

CATCHMENT DISTRICTS

Section 34 of the Act provides for the setting-up by His Excellency the Governor-General of catchment districts, which are administered by Catchment Boards. Consideration has already been given to the question of constituting catchment districts embracing the Manawatu, Hawke's Bay, and Nelson districts, and the Council expects to be in a position to make early recommendations to the Government.

Proposals affecting other areas are being worked out.

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS AND RESERVES

Section 13 of the Act provides for the constitution of soil conservation districts, and section 16 for the acquisition of soil conservation reserves, and several proposals are at present under investigation.

CENTRAL AND DISTRICT COMMITTEES

A central standing committee, and district committees in the various public-works districts, comprising representatives of existing Departments, have been set up to act in an advisory capacity as required on all matters pertaining to river control and soil conservation as may be referred to them from time to time by the Council. The local knowledge of the members of such district committees will be of considerable value to the Council. The central standing committee, which consists of representatives of the Public Works, Lands and Survey, Agriculture, Scientific and Industrial Research, and Forestry Departments, will have a most important function in connection with the work of co-ordinating the activities of the various Departments concerned in the problems of soil conservation and rivers control.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The collation of reports, maps, and other information will proceed as staff becomes available. Arrangements have been made for the exchange of information with the soil-conservation services of America and Australia, and much benefit is expected to accrue thereby.

SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

A programme of survey work, the collection of data in connection with soil erosion, soil conservation, and river control, together with related research and experimental work, is to be instituted.

AFFORESTATION

A programme of afforestation and work in connection with protective vegetative covering is planned, and district committees have been requested to make recommendations affecting their districts as to suitable areas for nurseries.

PUBLICITY AND EDUCATIONAL

Publicity and educational work will play a large part in the development of correct soil-conservation practice, and arrangements are in hand for the appointment of a publicity and educational officer so that the considerable task of the collection and collation of suitable material can be commenced and as much publicity and educational work carried out as present conditions will allow.

INSPECTION

Field inspections are being made as opportunity permits to enable members to become fully conversant with the varying problems which obtain in the different districts.

Travel restrictions and the pressure on members' time of other essential activities has greatly reduced the scope of these inspections. Nevertheless, brief visits have been made to the Hawke's Bay, Westland, and Nelson districts, and further inspections are proposed as opportunity offers.

GENERAL

The Council wishes to make it clear that progress in the work outlined is dependent on the financial provision made available, and, further, that the ability to take advantage of that provision is in turn dependent on the staff and man-power available to the Council. While the war is running its course the prior needs of the armed forces and essential services will overshadow the Council's activities and severely restrict its functions. This is to be regretted, but is unavoidable, and members of the Council look forward to happier days ahead when the organization which is being built up will be fully tested.

Signed on behalf of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council:

W. L. NEWNHAM, M.Inst.C.E., Chairman.