

Crown would provide for the cost of any necessary fencing. A bush committee was formed in the district, and this body obtained an option to purchase about 70 acres at the price of £10 per acre. Later on the owner reduced his price to £600. The committee set about raising funds for the purchase of the land, and in recognition of the local efforts the Government in September, 1935, agreed to give £100 towards the costs of acquisition and fencing. A little later an indication was given that the Crown contribution might be increased, and in August, 1936, by which time the Committee had raised over £400, approval was given to a grant of £200 being made, of which amount £180 was to be applied towards the actual purchase of the land and £20 towards the cost of fencing. The purchase was duly completed, and on survey the area was found to be 66 acres 2 roods, about 20 acres of which was salt marsh subject to the ebb and flow of the tides. This portion has been cut off from the bush area and is being added to the local domain.

The actual bush area, plus an unformed road which ran through it and which has now been closed, totals 51 acres 3 roods, and has been made a permanent scenic reserve which will be placed under the control of a local Scenic Board.

The reserve was handed over to the Government at a gathering held at Pounawea on the 29th April, 1937, when the Hon. the Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation warmly congratulated those concerned on the success of their efforts to save the bush, and intimated how pleased he was that his Department has been able to give some assistance. The case was a striking illustration of what energy and enthusiasm could accomplish in a relatively small community, and the Minister tendered his grateful thanks to all who had worked so hard and so well to raise funds for such a worthy purpose.

Three small sections on the Tahakopa River containing a fair amount of good scenic bush were reserved during the year, and will form welcome additions to the many beautiful areas that have been set aside in that part of South Otago. In that locality, also, arrangements were completed for the better preservation of the exceedingly beautiful bush growing on the unformed roads on the banks of the Tahakopa from its mouth to a point some miles up-stream. In places there are some very fine stretches of heavy bush with kowhai trees fringing the river. A good view is obtained from the formed roads on either side of the river, and during the season the kowhai in full bloom crowns the placid stream with garlands of golden blossom. The unformed roads have been declared to be Government roads so that the bush can be adequately protected, and the co-operation of the property-owners in the locality has been sought in the matter of preserving the natural features of a district so generously endowed with scenic attractions.

Reservations totalling some 2,163 acres were made in the Southland Land District. A strip of bush extending for about four miles on each side of the Waikawa-Catlins Road was handed over by the State Forest Service for proclamation under the Scenery Preservation Act. The area concerned is 594 acres, and its reservation practically completes the programme of reserving areas of scenic interest along that particular highway. An area of 126 acres of education-endowment land near Invercargill was also reserved during the year, the Education Department agreeing to make the land available for scenic reservation free of charge. This is a valuable area and will make a most attractive reserve. A proclamation was issued setting apart under the Scenery Preservation Act an area of 1,443 acres of heavily bushed land in the Forest Hill district. This reservation included some 218 acres of State forest made available through the courtesy of the State Forest Service. The area is easily accessible to residents of Invercargill and district, and the preservation of the bush is a matter of great local interest. It is proposed to arrange for the appointment of a Board of control consisting of representatives of the local bodies and of the Department. Prior to the reservation of the area representations were made to the effect that the land should be opened for settlement, but it was decided that the preservation of the area was necessary in the general interest.

The areas set apart during the year may be roughly classified as follows :—

Class of Land.	Area (Acres).
State Forest areas made available	19,821
Ordinary Crown land areas	18,417
Crown leasehold areas surrendered by lessees without compensation ..	21,628
Education-endowment land made available	1,281
Leasehold land acquired by Department	11
Leasehold land acquired by Department with assistance of State Forest Service in disposing of certain timber rights.	192
Private land acquired by Department assisted by Bruce Trustees and local subscriptions	86
Private land acquired by Department assisted by local subscriptions ..	251
Native reserve land acquired by Department	50
Public domain declared scenic reserve	51
Acclimatization reserve land made available	71
Gift area	1
Total	61,869

The reservation over scenic-reserve areas totalling 10 acres was revoked during the year. Special legislation was provided revoking the reservation over an area of 9 acres at Governor's Bay, in Queen Charlotte Sound. The area dealt with is much used by the public for picnics and also often by unauthorized camping-parties. The status of the land was therefore changed to public domain in order that efficient control of its use by the public may be maintained by the Ngakuta Domain Board, which controls domain land in the vicinity.