

1933.
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.

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st August, 1933.

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, 1933.

I have, &c.,

W. ROBERTSON,

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

Under-Secretary for Lands.

REPORT.

PART I.—PUBLIC DOMAINS.

At the 31st March, 1933, the total number of public domains administered under the provisions of Part II of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, was 759, covering a total area of 75,230 acres. Forty-one of these domains are administered by the various Commissioners of Crown Lands, 269 are controlled by local authorities acting as Domain Boards, while the remainder are under the management of local Boards appointed from time to time. The Lands and Survey Department exercises a general oversight over all these reserves, and assists the controlling Boards in various directions to administer our public domains in the best interests of the general public.

The work of setting aside new domain areas to provide for the recreation and enjoyment of the public always receives its fair share of attention, and during the year eleven new domains, covering a total area of 68 acres, were reserved and brought under Part II of the Act. Boards were appointed to control ten of the new areas, and arrangements will be made in due course for the care and management of the other one. Additions totalling some 270 acres were also made to nineteen existing domains.

Brief mention may be made of a few of the more interesting new reserves set apart during the year. After protracted negotiations, and with the assistance of the Thames County Council, an area of 5 acres 2 roods 39 perches at Tapu Flat on the Thames-Coromandel Road was acquired as a public domain and placed under the control of the County Council. This piece of land is one of the very few flat areas on the beautiful Thames coast that is available for public use, and as it is a favourite seaside resort for people of the district its acquisition is a matter for congratulation. Another valuable area, the acquisition of which presented considerable difficulties, was a piece of exceptionally fine bush land at Warkworth. In this case it was necessary to operate the provisions of the Public Works Act, and the Warkworth Town Board co-operated with the Department in the acquisition of the land. Matters in connection with an area of 10 acres at Dargaville in use as the main recreation-ground of the town were placed on a proper footing during the year. This area had been transferred to the Crown many years ago as a public reserve, and on the representations of the Borough Council steps were taken to change the reservation to recreation purposes, and to make the land a public domain. At Aongatete an area of 1 acre was donated to the Crown by Mr. F. Earl as a recreation reserve. The Department arranged for the necessary survey, and on completion of transfer to the Crown the land was made a public domain and placed under the control of a local Domain Board. The first public domain on Stewart Island was constituted during the year at Half-moon Bay. The domain comprises a reserve vested in the Crown under section 16 of the Land Act on the subdivision of certain property, together with an area donated by the Presbyterian Church authorities, and a further area purchased by the Crown to complete an adequate reservation. The Stewart Island County Council has been appointed as the controlling Domain Board.

Areas of some 23 acres at Parikino and 12 acres at Taumarunui were purchased by the Wanganui River Trust Domain Board as additions to their domain, and titles in favour of the Crown were duly issued. In addition, an area of nearly 1,200 acres of Crown land on the Wanganui was proclaimed as a public domain under the provisions of the Wanganui River Trust Act, 1891. The land was unsuitable for settlement, and to permit the felling of the bush would have spoilt that particular stretch of the river from a scenic point of view. The action taken had the effect of placing the area under the control of the Wanganui River Trust Domain Board.

Orders in Council were issued appointing fifty-four Boards to control domains for further terms, while ninety vacancies on sixty-eight Boards were filled by the appointment of suitable persons nominated by the residents of the various districts concerned. Additional members were appointed to the Te Teko, Orewa, Harihari, and Garth Domain Boards. Nine gentlemen were appointed to