

KAR_19 – Northern Radiant Range (15900.5461 ha)

Protected Areas	Area (ha)	NAPALIS #	# of Primary Parcels
Conservation Area - Blue Duck Creek	2.05	2807732	1
Conservation Area - Tidal Creek	61.9374	2807736	1
Conservation Area - Lyell Range - Radiant Range	15836.5587	2807731	48

Location

Catchments draining the western slopes of the Radiant Range, between Corbyvale on the Karamea Bluffs road and Little Wanganui.

Brief Description

The forested headwaters of the many streams draining from the northern Radiant Range into Little Wanganui River near its mouth. Includes beech/podocarp forests on gentle lowlands beside Blue Duck Creek and Tidal Creek, which have had the podocarp element removed, as well as hilly country on the Karamea Bluffs. The southern and southwestern part of this assessment area is included within the Species Management Unit - Glasseye Creek and is adjacent to the Mokihinui Gorge Ecosystem Management Unit. There is a grazing concession and a beehive site.

Ngāi Tahu Values and Interests

Mo tātou, a, mo ka uri, a muri ake nei – for us and our children after us

From the preliminary desk top assessments, there do not appear to be any site specific Ngāi Tahu values identified. However, there is a deep connection between Ngāi Tahu and all of the whenua in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā, and the absence of site specific values in the preliminary analysis does not detract from that connection, nor does it confirm that site specific values are not present. Further, a section 4 Conservation Act and Te Tiriti principles perspective is required as well, and it may be that areas of land are significant to Ngāi Tahu from that broader perspective. To avoid doubt, nothing in the proposed classification affects, limits or derogates from the rangatiratanga of Ngāi Tahu over its takiwā, including in relation to freshwater; and/or any other rights or interests Ngāi Tahu may have.

Ecological Values

Representativeness

Podocarp (*Podocarpaceae* and *Phyllocladaceae*)/hardwood/beechn (*Fuscopora* and *Lophozonia*) indigenous forest in the Karamea Ecological District on two distinct geology and topographies: in the north at low altitude free-draining sandstones on gentle river terraces, and in the south hilly country on mudstones on the Karamea Bluffs. Both rise steeply in the east along the Glasgow-Kōhahai faultline up to the alpine tussocks of the Radiant Range ridgeline.

The lowest and most accessible forests are recovering from logging of their podocarp element a century ago, and in parts, from extensive windthrow caused by Cyclone Ita in 2014. Despite these disturbances, the ecosystems remain highly representative of the indigenous communities of the southern Karamea Ecological District, of which it is a significant portion. Coastal hillslope streams with high natural character, high predicted water quality and intact native riparian vegetation are within the assessment area. A representative suite of fauna is likely to be present. There is some land modification downstream but not sufficient to prevent fish passage.

Diversity and pattern

Streams are likely to be in good condition and support diverse freshwater fish communities, including populations of four whitebait species – kōaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*), banded kōkopu (*Galaxias fasciatus*), īnanga (*Galaxias maculatus*) and giant kōkopu (*Galaxias argenteus*) – and redfin bully (*Gobiomorphus huttoni*), making these important streams with regard to whitebait diversity.

Rarity and distinctiveness

The type locality is a valuable part of the range of the threatened large land snail *Powelliphanta lignaria lusca* (Nationally Vulnerable). A strong population of the threatened South Island robin (toutouwai, *Petroica australis australis*) (At Risk: Declining) is present. The area is also in the distributional range of threatened kea (*Nestor notabilis*) (Nationally Endangered) and great spotted kiwi (roroa, *Apteryx maxima*) (Nationally Vulnerable). The threatened long-tailed bat (*Chalinolobus tuberculatus*) (Nationally Critical) has been recorded within the nearby area and may use this habitat. The freshwater fish species present include kōaro, īnanga and giant kōkopu (all At Risk: Declining).

Ecological context

This assessment area is a large 7912 ha irregular shape with one small disjunct Conservation Area adjacent to Blue Duck Creek. It is approximately 300 m at its narrowest and approximately 8 km at its widest. There is approximately 16 km between its northern boundary at Captain Creek to its southern boundary at Corbyvale. It is on the western boundary of Kahurangi National Park and is adjacent to both an Ecosystem Management Unit and a Species Management Unit.

It contributes significantly to the intact ecological gradients from the mountains to the sea in the Ecological District and the connectivity of ecosystems in the Northwest Nelson Ecological Region. The large Lyell Range - Radiant Range Conservation Area covers the upper catchments of many of the southernmost tributaries of Little Wanganui River. It is bordered to the north, east and south by Kahurangi National Park and along most of its West boundary by Glasseye Creek Ecological Area.

Recreation Values

Setting

A number of larger land parcels in a Backcountry-remote zone. There are no tracks or facilities. The adjoining land is the Kahurangi National Park.

Visitor type and activities typically undertaken

The area is likely to receive little recreation use. Hunters may use the areas accessible from the road.

Access

Part of the area can be accessed from the Karamea Highway.

Heritage Values

Historical overview

The area was occupied intermittently by Ngāi Tahu, and later by European sealers in 1836 and gold miners in 1864. Organised settlement started in the 1870s, helped by a government settlement scheme. In the early 1900s there were monthly arrivals of supply ships from Westport, which would continue on to Karamea to load up on butter, timber, and flax. By the 1920s there were several sawmills in the area, serviced by a busy port.

Before World War One, families had begun to settle in the remote upriver areas of Wangapeka Valley and Blue Duck Creek. Wangapeka children walked to school in Little Wanganui, several miles away, until a schoolhouse was built in 1921. In the 1930s, the Marris and Wollett sawmill began operating in the valley, but the population of Wangapeka gradually fell until the school closed in 1935. At Blue Duck Creek, children attended a Household School from 1917 until a schoolhouse was built. On 17 June 1929 the magnitude 7.3 Murchison earthquake struck the area, causing extensive slips and damage to buildings. A huge natural dam formed in the Little Wanganui gorge and burst three months later. The flood of mud and boulders destroyed 4 miles of road and numerous structures, but caused no loss of life.

Sites recorded

None recorded.

Heritage values

No value statement possible.

Modifying factors

None recorded.

Permissions summary

One grazing concession and one beehive site (with associated concessions) in this assessment area:

- Grazing concession held over approximately 30 ha at Duck Creek Valley.
- Beehive site (currently a pending concession application) along Mt Glasgow Road with numerous associated concessions.

Map (aerial photo)

