

2. Have you been through that forest recently?—No.
3. At any time?—Yes, all over it.
4. Were you residing there then?—Yes.
5. What was the climate like in those days?—There was a great deal more rain than now, but as the bush has been cleared we have less rain.
6. That being so, do you not think if all the bush were cleared off it would be a bad thing for the district?—No. We are in a swampy country, not hilly, and I do not think we shall ever be short of rain. But I do not want all the bush to go all the same.
7. When you resided in the bush were there any fires?—A few odd trees were burnt.
8. Before Waipoua was declared a State forest was it pretty well run over by gum-diggers?—Yes.
9. Therefore if it were liable to burn it stood a very good chance of being burnt then?—I suppose so, but a kauri bush is apt to be burnt at any time by a man lighting his pipe.
10. On account of the rainfall do you not think that even if a fire did start it would probably go out?—I do not think so. Once a fire starts in a kauri-tree it runs to the top and will spread thence to another tree half a mile away, and so on, even if there is not plenty of fuel on the ground.
11. *Mr. Clarke.*] Has any one a right to start a fire in that forest?—No, but a man might drop a match after lighting his pipe.
12. But I understand that there are no regular roads to or through Waipoua Forest?—Not that I know of.
13. Then what purpose would a man go there for?—Some go pig-hunting and cattle-hunting.
14. I suppose such people know they run the risk of imprisonment if they start fires there?—It would not be done on purpose. The Ranger cannot be everywhere, although he is as good a man as you can get.

JOHN H. MCCARROLL sworn and examined. (No. 45.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What do you wish to state?—I am a settler, but have had twenty-five years' experience as a forester and sawmillier. I wish to support Mr. Hunt in his application regarding the reserve at Ruawai. The present reserve should be sold and parts of the others he mentions taken up for scenery-preservation purposes, as there is not another piece of bush nearer than a hundred miles. I am not pessimistic enough to say that no kauri can be saved: it can be. As to the Waipoua State Forest, I strongly oppose its being opened up, both for sentimental and commercial reasons. We have there a forest that can never be replaced, as a kauri-tree cannot be grown in a hundred generations. As to the talk about fire, I say it is impossible to burn that forest even if you tried after a dry season like the present, on account of the wet vegetation there is in the bush. It would pay the Government to expend a larger sum than at present in protecting the Waipoua Forest from the risk of destruction, as it is a wonderful national asset. To-day the poor man cannot buy kauri timber, but wealthy private individuals are allowed to export it from the country, realizing large profits thereby. If Waipoua is sold our own people should have the benefit of the timber, and on that ground I would hold the present reserve.
2. Have you been over this forest personally?—I know it all.
3. What is the quality of the land there from a settlement point of view?—No good at all, on account of its abnormal rainfall. It is too poor to grow anything once the kauri is removed. In the immediate vicinity of that bush and towards the coast the country is nothing but gum land and fern hills.
4. Do you know the Marlborough Settlement?—I know it well.
5. How are the settlers doing there?—I rode through that settlement seven years ago and every house had the shutters up, and the settlers had deserted it with the exception of one man. I understand that since I was there it has been taken up again, and fresh people are tackling it.
6. Since when?—Within the last two years. They have had a good summer and good burns.
7. Do you agree that if this forest were thrown open a lot of land would be available for settlement?—I contend that the Government would be committing a sin if they allowed that forest to be destroyed. There are different fern-growths there that you do not get in any other New Zealand forest. The only place which is doing any good is Kaitaia, a considerable distance in from the Waipoua Forest.
8. Have you any evidence to give the Commission with regard to the proposed stoppage of the export of white-pine?—The day has arrived when the Government ought to seriously consider whether the white-pine should be sold for export, because that tree is becoming so scarce. I admit you cannot interfere with the private individual, but the Government should sell no more of its white-pine for exportation.
9. But if the Government said none of it could be exported, what about the position of the private individual then?—It would hit some people very hard, perhaps myself included; but, speaking generally, I think the time has come when the prohibition of the white-pine export ought to be seriously considered. The dairying industry is growing rapidly, and what are we going to do when we cannot get butter-boxes?
10. What do you think they do in Canada and Siberia?—I cannot say.
11. *Mr. Murdoch.*] Have you any other timber that will answer the purpose?—I cannot tell you. We have no tawa here in any quantity that would pay to mill.
12. What about tarairae?—Yes, but not in millable quantities.