

portion of the Waimarino Block, I would recommend to be reserved 2,000 acres south-east of Orupe Stream, and north of Retaruke River—this is very rough bush country—and a block of 10,000 acres south of Retaruke River consisting of birch bush on high cliffs and broken country. Coming south, I think the bush on the following blocks round the high peaks should be reserved for climatic reasons: 2,000 acres round Mount Tauakira east of Koroniti on the Wanganui River; 1,000 acres at Takihi Hill; 2,000 acres at Kauai-o-tawaki Hill; the high table-land called Raetihi Mount; the bush to the south-west of Kauaekeke Hill, a part of Motukawa Block; the Waipuna Bush at the south-east corner of the Rangipo-Waiiau Block; the northern end of the Tapuae Range, part of the Raketapauma Block; 2,000 acres round Tuhirangi Hill, at the headwaters of the Wangaehu and Turakina Rivers; 1,500 acres at Pukeokahu Hill, between Moawhango and Rangitikei Rivers. To lessen the risk of floods in the Waitotara River a reserve of, say, 1,500 acres might be made at Pukeariki Hill between the Waitotara and Wanganui Rivers; 1,000 acres of bush on the northern end of Kapiti Island.

In respect of the reservation of the bush in order to conserve scenic effect, to provide shelter, and to maintain the banks of the rivers, including the preservation of the forest in river-gorges and other places of natural beauty, so as to keep the attraction which the fine scenery of this Island has for tourists and travellers—I am able to report that these objects have been steadily borne in mind for some years in this district. The accompanying schedule, marked “B,” gives a list of reserves made for these objects.

In regard to preserving the bush along river-gorges and on steep cliffs, I believe that in many cases where these features are included in the Crown leases the lessees would be very willing to have these rough portions cut off their holdings, with a corresponding reduction in their rents. In most of these cases a survey would be required defining the area resumed, and the new boundary. I may mention that the lessees of Sections 1 and 2, Block V., Ruahine, and Section 13, Block IX., Ruahine, are desirous of having the rough portions of their sections along the River Kawatau resumed. I would also recommend for preservation as a scenery reserve part of Section 19, Block X., Hautapu, totara reserve; the 23 acres of which it consists having very little milling-timber on them. The balance of the reserve has been let for milling purposes. The additional reserves I would recommend to be made in this district are: A belt one mile wide on each side of the Wanganui River, from Parakino upwards, until the river becomes the boundary between the Land Districts of Wellington and Taranaki, thence on the Wellington side of the river a continuation of the reserve one mile wide to join the Wanganui River Trust Reserve (this would include a large number of Native reserves and settlements along the river-banks); the watershed of the Pitangi Creek on the Wanganui River; the basin of Kaukere Stream, and the bush for half a mile on both sides on the Pipiriki-Raetihi Road from Pipiriki to Waipuna Saddle; the gorges of the Mangawhero and Wangaehu Rivers in the Ohutu, Tauakira, and Taonui Blocks; the gorges on the Rangitikei River and its tributaries, Hautapu, Moawhanga, Makino. Kawatau, Pourangaki, Mangawharariki, &c.; the gorges on the Oroua River and Coal Creek, in the Apiti and Umutoi Survey Districts.

On the eastern division of this land district, there is only one large forest reserve for climatic purposes. This consists of 32,000 acres on the Haurangi Mountains. I would recommend that the area to the westward of the above reservations be extended from the headwaters of the Turanganui River and southwards to Mount Barton, as this will include the roughest portion of this part of the district. I may add that the land is of little or no value for settlement purposes.

My predecessor has already proposed that a number of sections in various settlements that are Crown land, either through forfeiture or through not having been selected, should be reserved. These are being held back until the question of loading is considered. Under any circumstances I would strongly recommend that a forest reserve be made along Puketoi Range, from Mount Butters to Mount Wahatuara. This would include some leaseholds, but the bulk is Crown land—say, 3,000 acres.

There are a large number of beauty-spots on private property, native and freehold, in the vicinity of the towns and settlements. Might not the preservation of such of these, as it was found desirable and possible to conserve, be left in the hands of the local authorities?

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

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