



LINZ – Crown Land

Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) manages over one million hectares of land in the South Island High Country, leasing much of it for pastoral farming. LINZ is a central government agency which works to manage land sustainably through the Land Act 1948 and the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998.

Disclaimer: This factsheet summarises provisions that are common activities within the Mackenzie Basin. For a full list of provisions refer to the operative Land Information New Zealand website.

Pastoral Leases

Pastoral lease land in the Mackenzie is owned by the Crown. The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Commissioner) leases the land to farmers and works with them on how they can use it.

The Commissioner is an employee of LINZ but acts independently in the discharge of their statutory functions and powers.

LINZ assists the Commissioner in managing pastoral leases, including conducting rent reviews, monitoring compliance of consented activity and

administering the tenure review process (see below for explanation). Pastoral leases last for 33 years and leaseholders have the ongoing right to renew the lease. A number of the pastoral leases in the Mackenzie Basin have been farmed by the same families for generations.

The Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998, Land Act 1948 and lease agreements all govern the activities that leaseholders can undertake on the land. Farmers on pastoral lease land are required to apply for consent from the Commissioner to carry out various types of work on

the land, with a particular focus on activities that disturb the soil. This consent is called a discretionary action.

When considering whether to grant consents the Commissioner takes into account the impact the activity will have on the inherent values of the land alongside the need for the land to be used for farming purposes. As part of the application process the Commissioner receives advice from the Director-General of Conservation on the likely impacts on those inherent values, as well as from LINZ consultants on the impact to farming.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES REQUIRE THE COMMISSIONER'S CONSENT:

Activity	Example
Clearing or felling any bush or scrub	Clearing invasive plants like broom or wilding conifers.
Cropping, cultivating, draining or ploughing	Cultivating a new area of land so it can be used for grazing.
Top-dress and/or sow seed	Sowing grass seeds in a paddock.
Planting trees	Creating a new forested area.
Forming a path, road or track	Creating a farm track to access part of the lease.
Disturbing the soil	Laying foundations for a building.
Changes to stock numbers	Increasing the number of sheep grazing on the land or changing from farming sheep to deer.
Burning vegetation	Burning an area of matagouri.

When applying for consents, leaseholders must provide the following information:

- › descriptions of the proposed activity
- › descriptions of the farming benefit
- › an assessment of the likely environmental impacts
- › a description of the proposed locations, including a map
- › an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed activity and any mitigations
- › information on any resource consent that may be required

Third parties or leaseholders may also apply for recreation permits to undertake recreation or other commercial activities, such as tourism. Third parties may also apply for easements across the land, for example walking access to a track or trail.

TENURE REVIEW

In February 2019 the Government announced its decision to end tenure review. Until the legislation changes the process will continue. However, only those leaseholders that have reached a substantive agreement will complete the process when the law changes.

Tenure review is a voluntary process that gives pastoral leaseholder an opportunity to buy some of their leasehold land. LINZ conducts tenure reviews on behalf of the Commissioner under the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998.

Like with discretionary consents multiple organisations are consulted at various states of the process including the Department of Conservation (DOC), Fish & Game New Zealand and local Iwi. Once a preliminary proposal is developed the proposed designations are advertised and submissions invited to ensure all important values are identified.

At the beginning of the tenure review process, ecological, heritage, cultural and other values are assessed. Where significant

indigenous habitats, flora or fauna are identified, they are highlighted for protection through tenure review, and discussed in consultation with the lessee. In many cases, any identified distinctive and rare ecosystems are placed into the conservation estate for protection. This has led to the formation of high country parks and Department of Conservation reserves as well as improved public access

RIVER AND LAKEBEDS

LINZ manages most major lakes in the South Island, including Lakes Pukaki, Tekapo and Ohau in the Mackenzie Basin. We also manage the beds of navigable rivers. 'Navigability' generally refers to rivers with a history of navigation along their course.

Anyone wanting to undertake an activity involving a lake or river bed, may need the permission of the Commissioner. Examples of activities that require consent include building a jetty or boat mooring, anchoring swimming pontoons, or extracting gravel.