

Unsurveyed Land.

Subdivision.	Block.	Area.	Loading for Roads.		
		Acres.	£	s.	d.
Eastern ...	Nil	Nil	Nil.		
	Waimarino (part) ...	45,760			
	Taurewa No. 1 ...	17,600			
	South Kaitieke ...	20,189			
	Horopito (Township Reserve) ...	538			
Western ...	Awarua 4A 3B ...	1,911			
	" 4A No. 2 ...	903			
	" 4C No. 1 ...	864			
	" 1DA ...	22,807			
	" 1B ...	59,300			
	" 4C No. 2 ...	473	141	18	0
		170,345	141	18	0

The CHIEF SURVEYOR, Wellington District, to the SURVEYOR-GENERAL.

SIR,—

District Survey Office, Wellington, 21st April, 1881.

In compliance with your instructions of the 19th instant, following upon Circular No. 82 of the 7th January last, I have the honour to submit for your consideration descriptions of several proposed reserves for State forests in this provincial district.

Though your circular does not appear to contemplate more than the protection of springs and the sources of rivers and streams, I have ventured to assume that the primary objects to be kept in view are :—

- (1.) The preservation of forest and scrub upon all mountains, high hills, and their steep faces, to insure the following advantages :—
 - (a.) The sources of streams would be sheltered and the existing water-supply maintained.
 - (b.) The surface of the country would be saved from degradation, and the alluvial valley lands protected from the accumulation of detritus.
 - (c.) The rapid descent of storm-waters would be avoided, and consequent sudden and high floods more disastrous than those now experienced.
 - (d.) The "climatic equilibrium" would be maintained.
- (2.) The reservation of forest, &c., along the courses of streams in flat valleys and plains in localities where the banks would be subject to encroachment and destruction in times of flood.
- (3.) The establishment of State forests which would comprise timber trees of special value for construction and general purposes, as well as to keep up a sufficient supply of fuel.
- (4.) The reservation on low sandy coasts of tracts where protection planting may be necessary to guard against shifting sands.

All my present recommendations have mainly in view the objects specified under heading (1); in a less degree some of the purposes required under heading (3) will be accomplished. In consequence of the purchase by private individuals of most of the accessible forest classed under the latter heading (3) reservations will require to be effected for those purposes at a future time, as the surveys progress and actual inspection reveals where valuable timber trees exist. The same remarks apply to the conservation of bush under headings (2) and (4).

You will observe that the proposed reserve on the Rimutaka Ranges will guard, as far as is now practicable, the important settled district in the Hutt Valley from higher floods than are now experienced. The country around Featherston will likewise benefit in the future. The Wainui-Paikakariki and the Otorongo reservations are recommended for climatic and landscape considerations and effect. Within a few years I have little doubt that the aspect of the Wellington country districts will present an almost complete absence of forest scenery. This consideration alone furnishes ample argument for forest-reservation.

Most of the purposes indicated under (1) will be insured by the proposed reserve on the Arawaru-Fitzherbert Ranges. When the plans of the Tararua Block have been completed the mountain country at the heads of the Mangahara, Makakahi, Ruamahanga, Waipoua, Waingawa, and Waiohine Rivers should be reserved to prevent the probable future destruction of large tracts in the Wairarapa, as well as to save some of the towns from actual danger of devastating inundations. Reservations in the following localities should be made from time to time as the surveys furnish the requisite information: Forty-mile Bush, Puketoi, East Coast, Otaki, Tokomaru, Pohangina-Ruahine, and other places.

It may be considered that the areas are large, but I doubt whether comparatively small forests will withstand destruction (wilful or accidental), or even the effects of natural decay. Additions can hereafter be made as necessity requires. And it would be well, also, if provision were made for the withdrawal of portions of areas from the operations of "The New Zealand Forests Act, 1874."