

tance between Lake Manapouri and the head of Smith Sound, allowing for windings of the road, would be, I believe, under thirteen miles. From the relative positions of Lake Manapouri and the sounds it is evident that no shorter route can be got as low. The pass from Te Anau Lake to Milford Sound is more than half as high again, and the distance between lake and sound more than twice as long.

3. That from the view obtained of the country from Leaning Peak it appears very unlikely that any passes exist between either the Mica Burn, the Aweburn, or the Truman Burn and any of the sounds, the general altitude of the country appearing to rise towards the north.

4. That there is a pass below bush-level, at the head of the Hauroto Burn, giving through communication between Hauroto Lake and Dusky Sound by way of the Hauroto Burn and Deadwood Creek.

5. That a low pass or flat saddle exists at the head of the Grebe River, giving an easy through route between the south arm of Lake Manapouri and the north end of Lake Monowai. I have not been at this saddle, and so cannot state its altitude, but it appears to be very low.

I should be pleased at some future date to continue this work, either by boat on Manapouri or by boat on the sounds. I have obtained a few photographs, which, if on development they prove good, may be of interest, and I will forward you copies.

E. H. WILMOT, District Surveyor.

APPENDIX No. 12.—WANGANUI RIVER.

REPORT ON THE WORKS CONNECTED WITH IMPROVEMENT OF THE WANGANUI RIVER FOR STEAMER TRAFFIC, UNDERTAKEN BY THE WANGANUI RIVER TRUST, AND SUBSIDISED BY GOVERNMENT.

For the year ending the 31st March, 1897, there has been expended an amount of £1,915 6s. This included the construction of two new working-punts, each 60 ft. long and 15 ft. wide, built of kauri and totara timber, and each fitted with derrick and crab-winch for snagging and lifting stones and boulders, and for loading and carrying and depositing stone in training-walls; the requisite tools, ropes, plant, and material, and working-gear for the punts and work; towage by steamer of stone-punts, and wages of working-parties; repairs to a punt got on loan from the Harbour Board for a time before the new punts were built; and the wages of labour on survey of river for two months.

The amount received by the Trust for river-dues during the year ending the 31st March, 1897, has been £81 3s. 6d. A grant was made by Government this year of £1,600, of which £1,000 has been received by the River Trust up to the 31st March. The total amount expended by the Wanganui River Trust since its inauguration in 1891 has been £4,148 6s. 7d.

Below Pipiriki, in the early part of the year, 250 cubic yards of stone were deposited in training-walls, and some snagging done.

During the winter months, when the river was too high for general work, advantage was taken of the easy navigation in such a state of river to bring down by the punts a quantity of stone for training-walls, and, as this stone had to be brought from considerable distances, the use of one of the river-steamers was got for a time for towage of the punts in this service, as without this too much time in shifting the punts up and down the river would occur. By this means 1,820 cubic yards of large stone were deposited in different localities, and afterwards placed in position by the punts with working-parties, who also at the same time took out snags and large boulders from the channels at various places.

Above Pipiriki, in the latter part of the year, work was going on in clearing channels and training currents in the rapids as far as the junction of the Manganui-teao, and in snagging as far as Tieke, about thirteen miles above Pipiriki. It was hoped to have completed this portion this season, but the unusual wet weather for the time of the year, and consequent higher level of water for a great part of the time, prevented this being done; and the portion of the work requiring very low river, such as blasting papa reefs on the bottom and sides of channels, and blasting and removing rocks, &c., has had to be left till next season, when this is intended to be the work first undertaken as soon as the river is low enough.

The months of February and March are usually looked to as suitable for low-river work, but this year in February only nine days' work was got, and in March also there was considerable disadvantage to work owing to the amount of water in the river. Viewing the comparatively short season of low river generally available for advantageous work, it was considered advisable to increase the number of punts, as without punts an increased number of men cannot be utilised in this work. Consequently two new punts have been added to the plant. This makes four punts, and will allow of four parties at work, and it is intended to utilise the punts so as to do as much work as possible when work can be done to most advantage—viz., at low-river periods.

This season one punt was placed at the disposal of the Survey Department, who were carrying on work in the Tangarakau River. Next season it is proposed to continue the work between Pipiriki and the Tangarakau River junction, and probably also to have a punt and party below Pipiriki, going from Hiruharama downwards, and taking out such snags and boulders still desirable to remove, and which are to be got at in very low river only in various places in the channels, and doing sundry other work.

In connection with the Tangarakau River, by request of the Minister of Lands, the Chairman prepared a specification and called for tenders for clearing a light steamer channel, 33 ft. wide, for fifteen miles up the Tangarakau from its junction with the Wanganui. The Minister of Lands, however, afterwards decided, in the meantime, to clear a canoe channel only, and this work has