

Native Vegetation Reserve Inspection Report

Client: Wenita Forest Products
Liaison Officer: James McEwan
Date: 3/7/2017
Site: McLaren Gully Road
Compartments: Compartment 43
Size: Not available
Criteria: 3 (Moderate-Above Average)

Comments:

This compartment is made up of three distinct elongated sections above McLaren Gully Road on a south-westerly facing slope. All are bordered with recently harvested production forestry and agricultural grazing on the upper northern limits.

Two significant catchments run through the site that feeds into peripheral wetland/creeks alongside McLaren Gully Road. During the inspection the water flow in both was significant to the scale of them both.

There are two distinct types of vegetation found with the three sections of the compartment. The upper drier edges are dominated by Kanuka regeneration of some size, indicating colonial clearance for agriculture and subsequent regeneration. The deeper damper gullies are dominated by typical Eastern Otago lowland broadleaf forest of some age and of reasonable condition. All three sites within the compartment showed the presence of significant and younger totara and some matai were noted also.

The forest floor was poor in many places due to browsing and the upper western site open to stock incursions from the nearby farm.

The upper section of the central compartment had a track cut through part of the creek which did not appear to have a proper culvert created for it. This work does not allow the proper flow of water and may increase sediment inflow to the catchment.

Native birdlife was noted but it was not prolific

Weed Species:

Gorse grew strongly on the fringes of the western section along with a number of mature and semi pines.

Conclusions:

This compartment is a useful native remnant in the context of the wider land use landscape of farming and forestry. The browsing damage to the understory is repairable with proper stock and access control.

Recommendations:

1. Ensuring edge damage of pinus felling is limited to ensure the integrity of the forest fringes.
2. The removal of seed bearing pine from the bush when pine felling is undertaken.
3. Protecting the bush fringes from invasive weed species once felling is completed and re-sowing is undertaken as part of that activity.
4. Establish liaison with the farm owner over fencing.
5. Inspect and revise the track access through the creek on the upper section
6. Issuing regular hunting permits to keep browsing animal numbers down, including possums



Figure 1 View of the western section of the compartment showing the comparison between kanuka and lowland broadleaf forest



Figure 2 Kanuka section showing the new and older gorse growing on the perimeter of the compartment



Figure 3 The understory of the compartment had been heavily browsed and was poor in places.