

and fernbirds nest around the ponds.

To the east of Dome Mire lies the Dale Development Block, about 30 percent of which will be excluded from pastoral farming and set aside in reserves. These include Dale Forest and Lake Otter, berm areas along the banks of the Whitestone and Upukerora Rivers, and another small reserve at present managed by the Wildlife Service.

Luxuriant cover

Kakapo Swamp, close to the main road about 6 km east of Te Anau, is a prime waterfowl breeding area and contains luxuriant cover of flax, nigger-head, and abundant watercress. The water level has been raised and the swamp area extended to increase the breeding space available to birds.

The curiously named Dawson City Swamp, an interesting fen dominated by the sedge *Carex diandra*, and the Wilderness Lagoon, both in the Wilderness Road area, have also had their water levels raised by weirs to add to their potential as waterfowl breeding areas.

Land development has been seen by some as a menace to the remaining wetlands of the Te Anau basin because of the burning off and the drainage of swamps and bogs associated with it.

But devastating fires, as we have seen, are nothing new. They have swept the area for centuries. The clearing of vulnerable dry scrub and its replacement by pasture plants should lessen the chances of widespread fire in the future.

The Kepler String Bog and the Dome Mire, both regarded as wetlands of international significance, have been excluded from development, and any interference with their drainage patterns is being avoided. These and several



Part of the pool system in the Dome Mire. The wind-swept appearance has been caused by down-wash from the rotor blades of a helicopter.



The pool system of the Kepler String Bog, with Lake Manapouri behind. The bog drains from right to left, across the line of the pools.



An aerial view of the Dome Mire, looking towards the north. The stands of bog pine (*Dacrydium colensoi*) are on the far side of the bog.

other small wetlands have been set aside as potential reserves, and the swamps mentioned above have been extended and enhanced to improve their carrying capacity for breeding water birds.

“Lands and Survey policy is to strike as equitable a balance as possible between the various conflicting land-use options for the basin,” says Bing Lucas, the department’s director-general. ■