

1900.
NEW ZEALAND.

RIVERS COMMISSION:

INTERIM REPORT OF COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO CERTAIN MATTERS RELATING TO WATERCOURSES.

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 11th July, 1900.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House an interim report of the Rivers Commission, or so much as is in the public interest desirable."—(Mr. J. ALLEN.)"

To His Excellency the Right Honourable UCHTER JOHN MARK, Earl of Ranfurly, the Governor of New Zealand.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

In compliance with your Excellency's Commission of the 9th day of April, 1900, to inquire into any matter or thing arising out of or connected with constituting and setting apart watercourses into which tailings and waste water produced by or resulting from mining operations may be discharged; also as to the resulting benefit to mining and other industries, and the resulting injury to the agricultural and other industries, that would be effected if such watercourses were proclaimed channels into which the said tailings and waste water from mining operations may be discharged; also the sum that will probably be required to settle claims for compensation or to take the land compulsorily, we have the honour to forward an interim report on the watercourses we have examined up to date, as follows:—

WAI AU RIVER.—(FIRST SCHEDULE.)

The only claim for compensation in connection with proclaiming this river and its tributaries is one of £2,500 from Janet McQuillan, who holds a farm of 258 acres, Section 12, Block 16, Longwood, with riparian rights on the Hollyburn, a tributary of the Waiau River. Your Commissioners do not think that any mining operations will be carried on in the vicinity of the Hollyburn, and are of opinion that no injury will result to agricultural or other industries from the Waiau River and all its remaining tributaries to their sources being proclaimed. There are several dredging claims taken up on the Waiau River, and one dredge has been at work near Belmont. Your Commissioners therefore recommend that the Waiau River and all its tributaries to their sources, with the exception of the Hollyburn, be proclaimed watercourses into which tailings and waste water from mining operations may be discharged.

KENNY'S CREEK, OREPUKI.

Several miners waited on the Commission at Orepuki, and urged the necessity of setting apart Kenny's Creek as a proclaimed watercourse. The evidence tendered in regard to this matter showed that in ordinary weather there is only one sluice-head of water in this creek, that it passes through freehold lands to near its source, and that it will not open up auriferous lands of any great extent. Your Commissioners therefore do not recommend Kenny's Creek to be proclaimed a watercourse into which tailings and waste water from mining operations may be discharged.

OURAWERA CREEK, COLAC.—(SECOND SCHEDULE.)

This creek has been used for over twenty years as a depository for tailings from mining operations at Round Hill, and its bed has been raised to a considerable extent. The water now flows over a width of fully 20 chains at different points along its course. The land adjoining the creek is unsuitable for agricultural or pastoral purposes. There are extensive mining operations carried on in this locality; but no evidence was tendered either for or against the issue of a Proclamation, notwithstanding that due notice was given by advertisement in the newspapers circulating in the district that evidence would be taken at Colac. After careful inspection and inquiry, your Commissioners recommend that the Ourawera Creek, with all its tributaries to their sources, be proclaimed watercourses into which tailings and waste water from mining operations may be discharged.

WAIKAKA RIVER.—(FIRST SCHEDULE.)

There are thirteen dredging claims taken up on freehold land and one claim on a lease in perpetuity in the valley of the Waikaka River and tributaries, and twelve dredging claims on the Waikaka Mining Reserve. There are five dredges at work and six under construction, two of

* Omitted portions of the report are indicated by a line of asterisks.