

The cession to the Crown of portions of the Waione Blocks was dealt with under section 32 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, 1922, which provided that the boundaries of the lands to be ceded should be pointed out by Ngataiawhia te Ruahuihui, and that they should thereupon be defined by the Crown by survey. The boundaries were duly pointed out on the ground to the surveyor, and, following the approval of the survey plan, a Proclamation was gazetted on the 4th June, 1931, declaring five areas, totalling 162 acres 3 roods 19 perches, to have been duly ceded to the Crown. On the issue of this document the lands concerned vested in the Crown in trust as scenic reserves, and their administration passed to the Rotoiti Scenic Reserves Board, which controls the areas at Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoehu ceded to the Crown under section 33 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, 1919. This Board consists of six members, of whom five are members of the Ngatipikiao Tribe.

The gift of these reserves by the Native owners is greatly appreciated, and preserves to the Dominion scenic areas of unusual charm. Lake Okataina itself is a popular attraction for tourists and local residents alike, and forms one of the premier sights in a district in which Nature has taken delight in lavishing her gifts with a bountiful hand. The lake is a beautiful sheet of placid water hidden away in a basin in the hills, with shores flanked by grassy flats and precipitous bush-clad heights, and numerous tranquil bays dominated, in many cases, by lowering cliffs.

A further public-spirited gift was that made by the Whakamarama Land and Timber Co., Ltd., of an area of 85 acres of heavy native bush near Omokoroa. This bush is of particular interest to lovers of nature as, in addition to the usual forest trees, it possesses ferns and shrubs in great variety and profusion.

During the past year only one area of 73 acres was set aside in the Taranaki Land District. This reserve comprises a steep, bush-clad face in full view of the Main North Road over Mount Messenger, and its reservation was made possible through the generous action of a Crown tenant in surrendering his interest in the land.

Activities in the Wellington Land District led to the reservation of several areas of considerable scenic interest. The first of these is the Whakapapa Island situated between the Wanganui and Whakapapa Rivers at their junction in the vicinity of Kakahi and forming a favourite picnic spot for residents of the surrounding district. It carries a good stand of young totara trees bordered on the outskirts by fern and heavy manuka, and will form a most valuable reserve. The river boundaries form a natural firebreak, and the development of the totara bush should prove of great interest.

The second area forms a peninsula projecting itself into the Pohangina River some little distance from Pohangina. The reserve is a favourite picnic spot for local residents and possesses considerable scenic charm lying, as it does, in a horse-shoe bend of the river.

The third reservation was that of an area of some 634 acres adjoining the Rotokahu Scenic Reserve on the Maungaroa Road and exhibiting varied pretensions to scenic interest. The new reserve comprises, for the most part, exceedingly rough, precipitous country, but containing a considerable amount of native bush. This will prove a valuable reserve for the preservation of native bird life. The locality is somewhat inaccessible, and the reserve is a favourite haunt of various native birds.

The final Wellington District reservation during the year was the setting-apart of two small areas overlooking Taumarunui and originally comprising portion of the Wanganui River Trust Domain. Representations were made that these areas should be set apart as scenic reserves and the control thereof vested in the Taumarunui Borough Council. The matter was therefore dealt with by section 4 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1931.

Several reservations of some importance were made in the Nelson Land District during the period under review, not the least important of which was the setting-apart of 884 acres of heavy bush country in the Maruia Valley. The West Coast Road through the valley traces its way through this bush, the reservation of which enables a major scenic attraction on the route to be preserved.

A further 2,023 acres of high bush-clad country in the Buller Gorge were added to the already extensive reservations in that locality.

Eight areas totalling 698 acres of unalienated Crown land in virgin forest on the Greymouth-Westport Main Highway were reserved during the year. This highway is developing into a popular tourist route, and it is intended to preserve its interest to the traveller by the reservation of all available bush areas.

An area of 3,290 acres in the vicinity of the Dun Mountain, and containing portions of the basins of the Maitai and Roding Rivers, was also set aside under the Scenery Preservation Act. The land concerned was State forest, but contained little timber of commercial value, and the State Forest Service agreed to the purpose of this reserve being changed. Special legislation was provided in section 8 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1931, cancelling the State forest reservation, and setting the land apart for scenery purposes. The control of the reserve is being vested in the Nelson City Council, which has for some years controlled considerable areas of scenic reserves in the vicinity.

Ngaio Island, in Tasman Bay, was proclaimed as a scenic reserve since, although this small island has always been regarded as a reserve, an investigation of the title showed that no Proclamation had ever been issued. This fault has accordingly now been rectified.

In the Marlborough Land District the areas placed under the control of the Hundalee Scenic Board was augmented by the addition of the Hapuku Reserve of 142 acres of bush land. This is a particularly welcome addition since it has been used extensively in the past as a camping-ground. A narrow and picturesque bush road winds through the area which was the only reservation effected in the district during the year.

Reservations in the Canterbury Land District include four sections in the Rosewill Settlement of an aggregate acreage of some 154 acres of excellent native bush. This locality is singularly deficient in really good reserves, and these areas should prove a valuable asset to the district.

An area of 510 acres in the Pareora Gorge of native bush reserved in 1898 as a sanctuary for native birds was set aside as a scenic reserve. This reserve is one of the few areas of first-class native bush left in the South Canterbury District.