been opened up to give access to bush in close proximity to the hostel, enabling visitors to see some very fine scenery without the necessity of tramping a distance. Lookouts have been constructed affording an excellent view of the surrounding country. Sign-posts have been erected to enable visitors to view the points of interest as conveniently as possible, and many native trees have been named.

A new manager has been appointed and already a pronounced improvement is noticeable in the number of visitors to the hostel.

ALPINE CLUBS.

A most pleasing feature of the present year is the great interest and activity displayed by members of the three alpine clubs surrounding the mountain. The Mount Egmont Alpine Club in the south, the Stratford Alpine Club in the east, and the more recently formed Taranaki Alpine Club in the north have all assisted the younger enthusiast to appreciate the many attractions of the park. This evidence of a keen interest in tramping and mountaineering is gratifying to the Board and committees administering the park. The thanks of the Board are due to the honorary rangers, also to the Chairman, members, and officers of the various local committees, and to its own officers in carrying out the work of the Board.

The Mount Egmont Alpine Club has assisted the Board in popularizing the mountain by building a hut (Syme) on Fantham's Peak on the southern slope of the mountain at about 6,400 ft. above sea-level. The hut reflects the greatest credit on the Alpine Club members, as they supplied all the labour necessary to carry the material to the site, also carrying up the equipment. The Syme Hut is fully equipped and makes an excellent base for early ascents to the summit, or for search parties in case of accident on the mountain.

The Taranaki Alpine Club is at present preparing plans and considering costs with the object of erecting a similar hut at Humphries' Castle on the northern slope of the mountain at a height of 5,000 ft., and it is felt that the report received from the alpine club is of great assistance to the Board.

APPENDIX B.

REPORT OF THE ARTHUR PASS NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(W. STEWART, Chairman.)

This report covers the period from the inception of the Board, 19th September, 1929, to 31st March, 1930. The Board has been engaged on little else than preliminary work, in particular towards securing finance wherewith to develop the resources of the park. The Board acknowledges with gratitude the grant of £200 from the Government, which will cover initial expenses and allow certain minor urgent works to be undertaken.

The most important contribution is that of the Christchurch City Council, which has undertaken to give £500, provided other local bodies between them contribute a like sum. At present the canvassing of the other local bodies is being organized, and it is hoped to raise the necessary amount, although probably not without difficulty. With a subsidy from the Government, which it is hoped will be forthcoming, a sufficient sum for definite progressive works will be available.

The public of Canterbury and Westland have a proper appreciation of the action that the Government has taken to provide for the development of what is regarded as one of the greatest scenic and natural playground assets that both provinces possess. The park is rapidly increasing in popularity as a holiday resort, both for overseas tourists and for our own people, and is patronized during summer vacations and for winter sports. The Railway Department has done much to popularize this resort by providing for excursions, which invariably produce capacity trains. It is safe to predict that the park, being so easily accessible, and within the means of almost every person in both provinces to utilize and enjoy, will become the most used of any similar resort in New Zealand.

One of the chief features of the park is the abundance and variety of its flora, which is declared by scientists within the Dominion and beyond to be quite unique, but in need of expert protection. This phase of the Board's work is receiving full attention, as it was one of the prime motives for asking that the area be placed under a local Board of control. A ranger has been appointed, and several local enthusiasts are being approached to see if they will assist by accepting appointment as honorary rangers. This part of the Board's responsibility is possible even with our present limited finance, and developmental work will require to wait until more money is available.

The chief bodies connected with the park for the promotion of sports are the Canterbury Mountaineering and Tramping Club and the Christchurch Ski Club. The former club has been operating for some years, and has already built a hut suitable to the needs of its members, known as the Carrington Memorial Hut. The Board proposes that a lease for a term of twenty-one years be granted to the club at a nominal rent, and with the right to charge small fees to non-members. The club is doing valuable exploration work, and many of its discoveries have been incorporated in a map of the park now being prepared. The Ski Club is of more recent formation, and is chiefly interested in the utilization of the opportunities the park provides for winter sport. It is becoming strong numerically, and anticipates a very good season.

Both clubs are co-operating enthusiastically with the Board, and can probably be relied on for assistance, particularly in the matter of providing manual labour for the formation of tracks and the erection of huts.

It should be stated, however, that the Board has defined a policy that its first regard must be for the general public rather than any particular section of it. The Grounds Committee recently carried out a fairly thorough inspection, and in consequence the formation and improvement of existing tracks to places of interest and beauty, and accessible to the average walker, have been determined upon.

Good ski-ing grounds are available. Strong representations have been made for the erection of a suitable accommodation hut, and this will be undertaken when the more general needs are fulfilled and finance is available.

Perhaps the greatest need of the park is for a modern accommodation-house. Without this we cannot expect to attract a large section of our citizens who would like to enjoy an outing, or would benefit by a more prolonged stay in the park surroundings, but who have reached an age when some comfort is needed. There are hopeful indications that this necessity is receiving the consideration of private financial interests.

The destruction of flora by deer was causing alarm, but the Board has been empowered to license deer-stalkers to operate. The result has been that good sport has been obtained, and the menace considerably lessened.

The Board is gratified at the considerable public interest that has been aroused in its operations, and in this connection desires to thank the press of both Christchurch and Westland for its liberal and sympathetic assistance.

ARTHUR PASS NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1930.

<i>Receipts.</i>				<i>Payments.</i>			
		£	s. d.			£	s. d.
To Government grant .. ..	..	200	0 0	By Travelling-expenses .. ..	..	27	7 2
Deer-license fees .. ..	..	2	0 0	Rent .. ..	..	0	10 0
Rent .. ..	..	1	15 4	Salary, &c., ranger .. ..	..	7	6 0
Travelling-expenses refunded ..	..	0	10 0	Stationery .. ..	..	3	9 2
				Stamps and telegrams .. ..	..	1	10 0
				Bank charge .. ..	..	0	5 0
				Sundry expenses (seal) .. ..	..	2	15 1
				Balance .. ..	..	161	2 11
		£204	5 4			£204	5 4

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1929, TO 31ST MARCH, 1930.

<i>Expenditure.</i>						<i>Income.</i>			
To Expenses of management—						By Grant from Government			
Travelling - expenses of	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	
Grounds Committee	7	10	2		Deer-license fees	2	0	0	
Less refund amount					Rent from leases—				
overpaid	0	10	0		Rent paid	1	15	4	
					Accrued but unpaid	0	15	8	
			7	0				2 11 0	
Stamps, stationery, and									
telegrams			5	4					
Cost of making seal			2	15					
Salary and expenses of									
ranger—									
Paid to 12th March,									
1930	7	6	0						
Accrued but unpaid	1	6	1						
			8	12					
				23					
				11					
				6					
Expenses of meetings—									
Travelling-expenses of members	19	17	0						
Rent of building			0	10					
				20					
				7					
				0					
Excess of receipts over expenditure				160					
				12					
				6					

BALANCE-SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH, 1930.

<i>Liabilities.</i>				<i>Assets.</i>			
	£	s. d.			£	s. d.	
Sundry creditor for unpaid salary	1	6 1	Cash in bank .. ..	..	161	2 11	
Capital Account	410	12 6	Sundry debtors—Rent accrued but not due	..	0	15 8	
			Tracks .. ..	..	100	0 0	
			Carrington Memorial Hut ..	..	150	0 0	
	£411	18 7			£411	18 7	

S. T. BARNETT, Treasurer.

Examined and found correct—G. F. C. CAMPBELL, Controller and Auditor-General.

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