

29/1/82



Shooter Jeff Carter with a three-barrelled net gun used in the wapiti capture operation.

Wapiti Hunt Row Flares

The Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, was creating a smoke screen by agreeing to reconsider allowing a wapiti trophy shoot to be held in Fiordland National Park, Wanaka recreational hunter Mr Alan Rodger said yesterday.

He was referring to a report that, following a meeting with representatives of the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association, in Wellington, Mr Elworthy said he would reconsider holding the shoot.

Mr Rodger, who is organizing an illegal shoot, claimed the Minister was creating a smoke screen to take people's interest away from the issue.

He had not definitely said a trophy shoot would be organized and would fool around until it was too late for anyone to do anything, he added.

Good News

If it did eventuate, Mr Rodger said it would be very good news and he would be the first in with his application.

He said he doubted it would come to that because the Minister would be admitting it was a mistake to have put a stop to the trophy shoot in the first place and this led on to it being a mistake to take the wapiti out of the park.

Mr Rodger said he was continuing with his own plans to organize an illegal shoot.

Today was the final date for people to write to him. About 40 had shown their interest, either by letter or by telephoning.

Letter

Early next week Mr Rodger said he would send out a letter to those who had written to him, setting out the implications of participating in such a shoot and asking them to indicate which blocks in the wapiti area they were interested in.

If there were too many for

one block, a ballot would be held in the same manner as had been the tradition in the past.

Mr Rodger said he did not wish to break any fire-arm laws as he would if he went ahead with an illegal shoot.

He believed very strongly in the proper use of firearms but he also felt very strongly about this wapiti issue, he said.

Mr Rodger has also referred the wapiti issue to the Chief Ombudsman in Wellington for investigation.

He said he had taken this step because he believed the relocation venture was an interference with animals that belonged to New Zealand people.

The Chief Ombudsman, Mr George Laking, was not available for comment but a spokesman for his office said communications had been received from Mr Rodger.

Mr Laking would have to decide whether the affair was within his jurisdiction and he might then carry out an investigation, the spokesman said.

Wapiti Herd

Sir, — I would like to reply to "Nature Lover's" comment that "Deer are just as large a threat as the rabbits, if you leave a pair you soon have a hundred."

Deer generally have one fawn, sometimes two a year. Rabbits can have an average of six young every 31 days, or approximately 60 a year. His statement does not add up.

Deerstalkers help keep the deer and wapiti numbers down.

What about his statement that "doing away with the freedom of boys getting pocket money, a weekend occupation." You don't make money hunting in the park, it can cost you a small fortune in transport costs alone.

To get a rifle permit you have to be a certain age, not a boy. A lot of the "millions of tourists" look at the park through a bus or car window. Some will walk the well-defined tracks like the Milford Track, but only "the boys getting pocket money," fishermen and trampers will walk the rest of the park.

If the deer are removed the tracks will cover up and "Nature Lover" will need a chain saw to get into some of that country.

1/2/82, Fiordland for Wapiti

Sir, — If Mr Alan Rodger and other deerstalkers read the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society's report, "Deer and the Resulting Devastation in New Zealand" (1979), they might begin to realize that wapiti and other introduced herbivores certainly do not "belong" in Fiordland National Park, nor any other native reserve. They are not a part of New Zealand's heritage, but a threat to it.

Karen Roach

Invercargill

Two Spent Night In Open

A misplaced capture net delivery left two Te Anau men unhurt beside their downed helicopter in the Cameron Mountains area on Thursday night.

The pilot, Mr Kim Hollows, and shooter, Mr Malcolm Wheeler, were reported missing to the Te Anau police shortly after midnight.

A Mount Cook Airlines aircraft made a high-level search of the Lakes Poteriteri and Hauroko areas soon after and located the helicopter's beacon.

The downed helicopter's lights and two signal fires were sighted.

Another Alpine Helicopter, piloted by Mr Bill Black, flew in

about 4am yesterday and picked up the two men, who were not injured in the crash.

Invercargill police last night understood the helicopter was forced to land after a weight from one of the capture nets flew into the rotors.

A mechanic was flown in yesterday. He repaired the helicopter and it was then flown back to Te Anau.

The helicopter was put down near a river which feeds Lake Poteriteri.

Wakatipu Site Advocated For Wapiti

The Fiordland wapiti should be relocated in the high country area south of Lake Wakatipu, the MP for Invercargill Mr N. P. H. Jones, said yesterday.

This took in the Cecil Peak, Walter Peak and Mt Nicholas stations and was similar to the animal's native habitat.

Mr Jones said the MP for Wallace, Mr D. A. Angus, would be bringing this up at caucus next week and he would support him.

From his understanding of what the wapiti capture consortium was doing, there was no way it was going to be able to bring all the wapiti out of Fiordland National Park in two years, he said.

That would be like trying to get the last rabbit.

Mr Jones estimated it would only be able to recover about one-third of the animals.

Once this two-year operation was completed the consortium should continue to take out the red deer and hybrids, but leave the remaining wapiti for the recreational hunter.

Reducing red deer numbers would allow the wapiti herd to remain relatively pure.

The relocated wapiti herd in the area south of Wakatipu

could be offered as a tourist attraction, Mr Jones said.

A tourist could buy a licence for about \$2000 and this would allow him to shoot one animal. No helicopters would be permitted, and access would be by foot or on horseback.

The only thing that would be required to keep the animals in the area would be a deer fence running from behind Kingston across the mountains to Mararoa, he said.

He had discussed the idea with the consortium members

and others and he thought "even the forestry and lands people would agree it was sound."

Referring to the decision to relocate the wapiti, Mr Jones said he had been annoyed when he heard it had been announced. He had been led to understand no final decision had been made.

However, the decision obviously had been made and then kept a secret until after the election.

It was "sneaky" and poorly handled, he said.

30/1/82

Wapiti Trophy Shoot In April 5/2/82

The Government changed tack yesterday and announced that recreational hunters and deerstalkers would be given what looks like being one final opportunity to take part in a wapiti trophy shoot in the Fiordland National Park.

The long-established annual shoot was cancelled last year, and a programme to relocate the wapiti outside the park started on January 1.

However, the moves drew much criticism from recreational hunters, and a Wanaka man was prepared to organize what would have been an illegal shoot, if necessary.

Yesterday, the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, announced that the usual trophy shoot would go ahead. It would run from April 9 to 30.

Advertisements will be placed in daily newspapers immediately, and applications from those wishing to take part in the shoot will have to be in by March 8.

The shoot will be organized in the same way as in the past with blocks being balloted out, the Minister's press secretary, Mr Gyles Beckford, said.

Those who applied last year, but were told no shoot was to be held, would have to reapply.

Both the wapiti deer capture consortium, participating with the Crown with the relocation, and the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association had been consulted, Mr Beckford said.

They were happy with the situation.

The consortium would continue its operations in the wapiti area until the beginning of the trophy shoot but they would be suspended from April 9 to 30.

The Minister made his decision after having discussions with the Deer Stalkers' Association earlier in the month, Mr Beckford said.

He told the association he would go back to his departments to investigate the feasibility of holding the shoot.

He did this, and the answer was "Yes," Mr Beckford said.

It was hoped the deerstalkers would view this as a sign of good faith in the Government, which was acting in the interests of both deerstalking and the wapiti.

It had been decided last year not to hold a trophy shoot so the wapiti area in Fiordland could be spelled in preparation for any relocation operation that might be decided on.

The joint Government-consortium venture was subsequently announced, in the face of vocal opposition from deerstalkers and recreational hunters.

The decision to hold the trophy shoot was greeted with mixed feelings by a Wanaka recreational hunter, Mr Alan Rodger.

Mr Rodger was organizing an illegal shoot, but had said he would not go ahead with it if a legal shoot was planned.

He reiterated this yesterday, but said the Minister's move was "crafty."

The date of the trophy shoot, he said, was such that the consortium would have "the pick of the roar and the hunters will be left with the scraps."

Between April 9 and 30, there would not be too much roaring going on. It would largely be over, Mr Rodger said.

However, it was still better than nothing, and he would be putting in an application.

He said he would also write to the Minister and ask that those who were prepared to undertake an illegal shoot be given preference.

It was pressure from these people that was largely responsible for the decision. By allowing the trophy shoot, the Minister was admitting a mistake.

Mr Rodger said he would be interested to see if he was "big enough" to admit that the decision to relocate the wapiti was also a "blue."

The national vice-president of the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association, Mr J. C. Bamford, said he was "quite

pleased" with the Minister's decision, but added: "I hope that he doesn't think he will fob off the hunters by giving them this trophy shoot and hoping they will keep quiet about the relocation."

Hunters would fight the relocation proposal to the end, he said.

Mr Bamford hoped hunters would have the integrity only to shoot those animals for which they had a licence.

In the past, hunters were entitled to shoot one wapiti bull, and also red deer. But Mr Bamford said that with the consortium operating this year, it was possible the shoot would not include red deer.

"I wouldn't have any argument with that," he said.

In the meantime, the MP for Invercargill, Mr N. P. H. Jones, said he and the MP for Wallace, Mr D. A. Angus, would be approaching the Minister about relocating the wapiti on high country south of Lake Wakatipu.

They had decided to do this instead of going straight to caucus with the issue, Mr Jones said from Wellington yesterday.

If they "got no joy" from the Minister, then they would take it to caucus, he said.

2/2/82 Wapiti Herd

Sir, — I am of the disillusioned feeling that the Fiordland National Park belongs to Mr C. J. McFarlane and the board members, with comments from Mr McFarlane like "you blokes are persistent." He appears to be avoiding the opinions of the deerstalkers association, big game hunters association and recreational hunters who are the most regular users of the park.

As reported in The Southland Times, January 26, 1982, the wapiti issue was on the board's agenda. The protesting hunters were not themselves the subject of discussion leaving it clear in my mind that the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board members are failing in one of their duties to the public by ignoring public opinion.

I also wonder how many of the board members are like Mrs Blair Robble, who suggested a meeting with the deerstalkers' association to discuss the issue because she didn't understand what the hunters were objecting to.

Sir, I am utterly disgusted with the decision by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, for giving the go-ahead to remove wapiti from the park as he earlier stated that further investigation is required by himself about the whole programme, but at the same time giving the go-ahead for the consortium to start on New Year's Day when all Government offices were closed and would be for some time, making it impossible to receive any objections.

As no other site has yet been chosen, I suggest a heavy cull of red deer in the "now wapiti blocks" and put them, the improved wapiti, back where they have already acclimatized in the Fiordland National Park and manage them wisely.

R. J. Pickett

Otatara

2/2/82 Few Hitches In Deer Slaughtering

Commissioning trials at the Mossburn deer slaughtering facilities last week went "as well as expected."

The regional meat veterinarian with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in Dunedin, Dr A. A. Rosenstreich, attended the trials to check that the premises complied with the Game Regulations 1975.

He said yesterday the trials had gone "as well as expected." About 50 head had been slaughtered in one day.

However, Dr Rosenstreich said he would return to Mossburn next Monday to have another look at some minor problems.

An export licence would be issued in due course, he said.

The facilities are incorporated in a game packing plant operated by Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd.

Rotor Blade Damaged 2/2/82

A misplaced capture net delivery was not the reason why two helicopter deer recovery operators had to down their machine in the Cameron Mountains, the Fiordland National Park, on Thursday night, according to one of the men involved.

The pilot, Mr Kim Hollows, and his shooter, Mr Malcolm Wheeler, downed their helicopter after an incident while trapping a deer.

Mr Wheeler said yesterday that the deer was netted and started rolling down a hill. One net weight pulled free, probably by hitting a rock or a tree, and damaged the last two inches of one of the rotor blades, he said.

The two men felt it was wise to bring their machine down.

Neither was injured in the incident, and the helicopter was repaired and flown back to Te Anau on Friday.

3/2/82 Sheep in Park

Sir, — It cannot be denied that continual sheep grazing at the Eglinton has changed the general character of this beautiful valley. This I can definitely vouch for, after being a regular camper over 20 years up the Eglinton. The group of beech trees that used to give us shade and shelter do not exist anymore, the reasons being that sheep have either restricted the natural vegetation of the trees by browsing on the growing seedlings, or destroyed the seedlings by their constant tracking from one clearing to another.

I expect for the same reasons the edge of the whole bush is receding as the

fringe species being particularly palatable to sheep are grazed out. There were some enclosures at Totara Flat that clearly showed the difference between the land being grazed and that not. For some reason the fences around these enclosures have been allowed to become dilapidated.

Recent suggestions made by Mr McFarlane about the sheep helping to manage the long grass are quite naive as any farmer could have told him, sheep will not eat long rank grass when there are alternatives such as broad leaf. It is interesting to note that he doesn't mention how sheep bring ragwort and so on into the park.

Finally the other reason that Mr McFarlane gives for the sheep to stay is that they help to control the fire risk. This makes amusing reading as after just spending two weeks in that locality it rained on 13 days.

Dunedin

Five Finger

Wapiti Herd 30/1/82

Sir, — The current controversy regarding the transfer of wapiti from Fiordland National Park is of interest to our society and I would like to comment by way of your column.

The Forest and Bird Protection

Society holds to a policy which recognizes the absolutely unique nature of New Zealand's native forests — forests that have evolved since the Mesozoic in the complete absence of any mammal except two species of bat. Because of this uniqueness, we New Zealanders have an obligation to all succeeding generations to maintain at least a representative portion of our original forest with as little influence from recently introduced (on an evolutionary scale) plants and animals as possible. Our national parks aim to fulfil this role of preservation and our society supports any move which aims to maintain or improve it.

The operation to remove some of the wapiti from Fiordland, of course, is not capable of removing all the deer in the area, and for the foreseeable future the hunter will always have a chance of a "shot." The prime aim of the operation is to provide a herd capable of producing the desired "trophy" animals elsewhere in some less environmentally important location. We believe this to be a step in the right direction which aims to protect the interests of the hunters as well as to improve the protection being given to the native environment of Fiordland National Park.

Our society believes that the need for this protection for the native trees and animals is ultimately more important than the need to provide recreational hunters with the prospect of an animal head.

A. D. Gamble
Secretary RFBPC Soc
Southland

4/2/82 Wapiti Herd

Sir, — I am a member of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and a recreational hunter. I do not go along with the society's policy on the extermination of wild game in New Zealand. I am concerned for the youth of New Zealand as this extermination will not give these people the chance to learn to appreciate and develop the skills which are needed to travel safely and with enjoyment throughout our wonderful back country, beyond the well-defined tracks.

Recreational hunting taught me the value of the flora and fauna in the remote parts of New Zealand and without the incentive to shoot deer I am sure that I would never have ventured into the wider parts of our country thus missing out on much that it has to offer. For this reason I now feel that I can be a worthy member of the RFBPS and still feel that there is room in our national parks for the deer and wapiti.

Mataura Another Nature Lover

Wapiti Settlement Discussed 5/2/82

Comment made by the MP for Invercargill, Mr N. P. H. Jones, suggesting a site near Lake Wakatipu for the relocation of Fiordland wapiti, has concerned the Southland Catchment Board.

Mr Jones had suggested that the wapiti should be relocated in the high country area south of the lake taking in Cecil Peak, Walter Peak, and Mt Nicholas stations.

Reporting to the catchment board soil conservation com-

mittee yesterday, the chief technical officer, Mr Neil McMillan, said he was "a bit concerned" to see the comments by Mr Jones.

In view of Mr Jones's statement suggesting the area for relocation, Mr McMillan said it was felt the board should ask to be consulted before any firm decision is made.

"The statement — that the only thing that would be required to keep the animals in the area would be a deer fence running from Kingston across the mountains to Mararoa — shows a lack of appreciation of the difficulties maintaining

even normal fencing in this terrain during winter, and escape of animals to neighbouring critical areas is highly likely," Mr McMillan said.

Vegetation

Mr McMillan said that because of the board's interests in maintaining vegetation on critical high country and the long-standing general policies of Water and Soil Organization on noxious animals there should be no doubt that the board "has a very real interest in any proposals."

Mr K. Prior, the conservator of State forests in Southland who sits on the committee, said

that he wondered if the board was over-acting to Mr Jones's opinion.

He said that Mr Jones's opinion carried no weight just as if he himself was to express an opinion.

"I think we're overacting, and keeping it in the public eye. The less said the better," he said.

On the recommendation of Mr McMillan the board will ask the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, to ensure that the board is consulted before any commitment is made to liberate wapiti in the Southland catchment, or any adjacent district.

Wapiti Shoot Dates Unacceptable

The organization of this year's wapiti trophy shoot has been "hurried and haphazard," the dates suggested are unacceptable, and hunters may now vent their frustration by poaching wapiti from Fiordland National park.

This was the warning sounded by the president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr John Henderson, last night. Mr Henderson said after the association learned of the trophy shoot dates (April 9 to 30) last week, it approached the office of the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy.

A case for changing the dates was made on two grounds.

The first was that by April 9 wapiti bugling was virtually over, making it much more difficult for hunters to secure trophies. In previous years, the shoot had always begun around March 22, Mr Henderson said. Hunters could not be expected to spend hundreds of dollars travelling from over the country to the park wapiti area if it was unlikely that they would secure a trophy.

Mr Henderson said association members were "very upset" because it seemed the system this year was not "designed to give them a fair show."

Disrupted

A second factor was that the wapiti relocation consortium would be ceasing their helicopter operations only a day before the trophy shoot began.

That would mean the wapiti area was still disrupted, Mr Henderson said.

On these grounds, the association had asked Mr Elworthy to change the trophy shoot dates.

"But we have been given to understand by the Minister's secretary that he will make no amendment to those dates," he said.

If that was the case, the association did not want to be a party to "conning hunters" into taking part in a shoot that was not a proper trophy shoot.

If deerstalkers then decided to take action of their own, it would be "very unfortunate" to have to invoke the usual disciplinary procedures.

Mr Henderson said it was up to the Minister to change the shoot back to around March 22, and to move the consortium helicopters out a week before it began.

"Insult"

Meanwhile a Wanaka recreational hunter, Mr Alan Rodger, last night called the trophy

shoot dates "an insult to hunters," and said feelings were running high.

Mr Rodger said he was afraid hunters might, because of their frustration, poach in the wapiti blocks around the end of March. If that happened a "very dangerous situation" might eventuate.

In a bid to avoid such a situation, he was considering organizing an unofficial shoot.

Mr Rodger said he had planned to carry out such a shoot before the official shoot was announced, and had already canvassed hunters around the country.

He also wrote to Mr Elworthy yesterday, asking him to change the shoot dates, and had been in touch with the Chief Ombudsman, Mr George Laking, who is to enquire into the whole wapiti relocation venture.

Another recreational hunter, Mr Warren Taylor, said last night he had no intention of taking part in an official shoot.

Board Blamed

Mr Taylor said he understood the consortium had had no objection to an earlier date for the trophy shoot, but that the Southland Parks and Reserves Board had pushed for as late a date as possible.

But the board's chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, denied that it

had been involved with the timing of the shoot.

The shoot was a matter to be decided by the Department of Lands and Survey, he said.

A consortium member, Mr Evan Meredith, said last night the consortium had not made any conditions about the shoot, but had simply been informed of it.

The trophy shoot was entirely the business of the Crown and the deerstalkers, Mr Meredith said.

"If the Crown changes the dates we can't object," he added.

Earliest Possible

The Commissioner of Crown Lands in Southland, Mr Joe Harty, said the April shoot dates were the earliest possible dates that could have been selected.

They allowed the minimum time necessary for advertising, and processing of applications. A ballot would have to be held and the successful applicants given reasonable notice so they could make arrangements for the shoot.

Mr Harty said he could appreciate that the shoot "was running a little late. But I don't believe that it is too late."

It would be difficult and confusing to change the dates now, he said.

takahe out of house and home — 8 metres in length of droppings a day, I'd say he's done a pretty good job himself.

Poo

Te Anau

Minister Replies on Wapiti Issue

Sir, — Mr Elworthy's statement on having received irreconcilable demands for the retention of the wapiti in Fiordland and their removal lacks any sort of clarification.

The demands to have the wapiti retained in Fiordland came from and are supported by 98 per cent of the whole of New Zealand. The demands to have the wapiti removed came from less than 2 per cent of the population who represent an anti-deer and wildlife movement and most of whom live in Wellington and Auckland and would be hard pressed to find Fiordland on a map.

Does Mr Elworthy support a signed statement by his predecessor Hon V. S. Young: "In reaching its decision the Government had regard to the content in the submissions made to it rather than the numbers received."

I believe that 2 per cent of the country's population are entitled to their opinion, but it is outrageous that they should be allowed to run the country and stand in for the government.

Peter Glaister

Pareta

PS: In referring this letter to Mr Elworthy it should be noted that the figures came from a survey of the wapiti petition 1980.

[Asked to comment, the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, said: "The irreconcilable demands over the presence of the wapiti in the Fiordland National

Park have been enumerated, many times before. Briefly the two positions are, support for the herd's retention in the park because it is a valuable and unique recreational hunting resource, and on the other hand, calls for the wapiti's removal because they conflict with national park values, compete with rare native birds and damage vegetation. It should not be forgotten that progressive hybridization with red deer will inevitably lead to the disappearance of a pure wapiti strain.

"I doubt that Mr Glaister could really support such a sweeping generalization that 98 per cent of the whole of New Zealand supported the retention of the wapiti in the park. Certainly such a claim cannot be supported on the basis of the number who signed the wapiti petition. In my experience those who support the removal of the wapiti are certainly not "anti-deer and wildlife" and are not confined to Wellington and Auckland.

Mr Glaister confuses the situation further in quoting my predecessor, the Hon V. S. Young. The quote was in fact made in relation to public submissions received on forest management plans, many of which were xeroxed standard form letters prepared by one of the lobby groups. However, on all issues the Government must have regard not only to the number of submissions but also the content."

Sir, — On watching the botanic man on TV on Monday night, it must now be quite obvious to many that we can't blame the poor old wapiti for eating the

Wapiti Herd

Sir, — In regard to the wapiti issue, I feel the decision to remove them from the park has been made with unnecessary haste. I believe the wapiti should be left where they are for a number of reasons.

1. It is a remote area of the park having its own natural boundaries thus no expensive fencing and maintenance will be required to retain the herd.

2. The herd has already acclimatized to the Fiordland conditions, weather and terrain.

3. They do not cause any threat or liability to any other life in that area. As for the takahe, they are programmed to be relocated on Maud Island early next year.

4. This area provides the ultimate challenge for hunters, many of whom come from all parts of the world to hunt this unique herd.

It is my opinion that the red deer herd should be reduced heavily over the next two years through recreational and commercial hunting in preparation for the return of the improved wapiti herd.

Jock

Wapiti Herd

Sir, — Mr Murray's statements regarding stoats (11.2.82) would be corrected and/or answered if he referred to the article by Dr C. M. King published in your paper on November 27, 1980.

It is interesting to note that neither he nor any of the other correspondents who support the retention of the introduced wapiti (or wapiti-type animals) in

Fiordland National Park has endeavoured to counter the interesting factual information regarding the true relationship of wapiti and other deer species with New Zealand's natural heritage which was contained in the letters from Messrs Henderson and Collett (12.1.82), "Conservationist" (21.1.82), and Karen Roach (1.2.82). (Could it be that they are unable to do so with any accuracy or authority and hope that by ignoring it, it will be forgotten by all your readers?)

As to the statements that wapiti were a gift from (then) President Theodore Roosevelt, my information is that this "gift" was made on the prompting of an English big game hunter and only on the basis that a number of rare New Zealand birds and lizards were to be sent to the United States of America.

As far as the practicalities of managing wapiti-type animals in Fiordland is concerned, is it not correct that the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association had the opportunity to do this when it controlled shooting in the "wapiti area" in the 1950s and 60s, and failed miserably? Indeed, wasn't it this failure that led to the cull operations undertaken by the (then) Fiordland National Park Board in the early 1970s being both necessary and economically possible?

Finally, is it not correct that:

(a) The cull operations undertaken in the early 1970s were promoted and controlled by the (then) Fiordland National Park Board with a few people who, in some cases, happened to be members of the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association, assisting the species identification?

(b) These operations were vehemently opposed by the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association itself, and especially its (then) president, who I understand is currently serving another term.

W. J. Cooper

Invercargill

majority of visitors to the park never penetrate the wapiti area and remain content to view the sights from the comfort of their coaches and tourist launches.

A compromise such as that reached over the Manapouri power scheme must be arrived at. There has to be an accommodation between park values and a long standing, one might say traditional, recreational use of a relatively small section of the national park. One option is that the removal and selective breeding go ahead but the wapiti be returned to Fiordland, if need be within reduced boundaries so as to accommodate the takahe. Wherever they are reintroduced in New Zealand interbreeding with red deer will occur. With a suitable programme of game management the wapiti need not, as Karen Roach suggests, endanger New Zealand's heritage but instead continue to form part of it.

D. L. McFarlane

Invercargill

Sir, — I was one of the protesters who picketed the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board meeting in Invercargill last week. I am not proud that I was one of these men, but I found that desperation led me to demonstrate, to show my strong feelings in support of the wapiti, which have been in the park for about 30 years longer than there has been a national park. The wapiti have adapted to the National Park environment as has the environment adapted to the wapiti.

As the parks board policy for the Fiordland National Parks is extermination of all introduced flora and fauna to the park, is it therefore the parks board intention to see that all the introduced brown trout and the blackbirds are removed from the park.

Russell Meikle

Mataura

Sir, — Those upset by the removal of the wapiti could take an Elkassellsher.

J. B. Russel

Alexandra

Wapiti Herd

Sir, — After protesting outside the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board's meeting on January 25, I sat in on the meeting with my fellow hunters. The silence at times was like Fiordland today. Mr Jack McKenzie was the only member for the wapiti to stay in the park, the Federated Mountain Club members did not support him. I was so pleased to hear Mrs Blair Robble suggest a meeting with the Deer Stalkers' Association to discuss the issue. She said she did not fully understand what the hunters were objecting to. It shows she is interested in what is going on and she will be a good member on the board.

It would take a page of this paper to tell her why we object to the relocation and what has gone on in the wapiti area of the Fiordland National Park. Her suggestion was lost for lack of support.

I have never in my life had to show such self-control to keep my mouth

shut. I would have liked to tell the sad story of the wapiti, the lack of co-operation and never ever any management of them in the park.

I would like to ask Mr J. P. Harty, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, two questions:

1. When he said a lot of effort by staff had been put into the wapiti and staff content increased to combat illegal taking of wapiti, did he ever ask the New Zealand police to help, and the Forest Service, through the yearly deer statistics, to find out where the wapiti were going?

2. When giving a report on reserves, he reported a fire that went through 3500 acres of red tussock reserve. They had misjudged the situation, the fire was too hot and ruined the tussock. Do any heads roll? Or is it just one more departmental blunder like the management of the wapiti?

What was a fine herd of New Zealand wapiti is now spread over many deer farms throughout New Zealand. A tremendous asset to Southland will be lost unless action is taken now.

David Mackle

Clinton

[Asked to comment, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr J. P. Harty, said: "1. No. 2. The management of this area is carried out in accordance with a plan agreed to with conservationists and other interested parties, however, I agree that the situation was misjudged."]

Sir, — The Fiordland National Park Board and the Minister, in their decision to remove the wapiti from the park, have ignored the historical importance of the herd in Fiordland. It has played a vital role in attracting New Zealanders to remote and rugged corners of the park. Legendary figures such as the Murrells, Viv Donald and others hunted and explored the wapiti area early this century. The Glaisnock, George Sound and Lugal Burn are synonymous with the wapiti herd. In contrast, the vast

Deer Slaughterhouse First for Southland

The official opening yesterday of the newly-completed and commissioned deer slaughtering premises at Mossburn was another first for Southland.

This was the remark made by the chairman of Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd, Mr R. Wilson. The company had been responsible for the building of the slaughtering premises which will process deer for the export market.

In his welcoming address to a large gathering of deer farmers and industry people, Mr Wilson said that the commissioning of the plant was yet another milestone in the venison industry.

Same Site

The new plant had been built on the same site as the original slaughtering factory opened by the late Mr P. Kilgarriff, a pioneer in the deer industry, in 1960.

Mr Wilson, and later Mr Bernard Pinney, who officially opened the premises, both paid tribute to Mr Kilgarriff and the work that he had done to establish an export venison industry in the south.

The deer industry had come a long way since its inception, Mr Wilson said. The modern deer slaughtering premises had cost \$1 million and had the capacity to handle 200 carcasses a day or 60,000 a year, a far cry from the first premises which had been

capable of only 15 deer a day, he said.

Since the industry was started some 20 years ago, there had been few complaints from overseas buyers as to the product quality and over 50,000 tonnes had so far been exported by New Zealand.

The Mossburn deer slaughtering premises was officially opened by the president of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, Mr Bernard Pinney.

The opening was a great occasion for the deer industry in Southland, Mr Pinney said, as it was the first such premises to be opened in the South Island.

It also highlighted the support given to the deer industry by the four companies involved, Wilson Neill Ltd, Southland Farmers' Co-op Association Ltd, Wrightson NMA Ltd and Alpine Helicopters Ltd.

Key Role

"Alpine Helicopters Ltd, through the enterprise of Tim Wallis, has played a key role throughout," Mr Pinney said. "They pioneered helicopter deer recovery in the early 1960s, became involved with Wilson Neill Ltd in setting up processing facilities and organizing markets for their production of feral venison and by-products."

"They developed their skills further into live deer recovery by helicopter for supply to the early deer farms."

Mr Pinney said that both Southland Farmers Co-op Asso-

ciation and Wrightson NMA Ltd can be congratulated in joining forces with Wilson Neill Ltd and Alpine Helicopters Ltd in funding the deer slaughtering premises.

Contribution

"All these four companies have made a great contribution to date, for which the deer farmers are most appreciative."

"One can now count at least a dozen deer farms within a few kilometres of Mossburn, and a healthy respect for the new deer farming industry at both local and national level," Mr Pinney said.

Mr Pinney reminded the large gathering of the long pioneering tradition that is associated with Mossburn and he cited the cultivation of Chewings fescue in the 1920s and 1930s and the importation of Charolais semen which had established the breed in New Zealand and gave the catalyst to the introduction of many other exotic breeds of cattle.

"These examples and others show it was not surprising that Mossburn should be pioneering in yet another area," he said.

Essential

There are three main areas of activity in the game industry, Mr Pinney said, those of production, processing and marketing with research. It was now essential that all these areas co-ordinate their work to ensure that the main objectives of all are met, he said.

"Each activity is important and all are inter-related."

"The deer farming industry has had approximately \$200 million invested in it so far by people with faith that it will succeed and grow. These people will not tolerate a fragmented industry."

Together

Mr Pinney believed that deer farmers, the feral industry, processors, the marketers and the researchers, will all be better served if they pull together as a united game industry.

At the conclusion of the opening function, the facilities were opened for inspection, at which an informal social function was held in the Mossburn hall.

The chairman of the Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd, Mr R. Wilson (left) and Mr B. Pinney, president of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, chat informally after the official opening of the deer slaughter premises at Mossburn yesterday.

Queries Over Wapiti Herd Decision

Sir, — I would like to ask Southland National Parks and Reserves Board members:

1. Do they all know what the recreational hunters and deerstalkers were objecting to at their board meeting on January 25? One member said she did not fully understand.

2. How many others are there that did not understand and did not speak up at the meeting?

3. If there are more, should not a meeting with deerstalkers be organized for the benefit of both parties and the public?

A board member said at that meeting that the deerstalkers should get the National Parks Act changed themselves if they were not happy. I would like to suggest to that member that our last petition on wapiti of over 50,000 signatures did not change anything. What kind of chance have we got of changing an Act?

Those hunters at that meeting were trying to say they need board members' assistance and the board has that influence needed to assist.

There is growing concern among the public and I think it is time for the board to sit up and exert its influence in the direction indicated by the public.

O. Milnes

Gore

[Asked to comment, the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said:

"1. All board members were well aware that Mr Milnes and his colleagues were objecting to the Government decision to remove wapiti from Fiordland National Park. What was not so clear was how the group wailing 'We want wapiti' reconciled their wants with the inevitable loss of the wapiti herd through hybridization with red deer, if they were left in Fiordland."

"2. All members had the opportunity to discuss the matter at the meeting."

"3. No."

"On January 25 Mr Milnes and the hunters' group sought the support of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board in reopening the question of amending the National Parks Act to permit the management and protection of an introduced grazing animal in Fiordland National Park, on the grounds that the board should respond to public opinion in this matter. There is, however, a contrary public opinion supporting the present Act, which requires that... 'except where the Authority otherwise determines, the native plants and animals of the parks shall as far as possible be preserved and introduced plants and animals shall as far as possible be exterminated.' (The discretionary power given to the Authority permits the presence of relatively non-damaging species, such as trout, introduced birds, etc, which are obviously impractical and/or unnecessary to exterminate.)"

"These conflicting points of view were expressed by many groups appearing before the select committee considering the 1980 wapiti petition. The

results are well known — the weakest possible recommendation for the petition, short of rejection, and a clearly declared Government policy for the relocation of the wapiti."

"The January 25 protest group, plus letters from various NZDA branches, did not bring up any new material or arguments that had not already been thrashed out at length before the select committee. Under the circumstances, there was little point in the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, a body charged with the formation of policy within the restraints of existing legislation, reopening the matter."

"The debate about what should or should not happen in national parks is, perhaps, obscuring the matter of whether it is best to retain and improve the wapiti herd within an area where game management is practical, as opposed to Fiordland where it is not. The board is sympathetic to the idea of a new home where a recreational wapiti herd could be managed and, at their January 25 meeting, requested the Commissioner of Crown Lands to pass on to the appropriate authorities their wish that the selection of a new area be expedited and that recreational hunters should be consulted in the selection process."

FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK WAPITI TROPHY SHOOT 1982

A Wapiti Trophy Shoot will be held in Fiordland National Park from Friday, April 9, 1982 to Friday, April 30, 1982.

Applications will close with the Commissioner of Crown Lands at Invercargill on Monday, March 8, 1982 at 10am. Only applications received after Wednesday, February 10, 1982 will be valid and people having made an application or an enquiry prior to this date MUST re-apply.

Further information and application forms are available from the Department of Lands and Survey, PO Box 826, Invercargill (4th floor Menzies Building), Esk Street, Invercargill.

75572

No Change In Dates For Shoot

The Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, will not change the April 9 to 30 dates for this year's wapiti trophy shoot, despite appeals from the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association to do so, his private secretary, Mr Graham Grant, said yesterday.

"A change just isn't possible in terms of sheer logistics," Mr Grant said.

The Minister, he said, was disputing claims by the deerstalkers' association that the roar would be over by April 9.

Although the dates set were towards the end of the roar, the roar would still be on, he said.

A second request by the deerstalkers, that helicopter operators move out of the wapiti area several days before the trophy shoot began, had also been refused.

There had been "fairly detailed negotiations" with the wapiti relocation consortium on this issue, and there was "no chance" of reopening talks, Mr Grant said.

Under the terms of the agreement with the consortium, operators will move out the day before the shoot.

Bobbity On The Wapiti 6/2/82

PRESSURE is an interesting subject. The air around us exerts pressure, and most of our actions are brought about by pressure.

Then there are the other sorts of pressure, such as political pressure. Sometimes they are subtle; sometimes they are blunt. Sometimes they can be seen or heard; sometimes they are invisible or inaudible. The only factor in common is that pressure can always be felt.

Sometimes it succeeds. Sometimes those being pressurized can withstand it, and have only to wait for it to wilt. All of which is a roundabout way of getting to a subject about which there has been a lot of pressure lately.

It involves wapiti. Last year, it will be recalled, the Government announced that a wapiti trophy shoot wouldn't be held this year while a relocation programme was studied.

After the election, the new Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, announced that wapiti relocation would proceed, and the first step would start from January 1. This involved a joint venture between the Department of Lands and Survey and a consortium of four private operators.

The uproar was immediate, and pressure applied. The Minister came to Te Anau on his holidays and said he would look at certain aspects.

In the meantime, the pressure continued, particularly from the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association. This week saw the first signs of crumbling. Mr Elworthy announced that a trophy shoot would be allowed.

How many animals will still be there is an interesting point, but the Government was given some credit for its action by all concerned, even the Wanaka man who planned to hold an illegal trophy shoot if necessary.

Deerstalkers plan to continue their campaign to stop the relocation. They appear to have virtually lost the battle, yet the Government has wilted slightly.

As we said, pressure is a most interesting subject. It remains to be seen whether the Government was just relaxing its muscles or whether it is really having second thoughts.

It's a ricochet to a bull's-eye, however, that there won't be a trophy shoot next year.

Comments on Relocation Of Wapiti 25/2/82

Sir, — Mr W. J. Cooper, who is a senior officer with Lands and Survey, has made a criticism (13.2.82) of Mr Murray's statement on stoats, but I would suggest that Mr Cooper lacks any justification for his comments, unless he overlooked the article (18.1.82) by Dr G. M. Orbell, the man who rediscovered the takahe.

I quote from that article: "As far as the birds (takahe) go the wapiti are not affecting them in any way. The problem is stoats. Everyone makes a huge fuss about the effect of wapiti because they can see them but you can't see a stoat." "They tag them (stoats) and let them go to kill a few more birds."

Let me now put a few facts to Mr Cooper on his criticism of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association. In 1954 NZDA gained management control over the wapiti area, initiating a selective culling programme and data collecting system for research and management. While it is true that not enough animals were shot it is also true that nothing was being done in the rest of the park which had any effect on animal numbers.

In 1964 a select committee recommended that NZDA, in conjunction with the Fiordland National Park Board, organize private hunting in the wapiti area, over a five-year period. NZDA tried to manage the herd but the Park Board was less than helpful, continually opposing and frustrating the association in its attempts to realize the goal

— a herd of pure wapiti of numbers acceptable to good habitat management. This opposition continued right to the present time, with the board even refusing to discuss or take action on a decision by its own sub-committee.

It should be remembered that this was before the days of the helicopter. NZDA recognized the place of the helicopter as a management tool and a proposal was put to the board in the early 70s, suggesting management of the wapiti area, incorporating helicopters, but this was rejected. NZDA's only objection to the use of helicopters was when used for purely commercial operations, instead as a management tool, to remove red deer and hybrids.

One of the main contributions by NZDA to the area, in conjunction with Forest Service, was the provision of data to Mike Smith, a wildlife habitat biologist, for his thesis "Biology and Management of Wapiti," published by NZDA.

The obvious acceptance by Mr Cooper and Messrs Henderson and Collett (board members) of the then Minister of Lands, Mr V. Young's unwillingness to agree to the retention of wapiti in Fiordland Park, and the present Minister's decision to relocate the wapiti, indicate that they are supporting decisions which they consider correct. May I ask these gentlemen, if Labour had become the Government in November, would they now be giving the same support to a policy which would now be the retention of wapiti in Fiordland? Do they support a Government policy, or a game management policy?

Messrs Henderson and Collett's statement (12.1.82) on the lack of success of the wapiti petition ignores the composition of the select committee, which was six Government MPs and four opposition MPs, chaired by Government, and the vote was six to four against the petition. Need I remind readers that the present Government's policy is relocation of wapiti, Labour policy is the retention of the herd in Fiordland, their habitat since their release in this country in 1905. The recommendation to the petition "that the petition be reported to the Government for consideration" made sure that those in power would not be faced with a debate in the House.

Mr Cooper should realize that there is little point in replying to a letter from board members which states "... red deer, the worst animal pest in New Zealand." Rabbits, stoats and opossums must be feeling rather insulted.

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board should take notice of the wishes of the majority of the people in the area. Board members are in a privileged position, appointed, not elected, and they should not abuse the security of this privilege by ignoring the wishes of the majority.

John C. Bamford

Vice President, NZDA

Balclutha RD

Wapiti Herd 11/2/82

Sir, — Mr C. J. McFarlane's reply to O. Milnes, and an earlier letter by Messrs Henderson and Collett, were both designed to inform the public but left many facts untold.

Contrary to what Mr McFarlane says, it is not inevitable that the wapiti herd will be lost though hybridization or that some form of game management is impractical in Fiordland.

Are the public aware that in the early 1970s deerstalkers assisted by national park rangers and Forest Service research personnel carried out a supervised culling operation and proved that it was practically and economically possible using helicopters to control and maintain a herd of wapiti-type animals of worth-while standards in the park for the foreseeable future. Sure they may not look exactly like their American relations but they would be an animal unique in the world — a Fiordland wapiti adapted to its environment.

That early success was rapidly and deliberately eroded away by the Park Board opening the area to virtually uncontrolled helicopter operations which resulted in a total reduction of animals regardless of type.

When it is suggested that deer can be exterminated from the 1,212,032 hectares of the park it should be noted that Secretary Island in Doubtful Sound, with an area of about 8000 hectares has been regularly hunted and poisoned with 1080 since 1975 and though deer numbers have been reduced, the objective of extermination has not been achieved.

Are the public aware that there were never many takahe in the wapiti area

and that the decline there is in proportion to that of the public excluded, intensively deer controlled special takahe area of the Murchison Mountains? Why should the birds now be expected to thrive in an area which in the past did not appear very suitable as it supported only low numbers.

Some three weeks ago while hunting in Fiordland our party shot one red deer and one stoat which was knocked from the forks of a tree at least 6 metres above the ground. I am sure nobody believes that the stoat was up there to study the botanical wonders of the Fiordland bush. Are the public aware that the past Fiordland National Park Board of which both Messrs McFarlane and Henderson were members, agreed to the capture and release of a large number of stoats in the park without any attempt being made to have them sterilized to prevent breeding and further destruction of our bird life?

If there has been any useful conclusion to that piece of so-called research costing thousands of dollars then I am sure the public would be interested to hear of it. When members of the Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee asked the Park Board to release wapiti from capture pens so as to be consistent with the then helicopter policy the answer was "Oh no! that would be releasing an animal in a national park."

Mr Henderson asked what would the stalkers have the board do. The answer is easy. Ask the Government to immediately stop the "relocation" programme and return a purified herd to the Glaisnock Wilderness area as it is getting more obvious every day that there is no suitable acceptable area elsewhere in New Zealand.

Or is the National Parks and Reserves Board so hamstrung by narrow policy guidelines and little personal knowledge of the problem that they prefer to remain part of the system trying to destroy the hunting incentive which attracts many people to our Fiordland National Park?

As for the coming trophy shoot starting on April 9, the date set is either the result of bureaucratic ignorance or a sour practical joke as no wapiti hunter would normally look for a trophy after the bugle is over and the bulls are lying silent and unseen in the Fiordland scrub.

Are the public aware in this debate that they, like the wapiti, are the victims of economic exploitation and bureaucratic dictatorship?

Winton

J. Murray

20/2/82

DEERFARMERS DEERFARMERS

THE DIRECTORS AND MANAGEMENT

OF

SOUTHERN LAKES VENISON PACKERS LTD

MOSSBURN, SOUTHLAND

INVITE

Southland and Otago Deerfarmers to the official opening ceremony of the new deer slaughtering premises to be held at the plant at 2.30pm on Wednesday, February 24.

Following the opening ceremony light refreshments will be served and the plant will be open for inspection by the public.

77242



NATIONAL RECREATIONAL HUNTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Nominations sought for reconstituted committee

PURSUANT to Part III of the Wild Animal Control Act 1977, nominations are called from individuals or organisations whose object is to foster hunting or shooting on recreation hunting areas, for experienced persons to serve for a period of three years on the National Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee.

The functions and powers of the reconstituted committee shall be to advise me on the following matters:

1. Criteria for the selection of recreational hunting areas.
2. The administration of recreation hunting areas including means of achieving a balance between recreational hunting and other uses.
3. Wild animal control plans and other technical reports related to recreational hunting referred to the Committee by the Director-General of Forests.
4. The promotion and encouragement of recreational hunting on State forest lands and other land as may be appropriate.
5. Such other matters as I may refer to the Committee from time to time.

Nominations close on March 31, 1982 with the Director-General of Forests, Private Bag, Wellington.

Johnathon Elworthy
Minister of Forests

77457

Trophy Shoot Rejected 26/2/82

The New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association has "reluctantly but definitely" dissociated itself with this year's wapiti trophy shoot.

The president of the association, Mr John Henderson, said from Wellington yesterday that the association would play no part in encouraging hunters to incur the expenses associated with a trip to Fiordland.

The association would also warn hunters that the arrangements announced by the Minister of Forests, Mr Elworthy, for the trophy shoot, would almost certainly allow them into Fiordland after the trophy sea-

son bugle had ended.

The association was "very disappointed" that Mr Elworthy had apparently refused to alter the opening date of the proposed trophy hunting season from April 9 to either March 22 or 29.

Mr Henderson said the association understood that the wapiti capture consortium, at present working in Fiordland, would not object to any changes

in the dates or conditions the Government made.

He concluded that the Minister refused to agree to the association's request for a sensible date and for the ending of helicopter operations at least one week before the opening date of the trophy season.

"We believe the conditions he now insists upon largely destroy the credibility of the trophy shoot gesture," Mr Henderson said.

Further Views on Wapiti Relocation

1/3/82
Sir.— A recent letter carried in your comment column by W. J. Cooper (13.2.82) for the relocation of the wapiti herd from Fiordland clearly highlights the lack of depth of thinking behind some of the so-called conservationist groups comments in support of relocation, with the author going into great detail about some obscure academic point concerning wapiti heritage, instead of considering the real reasons behind the relocation.

From reasons given by the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board for the relocation, the run of their argument seems to revolve around the need for protection of the takahe from these bird-eating deer.

Could the board please answer a few points about the takahe.

1. Is it not true that the takahe were on the road to decline and extinction long before the first Europeans arrived and long before the introduction of the first wapiti, a similar path in fact to the natural decline of the kakapo?

For did the takahe range not originally include parts of the Auckland district in pre-European times?

2. Why increase the present takahe area (Murchison Mountains) to encom-

pass the wapiti area, which includes some of the densest rain forest in New Zealand and provides an ideal habitat for stoats and ferrets, which will prove virtually impossible to control. Surely results from observations made on Stewart Island kakapo prove that the main threat to ground dwelling birds is predation.

The Royal NZ Forest and Bird Protection Society must realize that the real answer lies in "relocation of the takahe" to predator-free or predator-controllable areas (eg Maud Island).

Admittedly relocation of the takahe is not as financially attractive as relocation of salable wapiti livestock, although surely a more sensible solution; but then again common sense is not generally associated with bureaucratic thinking.

I hope this letter will stir more hunters into putting their views on paper and once and for all put paid to this pointless wapiti relocation proposal.

Invercargill

J. Hall

[Asked to comment, the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said: "The case for the relocation of the wapiti does not revolve solely around

the protection of the takahe but is, in fact, the only option that gives weight to both the preservation of native flora and fauna and the salvaging of a pure strain of wapiti for re-establishing a recreational shooting herd. The takahe would, of course, be beneficiaries.

"In reply to Mr Hall's questions:

"1. There was a substantial decline in takahe in both the North and South Islands prior to the arrival of Europeans. Climatic change is the accepted reason for this decline.

"2. Takahe or signs have been sighted in various parts of the wapiti area (i.e. outside the takahe special area) since rediscovery in 1948, and parts of the area in which sightings have occurred contain vegetation types preferred by takahe (and deer).

"Stoat predation, especially following high seed fall years, is certainly a threat to takahe. Restriction of habitat arising from competition for food from deer is also a major threat. The effects of competition for food — both preferred tussock species and beech forest understorey — are well documented in a paper by Drs J. A. Mills and A. F. Mark, published in the Journal of Animal Ecology, November 1977.

"Over the past 25 years, the Wildlife Service has made considerable efforts to breed from relocated takahe at Mt Bruce. The results, as yet, have not been successful enough to ensure survival of the takahe outside their habitat in Fiordland.

"In the meantime, every effort must be made to maintain and, if possible, increase the population in Fiordland. Management options to support the takahe include: stoat control following high seed fall years, deer control, artificial fertilization of preferred tussock species and enlargement of the habitat where this leads to improved food supplies."

Sir. — I would like to thank Mr Bamford for the elevated status he accords my position in the Department of Lands and Survey. Although I am employed by that department my duties and responsibilities do not include dealings in respect of wapiti and any views that I may express through these columns are entirely my own.

If Mr Bamford would care to read my previous letter again he would find that I did not criticize Mr Murray's statement on stoats. I merely indicated where he could obtain factual information on stoats, including the answers to his queries. Indeed I would now suggest that both Mr Bamford and Dr Orbell read the article by Dr C. M. King (27.11.80) as it outlines the research undertaken in Fiordland National Park, including the programme involving the

capture, tagging, and release of stoats in the Hollyford Valley (which is many kilometres from the areas inhabited by, or suitable for, takahe).

I also thank Mr Bamford for confirming that the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association failed miserably when it had the opportunity to manage a wapiti-type herd in Fiordland National Park. However, is the fact that it failed miserably any justification for then demanding that the Government undertake and finance a successful operation — especially when it would be for the benefit of fewer than a mere 100 "sportsmen" per year?

The 1965 Select Committee's recommendation that the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association be invited to co-operate with the (then) Fiordland National Park Board in the organization of private hunting was just that. It did not recommend, let alone authorize the introduction of game management within Fiordland National Park. Indeed the management of an introduced animal is contrary to the whole principle of national parks and was not permitted in terms of the National Parks Act 1952. (Similarly it is not permissible under the provisions of the National Parks Act 1980).

The New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association has pressed for the introduction of game management on numerous occasions — notably to the Lands and Agriculture Select Committee in 1964 and the Labour Government's Caucus Committee on Noxious Animals in 1974. At no stage has this been favoured, although the 1974 Labour Government's Caucus Committee did recommend that in a few specific areas (all of which were outside national parks) animal control should be through recreational hunting alone.

While on the question of game management and the feasibility of it being introduced to New Zealand I would draw your readers' attention to the 1973 Sanderson Memorial Address — "Deer Extermination: Control or Management?" — given to the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society by the late John T. Holloway, former director of the protection forestry division, Forest Research Institute (and a person often quoted by New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association members). In this address Dr Holloway's conclusion was:

"Extermination is not a practical solution to the deer problem: game management, at least at this juncture, is a pipe dream. The only practical policy is the policy of control as already defined, even though this may satisfy no one completely. It will not lead to the restoration of primeval conditions in the forests or for birdlife, but it should go a long way towards this end. Nor will it provide for the complete safety of the

watersheds. It will be a never-ending struggle, but this is the price we must pay for the introduction of deer in the first place. To my friends the deerstalkers I would say that although game management is a pipe dream, there will be deer to be had for as long as can be foreseen. Even helicopters will not eliminate them. They will not be present in such large numbers or in such readily accessible places, and more skill will be needed to hunt them, but they will be larger and better animals with a higher trophy value. Hunting under these conditions can remain a popular sport, to be enjoyed by anyone, without the high costs and regimentation implicit in game management."

Mr Bamford's questions in respect of Labour Party policy are somewhat confusing but I interpret them as meaning "do I support the decision to relocate wapiti-type animals from Fiordland National Park only because it has been made by the Government?" I personally support the decision because, as Mr Bamford himself states, I believe it to be the correct one.

As to the Labour Party's policy, I know for a fact that its adoption cost it votes in seats it had to win if it was to become the Government.

Finally I would remind Mr Bamford that world wide, national parks are held to be of national, indeed international, importance and are not intended to be preserved just for the local inhabitants.

I now consider correspondence on this well-worn subject to be closed.

W. J. Cooper

Invercargill

Australia Wary Of Venison

(PA)

WELLINGTON

Australian deer farmers have launched an attack on imports of New Zealand-farmed venison.

The Victorian Deer Breeders' Association has asked Australian Government officials for urgent action on threatened imports of New Zealand venison, according to the association journal, The Deer Breeder.

The move comes as the farmed venison export industry in New Zealand is making its first overseas sales following the building of deer processing plants around the country.

The first plants came on stream late last year, and exporters are looking to Australia as one of the main potential markets, the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association's executive officer, Mr Michael Pattison said yesterday.

Wary

"The Australians are very wary of venison imports from New Zealand which they consider will be at a lower cost than the relatively high priced venison they sell mainly to restaurants," he said.

"They argue that it is only a small market which they are supplying. But it could be argued that with the sort of prices they charge it is not surprising that the market is small."

Mr Pattison said that so far very little meat had been sent to Australia.

"They are really chucking rocks before the target comes in sight," he said.

The Deer Breeders' magazine said that anti-dumping regulations had been made quite clear to Australian venison importers.

A spokesman for the New Zealand Department of Trade and Industry said that venison exports to Australia had been restricted previously by quarantine regulations requiring certificates saying the deer were slaughtered in a licensed slaughterhouse.

With the building of New Zealand slaughterhouses, the way had been opened for exports to Australia. The Australian producers had mentioned dumping but their claims were unsubstantiated.

"This is a campaign they are trying to run, but some of their fears are not justified," he said.

BLIND: A court here has granted the wish of a father of five who wanted to spend a precious few weeks with his family before his eyesight fails altogether. York magistrates had committed Fred Fisher to Crown Court on unconditional bail for sentence on 14 offences and deferred sentence on 12 others. — (York, England)

No Southland Sites in New Home for Wapiti

Four areas are being investigated as a potential site to relocate the Fiordland wapiti herd, but none of them are in Southland.

The Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, announced yesterday that a team of Forest Service rangers and scientists started work on Monday inspecting the sites.

All four areas are in the northern part of the South Island.

They are Molesworth Station, a Department of Lands and Survey property in Marlborough; the Richmond range, near Nelson; Victoria range, near Reefton; the Karamea catchment in the north-west Nelson State Forest Park.

The Minister's press secretary, Mr Gyles Beckford, said the team would be looking at each area to see what sort of

cover it provided, both for winter ranging and summer grazing.

It would be seeking land not prone to erosion. Soil and water conservation and the protection of flora and fauna would be major considerations.

The team would also be wanting to avoid the possibility of the relocated wapiti interbreeding with red deer, as had happened in Fiordland, Mr Beckford said.

Therefore, it would investigate the history of colonization and red deer numbers in each area.

Should a place be identified as a suitable potential wapiti site, red deer control methods, if

necessary, would be undertaken before and after the relocation.

Between them, the four areas offered quite a wide variety of land forms, Mr Beckford said. They had different vegetation, soil types, climate and access.

At Molesworth Station, for example, there were extensive dry open grasslands, while in the Karamea catchment there were forest-clad valleys.

The team would report back to the Minister, who would discuss their recommendations with deerstalking groups before making a public announcement.

He hoped to make the announcement before the end of this month, Mr Beckford said.

The four areas were selected on the basis of past experience of department staff.

No one had identified any in Southland as being suitable for wapiti relocation.

Earlier this year, the MP Invercargill, Mr N. P. H. Jones said he and the MP for Wallingford, Mr D. A. Angus, would be advocating the high country south of Lake Wakatipu as being suitable for wapiti relocation.

Mr Jones said yesterday he had not been pursued with the Minister, but it would not be late to do something.

Both he and Mr Angus want the relocated herd to be in Southland, Mr Jones said.

Helicopter Seized In Drug Raid

2/3/82
A 29-year-old man will appear in the Invercargill District Court, today charged with offences under the misuse of Drugs Act after a police operation which involved the seizing of a Hughes 300 helicopter in Te Anau on Friday.

The man will be charged with cultivation of cannabis, possession of cannabis for supply, and using a helicopter to commit an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

Police have possession of a helicopter and a quantity of cannabis.

More Views on Wapiti Relocation

7/3/82
Sir, — I thank Mr Elworthy for his reply to my letter 17.2.82. The statement by Mr V. S. Young in question was in fact a reply made to Mr R. Gray MP for Clutha following representations made last year.

Again the Minister mentions the competition that results with wapiti and the "rare native birds." I would be quite certain that the so-called "rare native birds" are fast becoming extinct as a result of the poisoning operations currently being undertaken by the Park Board on the fringe of the wapiti area. It appears there are either no rare native birds in the wapiti area or they are being poisoned into extinction.

I stand by my statement of only 2 per cent of the public being in genuine support of wapiti removal. If the Minister initiated a public opinion poll in the

South it would confirm my statement. I agree that the odd person may think "in theory" that the removal of wapiti could prevent further hybridization. This line of thought I believe the Minister may be basing his arguments on is quite typical of little up to date knowledge of the wapiti's exact location, population and degree of hybridization. The majority of the wapiti are now largely confined to an area of coastal bush after being forced there by commercial helicopters.

During last year's trophy shoot in this area our party was very interested in assessing the number of hybrids, red deer and wapiti. The results after 16 solid days hunting were quite interesting. We searched out two large hybrids and two red stags we shot and unwisely let another two red stags go, choosing to photograph instead. On the contrary in our search for the wapiti we came across 15 pure-blooded wapiti. As testimony to the pure type I enclose a colour

print of a wapiti bull secured by our party.

Though a young bull at five years he sports a full 12 points with the top two broken off and measures 42 inches in length. I would defy the Minister to dispute the purity of this and the other wapiti. This bull I might add is just a pup.

Will the Minister take a short trip during this year's bugle to see the wapiti first hand? To assess the degree of hybridization by helicopter or by the consortiums progress is completely unreliable. The wapiti have a cunning that is infinitely superior to that of the red deer and most other deer species.

The Minister would now be wise to initiate a thorough red and hybrid cull in Fiordland in preparation for the return of additional superior wapiti. The aim—a healthy herd of wapiti and continued forest regeneration. The taxpayer should at least be warned of the hundreds of thousands of dollars the Minister will be spending to be able to relocate the wapiti solely to the benefit of the poacher and spotlifter.

All arguments for the removal of wapiti have been so far groundless. I can only suggest that the Minister has unfortunately involved himself in a bureaucratic mess of gigantic proportions.

Peter Glaister

Balclutha RD

Sir, — I have read the letters appearing in this column regarding the wapiti relocation programme and am concerned that the average citizen, who does not have an axe to grind, must be totally confused regarding the facts of the whole matter.

The Act which forbids the introduction of foreign animals into our national parks was effected to preserve our native flora and fauna. It is nothing less than hypocrisy to suggest that it is more desirable to have the wapiti damaging native forest outside a national park, rather than in it.

Many people have been misled into thinking that our native bush is being devastated by browsing animals, along with considerable erosion as a result. This is far from the truth.

The present problem is that the deer modify our bush by eating out certain species of native plants, allowing other species (and often the less desirable ones) to multiply and take over.

Erosion is not a significant problem in the wapiti area and the subject is only thrown in by some people to strengthen their arguments.

In recent years the wapiti area has been generally open to recreational shooting, helicopter recovery operations, selective culling by helicopter, and poaching, just like any other part of the Fiordland park.

Removal of the wapiti will not significantly reduce animal numbers in the total area and the red deer will continue to modify the bush.

What then has been gained?

One valid argument for particularly removing the wapiti is that their peculiar feeding habits cause damage to species of plants which are of no interest to red deer.

Why then should we remove these animals from an area which has already borne the brunt of the wapiti's peculiar feeding habits and liberate them into another area of our native bush?

Should it be recognized that a herd of wapiti is desirable, then leave it where it is.

J. S. Smith

Invercargill RD

Wapiti Ballot Today

9/3/82
Although the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association has dissociated itself with what could be the last wapiti trophy shoot in Fiordland, this year's ballot has attracted 115 applications.

These involve 425 people — one less than last year and considerably more than those in the four years before that.

A ballot for the blocks will be held at 1.30pm today.

In a surprise move early last month, the Government announced that recreational hunters and deerstalkers would be given what could possibly be the final opportunity to take part in

a wapiti trophy shoot in the park.

It had originally been cancelled last year and a relocation programme for the wapiti started on January 1.

Following the announcement that the shoot would be held, after all, the Deerstalkers' Association said it dissociated itself from it.

One reason, it claimed, was that the dates set were too late and the wapiti bugling would be over, thus wasting hunters' time.

24 Blocks

Applications for the shoot closed at 10am yesterday.

The 24 blocks will be balloted out in the normal way in the Menzies Building today. There will be 12 reserves.

Each applicant was asked to list the blocks in order of preference.

Members of the parties included Australians and a lot of North Islanders, said Mr J. R. Fraser, of the Department of Lands and Survey in Invercargill.

This was why the shoot, which would start on April 9 and run for three weeks, could not be held earlier.

By the time the successful applicants were officially notified, there would not be long for them to make all the necessary arrangements, he said.

A briefing session on the shoot will be held at Te Anau on April 8. This must be attended by all applicants.

Another condition is that, as in the past, only one wapiti trophy per person will be allowed with a maximum of four wapiti per party. The minimum party size is two, with no maximum limit.

There is no limit to the number of red deer trophies permitted.

A new condition for this year is that applicants must accept that "of necessity," commercial operations will continue in the wapiti area up to and including April 8.

Last year, 107 parties, involving 426 people, applied for blocks of these, 20 parties (79 people) were successful but only 47 hunters actually participated.

In 1981 there were 98 parties, 387 people, 20 successful parties, 98 people, and only 67 actually participated.

In the same order, the figures for 1979 were: 78, 322, 22, 95 and 58; for 1978, 81, 273, 18, 61 and 63; for 1977, 61, 22, 19, 61 and 48.

Hunter Slams Wapiti Areas

4/3/82
One of the areas being considered as a potential site for Fiordland's wapiti herd was drought prone and the remaining three were riddled with red deer, recreational hunter, Mr Alan Rodger, of Wanaka, said yesterday.

The Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, announced on Tuesday that four areas in the north of the South Island were being investigated by staff as potential sites for the relocated wapiti.

However, Mr Rodger said it was "ludicrous" to even consider one of them, Molesworth station in Marlborough.

It was drought prone and the wapiti would never survive.

The remaining three, two near Nelson and one near Reefton, were inhabited by red deer and it would cost the taxpayer thousands of dollars to get rid of them, Mr Rodger claimed.

He could not understand how a Minister of the Crown could ask his staff to investigate such areas.

The MP for Wallace, Mr D. A. Angus, said he had been working with the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in an effort to keep the wapiti in Fiordland.

Mr Angus said he had also suggested to the Minister a suitable relocation site in Southland should be found, as an alternative.

"I personally don't want to see them (the wapiti) leave Southland."

Mr Angus and the MP for Invercargill, Mr N. P. H. Jones, will attend a public meeting at Gore on March 13, at which the issue will be discussed.

Mr Angus said he hoped recommendations for sites in Southland would come out of the meeting.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I am led to believe that President Roosevelt of America gave to the people of New Zealand, as a gift, some American elk, better known by us as wapiti. These same wapiti were liberated in the area that they now occupy within the Fiordland National Park, though this park was not formed until at least 30 years after the liberation of these animals.

Now our Government is making some fast money out of this gift which belongs to all New Zealanders.

I now see that the Government has given two wekas to the people of Japan, as a gift. If these wekas are liberated in Japan, who in the future is going to see that the people of Japan don't follow the New Zealand Government in its treatment of gifts as has happened with the wapiti and kill them off?

6/3/82
Russell

Mataura



Wapiti Have Place In Fiordland

The decision to activate the planned removal of wapiti from Fiordland has met a much more hostile reception than the perpetrators could have anticipated.

It is certain that unless some "Shangri La" for wapiti is found in New Zealand, or the present operation is modified so that the good wapiti are left in Fiordland, that the decision will be an albatross around the neck of the Minister, Mr Elworthy, at the next election.

Had a red deer-free area, where there was no conflict of interest and offering the same attractions and challenges, been made available I am sure the stalkers and their supporters would have agreed to the plan. It is because the capture programme has already started with no such area in view that anger has been aroused.

The public meeting at Gore on Saturday night is to obtain massive public support for the retention of wapiti in their traditional Fiordland area.

This meeting is yet another part of a 30-year campaign by deerstalkers to have the presence of wapiti in Fiordland officially recognized.

On May 21, 1980 a petition containing 53,811 names was presented to Parliament by Mr Ken Comber MP for Wellington Central. It asked the Government to set aside a special area for wapiti in Fiordland. It was referred to the Lands and Agriculture Select Committee. The petition's fate is best described in a letter to me from an Opposition member of that committee.

"As you know, I have always strongly supported the retention of a special area for wapiti in Fiordland National Park and, with my three colleagues on the committee, have voted for a 'Most Favourable Consideration' recommendation for the NZDA petition recently considered. However we were defeated 6 to 4 on straight party lines. The Government members were very cunning, opting for a recommendation to refer the petition to Government for 'consideration'. It would have been better to get 'No Recommendation', as this would have given us the chance to debate the issue in Parliament."

Several Government members have stated recently that the wapiti are a threat to the present and future range of the takahe. It would seem that the Opposition members on the committee were less impressed by the evidence presented to them. One wonders whether the apparent concern for takahe preservation and about hybridism is not being used as an excuse to get the animals out of the park. When this thought is coupled to the fact that no satisfactory alternative area has been made available, the exercise appears like extermination of wapiti, as far as sportsmen are concerned, in another guise.

Takahe

For many years deer have been blamed for the decline of both kakapo and takahe. Observers, like myself, have doubted this contention because kakapo have vanished from places they formerly occupied while deer have still not colonized those places. The early explorers, prospectors, bushmen and so on, have reported the depredations of birdlife by predators which they had actually witnessed.

Fossils found indicate that takahe inhabited most of New Zealand at one time thought their decline may have begun before the advent of man on these islands. Birds sighted or caught between 1849 and 1898 made it appear as though they may have been scattered over the southwest of the South Island—perhaps 5 per cent of the New Zealand land area. For 50 years after this they were thought to have become extinct until they met their rediscoverers, Dr Orbell and his party, in 1948. By then their territory had shrunk to about 1 per cent

JACK McKENZIE, the author of this article, was a founder member of the Fiordland National Park Board and is currently a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board.



The present wapiti in Fiordland are the descendants of 18 liberated at George Sound in 1905. Ten of the animals were purchased in the USA by the New Zealand Government Tourist Department. The other 10 were presented by President Theodore Roosevelt on the suggestion of a fellow big game hunter that the New Zealand mountains would be particularly suitable for deer. In return the New Zealand Government presented some New Zealand native birds and a tuatara lizard to the National Zoological Park, Washington DC.

of New Zealand. They would probably have encountered their first deer a few years prior to this.

Stoats had even reached Resolution Island by 1900 so their unfortunate acquaintance with takahe would almost certainly have begun prior to this. For most of the 70 million years since our New Zealand "Ark" had cast off its parent body—Gondwanaland—takahe and kakapo would have coexisted with a multitude of avian herb and grass eaters. Countless thousands of moas (26 species), a flightless goose, a giant rail, other extinct species, and those that have survived until now. Never before, however, had they encountered a predator such as a stoat.

It had been estimated that the population of 500 takahe in 1948 has dwindled to 200 at the present time. Weather and predation have played havoc with this year's crop of eggs and chicks. Whether the intention of bringing some of these birds out of the park and setting them elsewhere will arrest their decline toward ultimate extinction is problematical. It would seem to hold more promise than the constant perseverance against the tremendous odds of Fiordland.

The claim that has been made that ta-

kahe were present in the wapiti area until recently and that they have been eaten out by wapiti is quite wrong. If the removal of wapiti and their replacement with wapiti is based on this premise then I am sure it will prove to be an act of the utmost folly.

Birdlife

In defending the wapiti against those who insist that they are a menace to birdlife one may easily appear to have little compassion for our feathered friends. Nothing could be further from the truth. Without doubt the birds of Fiordland, particularly those that have become rare elsewhere, are one of its great attractions. From the weka at base, through the bush with its tuis, bellbirds, kakas, ducks, tomitts, fantails, wrens, to that intelligent pirate of the tops the kea, one is seldom without an avian companion. Our only meeting with the takahe took place in the Stillwater valley in 1969. A rather forlorn bird seemed to seek our companionship for several days. To us it was a living fossil and we felt sorry for it.

I am sure hybridism between wapiti and red deer exists on a wide scale in the wapiti area. If anyone goes into that area expecting to find purebred animals

they may well be disappointed. But is this really what stalkers want? The enjoyment most hunters seek there is that of hunting a unique game animal—New Zealand's most impressive—in the rugged grandeur of some of world's finest scenery. To say that hybridism destroys the identity of the animals as a distinct species is nonsense. Where else would animals like this be found?

The fear that the animals will become so interbred with red deer as to become indistinguishable from them has no foundation in fact.

Using the tools available to us, and with the slightest degree of intelligent management, animals attractive to our people and overseas visitors can be maintained indefinitely, without threat to other park values.

Not Serious Threat

The propriety of having game animals and game management in a national park has been mentioned in this newspaper. In like manner one could counter by questioning the propriety of covering the wapiti area with such barbaric legislation, and in so doing ignore the wishes of a sizeable segment of the general public who enjoy hunting.

Obviously Dr Murie, the leader of the 1949 expedition to the area, and a highly respected American conservationist, saw nothing wrong with having the animals there when he wrote "... we are agreed that the presence of a moderate wapiti population need not be a serious threat to the Fiordland forest."

In 1963 Messrs A. L. Naylor and W. A. Bell wrote to HRH the Duke of Edinburgh acquainting him, as one who had a great interest in wildlife, with the official attitude towards wild animal species, particularly the wapiti. The Duke put the matter in the hands of Sir Peter Scott of the World Wildlife Fund. I quote from his letter to the Duke.

"I have consulted six ecologists of international distinction and all are agreed that attempting to exterminate the wapiti as 'noxious animals' is impractical and undesirable.

"The introduction of exotic species whose damaging effects on the habitat may be considerable is obviously to be discouraged in the first place, but species which have been established for half a century or more, and whose damaging effects are still debatable, cannot be considered in the same light. Steps may be necessary to prevent further expansion of the population, but in the case of the wapiti, where the animal provides a sporting amenity and an impressive faunistic addition to the landscape, a policy of attempted eradication is in their view (and mine) not only unrealistic but mistaken."

Legitimate Use

A rather courageous Forestry scientist said some years ago that the sustained production of big game in Fiordland was safe and legitimate use of the land.

The following recommendation was passed unanimously at the National Parks Authority Jubilee Conference, July 1978.

"If it can be demonstrated that an existing species of introduced flora or fauna has outstanding aesthetic, scientific, recreational or historic value, and already exists within the confines of a national park, and can be contained in a specific area under control and without detriment to other park values, consideration should be given to tolerating that species under Section 3(2b) or 28(1a) of the Act."

Some of the opponents of wapiti have tried to interpret this resolution as being applicable only to such things as blackbirds and trout. These species are already protected by another Act in the case of trout, and park bylaws in the case of introduced birds. In any case the resolution would not make sense when applied to birds because how on earth do

you "contain them in a specific area" without bird netting.

In addition to the above I believe that the resolution was moved by a former president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association—that should be final confirmation of the resolution's meaning.

Management

The 20-year period from 1954 to 1974 when the NZDA practised game management in the wapiti area is a long story on its own. Some of it can be told briefly. It has to be conceded that the campaign failed in its main objective—the control of animal numbers by way of the man on foot. Local NZDA members have been offended by the failure of some critics to recognize their efforts in persuading the influential minority opposed to the use of helicopters to rectify the position.

Trials with the use of helicopters for selective reductions of animals took place in parts of the wapiti area in 1970 and 1971. In 1973 a highly successful operation took place over a 10-week period when everyone appeared well satisfied with the results achieved.

It is my contention that shrewd anti-deer people could see that game management using this highly efficient new tool was possible. Through the formation of a recreational hunter sub-committee of the Fiordland National Park Board in which the hunter representatives were able to be outvoted 2-1, the wapiti area was opened to commercial hunters on foot and from helicopters in a campaign that, except on paper, amounted to open slather shooting. This type of "management" resulted in the virtual disappearance of wapiti over 70 per cent of the area in which they had formerly been in reasonable numbers.

There were two areas in which the NZDA campaign was successful. One of these was the management of the hunter, the other successful objective was keeping the policy of extermination in national parks from being implemented in the wapiti area.

No Pipe Dream

Despite what has been said to the contrary, hunters were prepared to be "re-gimented." In this case their reward was the right to take a wapiti trophy on a special trophy hunt. To earn this right entailed taking part in culling campaigns, or contributing finance to make campaigns possible. In addition those who took the field were required to take considerable scientific data from the animals they killed.

Finance was made available by the NZDA which, with subsidy, made possible the building of two huts in the Murchison Mountains. Sports hunters are excluded from using these huts now. Another hut was to have been built in this area but the finance was eventually used to help build a hut in another part of the park.

Game management is certainly no "pipe dream" but I am sure that almost all stalkers will agree that in the Fiordland climate and terrain that the helicopter is the main tool required to carry it out.

The Minister has stated that he found the pro and anti wapiti viewpoints irreconcilable. One would have expected him to have insisted on some sort of compromise. Instead he and the Government have capitulated to the anti-wapiti lobby. The wiser course would surely have been to have reduced the size of the wapiti area, to have excluded the fringe areas containing takahe, and by enlisting the aid of science to ensure an even low density distribution of the best possible animals.

We seem to have all the ingredients to do this except common sense and will power. Good will could transcend both these words. It is the one quality I think to be painfully lacking.

Wapiti Herd

Concern about the future of the Fiordland wapiti herd, expressed at a meeting in Gore on Saturday night, will be shared by many who have no particular interest in deerstalking, but who recognize the attraction the animals have for hunters and who regard the presence of the animals in the Fiordland National Park as an asset rather than a liability.

If the wapiti and other deer were present in such numbers as to pose a severe threat to the environment through damage to the vegetation there would be a strong case for, if not removing them, at least reducing their number to less destructive levels. With the advent of helicopter hunting that, in fact is what has happened. With the use of helicopters, those charged with administering the park have the means to keep deer numbers down to a level at which damage to the forest is unlikely to cause problems.

Even with the use of helicopters it is doubtful whether deer can be eliminated from the park so that it is unlikely ever to be returned to its natural state. And even if that state was achieved, who would benefit? Deerstalkers have a strong argument when they say that apart from themselves, very few people venture into the depths of Fiordland. There is little point in having a pristine wilderness that no one visits.

Concern has been expressed for the future of the takahe, but it is doubtful whether the wapiti are serious competitors of the takahe. The birds face a more serious threat in the form of ground predators and are, in any case, a naturally declining species. It makes more sense to remove takahe from the area for selective breeding than wapiti.

In many national parks of the world it is the animals they contain that are the attraction. That the wapiti are not native to Fiordland does not really matter so long as they are not irreparably damaging the countryside. The difficulty of finding an alternative home for the animals removed from the park further suggests that they are better left where they are. Certainly they may hybridize with the red deer, but they will still prove a drawcard to hunters who are entitled to enjoy the park in their own way. The Government and the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board would be wise to accommodate them.

Wapiti Blocks Balloted For Trophy Shoot

A small gathering of people witnessed yesterday what could well be a never-to-happen-again event — the balloting of Fiordland wapiti blocks for the annual trophy shoot.

In spite of the relocation programme being carried out, the wapiti has not lost its appeal to hunters and there were 118 applications (including three late ones) from parties wanting to take part in the trophy shoot.

This could be the last shoot for the wapiti in Fiordland.

Applications closed on Monday and the draw for the 24 blocks took place yesterday at a Department of Lands and Sur-

vey office in the Menzies building.

The draw was scrutineered by two executives of the Southland branch of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Messrs Bill Bell and Alan Murray.

Thirty marbles were drawn for the 24 blocks, as six applicants had not listed enough preferences and their preferred blocks had gone before their

names were drawn. Twelve reserves were also drawn.

The 24 successful parties represented about 90 shooters.

Notification

Party leaders will be notified and will be sent a copy of the conditions covering the shoot, along with a map of their particular block.

An administration officer with Lands and Survey in South-

land, Mr John Fraser, said leaders would have to contact members of their parties and complete their organization.

A briefing would be held at Te Anau on April 8 — the day before the three-week shoot begins.

Those who were successful in the ballots, with the blocks allotted them, were: L. Lyons (George River), W. J. D. Chaloner (Narrows Creek), J. Barker (Wapiti River), L. R. Dickson (Looking Glass), I. D. Dawson (Large Burn), K. Logan (Worsley Stream), R. W. Banks (Mt Tanilba), G. P. Milne (Stina Burn), A. Youngman (Doon River), K. Bradley (Upper Glaisnock), D. Mackie (Mid Burn), H. A. R. Callander (Charles-Caswell), R. A. Carr (Catseye), I. Mitchell (Hankinson-Loch Burn), J. H. McKenzie (North Western), D. Moore (Caswell Sound), R. Maru (Lake Katherine), P. Ashby (Lugar Burn), R. P. Cooper (Charles Sound), M. M. Wright (George Sound), M. Mitchell (Lower Glaisnock), P. Johns (Billy Burn), R. Agnew (Bligh Sound), A. Shaw (Whitewater).



Mr John Fraser, administration officer with the Department of Lands and Survey in Southland, shows scrutineer Mr Bill Bell a marble which has just been drawn from the ballot box, in the wapiti trophy shoot ballot yesterday.

● Story on Page 3.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — Mr Cooper suggests that I elevated his status, but I note he elevated his own by indicating that he considers wapiti correspondence to be closed. I always believed the editor made that decision.

At no stage did I indicate that the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association had failed miserably in its management efforts of the wapiti herd in Fiordland. What I did indicate was that insufficient animals were shot and that the then Fiordland National Park Board was less than helpful to the association in its efforts.

Mr Cooper claims that the Labour Party lost seats because of its wapiti retention policy. This seems strange as Messrs Jones and Angus, two National Party candidates who believe in Southland and the future of the wapiti in that area are now Members of Parliament and increased the majority in their electorates.

If the democratic process still works in this country, the wishes of the majority of recreational hunters should be acted on as they, with a few exceptions are the only members of the general public of New Zealand to set foot in that remote corner of our country.

John C. Bamford
National Vice-President NZDA
Balclutha RD

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I read somewhere recently that if the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board had asked the Minister to keep the wapiti in the Fiordland National Park, then the Minister would not have made the moves that he has to have them removed, and would have left them where they are.

Now I read that a parks board spokesman says that they don't have the right to say "no" to the eventual mining of minerals in the national park.

What right did they have to say "no" to the wapiti, who only browse on, and live in, regrowable vegetation, and not take out irreplaceable resources, while the land itself is drastically changed or destroyed?

Russell

Mataura

Venison Dumping

No Ground For Allegation

Australian deer farmers have no grounds for complaining that New Zealand venison is being dumped on their domestic market.

That is the opinion of the game meats manager of the export division of Wilson Neill Ltd, Mr John Scandrett.

Allegations that New Zealand venison is being dumped on the Australian market are being investigated in Canberra by the Department of Business and Consumer Affairs.

A department spokesman was reported this week as saying evidence indicated export sales of New Zealand venison were being made to Australia at price levels representing dumping margins of 16.75 per cent.

Mr Scandrett said from Dunedin yesterday the few Australian deer farmers, who sold a small number of carcasses at high prices, were trying to block imports of New Zealand products.

They were claiming that price levels for New Zealand venison were endangering their livelihood.

For prices to constitute dumping, Mr Scandrett said, they would have to be less than in the country of origin and less than in the main market, West Germany.

That was not the case. For example, New Zealand venison sold for 85 per cent more in Australia than it did in West Ger-

many. "I'm confident the Australians have got absolutely no grounds for complaint," he said.

The subject will be discussed at a game export advisory committee meeting in Wellington on Monday.

The committee, which is chaired by Mr Peter Elworthy, consists of three industry and three farming representatives. Mr Scandrett is a member.

Helicopter Pilot Charged With Drugs Offences

A man, who it is alleged, allowed his helicopter to be used for the commission of a drugs offence, elected trial by jury after he appeared in the Invercargill District Court yesterday.

Mervyn Carter Frisby, a 29-year-old helicopter pilot, has been charged with allowing his helicopter to be used for an offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975, at Winton on February 26.

He also faced charges of possession of cannabis for supply at Te Anau and cultivating cannabis at Winton.

Judge Anderson remanded him until April 19 for the taking of depositions.

The defendant was released on bail with one of the conditions being a daily reporting clause.

Relocation of Wapiti Herd

Sir, — Through your column I would like to ask the Minister of Lands two questions:

1. Exactly where is the final location being sought for the newly established wapiti herd?

2. What guarantee does the recreational hunter of New Zealand have that a new herd will be re-established at all?

T. S. Bagrie

Gore

[Asked to comment, the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, said:

"1. Several sites are currently being investigated by the Forest Service and the Department of Lands and Survey as possible locations for a wapiti herd. I have on several occasions invited the public to suggest possible locations, either within the Southland region or elsewhere in the country. This invitation has also been extended to the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association. I have given an undertaking that any site chosen would first be discussed with the National Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee and that the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association would also be consulted.

"2. I have given a clear assurance both to the public and to the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association that the Government will re-establish a wapiti herd."

"It seems clear to me that no Government would engage in such a time consuming and involved operation to capture and breed up a pure wapiti herd if its intention was not to re-establish them. For the benefit of your correspondent I am happy to repeat my earlier assurance that a wapiti herd will be relocated, and I hope that I can make an announcement as to a suitable final location in the not too distant future.

"I take the opportunity to again emphasize that the object of the exercise is to preserve the wapiti species by ending

the hybridization that is going on with red deer at present. A number of recreational hunters and a number of Southlanders have indicated to me their support for the venture."

More Views on Relocation Of Wapiti

Sir, — In spite of all the arguments and protests put forward by the deerstalkers, there is no reason why the animals should be kept in the Fiordland National Park for the hunters to kill.

Blood sport (very cruel if the shot is not a clean one) seems quite out of place in this supposedly enlightened age. The killing of animals merely for enjoyment is repugnant to far more people than there are deerstalkers.

It looks as if the issue of where the wapiti will be located will solve itself. Nobody else appears to want these destructive animals for the very reasons that make them unacceptable in a national park.

Senecio

Halfmoon Bay

Sir, — By publishing Mr McKenzie's article "Wapiti Have a Place in Fiordland" on March 11, you allow what by now has become a drawn-out and well-aided topic, with endless interpretations, sentiments and mis-

representations of the truth, to be continued ad infinitum. The general public must be thoroughly fed up with the issue of whether deer, birds or people have a right to inhabit the national parks. Your editorial on March 15 adds nothing to the "case for the wapiti" apart from indicating your biased stance on this issue.

Statistics are useful in convincing people of the validity of an argument — especially if they are plucked out of the air, as in the case of one correspondent who claimed that 98 per cent of New Zealanders wanted to have the wapiti in Fiordland rather than relocate them elsewhere. One cannot deny that 53,811 names appeared on the "Save the Wapiti" petition (not quite 98 per cent of the population!) nor, on the other hand, can one fail to note that in the past five years only 47 to 67 hunters actually take part in the trophy shoot in Fiordland in any one year (and they are the keen ones — the other 30-odd eligible shooters stay at home!).

What do we make of such statistics? To me the answer is fairly obvious and I

would therefore suggest that further correspondence on the wapiti issue be withheld for lack of public interest.

Te Anau

Small Bore

Sir, — How proud I was to be amongst the 500 or so people who gathered in the James Cumming Wing in Gore last Saturday to discuss the wapiti issue. Looking round the hall it was noticeable that a wide cross section of the community was represented there. There were farmers, shearers, lawyers, carpenters, real estate agents, school teachers, accountants, and a host of other professions all with a common cause — to save the wapiti in their present habitat.

I got the distinct impression that it is not the wapiti that needs relocating but rather the Park Board with the exception of a "big" man, Jack McKenzie.

Gore

Interested

Sir, — Let's hope the new wapiti location is elk-worthy.

Alexandra

J. B. Russel

Helicopter Crashes Costly

(PA)

WELLINGTON
Helicopter crashes cost New Zealand more than \$10 million in overseas funds in the five years until 1980, according to the Ministry of Transport's Flight Safety magazine.

This was the amount of money spent on replacement helicopters and spare parts after 206 helicopter crashes in the five years from 1976 until 1980.

Thirteen people were killed and 36 seriously injured in the 206 crashes, which resulted in 66 helicopters destroyed and 130

substantially damaged.

Helicopters involved in work such as game recovery and other than agricultural work had an accident rate of 7.6 in 1976 per 10,000 hours in the air. The rate in 1980 was 18.6.

Bad Record

Flight Safety describes the record as extremely bad. It says the industry must face up to its responsibilities in accident prevention.

The record not only reflected badly on the role of the helicopter in industry, but brought into question its economic viability.

"In order to dispel such doubts and prove that the aircraft is vital to the national economy, the industry must face up to its responsibilities and maintain a concerted programme of accident prevention," the magazine said.

The predominant factor causing accidents was inflight structural, mechanical or power failure, accounting for 28 per cent of crashes. Wire strikes during flight account for 11.7 per cent.

The magazine said in the case of 26 technically related accidents in deer recovery, half were with engine accessories or transmission problems.

"Most, if not all, mechanical engine failures occurring during deer recovery operations result in further aircraft damage during the subsequent forced landing," Flight Safety said.

It was recognized in game recovery operations, there were more frequent violent manoeuvres, power changes and control applications. Wind effect and turbulence were also relevant factors, the report said.

Deerstalkers Will Not Stand Idly By

Recreational hunters will not stand idly by watching the carving up of a public resource between the Crown and a small group of commercial operators, according to an executive member of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr W. A. Bell.

In a statement yesterday, Mr Bell, said in spite of the depletion and harassment of the wapiti by more than three months of capture operations and the unfavourable time of the trophy shoot, the overwhelming interest in the ballot of blocks this week shows the national and international enthusiasm for trophy shooting in Fiordland.

"It is an aspect of the changing concept of the use of National Parks for multiple recreation which no administrative body has the right to ignore," Mr Bell said.

Obligation

He said the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board had an obligation under recent legislation to prepare a new management plan for the wapiti

area and submit it for public comment.

"This has not been done, and the new Minister in fact appears to have acted precipitously in ordering the capture and relocation suggestion from the old board to proceed before new requirements had been fulfilled.

"The recreational hunting sector can hardly stand idly by while it watches the carving up of a popular public resource (which it considers should be part of such multiple use) between the Crown and a small group of commercial operators who stand to profit considerably from the deal," Mr Bell said.

Public Meeting

The increasing frustration felt by deerstalkers because of the relocation programme

which they believe will never be a viable proposition in their lifetime, has prompted a public meeting which will be held in the James Cumming Wing, in Gore, tonight at 8pm.

The meeting will include a number of speakers, including the national president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr John Henderson.

Also attending will be the MPs for Invercargill and Wallace, Messrs N. P. H. Jones and D. A. Angus.

The Southland Times, Saturday, March 13, 1982. 7

Wapiti Plans Condemned

Relocation of wapiti outside the Fiordland National Park came under fire at a public meeting in Gore on Saturday night.

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board was accused of being a destructive body and of adopting standards of convenience.

More than 400 people, one of the largest crowds to be seen at a public meeting in Gore, gathered to hear the guest speakers, question them and voice their own opinions on the controversy.

The meeting was chaired by the Mayor of Gore, Mr H. L. Smith.

The meeting called upon the two Members of Parliament present, Mr N. P. H. Jones, Invercargill, and Mr D. Angus, Wallace, to convey to Cabinet and Caucus the meeting's opposition to the removal and relocation of wapiti from Fiordland National Park.

The meeting also resolved that the board had failed to take account of public opinion on the wapiti question and had therefore not discharged its proper functions to advise the Government for policy-making purposes.

It called upon the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, to revise the method by which he appoints the national parks and reserves board, so that democratically elected personnel can more properly reflect public opinion "rather than bureaucratic dictatorship."

Despised

One of the guest speakers, Mr A. Harrison, of Queenstown, said there was no body in Southland more despised at present than the board.

He said it was essential, because Fiordland had recreational potential which lay mainly in animals, that the parks and reserves board had more than one person on it who was interested in animals.

Mr Harrison described the board, in its role of managing the Fiordland area, as being a "very destructive body."

Had a little common sense prevailed in the matter, Saturday night's meeting would have been quite unnecessary, he said.

"I don't think the idea of shifting those animals (the wapiti) anywhere else is of any advantage."

The parks and reserves board and the Minister came under attack from Mr Wilson Campbell, of Te Anau.

Administration

"I am gravely concerned at the events over the last 20 years in the administration of national parks," he told the meeting. "I am particularly concerned at the standard of administration, which is a standard of convenience."

Mr Campbell said he felt the present administration was doing what was convenient, not what was essential for the well-being of Fiordland National Park or the people who owned it.

"It appears our parks are administered for the benefit of the back packer and the mountaineer. They are very important, but they are not everybody. The young, the old, the tourist, the hunter all have their place."

He said he was very disappointed — "perhaps disgusted" — by Mr Elworthy's decision to remove the wapiti from the park.

"I am certain he knows almost nothing about Fiordland National Park," he said adding that the Minister had not shown a great deal of discretion or knowledge.

Balance

He said the Fiordland wapiti were living in balance with nature, "which is more than the stoats are doing."

Mr Campbell said he hoped Messrs Jones and Angus would take back to Wellington the message that everyone must have the opportunity to enjoy the park in the way they wanted to.

An organizer of the meeting, Mr W. B. Taylor, of Te Anau, said it was "extremely gratifying" to see so many people at the meeting.

"It's almost beyond our expectations," he said.

Mr Elworthy had shown "political courage" in announcing just after the election the decision to remove the wapiti from Fiordland, Mr Taylor said.

"It was a shocking thing to do and a shocking time to announce it."

He said that if the matter was not so serious, he would laugh at how anybody could possibly believe that a wapiti herd could be purified and located in the number of years which has been estimated.

Mr Taylor said it would take at least 12 years before the wapiti could breed back three times "and political promises, in my experience, do not last anywhere near 12 years."

Final Insult

The national president of the New Zealand Deer Stalkers Association, Mr J. B. Henderson, said the relocation proposal represented "the final insult."

The "wapiti war" had begun in the early 1950s, when the government of the day attempted to prevent hunting in the wapiti area, because the newly rediscovered takahē was located in nearby mountains, he said.

"We had to vouch for the integrity of those of our members who won the right to a trophy hunting block, otherwise the public was excluded entirely from the vast area."

"The National Parks Act of 1952 put up the 'unwelcome sign' to deer and deerstalkers' aspirations and we lived through the next 10 or so years under constant threat of extermination policies, including the use of poisons," Mr Henderson said.

The second round of the battle began in the early 1960s, when the NZDA applied political pressure on the government to restrain the bureaucrats from initiating "quite nonsensical killing campaigns." The association was then given a five-year trial period at managing the wapiti area, to be followed by a reassessment in the early 1970s.

Rewarded

"That experiment produced not only the data for the most comprehensive study of any species of large mammal in our history, but rewarded the sportsman with a system of self-administered recreational hunting, the like of which will probably never be seen again," Mr Henderson said.

"Round three of the wapiti war began to brew with the advent of the helicopter and the commercial velvet and venison market at the turn of that decade."

"In a matter of weeks, we had stripped from us the entire system so laboriously built and the NZDA was left to stare at a steady stream of our finest game animals en route from Fiordland to freezer, farm and velvet packing house."

"Round four is now upon us and represents the final insult. A commercial farming lobby is going to try for the remaining wapiti with the blessing of an accommodating government, whose intention it is to placate those sportsmen who are not entirely punch drunk, by dangling the carrot of a relocated wapiti herd," he said.

Saturday night's meeting was the most effective way of demonstrating to the country's political leaders what the public required, he said.

Cost

One of the absurdities of the relocation proposal, Mr Henderson said, was the sheer cost involved. He said the exercise would run for 10 to 20 years and the minimum amount of money required would run into seven figures.

Another absurdity was that for 25 years it had been a serious offence to liberate deer in the wild.

"For a government to now say it is willing to do so represents an incredible about-face, and it is absurd to believe it could happen."

Mr Henderson said there were no remote, rugged areas of New Zealand left which could fulfil the requirements of sustaining a wapiti herd in a wild state.

"Of course, wapiti can be raised on farm land anywhere in the country and this makes sense as a research project if the aim is to prevent extinction in the wild of a particular antler pattern or bloodline. But if such a proposition became necessary and/or desirable, deerstalkers are quite capable of providing the expertise and the land," he said.

"The hunter we represent who seeks the challenge of truly wild deer in rugged country will not be satisfied with shooting paddock-reared wapiti from the back of a Land-Rover."

Classification

The only drawback of the Fiordland wapiti area was that the land happened to be legally classified in 1952 under the National Parks Act, nearly 50 years later, Mr Henderson said.

"And ever since we have been treated to the 'tut-tutting' and pious hypocrisy of people who nevertheless turn a blind eye to the massive modifications to be found in other national parks for skiers, mountaineers, fishermen and foreign tourists."

The Fiordland wapiti area is one of the most invulnerable landscapes in New Zealand, he said and the considerable numbers of wapiti still remaining was a good indication of the resilience of the species.

"The species has successfully adapted to Fiordland over the last 75 years. It is where nature intends it to be, or it would not have survived."

"And the rubbish talked of

hybridization" was of little consequence to the deerstalker, said Mr Henderson. There were two distinct types of animal in the area, sufficiently different for the wapiti type to be of prime interest to the sportsmen and to the commercial operators.

Dates

In relation to this year's wapiti trophy shoot, Mr Henderson said it was only the dates the NZDA was in conflict with.

"There is only one place the responsibility hung to for the setting of the date — the chairman of the parks board itself. That's the man I believe is responsible for the ridiculous date of April 9."

Messrs Jones and Angus also addressed the meeting. Mr Jones commenting that he did not think the Crown should be in the deer business at all.

Mr Angus said he supported Mr Campbell's proposal, that national parks were for the people.

"My stand is that I want the retention and the relocation of the wapiti in and back to their present site. The area then should be declared a recreational hunting area," he said.

A feature of the meeting was the presentation of a film, shot by Mr J. McKenzie, showing the wapiti and other wildlife of the area.

After the meeting, Mr W. B. Taylor said he had been pleased with the attendance and speakers. A lot of things could not be said because of the time scale of the meeting, he said, but there had been some "very direct" criticism of the parks and reserves board.

Fear Expressed For Parks

Fear that the Fiordland National Park was being used as a "political football" was expressed by a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board at a meeting yesterday.

Mr Ken Collett said he was concerned that if the Labour Party became the Government, after the next election, the wapiti issue could be raised all over again.

This type of situation could devastate the park, he said.

It was very important board members bore this threat in mind.

Mr Wilson asked whether there was any way national

parks could be made sacrosanct and protected from being kicked around at election time.

National parks had always been under threat from Parliament and legislation, but this had increased, the board's chairman, Mr Jim McFarlane, said.

People concerned with the parks had to get out and sell the national park concept rigorously if they wanted to protect them.

Board to Meet Deerstalkers

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board will meet with representatives of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association before the end of May.

The suggestion was made at a meeting of the board yesterday. The chairman, Mr Jim McFarlane, said he thought the idea was sound although he did not know whether it would settle any differences.

Board member Mrs Blair tobbie said she felt very strongly there should be a meeting between the two so the board's few members could be informed of the issues involved.

The board was made up of ordinary people who were making decisions that affected others.

She said she could think of four cases where both sides of the story should have been heard.

There had been a lot of flak over the last few weeks and the board had come up for quite extreme criticism, board member Mr Duncan Wilson said.

If the deerstalkers were given some time to speak to the board it could be valuable.

Board members agreed a special meeting be arranged for a date some time before the end of May.

Wapiti Issue Defended

Under Government legislation the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board had no alternative but to act the way it had about the Wapiti relocation issue, the board's chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said yesterday.

He was answering criticism that had been levelled at the board during a public meeting at Gore on Saturday.

More than 400 people gathered to discuss the controversial relocation of Fiordland's wapiti.

People failed to recognize that under the legislation the board had no option but to take the course it took, Mr McFarlane said.

It had discharged the functions for which it was appointed.

Had the meeting sought to have speakers from the board present they could have given the other side of the picture and there might have been a more informed and balanced view, he said.

Not Invited

Neither himself nor Southland's commissioner of Crown lands, Mr J. P. Harty, had been invited to attend.

Regarding the dates for the wapiti shoot for which the board's chairman was blamed by the president of the New Zealand Deer Stalkers' Association, Mr J. B. Henderson, Mr McFarlane said he had no part in the setting of these.

Criticism at the meeting was

Plea For Retention Of Wapiti In Fiordland

By RAYMOND C. W. ZANDER
Diploma, Wildlife Management
of Palmerston North

It's time the politicians kept their fingers out of wildlife management, especially when it's related to the wapiti.

The policies of Government, Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, Forest Service and Lands and Survey Department indicate a lack of understanding of the principles of wildlife and natural resource management.

The removal and transfer of the wapiti herd from Fiordland National Park cannot be justified under proven wildlife management principles and natural resource management. For the sake of commercial motives, it appears that the removal of the recreational herd is being justified on the interpretation of the National Parks Act which relates to the status of introduced species of animals (and plants).

In this stage of our history it is high time that introduced wildlife that has successfully adapted to New Zealand conditions is brought into the acceptability that is accorded any species that has a value for aesthetic and recreational purposes. Good examples exist throughout our fauna, of animals that are an accepted part of our wildlife scene — for example mallard duck, brown and rainbow trout, Canada goose and black swan.

All of these animals have a free range in our national parks.

Many other introduced species have a free range too. A comprehensive list could be compiled and would include both plants and animals — stoats, opossums, sparrows, blackbirds, skylarks, hares, chamois, and rabbits for example, or cocksfoot, Russell lupin, dandelion, pinus contorta, or rye grass as examples of introduced plants.

Perhaps the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board would like to justify the retention of the brightly coloured Russell lupin "plots" on the islands of the Eglington river near Cascade Creek, or the presence of introduced grasses and herbs surrounding the tourist hotel in Milford Sound.

The wapiti it seems has been singled out for special attention.

One of the arguments used is that the wapiti is competing with the takahe for habitat. This would be a sound reason for removing wapiti from takahe habitat.

at were it not for one particular thing. The takahe apparently disappeared and was "rediscovered" in 1948 by Dr Orbell. The previously reported specimens were taken in the period between 1849 and 1898.

But about 75 years ago the first wapiti were introduced to Fiordland. It appears that the wapiti and the takahe coexisted in the Fiordland environment



Mr ZANDER

from about 1907 to 1948, a period of about 40 years.

(I wonder if for example the relationship between takahe and wapiti was beneficial to both species, or perhaps more particularly to the takahe?) During the past 60 to 70 years the wapiti has been mainly hunted, until the event of the helicopter, by foot slogging recreational hunters seeking trophies in the wilderness of the challenging Fiordland landscape. This is no cakewalk and the penetration of the bush and open tops is a place for experienced and thoroughly prepared hunters and outdoors people. The ruggedness of the area demands total preparation for all the skills of hunting and tramping.

If there are no wapiti there will be no

hunters. There will be no challenges to the uninitiated. The Tararua and Ruahine are like the hills of Kimbolton when compared with Fiordland.

We need to rethink our approaches to the status of our wildlife, whether it be introduced or native.

I suggest that the arguments being used by government bodies and the park board are fallacious when they are considered in the total context of proven wildlife and natural resource management principles.

Will the red deer occupy the ecological niche vacated by the wapiti?

If they do there will be more individuals per hectare, since the red deer are smaller animals. The carrying capacity of the habitat determines the number of animals using the available food and cover. As the wapiti are larger than red deer it could be justifiably argued that there would be fewer wapiti occupying the same area.

As there are fewer animals to hunt, the quality of the trophy heads is known to be higher than where larger numbers of animals exist. Also, as fewer individuals exist to hunt, it could be expected that the recreational hunter could exercise some measure of control over herd numbers.

Perhaps an "all-out onslaught" on native wildlife in national parks. The probability of this occurring is pretty slim, as this cannot be a revenue earning venture. It could be nevertheless (along with the removal of the last cat from our national parks) a significant factor in the saving from destruction of some of our more vulnerable species of native birds.

All wildlife ecologists know that it is almost impossible to totally eliminate a species from the environment (the last rabbit has not been killed yet!)

A plea for common-sense discussion is made here, as the total removal and commercialization of the wapiti will remove from our New Zealand wildlife scene an animal that is hunted, photographed, stalked, and studied in a rugged and majestic environment that is Fiordland.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — Mr C. J. McFarlane shows very little knowledge of wapiti and therefore I feel he is unqualified to comment on wapiti. If the Minister's proposal to relocate the wapiti had shown any merit he would have at least received some support from hunters and the public. Mr McFarlane knows as well as anybody else that the Minister's proposal will still result in hybridization unless the wapiti are contained in a domestic situation behind a fence. Therefore to control hybridization is much simpler and cheaper in Fiordland than anywhere else. The wapiti area has two natural boundaries — Lake Te Anau and the sea coastline. Red deer can only enter from the north or the south.

At a recent public meeting the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board was accused of being a "destructive body." Mr Joe Citizen must be heartily sick of the Parks Board and the Government. Out of the 500 citizens who attended the Gore meeting there would be lucky to be 20 who supported the Parks Board and Government in this crazy relocation proposal. Mr McFarlane and other Park board members of similar thinking have every right to be concerned. If they faced a democratic election they would most certainly be displaced by a ratio close to 500/20.

Both Messrs McFarlane and Henderson are completely out of touch with the park they administer. To state that the wapiti area has been "gutted" by animals and the protection of wapiti would be at the expense of native flora and fauna is certainly no indication of the

present situation. Dr Alan Mark, professor of botany at Otago University, led a group of 40 botanists including Park Board member Mr L. Hutchings into Deep Cove earlier this year. Dr Mark states (6.2.82) "The forests are virtually undisturbed and the profusion and size of the ferns in Fiordland amazed those who had not seen this part of the country before." I would like Messrs McFarlane and Henderson to visit the wapiti area now so an end can be put to those ridiculous statements.

D. Jackson

Balclutha RD
[Abridged. — Ed]

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I have read with interest that the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board claims to be doing the hunters a favour by removing some of the wapiti from Fiordland for relocation elsewhere. In one way they are doing us a favour, despite the fact that there is no really suitable area for relocation, and that is rescuing them from the helicopter's bullet or 1080 poison.

I feel that the real blow has yet to come once the authorities deem that sufficient animals have been captured for the consortium and relocation then an extensive poisoning programme in Fiordland will be undertaken in order to attempt to eradicate deer, chamois and opossums. They are well aware of the fact that aerial shooting and capture only reduces the animal population and furthermore it is too costly these days.

The whole "relocation operation" is an absolute farce.

R. W. Woodward

Otatara
[Slightly abridged. — Ed.]

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I congratulate the Otago National Parks and Reserves Board having admitted that it made an democratic decision. It is a pity that Southland National Parks and Reserves Board hasn't as yet admitted it made an undemocratic decision in request that the wapiti be relocated.

Not only has it disregarded the view of the public, a board member, Mr Henderson had the audacity to bring a motion to the last board meeting mending the Minister for his action. I believe the board's view is quite possible from a vegetation management point of view. If the Government succeeds in removing most of the wapiti there will be little incentive for the recreational hunter to afford an expensive trip to the Fiordland west coast. Consequently, the board will become barraged by incredibly high deer populations. The board has got to understand that if it continues to fight for extermination of deer it will always come off second best. A management plan for deer is the only solution.

When the pristine extremists on board and elsewhere are jolted back to reality they, too, will agree that animal management will be the only practical option. The Otago National Parks and Reserves Board asked that the Forest Service should consider the management of the Wakitipu white tail herd.

I would like to ask the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board they haven't asked the Forest Service to take over the management of the wapiti in Fiordland?

The Otago National Parks and Reserves Board seems to be serving the interests of the people they represent. Why should Southland be so unfortunate?

Stirling

L. Burgess

[Asked to comment, the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane said: "the chairman of the Otago National Parks and Reserves Board that his board has made any undemocratic decisions."

"Animal control in the Mt Aspiring National Park is carried out in accordance with a plan prepared by the New Zealand Forest Service under the requirements of the Wild Animals Act. This plan recognizes the status of land involved, ie national park. The main white tail deer herd is not in Mt Aspiring National Park, but is in adjacent Dart State Forest. The Otago board has asked that the control of animals in this adjoining area should be compatible with national park values."

"L. Burgess suggests that recreational shooters will not visit Fiordland after relocation. In my view, the removal of the restriction now placed on shooting in the area, except during a brief trophy shoot period, will encourage substantially more than the estimated 50 to 60 shooters who now use the area annually. The contribution of recreational shooter to the reduction of deer numbers in the wapiti area has been of some use but quite insignificant in comparison to the reduction obtained by commercial operators."

Helicopter Operators Oppose Legislation

(PA)

WELLINGTON

Helicopter operators and some lawyers are irate over proposed legislation, which would allow the seizure by Forest Service officers of aircraft suspected of being used in illegal deer hunting.

But the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association told a Parliamentary select committee yesterday it welcomed the planned powers in the Wild Animal Control Amendment Bill.

Seizure and forfeiture of aircraft, sometimes worth more than \$500,000, "may well be the only real deterrent sufficient to combat helicopter poaching," the deer farmers said.

The common law committee of the Otago District Law Society submitted that helicopter operators could be forced into bankruptcy by the measure.

The aircraft could be seized for up to 12 months while hearings were awaited, the committee said.

They might be seized over the October-April hunting season and the operator, meanwhile, be faced with insurance and finance costs for an aircraft of, for instance, \$2000 a week.

"To invest the investigating and prosecuting officers with Draconian powers over substantial assets is totally without need or merit," the Otago law committee said.

"The extension of the exist-

ing power cannot be justified under any guise."

Under existing legislation officers can seize items connected with venison recovery, other than aircraft.

Avenger Helicopters Limited, of Invercargill, told the select committee, helicopter venison recovery operators often work in remote areas. They would be left stranded if their helicopters were seized.

The firm also said that any person with a grudge against an operator could make a false accusation, have a helicopter seized and the operator be forced out of business.



Fiordland Park's new chief ranger Mr Paul Green (middle) was welcomed at a meeting of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board yesterday by the chairman, Mr Jim McFarlane (left) and Southland's Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr Joe Harty. Mr Green, who will be based at Te Anau, was chief ranger at the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park. Before that he was a ranger at the Tongariro National Park, at Ohakune, a senior ranger and then acting chief ranger at Whakapapa, in the same park. Mr Green said he had always wanted to work here. He had done some tramping in Fiordland and so knew part of the country involved.

More Views on Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — Mr McFarlane claims that the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board had no alternative but to act as it did on the wapiti issue. (ST, 15.3.82).

Mr Elworthy indicated at a meeting at Te Anau in December, 1981, that the Government would consider the retention of wapiti in Fiordland National Park if the board so recommended. This makes nonsense of Mr McFarlane's claim. If the board had discharged the function for which it was appointed, it would have listened to public opinion and recommended wapiti retention.

To his point on his and Mr Harty's non invitation to the public meeting, I can only say that 500 people attended the meeting without invitations being sent, but took the public notice as advice. Many others who did not receive invitations sent apologies for non-attendance, one being the Mayor of Queenstown who read the public notice and wrote expressing his support. There were others who attended and took the opportunity to advise the meeting of their views which were not necessarily in support of the hunters. They were listened to with respect.

I must stress that the meeting was called by the hunters to discuss the retention of the wapiti herd in the park, and by placing a public notice in the press, invited any and all who are interested in this issue to join in a public discussion. If Mr McFarlane chose to ignore that, that is his prerogative.

But as Mr McFarlane feels that justice has not been done and both sides of

the debate were not adequately shown, may I seriously suggest that the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board accept this as a formal request by New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association to have three or four of its members attend the meeting of the board following the March meeting, to formally discuss the broader issues of the wapiti debate. As the board is governed by the Public Bodies Meetings Act, members of the public can hear this debate, as he seems offended that they missed this opportunity on March 13. If this is unacceptable would Mr McFarlane and Mr Harty agree to a public debate with two of our members?

John C. Bamford
Vice-President
NZ Deerstalkers Association
Balclutha RD

19/3/82

Sir, — I agree with "Small Bore" and his comments on your editorial of March 15, which suggests to make national parks a farce. I understand the Act passed was to enable the preservation of "natural and distinctive features for all people's benefit" the ideology including preservation of soil, water, and plants; the extermination of all foreign aspects excepting people.

Animals do make a great attraction in overseas parks, granted, but what have we got that is uniquely ours? A fast approaching nothing? (Takahe?)

The editorial suggests "Wapiti an asset" "vegetation threat doubtful" and "hunter entitled to own way."

I worked for five years on a survey that covered the whole of the South Island.

land. Before and after that time involved me in four different tramping clubs, yet I have yet to see any land asset of true natural quality; the disappointment of seeing remote areas in short stumps in a sea of mud, the eaten remains of our fabulous Prince of Wales Feathers crepe fern, and the ever increasing population of common hard ferns, to name a few.

There are a few busy areas, where vegetation is pretty good, but it's not natural (as in virgin) so as a botanist I've never seen bush "my way," surely, I'm also entitled to that.

I'd like to go on a hunt with someone for those elusive animals, wapiti, or whatever, and absorb the dedication and the skill required. I envy a little those who can. I wonder how many hunters feel that way about my "sport." It must be difficult to reconcile to the idea of having to go perhaps to Nelson to find a wapiti; or I to an island, or remote cliff on the far west coast to find those plants that are now listed as rare, to add to New Zealand's pitiful record of permanently lost flora and fauna.

I believe though, that when the Government's barrel scrapers start getting splinters, the big shift will cease, and in a year or so you will have the park the way you're "entitled" to it, and I will have what's left again, — natural and distinctive what?

Having travelled intensively over the South Island, in bush, over lakes (drowned ones) and then to see my workmate botanist go home, did I feel disappointed? Nay, embarrassed!

A. A. Fredric

Invercargill

More Views on Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — In reply to Mr L. E. Henderson's letter of 20.3.82, my argument was never over whether or not deer and wapiti had caused damage in the park. Quoting my own letter of 18.3.82: "I am the last person to say these animals did not do damage. They did do damage — but they did not do irreparable damage." Stoats, by the way, were never blamed in my correspondence for causing damage to leafy understorey vegetation as Mr Henderson seems to have interpreted it — only to ground birds.

I have, at Mr Henderson's suggestion, called at park headquarters in Te Anau and viewed the photographs he mentions showing "complete forest collapse". There are two such photos accompanying Mr C. J. McFarlane's article of 23.3.82. Photographs always show what is immediately in front of the camera and nothing more, and are used as such.

In the mid and late 60s the Forest Service built vegetation enclosures in certain areas of the park to establish just exactly what damage the browsing animals were doing and how rapidly the bush could recover if left alone. There is one in the Lugal Burn region of the wapiti area — a part of it where the deer population is now at a controlled level. Today the vegetation outside the deer-proof enclosure is virtually indistinguishable from that within it.

If Mr McFarlane really believes that "expert opinions and reports on the wapiti in Fiordland... are valueless unless fully quoted or quoted with balancing comment" (23.3.82) let him publish a photo of that, so that the public can judge whether or not the forest is at a "stage of complete collapse."

I have no photographic evidence — it proves nothing about the whole area — but I have something I think is more important — a sound knowledge of all the areas involved, gained through many years of hunting them.

H. J. Paulin

Te Anau

[Slightly abridged. — Ed.]

Sir, — New Zealand has approximately 26,905,700 hectares of land mass, of which approximately 2,153,123 hectares is set aside in national parks, and approximately 517,877 hectares in public reserves, giving a total of approximately 2,670,500 hectares national parks and reserves.

New Zealand has 10 national parks, three in the North Island and seven in the South Island. The largest national park, 1,212,000 hectares, is the Fiordland National Park, just under half of New Zealand's total area set aside in national parks. It is one of the largest national parks in the world and the only natural known habitat of two flightless birds, the takahe and the kakapo (although a small colony of kakapo struggles to survive on Stewart Island).

Our national parks offer beautiful scenery and great opportunities to tramp, climb, ski, fish, hunt, camp and picnic to the public.

A total of 18 wapiti were liberated in George Sound in 1905 and 1907. The wapiti now occupy approximately 170,000

hectares, less than 15 per cent of the north-west corner of the park.

I have been in Fiordland National Park and have spent many hours in the mountains, loving the peace and tranquility, watching the birds while on hunting trips, and I am sure there is room in that vast park for a controlled wapiti herd.

I, like other recreational hunters and conservationists, deplore the coming state of the western ridges of George Sound/Bligh Sound as shown in the photos in The Southland Times of March 23, and this, to my mind, is partly due to the park board not acting wisely in game management.

I would like the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board to inform the people of their efforts to control the stoats in the Fiordland National Park before there are fewer native birds than there already are struggling to survive.

"Hunter James"

Otatara

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I read with astonishment Mr C. J. McFarlane's article "Wapiti Inconsistent with Park Status." The two photographs, showing damage done by animals in the George Sound/Bligh Sound areas are akin to a farmer taking a photograph of a gateway on a wet day after a mob of sheep has gone through, whilst his back is turned on all the green pasture behind him.

I do not intend challenging all Mr McFarlane's points but I cannot allow to go unchallenged his statistics on the low numbers of hunters in the area. Nobody is going to take two weeks off work, pay approximately \$200 for plane hire plus \$100 for food and then tramp into the heart of the wapiti country and see no animals. This is not an exaggeration, as two years ago I spent three hours flying in a helicopter and saw only 14 animals; I have spent more time in the area than any board member other than Mr Jack McKenzie, having traversed all the main watersheds in the wapiti area.

So, when I see the Parks Board embarking on such a naive, one-sided, campaign to justify its reasons for removal or elimination of wapiti in Fiordland, one must question whether it is serving the public and acting as guardians for future generations of New Zealanders.

W. J. F. Somerville

Pine Bush

30/3/82

Sir, — Do the people of Southland know that the Fiordland National Park has approximately 30 square miles of land set aside for the notornis, better known as the takahe, and no member of the public is allowed to set foot in that area, unless they are one of the select few who can find some valid reason to study the takahe.

Surely there must be some room for the wapiti which were in the park before it became a national park and before the takahe were rediscovered.

Russell

Mataura

Wapiti Inconsistent With Park Status

23/3/82

Fiordland National Park — some 1.2 million hectares in extent — is among the finest and largest national parks in the world.

In the New Zealand context, it is probably the prime example of an area designated "for the purpose of preserving in perpetuity as national parks, for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand that contain scenery of such distinctive quality, ecological systems, or natural features so beautiful, unique, or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest" under the National Parks Act 1980.

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board is charged with the formulation of policy and management planning under this legislation. Overriding all policy formation are included the requirements of the Act to:

- Preserve the park, as far as possible in its natural state.
- Except where the Authority otherwise determines, to preserve native plants and animals, as far as possible, and to exterminate introduced animals as far as possible.

These are the basic tenets of national park management and administration worldwide. They have special significance here because of the unique nature of New Zealand flora and fauna which have evolved over millions of years, without grazing animals or contact with other land masses since the drift from the ancient Gondwanaland continent began.

Has management for preservation been effective? Regrettably, in many areas the answer must be no, mainly through the difficulty in exterminating introduced species. This does not mean the battle is lost, only that we must try harder where there is scope for progress — for example, on the local scene, reduction of browsing animal numbers and extension and improvement of the takahe habitat.

The advent of commercial venison recovery and deer capture has been a breakthrough in the reduction of deer numbers in those areas of Fiordland which have been subject to normal helicopter coverage. Understorey vegetation, palatable grasses and mountain flowers are coming away as deer numbers have declined.

An exception is the wapiti area, covering about one fifth of the park area. There have been improvements here since the Fiordland National Park Board introduced helicopter control against the wishes of the national executive of the NZDA although with the support of local deerstalker members. The board's hands were tied however since 1974 by a Government direction to shoot red deer and hybrids before wapiti. This direction has had the effect of protecting wapiti and most hybrids with wapiti characteristics.

Too Many Animals

It is quite clear — from evidence gathered by ranging staff — that animal numbers in the wapiti area are too high, especially in view of the fact that vegetation devastated prior to the advent of the helicopter has not yet recovered. The accompanying relatively recent photographs taken on the western ridges of the George Sound-Blyth Sound area illustrate the type of problem that can occur. The first stage is the destruction of the understorey and the exposure of the root system of canopy trees. The next is the scouring of topsoil, undercutting of root system and occasional wind throw of canopy trees. Even without wind throw the forest canopy will eventually disappear through failure to regenerate if heavy grazing continues.

This article, titled "Wapiti Area — National Park or Grazing Area for Introduced Game Animals," is by Mr C. J. McFARLANE, chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board.

It is this problem of excessive animal numbers that has forced the Government to reassess the existing protection of wapiti and semi-protection of hybrids and formalize the management of the area in terms of the legislation, that is the National Parks Act and the Wild Animals Act that applies to it. The present protests follow the Minister of Lands' implementation of a decision to relocate the wapiti taken by the Muldoon Administration before the 1981 General Election.

Public Consultation

Those advocates of retaining wapiti in Fiordland who persist in their claims that the Crown or the Fiordland National Park Board or the present Southland National Parks and Reserves Board have not consulted the public, are apparently unable or unwilling to remember the public consultation that followed the visit of the Hon. Venn Young, Minister of Lands, to the area in September 1979, following representations from recreational hunters.

After his inspection of the area, Mr Young met with all parties, including recreational hunters, at Te Anau and, following wide ranging discussions, called on the Fiordland National Park Board, in consultation with the New Zealand Forest Service, to prepare a report and plan for recreational hunting in Fiordland National Park, including the wapiti area.

The preface to this report was as follows:

"In announcing the release of this document for public discussion, the Minister of Lands stated that the diver-

gent views listed in the report had previously been put forward by various interest groups. He hoped that these groups would take the opportunity to give him their thoughts so that decisions, which would protect park values as well as cater for the interests of recreational hunters, could be made. Individuals and organizations should forward their comments to Hon. Venn Young."

As far as I am aware, the recreational hunting lobby responded fully to Mr Young's invitation.

In reviewing the problems of management of wapiti in Fiordland, the report mentions:

- The undesirable effects of browsing animals on park vegetation.
- The difficulties in attempting to retain a pure wapiti trophy herd in the face of hybridization with red deer.
- Finance needed for effective game management.
- The natural disinclination of hunters to carry out culling of hybrids.
- Failure to cull trophy red stags.

Options

Seven options on the future of the wapiti were given for public comment:

1. Maintaining the status quo, ie virtual protection of wapiti with flow-on protection to hybrids with wapiti characteristics.

2. Absorbing the wapiti area into the rest of the park and treating wapiti in the same manner as other introduced animals that is, full exposure to both commercial and recreational hunting pressures.

3. Managing and controlling a wapiti trophy herd within the park.

4. Uplifting the national park status of the wapiti area.

5. Relocating selected wapiti or wapiti type animals.

6. Removing and utilizing animals in the deer farming industry.

7. Re-establishing a pure wapiti herd in Fiordland National Park.

Recommendation

The board's recommendation to the Minister was to follow the relocation option as being the only one that would satisfy the requirements of the National Parks Act, the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 (prohibiting recreational hunting areas in national parks) and the deerstalkers' requirement for a pure wapiti herd.

Management and control of a trophy hunting herd of wapiti within the park was seen to be complicated, impractical and beyond reasonable cost owing to:

- the strong and emotional conflict of sectional interests (including differences of opinion within the NZDA itself, as to control)
- the interbreeding
- the difficulty of selective culling
- the ruggedness of the terrain
- the impracticability of adequate surveillance
- the economics of policing and administration

Further statistics showed that, since 1975, trophy shoots had, in fact, catered for relatively few shooters: 1975 — 68 shooters; 1976 — 60 shooters; 1977 — 48 shooters; 1978 — 63 shooters; 1979 — 58 shooters; 1980 — 67 shooters; and 1981 — 47 shooters; an average of 58 approximately per year. This then is the number of shooters the taxpayer is being asked to subsidise to the tune of thousands of dollars annually at the request of the NZDA or administration, control and policing, including the use of helicopters at \$500 per hour. No other sport could expect such a subsidy for so few active participants.

Apart from public consultation following Mr Young's visit, the matter was discussed fully before a Select Committee convened to hear representations on the wapiti petition, and earlier when a decision was made under the Wild Animals Act to prohibit recreational hunting areas in national parks.

Expert Opinion

Over the years, expert opinions and reports on the wapiti in Fiordland have been produced ad nauseam. As in all objective study, however, these are valueless unless fully quoted or quoted with balancing comment. Lack of balance or incomplete quotations have been a feature of NZDA campaigning over the years. Consider two hoary old repeats from Mr Jack McKenzie's feature article in The Southland Times on March 11. 1982.

Dr Murie, leader of the 1949 expedition, is quoted by Mr McKenzie as stating "... we are agreed that a moderate wapiti population need not be a serious threat to the Fiordland forest."

In commenting on this statement, however, a co-author of the report, Mr

A. L. Poole, then Director General of Forests and better qualified than Dr Murie to comment, said in 1963: "This statement was, of course, written about the herd as it existed then. It makes no reference to national parks values, which is a separate issue, or to the fact that the wapiti herd must expand and almost certainly reach country more to the east (of its 1949 range) where the type of damage would be quite different and almost certainly more severe from that caused in the present habitat. Subsequent events proved just how accurate this was. To state that comments based on observation made in 1948/49 is evidence supporting a case for management of wapiti as a game animal is a gross misrepresentation of the facts. It ignores National Park legislation and the responsibility of National Park Boards and the National Parks Authority charged with the administration of national parks. It ignores the (then) Noxious Animals Act and it ignores the failure of attempted management, applied over a long period of time to other introduced animals. These are all separate issues from the condition of the vegetation in its (wapiti's) range in 1949. None of them were commented on in the Fiordland reports."

It is clear that Mr Poole's comment is vital to give objective balance to this problem.

Mr McKenzie's reference to the opinion of a courageous forestry scientist that sustained production of big game in Fiordland was a safe and legitimate use of the land, refers no doubt to the paper published in the NZ Science Review, April 1959, by the late J. T. Holloway who actually said: "All told, assuming that the Stillwater Valley is indeed typical, we have in Fiordland an area where, disregarding values inherent in the National Park concept, sustained production of game animals is a safe and legitimate use of the land. Modification of the vegetation and elimination of some plant species may be regretted by those who regard national parks as areas to be kept inviolate and in their pristine condition for all time, but this is impossible."

Failure to quote the words in italics in the statement completely alters the meaning of J. T. Holloway's quotation.

The outcome of the 1978 Silver Jubilee conference is consistently misrepresented by the deerstalkers' lobby.

The conference did not pass any recommendation that could even remotely be construed as a waiver to allow introduced grazing animals in national parks. One of the six workshops recommended that the Authority investigate a change to the existing policy with respect to introduced flora and fauna where these were not detrimental to other park values. When this recommendation was referred back to the full conference it was pointed out that it was contrary to the spirit of the National Parks Act and not adopted.

After Relocation

The trophy hunting fraternity would have the public believe that, after relocation, the area will be bereft of game. The practical realities are that it will not, although the numbers will be reduced, especially after control measures used in other parts of the park are put into action.

Included in the reduced number will be animals with both red and wapiti genetic characteristics, and they will doubt thrive on the increased food supply. The park administration will welcome recreational shooters on a year round basis, as is now done in all parts

of the park, except special areas. Large numbers of shooters will be able to utilize the area instead of restricting numbers by short-season and ballot to 50-60, as now. In addition, there will be relocated trophy herd of wapiti, improved in genetic structure by breeding and introduction of fresh blood from North America by the capensis consortium.

Political Repercussions

No political party can openly permit the management for game purposes of wapiti in Fiordland without either amending both the National Parks and Wild Animals Acts, or uplifting the national park status over the wapiti area. Both options would give considerable offence to large numbers of

conservation-conscious New Zealanders and would put New Zealand out of step with international views on national parks.

Mr Jonathon Elworthy, Minister of Lands, whose difficult task it is to implement the Government's decision to relocate wapiti, has a clear understanding of the issues involved, as evidenced by his reported statements in The Southland Times on March 18, 1982.

The course of action he is pursuing gives recognition to both national park concepts and the retention of a wapiti game herd. No other politician who cares to follow the matter through logically could come to any other conclusion.

On these grounds I believe that the wapiti area must revert to its proper national park status.

Views on Relocation Of Wapiti 15/3/82

Sir, — In reply to L. E. Henderson's letter (15.3.82), how could any person living on the doorstep of the Fiordland National Park say that "the wapiti area has been gutted by animals"?

Why must the public be misled by such a ridiculous statement?

If there are such gutted areas in the wapiti block I, for one, would like to see them — areas, that is, which are not in the process of reverting to their natural state.

As a hunter in the park for the past 16

years, I have seen the park's vegetation at its worst — the damage having been done by deer and wapiti. Today that same bush is in the process of regeneration. Why? Because the browsing animal population has been controlled at a level the bush can accommodate.

I am the last person to say that these animals did not do damage. They did do damage — but they did not do irreparable damage.

To say the wapiti area has been gutted is just ludicrous. There are some areas I have hunted in which you would swear an animal has never set foot for years — if at all.

One personal example — I hunted the Doon river valley extensively in the early 1970s because, as Mr Henderson and others should know, the Doon held a large population of deer at that time. Damage had been done by them certainly, but today (10 to 12 years later) with the deer and wapiti in controlled numbers, the regeneration is such that I find it difficult to locate my old hunting tracks — even the one up the side of the river. This is "gutted" bush?

A final point — in those years, the ground bird, the weka, lived happily in the Doon in great numbers alongside the very deer that are supposed to have eaten them out of house and home. Where are they now? Gone to the changing growth of the forest floor and to the stoat.

If Mr Henderson is going to comment on the state of the bush in the wapiti area would he please inspect it before he does.

Te Anau

H. J. Paulin

Wapiti Relocation 20/3/82

Sir, — I note that your correspondent H. J. Paulin challenges the claim that the wapiti area has been gutted by deer. If he calls at Park HQ and asks for it he may peruse photographic evidence of this at any time. In fact he could see slides taken in recent months which show not just gutting of leafy understorey vegetation which has been going on for years but complete forest collapse.

Similar areas of damage exist in other parts of the park outside the wapiti area and are an equal source of concern to the board. All this damage is caused by deer not stoats.

L. E. Henderson

Te Anau

Control of Tb Rests With Deer Farmers 26/3/82

Tb in farmed deer is becoming a problem in parts of New Zealand, according to Mr Rob Brookes, a councillor with the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association.

Mr Brookes told a meeting of the Southland deer farmers last week, that at present there are 44 herds in New Zealand which have been found to have Tb infected animals. About six of these had a major problem with the disease, he said.

The good news for Southland

deer farmers was that so far farmed deer in the province are clear of Tb, and Mr Brookes said it was up to local farmers to keep it that way.

But, Mr Brookes said, once a farmer found Tb in his deer herd, it was no use "putting his head in the sand, hoping the problem would go away."

Sensitive

The Tb test for deer was the same as that used for cattle and had about the same success rate of 75 per cent in accurately assessing the incidence of Tb, Mr Brookes said. Unfortunately, deer appear to be more sensitive to the test than cattle and this had caused some problems.

At present it is voluntary whether a deer farmer takes part in the Tb testing programme and it was Mr Brookes's opinion that it should become compulsory.

The control and eradication of the disease rested fair and squarely on the shoulders of deer farmers and Mr Brookes urged all deer farmers to use the Tb test as a safeguard measure.

Farmers would be very unwise to buy replacement ani-

mals from a herd that had not been Tb tested, he said.

Movement Control

Where positive tests were recorded, a herd movement control was placed on the property, which meant that deer could not be sold from that farm until a clearance was given. The present movement control period was 12 months, although there were moves in some quarters to reduce this to two months.

Mr Brookes told the local deer farmers that he favoured the 12 month period as a means of controlling and eradicating the disease. This would be to the advantage of both individual deer farmers and the farmed deer industry as a whole.

The main problem area appeared to be in the Waikato where there was a growing fear by dairy farmers that their milking herds could become affected. The high stocking rates and the intensive nature of farming in the province compounded the problem.

Where Tb animals were found there was a set figure that would be paid as compensation to the farmer, Mr Brookes said.

The president of the New Zealand Deer Farmers Association, Mr Bernard Pinney, advised that Tb was a major concern to the association and it was of paramount importance that all efforts be made to control the disease.



Two photographs taken on the Western ridges of George Sound/Bligh Sound in 1980 showing (top) exposure of the root system and destruction of the forest understorey and, above, the next stage, the removal of topsoil resulting in water scour which undercuts the root system resulting in windthrown trees.

Deer Farming Catalyst For Diversification

The farmed deer industry had been a catalyst in encouraging farmers to diversify, according to the president of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, Mr Bernard Pinney of Mossburn.

Mr Pinney believed that farmers had for a number of years been looking critically at the decreasing returns of sheep farming and asking the question whether it was possible to use similar stock skills towards the production of a high priced specialty product.

In 10 years the farmed deer industry had grown from infancy to an industry with a \$200 million investment, he said.

The reasons for its dynamic growth had been a good product, innovative people, strong research, adequate liquidity and a steady supply of capital resources.

Mr Pinney said at the same time as people in New Zealand were asking questions and looking for a new farming activity, other people in Britain and other areas of the world were also asking similar questions. The work that had been carried out at the Rowett Research Institute near Aberdeen and at Lincoln towards the end of the 1960s had been a factor in establishing the deer industry in New Zealand.

Build Up

The early deer farmers spent the first decade gradually building up their herds and with the buoyant prices for velvet there was no slaughtering of animals for venison production. At the same period, the helicopter industry refined its capturing methods for feral deer, and this, together with the natural increase in farmed deer, meant national numbers now stand at around 220,000.

Mr Pinney said this base herd was large enough to ensure steady increases in the future with less dependence on captured feral deer.

There would be less dependence on feral deer because of the increasing costs of helicopter capture, the reduced price paid for captured deer and the fewer numbers of suitable feral deer available.

There were still a significant number of feral deer in the bush, and Mr Pinney said if there was to be sudden explosion in numbers, the high cost of helicopters for culling, could mean a return to State subsidized control.

Slaughtering Premises

At a recent count there were seven deer slaughtering premises in New Zealand; five in the North Island, one at Hokitika, and the recently opened premises at Mossburn. A number of others were in the advanced stage of planning, Mr Pinney said.

While the farmed deer industry supported the need for the highest possible standards

of hygiene in these deer slaughtering premises, the costs of building were serious and it would fall back on the producers to meet the costs.

Mr Pinney said the high prices for velvet of two years ago were now behind the industry, and had caused many distortions in the market for live deer. The current prices for velvet at about \$100 per kilogram for unprocessed A grade velvet had been reasonably stable since then.

"It looks to me that the velvetting side of deer farming will be a specialized operation," he said.

"It appears some districts are more suited to velvet production than others. I suspect we will see the bulk of velvet production taking place in the colder regions in the south of the South Island and the Central North Island."

Mr Pinney believed it would be uneconomical to keep young stags for their velvet production only, because of the growth nature of velvet and its steady increase with the age of the stag. Also, liveweight growth was most rapid in younger stags, he said.

Growth Rates

"This means that the bulk of the slaughterings are likely to occur in the 15-27 month age group. The exception to this possibility could be the hybrid Wapiti crossbred animals.

"The hybrid vigour of the cross means that they grow at a substantially faster rate than the straight bred red deer. This could lead to one of two possibilities. Firstly, they get taken to higher weights but get slaughtered at the same age, or secondly they get taken to similar weights as the red, but get slaughtered much earlier.

"No doubt the market-place will decide what happens," Mr Pinney said.

One of the most obvious areas for further development would be in velvet processing within New Zealand, whereas in the past this had been done by Oriental processors. To do this would require a high degree of skill and attention to detail, he said.

Another area of velvet production that he felt needed more research was finding objective methods of grading. This could involve X-rays and gamma rays to determine the level of calcification which is a prime concern of the eastern markets.

Mr Pinney said research was going on both within New Zealand and overseas into the medicinal properties of velvet.

He sounded a word of warning



however, as there was the risk that once the properties of velvet were discovered, a synthetic product could be developed.

Animal Health

In the area of animal health, Mr Pinney said there are at present wide ranging studies of the diseases that affect deer being carried out. "Deer like other farm animals, are susceptible to certain diseases and in many cases the onset of these is able to be anticipated or prevented."

The disease which concerned deer farmers the most was Tb, he said.

"A scheme for voluntary testing for Tb has recently been initiated by the MAF and is currently causing distress among deer farmers in certain regions."

The cause for this distress, Mr Pinney said was because the herd was effectively closed to the possibility of live sales during the 12 month herd control period. Mr Pinney favoured a more reliable test than the one currently used, coupled with compulsory testing and fair compensation for reactor deer as an aid to progress in eradicating the disease.

Following a successful trip to China last year by a group of New Zealand farmed deer representatives, a close rapport had been established and a return visit was planned by the Chinese to New Zealand next year.

"We believe the advantages of exchanging scientific and management information exceed the disadvantages. The question arises as to whether we would or should combine research in a parallel to that done by the IWS for the world's wool producers," Mr Pinney said.

Game Industry

The need for the Game Industry Board had been brought home to the industry in recent months with first the Koreans imposing special cutting regulations for antler in the current season and more recently the Australians endeavouring to stop venison imports from New Zealand.

"An industry board with teeth to act will be very useful in such situations."

Mr Pinney said the debate over the composition of the Game Industry Board had been energetic, but he was pleased to see the industry was now pulling together and the principle of producer control with industry representation was being negotiated.

The last year had seen the delicensing of the processing sector of the industry and the establishment of the open door policy. Mr Pinney said there was now competition for production with new firms entering the processing business and two established firms closing down.

The fact the deer industry had been kept out of the freezing industry had preserved the "game" meat connotation and had reduced tariff complications in some markets.

"One problem in the future is going to be how to reconcile strong competition for our produce at the farm gate, with strong selling overseas by exporters who will not drop prices to take a sale off fellow New Zealand exporters."

Mr Pinney wondered whether the industry could or should licence its exporters and how it could be done under the present political climate.

Wapiti In Good Condition

The Fiordland wapiti being captured by the Te Anau consortium were in good condition, the director of environmental forestry for the New Zealand Forest Service, Mr Ken Miers, of Wellington, said yesterday.

Mr Miers has been visiting Southland this week.

As representatives of the Government departments working with the capture consortium, he and the deputy director-general of lands, Mr George McMillan, were looking at the operation, he said.

They would be reporting back to the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy.

They were "pretty pleased" with the condition of the wapiti they had seen, Mr Miers said, although they were disappointed so few of the animals were coming out of the park.

Inevitable

It was inevitable, in spite of talk to the contrary in Southland, that the red deer would have eventually overrun the wapiti in Fiordland.

Mr Miers said he was involved with the relocation aspect of the wapiti operation but was not in a position to comment.

As far as a site in Southland was concerned, he said, there were better areas to be found elsewhere in New Zealand, outside national parks.

Mr Miers said he had had general discussions on environmental forestry during his visit to the south but there did not appear to be any major problems.

Deer Infiltrate 1080 Poison Trial Areas

Deer have infiltrated the 1080 poison trial areas on Stewart Island and could jeopardize the success of the trial unless something further is done to remove them.

Last year, 1080 poison was laid in parts of a narrow coastal strip of land between Port Adventure in the south, and Ocean Beach in the north.

One part had a heavy concentration of poison and the subsequent deer extermination was measured at 99 per cent. Another part had a moderate concentration and the deer kill was 93 per cent. An area in between the two had no poison laid in it.

The aim of the poisoning was to remove as many deer as possible so that their effect on vegetation regeneration could be measured and monitored. The area from which no deer were exterminated would act as a comparison.

Scientists from the Forest Research Institute were to monitor the trial during a five year period.

However, the senior ranger with the New Zealand Forest Service's Southland conservancy, Mr Kerry Mawhinney, said yesterday, it appeared the deer had reinfilted the

areas cleared by the poison in much greater numbers than had been expected.

Heavily Bated

Before the 1080 was laid, the area that was heavily baited with the poison had 45.2 deer to 100 hectares. Of these 99 per cent had been killed but it now appeared the population had returned to about 15 per cent of what it was before the poisoning.

In the area which was moderately poisoned, there had been 20.2 deer per 100 hectares. The kill was 93 per cent but it appeared the population was back to 50 per cent of what it was.

The area between the two, which was not poisoned, did have 22.4 deer per 100 hectares but the population had decreased to 37 per cent of what it was.

Obviously deer from this area had moved into the two areas that were poisoned, Mr Mawhinney said.

They had also moved from the forest behind the coastal strip.

The effect of this deer movement on the trial would have to be examined closely, he said.

It had to be decided whether it could continue, or whether further animal control would have to be undertaken. This did not necessarily mean using more poison.

Exclosure plots had also been set up which theoretically kept all deer out.

However, there were a lot of vegetation types in a forest and it had to be decided whether the exclosure plots covered every type.

In the time that the areas had been cleared of deer the vegetation response had been very good, Mr Mawhinney said.

The palatable species like supple jack could almost be seen growing.

It was quite possible this had made the areas more attractive to deer, and they had moved from forest that had been subjected to pressure from browsing animals to those which had the new vegetation, he said.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I have been following with interest the controversy on the Parks Board decision to relocate the Fiordland wapiti. I believe, Sir, that I have found the perfect solution — leave the wapiti in Fiordland and relocate the Parks Board.

1/4/82
C. A. Mathieson
Dunearn

In Defence of Policies of Parks Board

Mr L. E. Henderson, of Te Anau, a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, writes to the editor of The Southland Times, in reply to an article by Mr R. C. W. Zander, published on March 22:

Your article by R. C. W. Zander calls for a reply. His claim that the Park Board acts from "commercial motives" and uses its interpretation of the National Parks Act in its recommendations for removal of wapiti not correct.

Mr Zander pursues an equally fallacious argument when he claims that the board and Government agencies involved "lack an understanding of the principles of wildlife and natural resource management." On the contrary there is a background of many years of research, practical experience and careful evaluation before decisions are taken. New Zealand shares the problems of many islands throughout the world as those responsible endeavour to protect endemic wildlife from predation and competition from introduced animals. Others with specific problems

are for instance, Fiji (the depredations of the mongoose) Galapagos Islands (rats) and so on.

New Zealand shares also, however, scientific literature world-wide as a contributing member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the International Council for Bird Preservation as efforts continue to arrest the decline of endangered species and prevent their extinction. Since Lance McCaskill's attendance at the IUCN conference in 1965 New Zealand has been represented by biologists of distinction who have played a full part under a wide range of disciplines and conservation areas. In fact the ICBP is holding its XVIIIth World Conference at Cambridge, England, early in August of this year. Two days of this conference have been set aside for a symposium and workshop on the man-

agement of islands important for conservation. The primary aim is, through a series of invited papers and follow-up discussion, to develop guidelines for:

(i) eradicating introduced mammalian competitors or predators such as goats, pigs and cats from biologically valuable islands.

(ii) preventing the invasion of biological valuable islands by other mammalian competitors and predators such as rats or mongooses, which cannot usually be eradicated once established.

The intention is to present these guidelines to those governments throughout the world which have responsibilities for the protection of islands important for conservation.

While this conference primarily concerns smaller islands it will cover much of vital concern to New Zealand wildlife and will be attended by five New Zealanders who have made notable contributions in the field of wildlife management in the past. Their participation is so highly regarded that one has been invited to present one of the three keynote papers. Outside the work of individual governments and the well known universities in the field of conservation and wildlife management there is no comparable forum where these world-wide problems can be compared, assessed and the best action decided upon.

Through individual board members who have a deep interest in such matters the board has a direct link with these deliberations and is therefore able, not only to relate its own problems to others world-wide, but to obtain the latest and best guidance possible on matters of concern.

Your readers will have noted certain inaccuracies about the park in Mr Zander's article which I do not need to go into. Suffice it to say that his unqualified and unsupported accusations of incompetence and insincerity against the board, the Minister and the departments concerned can be seen to be quite without substance. Those whose responsibility it is to protect our national parks and wildlife need neither the abuse nor the advice of deerstalkers and their hangers-on.

only a few months to live. His name is revered in the United States conservation field. He was undoubtedly one of the few really great men I will ever meet.

I am sure that if a man with his knowledge and wisdom had had more influence on the framing of our National Parks Act that the conflict over the wapiti would never have existed. His words, actually taken from a report compiled on the New Zealand American Fiordland Expedition by A. L. Poole, to the effect "... we are agreed that the presence of a moderate wapiti population need not be a serious threat to the Fiordland forest" still hold good. I am a lot more impressed by these words than the subsequent comments by Mr A. L. Poole quoted in Mr McFarlane's article.

I checked with Mr Alan Evans about the fate of the recommendation which I stated was passed unanimously at the National Parks Authority Jubilee Conference in July 1978. He said that this was a fact and that he would send me a copy of the report on proceedings there as proof. I will make this and the 1958 Conference report available to Mr McFarlane in due course.

There is serious doubt about the availability of the wapiti area to hunters on the expiry of the existing wapiti extraction programme. Mr McFarlane knows of the proposal to translocate takahē into the wapiti area to such places as the Edith Valley — right in the middle of the area. If this proposal proceeds then much of the wapiti area will be closed to the public just as the Murchison Mountains are. There is no room for complacency here.

The wapiti have enjoyed a measure of protection for many years notwithstanding the diabolical legislation covering introduced species. The National Parks Act is an Act of Parliament not an act of God as some people seem to imagine. It appears as though the former may be more difficult to alter than the latter. We must drag some of its few supporters into the light of a world where extermination policies, directed at least against the higher forms of life, are quite unthinkable.

Introduced Animals In National Parks

Mr Jack McKenzie, of Leithen Downs, a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, writes to the editor of The Southland Times in reply to an article by the chairman of the board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, published on March 23:

A critique of Mr McFarlane's article would probably be of similar length, so I will confine myself to making brief comments on parts of it, and to explaining those matters which concern myself.

New Zealand does certainly have a great percentage in national parks but this should not be taken as a measure of our culture. We have been unable so far to make provision in one of them for the presence of wapiti, one of the most magnificent animal species on earth. It perhaps says more about us as New Zealanders than it does about the animals, that they have been labelled as "vermin" and as "noxious animals." They shared the list, of course, with axis deer — which were non-existent — and moose, almost so. However Forestry have scrapped the Noxious Animals Act and have elevated the list to "wild animals" under the Wild Animals Control Act. Their attempts to have their civilized policy toward wild animals accepted for all land was thwarted by some national park supporters who insisted on the policy of extermination for national parks.

If anything is "hoary," old, and unwanted, it is this policy. The sooner it is discarded as a general policy the better. To claim the policy is a basic tenet, worldwide, in national parks, is wrong. Even our nearest neighbours, the Australians, protect introduced deer in their national parks. In Old World parks they have probably lost track of which is which. In North America and Africa they have no need of introduced species. Without them our mountain country will be as lively as the moon.

I thought the comments about excess numbers of animals in the wapiti area and the photos of the Cats Eye Bay region, particularly, were misleading. This damaged area is comparatively small. The helicopter pilot who discovered it had been flying around the area for several years before he saw it in 1976. Though small areas such as this may still exist, a further six years of flying has failed to disclose any.

Further comment will, no doubt, be forthcoming from those people visiting

the wapiti area and wondering where the excess numbers of animals — or any animals at all — are.

The use of statistics can be misleading. It is the ultimate ambition of most stalkers to try for a wapiti trophy at some time in their lives. We have no figure of this number. It would have been fairer, surely, to have used the figure of applicants this year — nearly 400 I believe — than of those who have been successful in past ballots. The figures represent only the tip of the iceberg.

The taxpayer pays the salaries of clerks and rangers. If these people are not attending to requests from hunters in the case of clerks, or patrol work in the wapiti area in the case of the ranging staff, both groups will be occupied in another way. They will still be on the payroll. The helicopter hire was financed from animals taken on the patrols, it was not billed to the taxpayer. There was no subsidy as alleged.

When Mr Young came to Fiordland at the request of the recreational hunters he spent most of his time meeting with park board members and staff on board the vessel Renown at Doubtful Sound. Of the 14 hours available for inspection only a little over an hour was spent in the area the hunters wanted him to see and this was in fast deteriorating weather conditions. This was far too short a time to get a balanced picture of the total area.

I think Mr McFarlane should be more careful when he accuses the NZDA of misquoting reports and opinions. I have already stated through these columns that the source for the quotation from the late Dr J. T. Holloway was from a report by the New Zealand Forest Service of a conference held in Wellington in 1958 and not from the New Zealand Science Review in 1959 as he supposes.

In 1949 I was privileged, along with other members of our hunting party in the Worsley Valley, to meet Dr Olaus Murie and his wife and son. We had nearly a full day with them and some other members of the expedition which he was leading in the wapiti area that year. I met him again at his home in Moose, Wyoming, in 1962 when he had

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — What a tremendous rally the public meeting was that was held in Gore. Five hundred people turned out in support of keeping the wapiti in the Fiordland National Park. We had 45 from Clinton at the meeting and 10 more

had other commitments and could not make it. No MP, and no political party and no parks and reserves board in their right mind can ignore the voice of the people.

I feel very sorry for the Hon Mr Elworthy. He is carrying out Venn Young's blunder. If he thinks we have given in, he had better think again.

It gave me great pleasure to move at the meeting the motion that calls upon the Minister to revise the method by which he appoints the national parks and reserves board, so that democratically-elected personnel can more properly reflect public opinion. If the parks and reserves board said the wapiti could stay under a game management policy, then the Minister would have to go along with them. If Labour had been in power they would have had to do just that, manage the wapiti under a game management policy. I will be going into the Mid burn at Easter and you can bet Mr McFarlane I will have my camera with me to take photos of all the devastated bush.

David Mackie

Clinton

Sir, — I was very interested in Mr McFarlane's article of March 23. This article and photos mean nothing to people who know the sounds area unless they have a one-track mind. I can take photos in the Cleddau Valley where there have never been deer or wapiti which would show much greater damage.

It is no use taking the wapiti out to save the forest as anyone with practical knowledge will know that the forest cannot survive without the native birds. I am amazed that the Royal Forest and Bird Society has not forced the issue on classing the stoat as a noxious animal. Trees are already dying throughout the park eaten away by grubs which previously were controlled by the native birds.

J. G. Burnby

Te Anau

[Abridged — Ed]

More Views on Wapiti Relocation

6/4/82

Sir, — Your publication of Mr McFarlane's large counterstatement against wapiti (23.3.82) should have L. E. Henderson wiping egg off his chin after his inferences of your favouring Mr McKenzie's views.

However the article should not go unchallenged for the much publicized damage on the Cats-Eye ridges area in 1980 is not typical of the wapiti area and resulted from an unnatural concentration of animals in a small area undetected and attributable to the then Park Board's animal control policy. The NZDA was as concerned over the discovery as the board, and co-operated fully in its alleviation and I am disappointed that Mr McFarlane has inferred that these photos are typical on one hand, while on the other he accuses NZDA of quoting remarks by Dr Murie and others tolerable of wapiti out of context in order to score a point.

As for the catch-cry of "still too many animals," this cannot be substantiated by the observations and results of recent trophy and culling parties, as accurately compiled and published by J. J. Murray and he knows that "management" entails effective control measures.

I'm sure Mr McFarlane does not really believe the submissions from the recreational hunter groups received a

"fair and considered" hearing from the Minister following his 1979 visit, because at the same time, despite invited comment and suggestions and a public meeting regarding the reconstitution and setting up of a new local park board, the new body received very cavalier treatment and was relegated to an ineffective role by the Minister's takeover, and no one was more vocal and critical at that time than Mr McFarlane.

His implication that the recreational hunting access in the wapiti area will be freer and better following the removal of the wapiti herd and it's restrictions cannot be equated with the board's slavish adherence to the spirit and terms of the Act. If the latter puts a duty on the board "not to allow introduced grazing animals" in the park, then this cannot allow for any implied improved access or increased number of hunters or the quality of animals that he suggests.

If the area cannot be freed of animals as he admits, why not face the reality and encourage the management of wapiti as one of the most sought after attractions of the park — the present legislation was written years ago and is now quite out of date with modern demands on national parks as multiple use recreational and tourist areas, and the quicker the administration concedes this fact the better it will fall in with the

needs of the public it is supposed to represent.

W. A. Bell

Southland Branch
NZ Deerstalking Association

Otatara
[Abridged. — Ed.]

Sir, — Although the fiasco of the timing of the trophy shoot is now a "dead duck," there is one point (among many) I would like cleared up. Mr Meredith of the Te Anau consortium was reported in your paper as saying that the timing of the shoot and the question of spelling of the area from helicopter operations were matters purely between the Crown and the deerstalkers. To my knowledge there was no discussion between the Lands Department in Invercargill and the deerstalkers either before or after the announcement of the trophy shoot dates. Your readers would be interested to see a statement from the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Invercargill on this matter.

Would any one or more of Messrs Harty, Henderson and McFarlane, care to comment on the probability that the failure of the Fiordland National Park Board to adopt some recommendations from the Hunting Advisory Committee over recent years contributed substantially towards the decline in wapiti numbers and the advancement of hybridization with red deer in the park?

Hon Jonathon Elworthy was in Invercargill last week as part of a tour of "controversial areas" and was quoted as saying "I am here to listen and to learn" because "part of the exercise is to know what people are talking about when they give me proposals on paper." Would anyone from the Lands and Forestry Departments or the Parks and Reserves Board or for that matter the National Party, care to advise your readers just who the Minister came to Invercargill to listen to or learn from. Judging by the lack of public awareness of the Minister's visit it would appear he had little time to, in his own words, "take the opportunity to sample the opinions of the local people."

Warren Taylor

More Views on Wapiti Relocation

25/3/82

Sir, — In the March 17 edition of your newspaper the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board has made an unsubstantiated accusation against myself, which clearly shows a complete lack of knowledge and no understanding of wild animal management in other parts of the world.

More than a year of my life has been spent in Fiordland National Park, not the fringe areas, but in the remotest regions camped in tents or under rocks. Half that time was given to selective shooting in an effort to help to preserve our wapiti herd. Never have I had the privilege of meeting the chairman, or any Park Board member beyond the

management of our own big game resources both recreationally and economically.

But when we have a national park board not elected by the people we can only expect unpopular and harmful decisions. While many organizations and individuals devote much time and effort encouraging young people to be associated with the outdoors and nature, our local park board appears to be doing the opposite.

Is it not time that national parks were reduced in size, or that the National Parks Act was amended to make provision, in certain special areas, that some animals like wapiti be managed for their recreational and aesthetic value?

The present National Parks Act with its ruthless, non-selective, animal-destruction policy is reducing tourism to the area, putting vast unnecessary areas out of recreational production, creating further unemployment, and contributing to the increasing social and moral problems in our country. It has lowered the ethics of selective hunting to an orgy of blood and guts.

I sincerely hope that the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board will not stoop to such unfounded accusations again, and will uphold the respect that many of us have had for him.

A. R. Harrison

Queenstown
[Slightly abridged. — Ed.]

Sir, — An expression of appreciation to Mr Raymond C. W. Zander for his excellent writings concerning the retention of the wapiti in Fiordland, also to you, Sir, for printing it.

I attended the public meeting in Gore without an invitation, and was delighted to see so many concerned people who do not hunt deer, but want those animals left where they belong. Mr N. Jones and Mr D. Angus were really given the message that evening by people from all parts of Otago and Southland.

I was most disappointed in how out of touch Mr Jones was with the situation,

shores of Lake Te Anau, other than Mr McKenzie. Many countries overseas, particularly some of the African, have an abundance of big game animals. They have excellent game laws and one of their main means of progressive development lies in a tourist-hunter industry, where the hunter has his trophy, and the meat is all utilized in many cases by semi-starving indigenous people.

Never have I been, nor would I be, guilty of condoning or participating in the reduction of any endangered animal.

My interest in the conservation, management and utilization of big game animals in many parts of the world, has brought home to me the tragic mis-

having been an admirer of him since "Save Manapouri" and Springbok issues. He firmly believed and tried to convince us that every wet hind and wapiti cow that came out of the area had its babe in arms along also. He would not accept that it was a caucus decision to remove and relocate the wapiti. I have no confidence, I'm sorry to say, that he will help us in our cause.

Mr D. Angus has the situation in hand. He knows what it's all about and the people present knew that he was genuine and sincere when he said there's only one place for those wapiti and that's leave them where they are and if there's to be any transporting cart all the red deer out.

Gore

A. H. Harvey

[Abridged. — Ed.]

Sir, — I refer to A. A. Fredric's remarks in the Times on March 19 regarding wapiti relocation and his embarrassment and disappointment in things not going his way in locating sufficient specimens in the forest in his capacity as a botanist. I would like to put many minds at rest in this respect and relate an experience I had in Fiordland in 1952 while I was professionally hunting deer, guiding wapiti trophy hunters into George and Caswell Sounds and acting as general guide to tramping clubs and interested organizations.

On this specific assignment I was appointed to guide a botanist from Wellington through the Doubtful Sound track in an effort to recover as many specimens of mosses as possible in the four days at his disposal.

After the specified time and having had suitable weather to go with it, he finally wrote me a letter stating that in his 30-odd years as a botanist he was successful in obtaining 180 varieties of the then 200 known varieties and many of these specimens were new and unnamed varieties. He was very excited and honoured for his contribution.

So your correspondent should not lose heart but go back and try again. I can assure him he'll be successful. Perhaps more so than we hunters, because we know that we've lost out, with the re-

moval of the animals from these magnificent mountains.

Extract from Compton's Encyclopedia on mosses: "Mosses play a large part in making the land fit for animal habitation. The mosses and the higher plants formed the material which supported animal life on land."

Despite the then numbers of animals they still continued to grow and regenerate.

Conclusion: When the animals roamed the earth the world was free, but when the animal was born with a brain the world became disturbed.

Te Anau

Des Arthur

[Asked to comment, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr J. P. Harty, said: "Mr Meredith is correct that the wapiti shoot is a matter between the Crown and the NZDA and Mr Taylor will be aware of the discussions which took place at a national level prior to any decision being made. I will not comment on other aspects of the letter, but others directly involved may."

In reply to the query regarding recommendations from the Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee to the Fiordland National Park Board, the chairman of the Southland National

Parks and Reserves Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said: "A study of the minutes of the RHAC over a period of five years and the Fiordland Park Board's reaction to them indicates that, apart from ideological differences, there was a remarkable measure of agreement between the two bodies and I am unable to interpret any of the board's actions as leading to an advancement of hybridization or decline of wapiti. Perhaps Mr Taylor might care to be more specific. The records show that the board always accepted the committee's recommendations regarding trophy shoots, although it is probable that, by their very nature and the selective killing of the best wapiti bulls, these shoots contributed towards the decline in wapiti and the advancement of hybridization."

Sir, — If the National Parks Act is from Parliament, and not from the officiating boards, critics of the board may be out of order, considering the source documents, and the objectives perhaps wider reaching than what is understood especially when compared with a hunter's aim for the forest.

Statistical dredgers raise this or the meeting's figures, failing to isolate the majority's initial need, which is, "to save the bush." Sighting a large animal for seconds is a bonus, not a criteria.

Many "bush basher only" groups sympathize with wapiti, perhaps on compassionate grounds, rather than sound ecological reasoning and an eye to the future total survival, the mule muddie of the Grand Canyon being a prize example of compassionate intoxication.

A Te Anau hunter of 16 years experience is determined to prove forest regeneration by quantity. Could he please submit a qualitative argument. I offer five basis questions as suggestions: 1. Is the total cross section of the eco-system being re-fulfilled? 2. Are there sufficient semi mature saplings to replace the essential protective canopy, including bird feed by nectar and decomposition? 3. Will tree saplings, spindly and weak due to removal of lower branches (that influence trunk thickening) survive after wind throw from both forest edges and canopy decay? 4. Are lower canopy plants surviving in profusion and selection with the modified air moisture ratios to ensure microclimate diversities? 5. Will the forest floor become dense and damp again, retarding activities of stoat and opossum?

If these questions, and others like them, cannot be answered unequivocally in the affirmative (and substantiated by our Clinton photographer as a total ecosystem restoration of the national park, not the national valley, as that is what is needed till now, and will be needed to survive) the forest we all think we love so much could be in jeopardy, as a Queenstown correspondent suggested "the mosses are doing well."

Is this the total legacy after only years, and to be accepted as normal? Until it can be shown otherwise, many more people should embrace the parks board, being the only body that can see past unintentional ignorance of both hunter, family groups and trampers who could be loving native forests to death.

A. A. Fredric

Invercargill

Mossburn Deer Premises Function Smoothly ^{2/4/82}

The operation of the recently opened Mossburn deer slaughtering premises can only be described as smooth, efficient and businesslike.

This may seem somewhat surprising considering not one of the nine staff had any previous experience of handling deer on a killing chain before the premises opened in late February.

Only the plant manager, Mr Chas Hoey and a few other staff members had been involved with feral deer either in hunting or helicopter capture.

The success of the deer slaughtering premises is due in part to the management of the Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd. But the main credit surely goes to the staff who have shown a willingness to get on with the job and meet the challenge of processing farmed deer to a high standard required by the overseas export market.

Mr Hoey said they all had to

learn quickly to adapt to the special nature of the deer slaughtering premises.

Inside the \$1 million premises the atmosphere is more like an operating room than a slaughter floor. The walls are lined with a white plastic sheeting and stainless steel equipment is to be seen everywhere. Walls, floor and equipment are continually washed by either pressure hose or hot water to ensure a consistent high standard of hygiene.

In order to produce a product that is second to none, hygiene requirements have been set higher than may be required to ensure there is no possible criticism or rejection of the venison by export markets.

Killing is carried out on Mondays and Wednesdays with each day's tally processed the following day.

The deer are delivered to the premises from Southland deer farms by Ryal Bush Transport Ltd, which has a specially built deer transporter. This transport rig is also used to transport live deer from Southland to other parts of the South and North Islands.

Killing Chain
After standing overnight in

the yards, the deer are herded through a narrow race, from which there is no return, to the knocking pen, where they are stunned by a gas operated stun gun, in much the same method as that used for cattle.

From there, the animals are quickly hoisted onto the chain where they are bled. A clamp is inserted to prevent the stomach contents from contaminating the carcass and the animal is passed along the chain to the next stage.

Here the first cuts are made, the hooves and pizles removed and the skin prepared for removal by the pelt pulling drum.

The carcass is then gutted. At this stage both the offal and carcass are inspected by a Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries meat inspector. The by-products of heart, liver and kidneys are retained, and the carcass is given a final wash in preparation for chilling.

Skins

The skins are airdried, graded, baled and transported to Dunedin where they are exported by one of the partners in the enterprise, Wilson Neill Ltd, export division.

Offal and bones are sent to the Invercargill firm of Southland Butchers By-Products Ltd,

where they are converted into meat and bone meal.

After each carcass passes along the chain, the walls, floor and steel trolleys used to hold the offal are washed by pressure hose and all cutting equipment washed in hot water to prevent even minor contamination.

Overnight chilling brings the carcasses down to packing temperature and they are then cut into primal cuts of hinds, shoulders, saddles, boned out necks and flaps and packed into cartons ready for export.

Since the deer slaughtering premises began about a month ago, the average kill has been around 75 head a day, Mr Hoey said, with the highest kill so far being 85. Close on 800 head had been processed in that period.

Smooth Operation

Mr Hoey said so far, apart from a few minor teething problems, the operation had gone smoothly with only one problem to be sorted out — an adjustment needed to the knocking box. The occasional stag manages to jump out of the box on to the slaughter floor before it can be stunned, causing a brief moment of excitement until it is recaptured.

This problem appeared to be more significant at this time of the year, Mr Hoey said, as he believed that with the onset of the roaring season, stags became more nervous and their sense of smell more acute. He is quite certain the animals can smell the blood through the other side of the wall, but once the knocking box had been redesigned this would not happen, he said.

The main throughput so far had been older stags, Mr Hoey said, and many of these showed a large amount of fat cover over the hind quarters. Stags under about two and a-half years old appeared to carry less fat, he said.

Bruising of the deer, mainly on the fore quarters is of some concern. It is believed that much of it is caused through the stags fighting each other in close confines.

This was to be expected, Mr Hoey said, as it was against a stag's nature to be bunched up in a narrow pen or truck crate at this time of the year, being the onset of the roar.

Mr Hoey said he was confident that within a short time the premises could be slaughtering and processing deer all year round, as more farmers went in for deer farming and a greater pressure on selection and culling was applied to domestic deer herds.



Carcass inspection by Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries veterinarians and meat inspectors ensure a high standard of venison product is maintained at the Mossburn deer slaughtering premises.

Single-sire Mating For Deer ^{2/4/82}

By MIKE HARBORD,
Farm Advisory Officer MAF Invercargill

A reputation for quality deer is an asset worth developing. Hence it is pleasing to observe much local interest in deer improvement schemes that utilize performance records as an aid to selection.

A corner stone of any recording scheme is knowing the parentage of calves. Single-sire mating is one way of providing this information. However for deer, the benefits must be balanced against certain risks, especially infertility going undetected in a "master stag."

It is possible for stags to appear to be mating hinds, but with conception failing. Also, knowing that a stag was fertile last year does not ensure his virility has continued.

While the incidence of these infertility problems is not widespread in farmed deer, the financial implications if they occurred could be devastating.

Minimize Risks

Infertility risks can be minimized by having stags in good condition before mating. If a single-sire is used, it is advisable to replace him after one oestrous cycle — 18 days of mating. Most hinds should have been on heat during that time.

When replacing a used stag, he must be removed well away from the hind mob. Otherwise he can continue to exert dominance over any replacement stag and prevent the fresh stag from mating with hinds.

If offspring are desired from a particular stag and single-sire mating is not acceptable, then the preferred stag must be the dominant stag in the mating mob. Usually, if a stag is older and heavier, he will be dominant.

Dominance hierarchy can be checked by watching which stags yield in fights to the stag of interest. However, contin-

uous fighting among stags can itself interfere with their mating activity.

Unfortunately for deer, calves born before or after a date corresponding to replacement of a stag during mating, cannot always be assumed as sired by one or another stag. The gestation period for red deer hinds, although averaging 233 days, is variable with only about two-thirds of hinds predicted to calve within 228 to 237 days after conception.

Although to some extent the risks with single-sire mating cannot be ignored, some experienced deer farmers are using just one stag to each mating group of hinds. They appreciate the advantages of single-sire mating to their recording schemes and herd improvement programmes.

While one adult stag can be joined with up to 50 adult hinds, and two year old stags with 30 hinds, mating a stag with 30 similar hinds should yield enough progeny for a good evaluation of the stag.

Single-sire mating linked to identification during lactation of hinds and their fawns, and liveweight and production records for the progeny, make a comprehensive recording package recommended to experienced farmers on well-developed deer land. The information has a potential within a few seasons to become the basis of an excellent within-herd recording system and selection scheme from which very real gains in the profitability and quality of local deer can be derived.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir — May I take the opportunity of thanking Mr Jack McKenzie for his clarifying article of April 1. As one who has been into the wapiti area I am becoming increasingly annoyed at the amount of unfactual information being fed to the public.

For years we have had to put up with selected photographs of deer damage and comments about the few hunters wanting the deer in the park. Deerstalkers are in fact one of the major park users.

As one who knows, I know for a fact that the majority of tourists into the park (contrary to Mr Henderson and Mr McFarlane's comments) do not want deer removed from the park. To quote figures of the few hunters as against the thousands of other park users (ie the tourists) as if all these automatically want deer out of the park is not correctly representing the issue. So many of these tourists would just love to see a deer while in the park.

It seems more likely that there are a minority of influential hard liners winning the day, at the deer and particularly the wapiti's expense.

Just a Commoner

Otautau RD

Hunting Offences

Sir, — In the District Court news Saturday's (March 27) paper, it says three shearers went hunting without authority on Mt Linton station and were each fined \$300. They were dear pigs.

As the court does not mention who took them to court, could I find out through your paper who it was. Was it the owner of Mt Linton Station, or someone else? I would like to know for other hunters.

Inquisitive Hunter

Bluff

[The informations were laid by the Police Department under the Wild Animals Control Act following the laying of a complaint by the owner of the land. — Ed]

Trophy Hunters Move Into Wapiti Area

16/4/82

TE ANAU
Twenty-four parties of wapiti trophy hunters started entering the wapiti area of the Fiordland National Park yesterday for the start of the annual trophy shoot.

Others will take up their blocks during the next few days.

Almost all hunters attended a briefing in Te Anau on Thursday night, and from first light yesterday float planes and boats started ferrying the parties into the wapiti area.

Of the 91 hunters expected to take part, 72 will actually be in the field, the others having pulled out.

At the original ballot for blocks, 24 parties were successful in gaining blocks and 12 reserve parties were selected in case of any withdrawals.

The Fiordland National Park senior, Mr Ted Atkinson, said last night 11 of the 12 reserve parties had been offered a chance at a trophy shoot as other parties withdrew.

One of the withdrawals came only one day before the Thursday briefing.

Trophy parties are entitled to take one trophy per party member up to a maximum of four trophies per party.

The hunters were also encouraged to shoot red deer and red-type hybrids, which assisted in animal control and also reduced the amount of hybridiza-

tion able to occur between the two deer types, Mr Atkinson said.

Parties have also been asked to complete bird observation cards to help with ongoing bird distribution surveys.

Prospects looked good for a successful trophy hunt, Mr Atkinson said. Park staff on patrols in the area reported wapiti were bugling on the eastern and western faces of the area.

Elsewhere, the roar appeared to be better than average, Mr Atkinson said.

Reports to hand indicated the returns per hunter were better

than in previous years. There had been a strong demand for rifle permits for all areas of Fiordland over the holiday weekend and the roar period.

Fiordland's fine weather yesterday got the hunters off to a good start.

The shoot was cancelled earlier this year, when a deer capture consortium started relocation of the wapiti from January 1. However, following pressure from deerstalkers, the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, announced the trophy shoot would take place after all.

Deer Catcher Hit By Helicopter

16/4/82

(PA)

WELLINGTON
An out-of-control helicopter hit a deer hunter, bounced off him and rolled down a hillside, air accident investigators said in a report published yesterday.

The hunter suffered back injuries, but was able to reach the wreckage of the Hughes helicopter and help the pilot climb free.

The two men were capturing live deer when the accident happened in the Paeroa range, near Reporoa, on October 15 last year.

The hunter had been working as a jumper. The helicopter was following deer and when close enough, the hunter would jump on to their backs.

The report said the first bulldogging attempt failed when the jumper missed the deer.

On a second attempt, the hunter had jumped from a helicopter skid height of three to four feet and landed on one animal's back.

Struck Hillside

The pilot moved the helicopter clear while the hunter secured the captured deer, but was unable to prevent the main rotors striking the hillside when the helicopter began to pitch nose down.

"The pilot recalled looking down through the open right hand door at the jumper spread-eagled on the animal as the helicopter descended onto him out of control.

"After he landed on the animal, the jumper heard a bang. He then looked up and saw the helicopter descending towards him obviously out of control.

"The helicopter landed on him, injuring his back and rolled down the hill," the report said.

New Team

Weather conditions at the time were ideal. But it was only the second time the pilot and

hunter had operated together and they had still to develop the co-ordinated teamwork necessary for this type of operation, it said.

The pilot suggested that as the hunter leapt off the skid, he had used his hand on the toe of the skid to steady his jump. This sudden down-load resulted in a forward situation the pilot was not expecting.

"If this occurred at the same time as the pilot was increasing

power and commencing to move the aircraft forward, it could have resulted in a pronounced nose down-pitching moment," the report said.

But the jumper believed he was well clear of the helicopter before it started to descend on to him. He believed the pilot may have misjudged his aircraft's clearance from the hillside and incurred a main rotor strike as he banked the aircraft to see if the deer they were seeking had been captured.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — Would Mr C. J. McFarlane answer two questions for me?

1. What is going to happen to the flora and fauna in the area where the wapiti are relocated? If they are doing so much damage to the Fiordland National Park is he not concerned at the damage they will do in the relocation area? The two photos taken on the western ridges of George Sound/Bligh sound are very similar to ridges on the East Coast (Southland) where there are no animals of any type.

2. How pathetic for Mr McFarlane to state (ST 23.3.82) "Trophy shoots had in fact catered for relatively few shooters." There are 24 blocks in the wapiti area that are balloted for each year. The total number of people allowed in the blocks is 192 of which 96 are allowed rifles, the other 96 being observers for the consortium because they are not allowed to carry rifles, this being a ruling by the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board. If the 96 were allowed rifles there would be a greater percentage than the 58 stated. Seeing that Mr McFarlane has all the facts and figures could he please tell me through your column how many shooters have missed out on a wapiti block since 1957?

Gore

L. Fryer

[Asked to comment, the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said:

Hunters Fined

Two Australian hunters were convicted and fined \$300 each yesterday when they pleaded guilty to charges of obstructing a Fiordland National Park ranger.

The court was told that on

April 15, David Charles Petman, aged 36, and Robert John McFarlane, aged 34, both of Victoria, Australia, were granted hunting permits to hunt at the head of Lake Te Anau.

They were advised by Fiordland National Park staff that they could not hunt the wapiti block on the west side of the lake because of the policy governing wapiti capture.

Prosecuting, Sergeant W. W. Maloney said that on April 16 the defendants' boat and camp site was found on the shores of the north-west arm of the middle fiord of Lake Te Anau.

This was in the wapiti area where there were no designated hunting grounds.

Refused

A ranger approached the two men and asked them to hand over their firearms. They refused and the assistant chief ranger flew by float plane into the area to speak to the men.

They again refused to hand over their guns saying they had thrown them in the lake.

Mr Maloney said that at 11.30 that same evening the defendants arrived at Te Anau after travelling the distance from the middle fiord in darkness in their boat. On their arrival they were arrested.

Mr G. Todd, counsel for the defendants, said the two were experienced hunters. They did not want to hand their rifles over to the ranger, "because he did not look like a ranger."

His Honour said in sentencing the two, that he wanted to make it clear that he was not sentencing in relation to poaching because that was not the charge.

Convicting and fining them \$300 each, costs \$20, his Honour made an order for immediate payment of the fines. In default they would face one months' imprisonment.

"1. It appears that the Forest Service is looking for country that is already modified to some extent and is unlikely ever to revert to its original condition. The Molesworth is a good example of this. I do not see any harm in locating wapiti on such country, provided animal numbers are controlled to tolerable limits. The National Park status given to the Fiordland area, on the other hand, is an indication that it is country where the modification has been minimal or where there is a reasonable chance of preserving or re-establishing the native flora and fauna in its original natural state.

"2. In my feature article of March 23, 1982, I referred to an average of 58 shooters per annum participating in trophy shoots over the years 1975 to 1981. The term "shooter" in this instance covered all party members — stalkers, gunbearers, observers, cooks — the lot. Certainly, much larger numbers had the opportunity to go into the area but many parties have had the minimum of two members and others, after success in the ballot, have, without notice, failed to turn up. The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board has

had no part in the recent ballot. I am informed, however, by the Lands and Survey Department, that they followed the precedent set in recent years and did not place any upper limit on rifle numbers or party size."

Australians Embroiled In Wapiti Controversy

22/4/82

Fiordland's controversial wapiti embroiled three Australians in trouble with the law and they appeared in the Invercargill District Court yesterday.

Geoffrey Francis Maggs, a 29-year-old builder, Murray John Thomas, a 22-year-old butcher, and Kenneth Skeels, a 34-year-old builder, were each fined \$300 on charges of being in possession of a rifle in Fiordland National Park without authorization on April 19.

Skeels was also fined \$300 on a charge of killing a deer in the Catseye river area without authority on April 16.

Orders for immediate payment were made, in lieu of one month's imprisonment. They were not required to forfeit their rifles.

The court was told that on Monday national park rangers received information there were people hunting illegally in the Catseye area of the park. The three defendants were subsequently spoken to. They admitted knowing they were not supposed to be there.

Counsel for the defendants, Mr J. K. Fraser, said that during the past eight years the three men had applied for a wapiti trophy block but had never been successful.

Last year, they again applied but were told a trophy shoot was not going to be held. They heard

of an unauthorized shoot being organized and came to New Zealand earlier this year to take part in that.

After they arrived they received a letter saying there was going to be an official wapiti trophy shoot after all and the unauthorized one was not going ahead.

The defendants had spent a large amount of money thinking they were going to be able to participate in a shoot, Mr Fraser said.

Unfortunately, they decided to go into the wapiti area, anyway. Only one shot was fired while they were in there and a red deer was killed.

The defendants met up with the hunters who actually had the block. The hunters were leaving and it appeared they reported the Australians to the rangers.

Mr Fraser said the defendants made no attempt to avoid detection and were told by police officers they would only be fined about \$200 each. They sent over to Australia for that money.

They were also assured their rifles would not be forfeited, he said.

Judge Anderson said there appeared to be some confusion over the issue.

While the charges were serious, carrying penalties of three months' imprisonment and or fines of \$2500, in the circumstances the fines he would impose would not be at the level that might otherwise have been expected.

12 The Southland Times, Tuesday, April 20, 1982.

Sent for Trial On Cannabis Charges

A partner of Avenger Helicopters Ltd and commercial pilot for the company, was committed for trial on cannabis and helicopter-related charges after the taking of depositions in the Invercargill District Court yesterday.

Before Justices of the Peace, Messrs W. W. Thomas and R. F. Wilson, 29-year-old Mervyn Carter Frisby appeared on four charges.

They were possession of cannabis for supply at Te Anau on February 26, cultivating cannabis, allowing a helicopter to be used for a drugs offence and landing a helicopter at a place that was not a licensed aerodrome, all at Winton on February 26.

Frisby was committed for trial on May 31 on all charges. Bail in the sum of \$2000 was allowed with a surety for a similar amount. He was also ordered to report to the police three times a week.

Prosecuting was Sergeant N. D. Cruickshank and counsel for the defendant was Mr C. E. French.

The names of all civilian witnesses were suppressed.

Riverbed

A farmer from Winton said he was inside his house on February 26 when he heard, then saw, a helicopter. It sounded as though it had landed in the old riverbed on his property.

He heard it return about 20 minutes later, landing once again in the vicinity of the old riverbed.

The farmer said he ran towards where he thought it landed and was standing about seven metres from the helicopter for about 30 seconds.

He saw the pilot finish off tying a bundle of green plants to the helicopter. His passenger was watching.

Witness said he got the feeling the pilot was amazed and shocked to see him standing there.

Flew Off

The witness said he beckoned to the pilot but to his amazement he hopped into the helicopter and flew off.

The farmer said he thought something suspicious was going on so he rang the police.

He was "99" per cent sure the defendant was the pilot of the helicopter.

Constable L. N. Mathieson, of Te Anau, said he was advised of an incident involving a red and white helicopter at Winton. He went to the Waiau airstrip near Te Anau where he found a red and white Hughes 269C helicopter which he knew was flown by the defendant.

Frisby approached him and asked him what was wrong, Constable Mathieson said.

When he was told of the complaint about a helicopter landing unlawfully at Winton, Frisby said that he had flown direct from Invercargill to Te Anau and had not stopped at Winton.

Green Vegetation

Later on, Constable Mathieson said, he decided to search the helicopter and Frisby. However, the defendant had disappeared.

In the helicopter, the constable said, he found fresh green vegetation which he believed was cannabis leaf. The helicopter was eventually taken to the police station at Te Anau.

Detective G. A. Clark said that on February 26 he went to the farm at Winton where the red and white helicopter had allegedly landed.

A search of the area was started but because of the density of gorse it was impossible to carry it out on foot.

A helicopter was brought in and after an aerial search, lasting about 15 minutes, a clear area was found.

This had obviously been used for the cultivation of something, Detective Clark said.

"This area was surrounded by black, plastic netting and this is a common method used by persons cultivating cannabis to protect the plants from being eaten or damaged by livestock," he said.

Cleared

Cross examined, Detective Clark said the area was cleared of vegetation. The earth was exposed and the surrounding ground was grassed.

Detective R. W. Glendinning said he went to the Waiau airstrip on February 26.

Inside the red and white helicopter he found a coiled rope with traces of green vegetation among the strands. He also found fresh, green plant material in some gorse in the helicopter. A deer recovery bag containing traces of plant material was also found.

Mr Glendinning said he searched a deer pen, near the helicopter, which belonged to the defendant.



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90915

Two phosphate bags containing fresh, green plants, which he believed to be cannabis, were found.

Detective Sergeant A. C. Kelly said he went to the clearing found on the farm at Winton. It was an area of about 10 metres by five metres.

15 Holes

Within this was a plot measuring about three metres by 2.5 metres. It was surrounded by mesh netting and contained about 15 holes where plants had obviously been pulled out.

On March 1 the defendant called at the Invercargill CIB office.

Mr Kelly said he outlined the allegations to him. The defendant said he had been advised by his lawyer not to say anything. When he got up to leave he was arrested.

Further inquiries revealed Frisby was a partner of the company, Avenger Helicopters Ltd, and that he was its commercial pilot, Mr Kelly said.

Cross examined, he said Department of Scientific and Industrial Research tests could not show conclusively whether the plants located at Te Anau were from Winton.

Mr French called no evidence but made a brief submission relating to the charges.

Takahe Area May Be Widened

Once the wapiti are removed from the Fiordland National Park the takahe could be distributed over a larger area in the park, the Minister for the Environment, Dr Ian Shearer, said in Invercargill last night.

Dr Shearer, who is in the city to open the flour millers' conference at Ascot Park today, said other problems such as the stoat population had to be eliminated first.

After that was done, "it was possible" the takahe could become established in a wider area of the park.

"We don't really know very much about the activities of the takahe and just how far their zone extends," he said.

The wapiti, Dr Shearer said, were part of the problem causing the large decline in the population of the Fiordland takahe in recent years.

"It is a matter of trying to eliminate as many of the problems as possible. There is sufficient evidence to suggest the wapiti in the area are causing enough damage to affect the population of the takahe," he said.

Endangered

Earlier yesterday, Dr Shearer said from Parliament he agreed with warnings that the wapiti were endangering the takahe in the park.

He was commenting on a statement from the Under-Secretary for Internal Affairs, Mr G. W. F. Thompson, on Tuesday, supporting a programme by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, to remove the wapiti from Fiordland and to re-establish a purebred herd elsewhere in the South Island.

The wapiti were being removed because they competed with the takahe for food, Mr Thompson said.

Dr Shearer said New Zealand had an "abominable" history of bird extinctions. Forty-five species of native birds became extinct before 1800, and another eight species and six sub-species had disappeared since the arrival of Europeans.

Twenty-three species or sub-species of native birds were on the endangered list.

Priority

The preservation of the takahe had to take priority over the wapiti, Dr Shearer said.

However, Dr G. M. Orbell, of Invercargill, said yesterday there had been no wapiti in the Murchisons, where the takahe are located, since 1858. Two deer were seen in the area at that time, but were later shot.

Dr Orbell discovered the takahe population in Fiordland and is perhaps New Zealand's best authority on the group's behaviour.

"There are no wapiti where the takahe are, and there has been no reported sightings of takahe where the wapiti are," he said.

Crossbreds

Dr Shearer said last night he agreed stoats were a major problem to the survival of the takahe, but he said Dr Orbell

was being "very careful" when he made statements about the number of wapiti in the area.

"Dr Orbell could be right that there is no wapiti where the takahe are. However, there are so many crossbreds. There may, in fact, be no pure breeds in the area," Dr Shearer said.

"There are definitely deer in the Murchisons."

All crossbreds will be removed, along with the wapiti, and Dr Shearer said this would eliminate one problem for the survival of the takahe.

His information was based on "constant contact" with wildlife officials and others who were interested in the Fiordland National Park.

A programme could also be mounted to control the stoat population after the deer had been removed.

Dr Shearer said scientists had now developed the sex stimulant of the stoats and this could be placed in traps to kill off the animals.

Fragile Ecology

"We've got to remember the area has a very fragile ecology," he said. "We have the beech trees and if they have a high seed one year there is a boom in mice. The result of this is a buildup in the stoat population."

"However, next year there might not be so much seeds and so there is a reduction in the number of mice, and the stoats then turn to the takahe chicks and eggs for food."

"The ecology is so fragile it

doesn't take much to upset it," he said.

The programme to distribute the takahe in other areas of the Fiordland National Park will take as long as it takes to remove the deer and eliminate the predators, Dr Shearer said.

Report For Release

A report on the proposed areas for the relocation of the Fiordland wapiti will be released by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, today or tomorrow.

The report has been prepared by the New Zealand Forest Service and is described by Mr Elworthy as being "fairly comprehensive."

He said from Parliament last night the paper would contain reports on all four suggested areas for relocation and would list the priority of these areas.

No areas in Southland have been included.

"I will base my decision on this report, after doing more research into the matter," Mr Elworthy said.

"It is going to be the right decision."

Mr Elworthy said there was "no emergency" to announce the decision immediately. The main thing was that people knew that wapiti would be relocated.

"We are going to breed them up for a while and increase their numbers before relocating them," he said.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — Twice now, April 22 and 23, 1982, I have read in The Southland Times that Dr G. M. Orbell is "the foremost authority" on takahe.

My understanding is that after Dr Orbell had rediscovered the takahe in what is now known as Takahe Valley his main interest in the area lay in shooting deer and not research on the bird. (This belief is supported by the fact that I am unaware of his having had any papers on the takahe published in scientific journals).

A number of former and current officers of the Wildlife Division, Department of Internal Affairs, have devoted many months of their lives to field research on the takahe. All of these people would have far greater authoritative knowledge of the bird (and would have done more towards ensuring its continued survival) than Dr Orbell. Accordingly they have every reason to be slighted, indeed insulted, by the extravagant claim regarding Dr Orbell's knowledge of the bird.

As to Dr Orbell's claim that "there has been no reported sightings of takahe where the wapiti are," I would suggest that he consult the "Proceedings of the Seminar on the Takahe and its Habitat 1978" — a seminar which he attended as a guest of the (then) Fiordland National Park Board. In this he will find on pages 37, 49 and 50 details of sightings between 1948 and 1971 of takahe or their sign outside the special (takahe) area. Of the 41 recorded, 37 were within the so-called "wapiti area."

W. J. Cooper

Invercargill

[The description of Dr Orbell as "the foremost authority on takahe" was ours, not his. Some fruits of Wildlife Service study of the bird are reported in an article on this page today. — Ed]

Preferred Site For Wapiti Named

The southern block of State forest west of Nelson is the preferred site for the relocation of the wapiti herd, the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, said yesterday.

The site was picked by an inspection team of forest rangers and scientists from three others — Molesworth station, in Marlborough, the Richmond range, the Victoria and Brunner ranges.

The preferred site was the southern block of State forest west of Nelson containing the Wangapeka, Owen and Matiri catchments and the eastern side of the Mokihinui catchment.

Mr Elworthy said the area preferred by the inspection team, seemed large enough to cater for a large wapiti population. It provided good food, and was likely to be challenging enough for the recreational hunter.

He said there were no significant problems of erosion or conflict with other flora and fauna. There were, however, red deer present although the population was reasonably small. He said it seemed the area was large enough to allow the two types to co-exist but allow for the control of hybridization and red deer if necessary. The area also had good access and was not unduly difficult to police.

Further Research

"Although this site seems to offer the best habitat for the relocated herd, there is still more research needed," he said.

Surveys of vegetation, wild animal numbers and distribution would be necessary to keep competition and interbreeding down to a minimum.

"Nevertheless, it is clear that relocation is the best option available for the long-term survival of wapiti as a recreational hunting asset," Mr Elworthy said.

Mr Elworthy said he could not see any final announcement coming for several months.

"Further investigation of the two most favoured sites will continue. Consultations with deerstalking interests will also take place," he said.

He said the inspection team had looked at each of the four areas and applied a number of criteria.

"The preferred habitat was seen as having to be mountainous, well vegetated country without any major soil erosion problems. Nor should there be any significant conflict with flora and fauna. There is also a need to ensure that there is adequate food species and supply, and adequate area for ranging," Mr Elworthy said.

Challenging Nature

He mentioned the team had also looked at the long-term management needs of any habitat to ensure there was little competition with other wild animals, particularly red deer. It would also be necessary to ensure that the area could be reasonably policed and that the habitat would be of a challenging nature with good natural aesthetics for the recreational hunter.

"Given these criteria, the inspection team has discounted the Richmond range and Mo-

lesworth station as possible habitats. In the former, there was significant erosion and there would have been competition with the large goat population there. The area is also slowly recovering from the effect of deer and fire.

"Molesworth station was discounted because of the likelihood that the wapiti would range too widely, possibly into the Nelson Lakes National Park. The station also lacks suitable forest cover and food, and there could have been conflict with the large number of cattle on the property."

Mr Elworthy said parts of the Victoria and Brunner ranges would provide a good home for wapiti. But there were doubts whether the whole area could sustain a population of the size envisaged. Any wapiti herd could also conflict with possible future reserves and there might be problems with adequate policing of the area.

Shots Fired At Helicopter

(PA) ROTORUA
Wairoa and Raupunga police are investigating a complaint from a pilot and shooter of a Hughes 500 helicopter who claim four shots were fired at the aircraft on Saturday.

The four shots were fired at the helicopter, owned by Astro Helicopters Limited, Taumarunui, as it was hunting over farmland in the Putere area, south of Wairoa.

At least two shots struck the helicopter. One passed through the exhaust system and one lodged in the engine.

No one was injured in the incident and a spokesman for the Wairoa police said yesterday the helicopter was not poaching.

Police have taken possession of a .223 rifle and will be interviewing two men who were hunting on the farmland.

The helicopter was flown by Mr Michael O'Brien, of Auckland, whose wife, formerly Tania Harris, organized last year's "Kiwis Care" march.

Mrs O'Brien went into labour when she heard of the shooting incident. Her doctor at St Helens Hospital in Auckland said the baby had been expected to arrive yesterday.

Mr O'Brien, back in Auckland, said he thought he and his shooter, Mr Jim Brooks, were lucky to be alive after the helicopter was fired at.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — What a lot of rubbish. The wapiti do not compete with bird life. Mr Thompson sees the elusive takahe and the mighty wap having duels or something, hairbrained government-arranged of course. Where did the wapiti in the private park at Te Anau come from, not lately, the first lot?

Secondly, let's do a simple test with the wapiti at Invermay and swamphen or takahe, whichever is the most available, as they feed in a similar manner. Also a stoat and takahe, or swamphen, then we will have facts. Kill the stoats that's part of the answer to disappearing takahe. The next is unexplainable no one knows what makes animals become extinct, except New Zealand politicians.

Transport the wapiti to Molesworth where the first snows will let the wap run all over Canterbury.

Hunter Medley

Redan

[Abridged. — Ed]

Public Notices

I DAVID BURGESS, Company Director of 143 Haywood Street, Invercargill, give notice of my intention to apply to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries for combined Game Packing House, Meat packing house and fish packing house licences. For premises to be constructed in Benmore Street, Invercargill. Signed D. Burgess. This is the first publication of this notice. 23/4/82 96559

'Future Deer Markets Assured'

7/5/82

Deer farming was one of the great agricultural inventions and there was no other country that would seriously compete with New Zealand in the foreseeable future.

This was the observation made by German marketer, Mr Claus Hartge at the New Zealand Deer Farmers' annual conference held last month in Hastings.

In Europe the consumption of game meats including deer, pigs and hares was estimated between 65,000 and 75,000 tonnes per year, he said.

Game meat is expensive and a luxury in the consuming countries.

Of all Europe, Germany was the largest importer and producer of game meats, with more than 22,000 tonnes imported during 1980, Mr Hartge said.

Some 19 countries export deer meat to Germany with New Zealand exporting 1233 tonnes in 1982. Although Bulgaria and the Soviet Union had been refused entry, new suppliers such as Australia, South Africa and Spain had established themselves on the German market.

Germany's domestic production of deer meat is approximately 20,000 tonnes annually making its total consumption of game meat close to 45,000 tonnes per year.

Small Proportion

Other importing countries in Europe of game meat, include France, Switzerland, Belgium and the Netherlands and all but a small proportion is supplied by countries other than New Zealand.

In Scandinavia, New Zealand faced strong competition from Eastern Bloc countries, Scotland, and China.

Both Austria and the UK were mainly self-sufficient, Mr Hartge said, although at times, Austria had to import a small quantity despite its own domestic production of close on 6500 tonnes.

Most European countries permitted the import of game meat throughout the year, with the exception of France and Belgium which have limited selling periods. Peak consumption was during the colder months from September to April, he said.

New Zealand game sold best during the September to Christmas period as prices generally were low after that time with supplies from Eastern Bloc countries dominating the market through to about May.

Few Companies

In most of the European countries the import trade was well controlled by a few companies which operated nation wide and tended to sell to wholesalers by the tonne who in turn supplied restaurants, game retailers and supermarkets, he said.

However, the situation in Germany was somewhat different. About 30-40 major importers struggled for sales, he said and as a consequence had to compete for supplies. The reason he suggested was that there was so much game produced in Germany.

Where in other countries the importer sells by the tonne, in Germany he sold by the carton. Mr Hartge said the German importer was both a wholesaler and distributor and tended to operate locally, not nationally.

Because the consignments were mostly small often from only one to 20 cartons, distribution was costly, and could only be carried competitively if transport was pooled with other frozen cargo.

from other sources, he said. The reason was due mainly to the outstanding quality of the product, strict hygiene control and the small, handy size of the cuts.

Most restaurants liked buying New Zealand cuts, bone in.

"To us in Europe quality is synonymous with leanness," he said. "The public taste requests fat free game meat, tenderness comes later." More than 90 per cent of consumers wanted lean meat, Mr Hartge said, and he strongly urged that New Zealand should not ship deer meat to Europe unless it had been carefully trimmed, not only the surface fat but also internal fats.

It was more economic to do the trimming in New Zealand than in Europe where wages were generally higher and where defrosting of the cuts would lead to unnecessary

weight losses from thawing.

Mr Hartge said in his opinion farmed deer should not be promoted as a new item mainly because little advertising was done at all for deer meat, as the main outlet was through restaurants which spent no money on advertising.

Also the housewife and chef de cuisine expected deer to be wild and not brought up under the care of man.

As neither consumer asked whether the venison was feral or farmed they should not be given the choice, he said.

It was his company's aim to gradually lead European buyers to accept farmed venison as if it were feral. "We all have to try to achieve the same acceptance for the farmed product as for the feral," Mr Hartge said.

"Please bear in mind that too

much publicity for farmed deer will create resistance from EEC farmers' associations whose one and only intention is to keep imports of red meat down or to burden them with hefty levies." Mr Hartge warned that not too many New Zealand companies should export farmed deer to the EEC. The European market had its own rules and peculiarities, he said, and it should be approached from New Zealand in a co-ordinated manner. "Both commercial and political motives necessitate this."

However, Mr Hartge said, the European merchant would still be predominantly German who would welcome farmed deer.

"Red meat from genuine deer, from unpolluted soil, from a politically stable country will have its market share," he concluded.

Live Capture Pens Not Up to Claims

8/5/82

TE ANAU

Live capture pens have not totally lived up to the claim of being a good medium for the control of deer in the Fiordland National Park, according to the senior ranger, Mr E. Atkinson.

A statistical record on live deer recapture pen operations tabled at last night's meeting of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board in Te Anau, showed the number of deer captured had declined sharply in the past year.

Applications for the first live capture pen in Fiordland coincided with the beginning of the high live deer prices at the end of 1978.

The high prices could not be sustained for long, and declined as the supply of live deer caught up with the buyers demand, Mr Atkinson said.

"As a result of the decreasing return per pen and the slump in the demand for live deer from mid-1980, this year had not proved to be as viable as many operators would have liked," he said in his report.

In 1978-79, there were three permits issued for the live capture of deer in the park. This number rose to 33 in 1980-81 and has fallen to 28 this year.

However, the total number of pens has increased from 187 last year to 194 this year.

In 1978-79, 13 deer were captured. This number rose to 22 the following year and peaked in

1980-81 when 304 deer were captured. Only 182 were captured up until March of this year.

Not Fulfilled

"I do not believe that live capture pens have totally fulfilled

the claims of being a good medium for the control of deer.

"Properly run pens will continue to catch deer and in priority areas will be a worth-while alternative in wild animal control," Mr Atkinson said.

Board to Give Wapiti Policy

TE ANAU

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board will make its views on the wapiti relocation issue known to the Southland County Council at the council's next meeting.

At the last Southland County Council meeting, the views of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association were conveyed to the council by Mr Warren Taylor, a recreational hunter. In response, the board wrote to the council and received permission to make submissions stating its position on the controversial topic.

A letter outlining the board's views has been sent to the council. At last night's board meeting, Mr Les Henderson was elected spokesman for the council meeting and also for a meeting to be held with the Southland United Council.

The united council asked for submissions from the board at its meeting earlier this week.

Other items dealt with at last night's meeting included:

Fossicking: Fiordland National Park chief ranger, Mr Paul Green, reported there had been some illegal fossicking around some of the historical sites in the park. Some of the sites are being studied by Southland museum staff. Mr Green said it was almost impossible to effectively police the sites.

Wilmot Pass: The Southland District Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr Joe Harty, told the board substantial funds would have to be spent immediately to restore the Wilmot pass road. He said at least \$10,000 would have to be spent initially to repair damage caused by floods last year.

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — The relocation of wapiti, which the Wildlife Service strongly supports, means, at best, the loss of a valuable aesthetic, recreational, and economic resource to Southland. At worst, presupposing that the one remaining area for relocation also proves unsuitable, the only wild wapiti in the Southern Hemisphere will be those in Fiordland who succeed in dodging the nets, traps, bullets, and poisons.

The service which is dedicated to the protection of rare native species and the conservation of some acclimatized species must come up with a constructive compromise solution which will allow the Fiordland wapiti to occupy at least most of the area they have lived in for the past 77 years.

After reading the takahe article in your issue of April 27, 1982 and various other reports on the same subject, I felt that the scientists had down-graded the role of the stoat in the decline of takahe, and were obsessed with the presence of red deer and wapiti.

It is not always made clear that takahe occurred throughout New Zealand from North Cape to Bluff in centuries gone by, and lived in competition with countless thousands of moas and other now-extinct birds. By the time they encountered the deer liberated by European man they were already close to extinction.

Whether their further decline in numbers since their rediscovery by Dr Orbell and party in 1948 is faster or slower

than in the centuries preceding it is a question which would be difficult to answer. So far as the wapiti area is concerned it seems that, except for the southern fringe adjacent to the Murchison mounds that takahe had become extinct there before colonization by wapiti. The rare sightings of birds there would almost certainly be of nomadic birds.

In the fringe areas mentioned — Irene, Stillwater, and Doon valleys, and in the Large and McIvor burns — takahe appeared to thrive along with high populations of deer (and geese too in one place). Like the DSIR personnel (mentioned by your correspondent A. E. I. Sim) I too have wondered whether, at least in the above cases if deer had in some way stimulated the takahe. It will be interesting to see what happens to the small takahe colonies in the areas mentioned above now that deer have virtually been eliminated from those areas.

Wapiti are being convicted on false evidence. Their banishment from the park is a crime against present and future generations who wish to hunt those magnificent creatures with rifle or camera against the backdrop of some of the world's finest scenery and enjoy the place as we have done.

If lingering bitterness with the present capture and shooting campaign is to be avoided then some modification of it is essential. Direct action may well result from the refusal of bureaucracy to bow to public opinion.

If the Wildlife Service wishes to persist with its takahe management proposals and translocate takahe within Fiordland, then surely they should examine the area to the south of the Murchison mounds for its suitability, something I have been assured that they have not so far done.

Before I close I would like to take this opportunity, through you Sir, to thank all those people who are supporting us in our attempts to keep the wapiti in Fiordland — the people who wrote to these columns for over four months, the hundreds of wonderful people who turned out for the Gore meeting, Federated Farmers of Southland, the South-

land County Council, you and your staff for your fairness, and the local members of Parliament. In a democracy public opinion will win the day — keep it up Southlanders.

Jack McKenzie

Gore RD

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OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT INCLUDES: 8 piece lounge suite in gold dralon, oak exec office desk with 2 filing drawers and secret drawer, dining suite complete with 6 dralon covered chairs, Olivetti hexikon 80 golf ball type writer, zone pak, air conditioning unit model RF 440G, 12in Philips Colour TV K370, oak 2 door corner unit with 2 oak corner chairs in red leather, 4 d/filing cab, Bonair cocktail cab/fridge in mahog, oak 3 drawer office desk with filing drawer, exec office and typist chair covered in dralon, double brass wall light fittings, spot lights, mahog sideboards and tables, 3D/mahog desk, 2 door steel filing cab, quant office and typist chairs, brass table comprises oak corner what not, brass eagle, or brass framed coffee tables, 3 sets settees, Denion steel shelving, cafe bar, billiard table and accessories, Raytrk alarm system, plus misc office sundries, calculators, beautiful drapes and matching cushions, brass ornaments, sheep skins, pot plants, fire hoses, coolie chairs, Zip water heater, stove, fridge and other exciting items.

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- (1) 6 x .308 Cal SIG semi-automatic rifles
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- (3) 2 x .465 Cal Paxarms syringe pistols
- (4) 1 x .22 Cal Paxarms tranquillising rifle
- (5) 3 x .527 Cal paxarms bolt action syringe rifles
- (6) 1 x .308 Cal FN semi-auto rifle
- (7) 1 x .223 Cal AR15 semi-auto rifle
- (8) 1 x .223 Cal Ruger semi-auto rifle (minus mag)

SATURDAY, JULY 10, 1982 SALE

MAIN ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY INCLUDES: Quant bench vices complete with as new work benches, quant steel trolleys with Pneu wheels, 2 hand oper steel bench presses, repco super 30 battery charger, oil fired heater and tank, Miller twin HF arc welding mach with mobile leads and gauges, qty welding rods, champ spark plug tester, GMF 200mm bench grinder SPH, tannel elect drill press SPH, welding equip, gauges and bottles, mobile engine hoist, qty alum ladders, 5.5 hp 3 ph air compressor, air hoses and air lines, fire exting chain hoist, micro fishe reader 3M '800' (July 81) speedline 8in HD grinder 3/4 hp SPH, drilling and milling mach 20 m/M cap, 3/4 hp SPH engineering lathe, 1 1/2 hp cap model 1125B plus other allied tools and sundries.

HANGARS INCLUDE:

- (1) 3 Hangar buildings
- (2) Office and staff amenities block
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Details as to:

- (a) Ownership of land
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- (c) Building description will be shown in our fully descriptive catalogue by writing to the Auctioneers (\$1 includes postage).

AIRCRAFT INCLUDE:

- (1) 1970 MITSUBISHI MU — 2B — 30 ZK-ESM. The interior condition is as new having been completely refurbished. The exterior condition has new paint throughout and in first-class condition.
- (2) 1967 MITSUBISHI MU — 2B ZK-WAL. The interior has new custom wool fabric and brown vinyl base. The aircraft is configured in club seating arrangement and is first-class — almost brand new condition. The exterior of aircraft is absolutely spotless condition, with no evidence of corrosion denting, abrasion, damage or minor hangar damage. Has spare serviceable engine.
- (3) HUGHES HELICOPTER 369D (500D) ZK-HPW. The aircraft has been recently refurbished externally and completely repainted in a pleasing three tone colour scheme.
- (4) HUGHES HELICOPTER 369 HS (500) ZK-HJC 1969. This aircraft is not equipped with a turbine or gearbox. The aircraft has recently been repainted externally with only minor corrosion apparent.
- (5) 1974 CESSNA MODEL 177B ZK-DNX.
- (6) HUGHES 500CC ZK-HRF Helicopter.
- (7) HUGHES HELICOPTER ZK-HPZ.

NOTE: The receiver reserves the right to withdraw any aircraft from sale without prior notice.

AIRCRAFT SPARES

Spare parts for MU 2B, spare serviceable engine, MU2, spares for Hughes helicopters 500, 500 C20, 500D, 10 Hi stress aircraft seats (3 double units, 4 single units). Radar set: RDR 160 Weather radar, Model Bendix ART 161A B & W set.

TRACTORS AND TRAILERS:

- (1) Kubota Tractor model L285, L285 DT (hardly used — excel condition)
- (2) Kubota Tractor model B7100 — 750A
- (3) Power Pony Tractor
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AUCTIONEERS NOTE:

The Friday Sale is a No Reserve Sale, and as can be expected several items only of plant and the aircraft on the Saturday Auction carry a reserve and they are more than realistic. The condition of all articles is first-class and carries our recommendation, the plant still being in use and the office equipment being in use up till closure.

INSPECTION:

Friday, July 9 — 8am until sale starts.
Saturday, July 10 — 8am until sale starts.

TERMS:

Cash or bank cheques by arrangements with the auctioneers only.

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26022

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Friday July 9, 1982

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AUCTIONEERS NOTE

Having inspected the above offering we can thoroughly commend to intending purchasers. This will also be the first offering of AI Bred Weaner Bulls using Canadian Elk semen. The weaners have been weaned since the end of May and will be sorted into lines to suit intending purchasers.

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17864

Takahe and Wapiti

Sir, — The more we read on this subject the more we become convinced the Park Board is trying to convince the public with a lot of propaganda. In their statements on relocation of wapiti to obtain a pure herd they admit that any other suitable area is already populated with other deer.

The wapiti were in the area for 47 years before the National Parks Act 1952. Why then was this area included in the park in the first place?

The takahe were rediscovered in the Murchison Mountains in 1948. The whole area was closed to the public. A dozen huts were built. The public believed these were for cullers to keep the red deer, not wapiti, under control. But no, apparently they were camps for the top brass of government departments. After 20-odd years they finally became aware that the greatly increased numbers of red deer were competing with the takahe for food. Where were the experts on wildlife management? Surely anyone with even an elementary knowledge of wildlife could have foreseen this would happen when the recreational shooter was denied entry.

The fact of the remaining population of takahe being confined almost entirely to the Murchison mountains area would suggest that this is the habitat best suited to its survival. Now we find these experts trapping these birds and transferring them to areas where the former population has died out. It would appear the Park Board has become so wrapped up in its anti-deer campaign that the well-being of our native birds has been shoved into the background. With reports of native bird poachers being active in other areas we must be concerned for the takahe. We have some expert poachers who have made a complete ass of the park laws.

Tagged Stoat

Otautau RD

Wapiti Relocation

Sir, — I was one of the few lucky hunters on this trophy shoot to shoot a wapiti and even a red deer for that matter, as a lot of very experienced hunters never saw a deer. There were four members in our party and we saw only three deer for the 14 days we were in our block.

I only hope some day in the near future I can return into Fiordland on another trophy shoot and enjoy the rugged, steep, isolated bush and mountains of our national park.

I fail to see any reason why the wapiti must be relocated. No one would go into that part of Fiordland if it wasn't for the wapiti. The takahe is only an excuse for relocating the wapiti. Surely it would be easier and cheaper to put a fence round the takahe than to shift the wapiti!

Hybridization and deer numbers can be effectively controlled by helicopter and ground shooters as we can see now by the very low numbers of deer that are in the wapiti area.

The eradication of introduced animals under the National Parks Act is only a loophole the Parks Board is using to eradicate deer from the park — first the deer, then what?

The Act could be changed by the Government as we will see them do on the Clutha hydro scheme.

There is no other place in the country that can be more suitable for the wapiti than where they are now. The Government should stick to politics and leave recreational hunting alone.

A. J. Chittock

Gore RD

Helicopter Crew Found

TE ANAU

Three Te Anau men were found within half an hour of a search getting under way to find a helicopter and its crew missing in the Mavora area late yesterday.

The search was sparked off when a Hughes 500D model helicopter owned by Thompson brothers, was reported overdue at 4.30pm yesterday. It was working in the Mavora area.

Te Anau helicopter pilot, Bill Black, flew into the area and found the three men — pilot, Derek Cook, and crew members, Nelson Thompson and Milton Kiri — walking down a snow covered valley at about 5pm.

The three had walked about 16km from the helicopter after putting it down in a precautionary landing about midday after it developed mechanical problems.

Police in Te Anau said the weather at the time was cold, with deep snow over the area.

It is expected the helicopter will be repaired and flown out of the area.

\$250,000 Chopper Removed

(PA) HAMILTON

Taupo police are appealing throughout New Zealand for information on a Hughes helicopter taken from an airport hangar.

The \$250,000 machine may have been removed by an articulated truck seen at the Taupo airport on the night of June 23.

Detective Sergeant Doug Scott, of the Taupo police, said yesterday they wanted to speak to the driver of the truck.

The Hughes 369D helicopter was due to be sold at auction next week. It is understood the machine was formerly owned by RCS International, a Taupo company now in receivership.

Police in Taupo say the theft was unusual and that it was likely the helicopter had been hidden in bush or was being used in a remote area.

Helicopter parts are numbered and recorded in log books making it unlikely that the machine would be stripped and sold for parts, said Mr Scott.

Bearing the registration number ZKHPW, the helicopter was mainly cream in colour with a dark blue top and base and an orange-coloured tail section.

8/9/82



A Hughes 500 helicopter featuring the prominent identification circle and letter now required to be displayed if animal recovery work is being undertaken. In this case the inner circle is orange and the number and circle border are black.

Large Identification Marks Required

Helicopters carrying out wild animal recovery operations are now required by the New Zealand Forest Service to have large identification marks painted on them.

The identification marks will take the form of a prominently displayed circle featuring a letter painted inside the circle.

In the Southland conservancy the inner colour of the circle will be mauve or orange, although from time to time there could be other colours if a helicopter from another conservancy is in the area.

With the Hughes 500s the identification will be painted on the right and left hand fuselage areas at the rear of the aircraft. For 300s it will be on the outer edge of the fuel tank.

Senior ranger with the conservancy, Mr Kerry Mawhinney, said yesterday the letter and colour combinations had been allocated with the new licences issued for the year beginning June 1.

There had been some delays with issuing but helicopters operating on wild animal recovery work were expected to display the identification this licensing year.

These letters were over and above the registration numbers required by the Civil Aviation regulations.

The identification requirements had been imposed to deter helicopter operators from poaching.

Up until now the only identification had been the Civil Aviation registration and these numbers were too small to see at a distance.

As well, the new markings would be difficult to remove, cover up or alter. This had been a major consideration, Mr Mawhinney said.

Most helicopters in the conservancy had complied with the requirements.

Objections

There had been a few objections but the Forest Service believed it was the only way to ensure that identification could be easily made, Mr Mawhinney said.

Pilots realizing this would hopefully be deterred from hunting outside their permit areas.

The idea had initially been

tested in the Rotorua conservancy and was being implemented nationally.

Ironically, Mr Mawhinney said, the past season for Southland had been fairly quiet as far as illegal activity was concerned. Only one court case was pending.

However, for the likes of Rotorua and other conservancies, there had been a lot of trouble.

Cancellation

Failing to display the identification would be a breach of the terms and conditions under which a permit was issued and could result in the immediate cancellation of licences and permits.

For the new season 16 licences and 26 permits had been issued. This was slightly down on last year.

Animal numbers for the past year had been similar to the previous two or three years.

There appeared to have been a levelling out of the number of animals recovered, Mr Mawhinney said.

Forest Service staff were also hearing a lot from operators about the increasing costs, particularly with insurance and fuel.

A lot were looking at the non-productive hours they had been flying in the past.

6/7

CRIFFEL GAME PARK FIRST ANNUAL SALE OF NZ WAPITI WEANERS

To be held at Criffel's new selling centre at 1pm Thursday, July 8, 1982.

COMPRISES:
25 WEANER FEMALES
10-15 WEANER MALES

The last few years have been devoted to breeding these deer amidst natural farm conditions, and building up the base herd.

Now that this has been established this is the first opportunity of purchasing the cream of their offspring.

The offering is fully recorded and all records will be available for inspection as will the animals prior to the sales and on the morning of the sale.

Light luncheon will be provided by the Wanaka Lions Club.

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ALEXANDRA AND BRANCHES

SOUTHLAND FARMERS CO-OP, INVERCARGILL



23441

Spending on Wapiti Relocation

Sir.—Why are efforts to relocate the wapiti being persisted with when such drastic cuts are being made to social welfare, health, education and so on?

The proposed cost of the exercise (approximately \$250,000) for this year, and the expected cost of many hundreds of thousands of dollars for future years would surely be better spent in other fields.

The wapiti occupy only a small percentage of the Fiordland National Park area—they can be controlled for recreational hunting in this situation without costing the taxpayer millions of dollars for unnecessary relocation.

The nation's sportsmen should be encouraged in their recreational pursuits—not stifled.

Hamish's Mum

Gore

The Southland Times, Friday, July 9, 1982. 9

Wapiti Sale At Wanaka

(PA)

DUNEDIN

A sale of New Zealand wapiti weaners at the Criffel Game Park at Wanaka today saw female deer fetching an average price of \$2750, and males an average price of \$1650 each.

About 200 breeders from throughout the country attended the sale, the first of its kind for the game park.

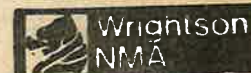
The park's managing director, Mr T. W. Wallis, described bidding for the 25 seven-month-old female and 15 male weaners as "keen."

Most of the stock for sale was bought by North Island deer breeders, he said.

The stock was all New Zealand-bred, although the park has imported weaners from Canada during the past two years.

Some of the New Zealand stock has been drawn from culling programmes in Fiordland.

The auctioneers for the sale were Wrightson NMA of Alexandra, and the Southland Farmers Co-operative.



FOR SALE

Weaner Hinds and 1 good Hybrid Stag.
Apply:
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29664

Some Wapiti To Stay in Park

21/7/82
Fiordland will keep the wapiti leftovers after a change in Government policy yesterday, which means that once the contract with the capture consortium is over, those deer left in Fiordland will stay.

The Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon, told a press conference in Wellington that Fiordland's wapiti herd would be moved out of the area where the native takahe live but some deer would remain in the national park.

The parties who had been arguing over the wapitis' fate had reached a compromise which he thought was "something that will work."

Environmentalists want the wapiti out of the park because of the threat they claim is posed to vegetation and the takahe.

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board has also maintained that deer in the park are in conflict with the values of national parks.

However, deerstalkers have been fighting to keep the wapiti there, saying the hunting provided is a unique sporting experience.

The wapiti relocation was started at the beginning of this year. A new site for them has not been decided, although an area in Nelson is being investigated.

Breeding Herd

Mr Muldoon said a breeding herd would be taken from the park and the rest of the deer left there. The area where the takahe lived would be cleared of the animals and enlarged.

The Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, said in a statement yesterday the Government caucus had agreed the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board should develop a management plan to allow a controlled number of wapiti to remain in the Fiordland park for hunting.

The MP for Wallace, Mr D. A. Angus, said later caucus had decided on a change in Government policy over the wapiti.

Once the contract with the consortium expired in December, 1983, the Government wanted a management plan drawn up which would incorporate the wapiti in part of the park.

Compromise

A compromise had been reached where quite a large area in the park would be given

over to the takahe, provided the other part was retained for the wapiti and recreational hunting.

The Government wanted the parks board to develop a management plan which would allow the wapiti to remain in the park for recreational hunting, Mr Angus said.

It would identify a defined area within the park for them. A provision would be that this did not affect the other values of the national park.

While it would have been desirable to halt the relocation, the two-year contract between the Government and the consortium was legal and binding, Mr Angus said.

However, the relocation would be stopped at the end of 1983.

Mr Angus said he was sure there would be animals left, and the question of the re-introduction of wapiti would be looked at when the time came.

It would also "be nice to think" the relocated herd could be accommodated within the park if there was nowhere else for it to go.

Mr Angus said he did not think the compromise was what the deerstalkers wanted, but at least it was something.

A Step

Mr W. B. Taylor, a Gore deerstalker, who went with Mr Angus to discuss the question at Parliament last week, said the compromise was a step in the right direction.

It was difficult to say whether there would be enough animals left, but he "would hope so."

Once the relocation was over, some sort of animal survey would have to be carried out.

If management was undertaken, it would have to be done properly. A special committee would have to be set up.

Once he saw exactly what was going to be done in writing, Mr Taylor said he would decide what the next move would be.

Mr Angus deserved a word of praise, Mr Taylor said. He had put a lot of effort into the issue.

Local authorities throughout Southland and Otago had given their backing, some without being asked, he said.

The national vice-president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr J. C. Bamford, said he was not happy with the decision. It was a step forward, but not a very big one.

He believed the relocation should have been stopped rather than allowing the commercial exploitation of the park to continue.

Mr Bamford said he would have to know a little more about the area to be given to the takahe, but he suspected it would be one of the better areas.

It was difficult to say what number of wapiti would be left. However, numbers were so low now, and combined with perhaps a poor area, he did not think the compromise would be acceptable.

The consortium was not taking a lot of wapiti out at the moment, he said.

This could be for two reasons — either they were not there, or it did not pay to bring them out as they were given to the Government.

Pleased

The chairman of the parks board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said he was pleased the matter had been resolved, although the Government directions to date made it difficult to fully assess the repercussions on the park.

The board would consider the aspect of a management plan when it was formally advised about it.

Mr McFarlane said he was pleased to note the consideration that had been given to the takahe.

A long-time fighter for the wapiti herd in Fiordland, Mr Jack McKenzie, said last night there was still a lot of detail missing and he would be concerned to see the small print.

"It sounds good," he said. "We should be grateful that after 30 years of effort we are seeing a change in direction."

While Mr McKenzie supported Mr Elworthy's intention to establish another wapiti herd in New Zealand, he said the stock should come from Canada, and not deplete the Fiordland herd.

The agreement with the consortium should be renegotiated, he said.

"There's going to be a place for these chaps to do some culling, but I don't think they should take any more of the wapiti out there," he added.

If the area to be set aside for the takahe made great inroads into the existing wapiti area there would be a lot of serious problems, he said.

The takahe area would also have to be closed to the public to prevent poaching by "unscrupulous individuals."

Mr McKenzie suggested that land to the south of the present takahe area, and also to the west, may be suitable, and therefore require only a little of the wapiti area to be claimed.

Mr McKenzie praised the work of Mr Taylor, Mr Angus, and the MP for Otago, Mr Warren Cooper, in supporting the wapiti campaign.

As well as citing the people of Gore, local councils and Federated Farmers, he commended the efforts of two former MPs, Mr Gordon Grieve and Mr Aubrey Begg.

Nothing Changed

The leader of the wapiti capture consortium, Mr E. J. Meredith said that although he had only heard brief reports of the Government decision, it did not appear to him that anything had changed.

It was always clear that there would be wapiti left in the park, he said.

"I think everybody appreciated before that there was no way all the wapiti could be caught."

"The real issue all along was whether the deerstalkers would get part of Fiordland National Park as a recreational hunting area. The wapiti just seemed to be a scapegoat in some way," he said.

The Fiordland wapiti were given to New Zealand early this century by the United States Government, coming originally from the Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming.

Wapiti is the North American Indian name for elk.

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7/8/82
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33840

Helicopter Hit Lines

23/9/82
(PA) ROTORUA
A helicopter, which crashed at Manawahe, north-east of Lake Rotoma, early yesterday morning, is thought to have hit overhead lines shortly before the accident.

A passenger in the helicopter was killed. He came from the Wairarapa, but his name has not been released.

The pilot, Mr Russell Strachan, aged 29, of Galatea, was treated at Rotorua Hospital and discharged.

Wreckage from the crash, which happened at 6am, was strewn over a wide area of semi-cleared hill country, and a back road. It was still smouldering five hours after the crash.

The Hughes-269C helicopter, based at Murupara, hit overhead lines, according to reports from the scene, and the pilot and passenger were thrown clear before impact.

After the crash, Mr Strachan walked five kilometres down the road, McIvor road, and raised the alarm at a farm.

The farmer, Mr P. S. Leaming, said: "The pilot was exhausted. He couldn't remember much of the accident, but thought his friend had been thrown out of the helicopter before impact."

Mr Leaming called the police and went to the crash site. "The helicopter was still burning — it was a real mess," he said.

Police from Whakatane and Kawerau later found the body of the dead man about 30 metres down a bushy gully below the road.

An inspector of air accidents from Wellington, Mr G. Goddard, inspected the crash scene late in the afternoon.

Wapiti Issue Before Cabinet on Monday

The Wapiti relocation issue is to be aired by Cabinet next Monday after a case by recreational hunters was favourably received by the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon yesterday.

A representative of the Deerstalkers Association, Mr Warren Taylor, of Gore, yesterday met with both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, in a last-ditch attempt to get Caucus to change its policy.

Mr Taylor was accompanied by the MP for Wallace, Mr Derek Angus, who also supports the case for the retaining of a recreational hunting area, and is not in favour of relocation of the Fiordland wapiti herd.

Mr Taylor's meeting with Mr Elworthy was not as favourable as he had hoped and seemed relatively ineffectual in altering the Minister's stance for relocation.

Mr Elworthy had told reporters after the meeting that the Government will relocate Fiordland wapiti despite the

continuing protests from local deerstalkers.

Much Thought

"We've given this a lot of thought and think we're doing the right thing," Mr Elworthy said.

Mr Taylor had made "reasonable requests to coincide with the point of view held by a lot of people in Southland," according to Mr Elworthy.

However, Mr Taylor had been told by the Minister that the Government was committed to a course of action it intended to follow.

Mr Taylor said last night that it seemed things had reached the stage that, if Mr Elworthy was not prepared to bend, "all out war" would have to be declared.

Mr Taylor received an ex-

tremely favourable reception from Mr Muldoon and now feels more hopeful that his case may succeed.

Own Volition

The Prime Minister told Mr Taylor and Mr Angus that he would take the matter before Cabinet on Monday.

This was not suggested to Mr Muldoon, but was of his own volition, which impressed Mr Taylor greatly. He said that the Prime Minister fully appreciated the problem now facing recreational hunters in Southland.

After the matter is discussed in Cabinet, Mr Angus will take the matter back to Caucus with the view to changing the decision to relocate the herd in the Nelson area.

Controversy on Takahe Colony

Sir, — I was amazed to read the comments of Mr R. B. Lavers (co-author of the 1981 Management Plan for the Conservation of Takahe) in Thursday's edition of The Southland Times.

Firstly, let me explain to Mr Lavers that recreational hunters have, for years, advised the local Park Board and the Forest and Bird Society about bird sightings in the park, and have told these people that stoats, not deer or opossums, have been the downfall of the takahe. How many birds — takahe or others — have to be eaten before a full scale war on stoats takes place?

Wapiti shooters have in the past asked for stoat traps to be supplied when they enter their hunting blocks, as a vast area could be covered for only the cost of the traps, but this appears to be too simple! It is more convenient to blame the wapiti.

Deer numbers have been low over the past few years but the takahe population has remained static, or even declined, so what now? How many takahe would we have today if the Wildlife Service had listened to the park users 20 years ago?

Secondly, because of the closure of the Murchison Mountains and other specially designated areas, nobody (other than a few scientists and the odd culler) has access to over 150 square miles of Fiordland National Park.

Can you blame Mr Bamford, the helicopter pilots, ground shooters, or other recreational users for not making known areas that contain takahe? To do so would probably lead to the closure of more areas of the park, which on past performances would not guarantee the survival of these rare birds (even if "Hindsight" thinks it would). Access to our large national park is slowly being withheld from recreational users, the very people it was originally designated for.

Finally, I think it would be more beneficial for the future of the takahe, if Mr Lavers was to stop criticizing the recreational users and listen instead to the suggestions made, in good faith, by them. In doing so he should not forget evolution has the final say on all matters including man himself.

G. P. Milne

Gore

Sir, — I was concerned to read Mr R. B. Lavers' letter in your column regarding the possible sighting of another takahe colony.

As a recreational hunter, I was present at the meeting between the National Parks and Reserves Authority and deerstalkers in Gore on September 17 when Mr J. Bamford the national vice-president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association reported and I quote:

"Evidence of another colony of takahe, separate from those documented by the Wildlife Service has been found in the Fiordland National Park. The discoverers of the birds

were unwilling to say where they had been found. The people concerned would not make public their find because of their opposition to what they saw as a wildlife policy of closing to the public, areas where takahe were found to be thriving."

Mr Bamford considered the report of the find to be from a reliable source and that the reported sighting was outside the special takahe area and outside the wapiti area in the park.

I do not condone the actions of the people believed to have found the colony in not disclosing their find, but it must be noted that the majority of the previous sightings of the takahe have been made by hunters, as they seem to represent the majority of park users and as a result these sightings have been detrimental to the users of the park. With this in mind it is understandable why the discoverers of the colony (whoever they are) are unwilling to disclose their findings.

Mr Lavers is mistaken if he believes Mr Bamford's statement puts the credibility of the Deerstalkers Association at stake or affects their ability to manage a herd of wapiti in Fiordland National Park at a level that won't detract from park values.

If we look at the Wildlife Service's performance over the past years in the special takahe area, it is interesting to see that the takahe numbers have declined along with the decline of the deer numbers. When will the Wildlife Service realize that the stoat is the reason for the decline of takahe in Fiordland. I believe that takahe and deer will live harmoniously in the same habitat provided the deer numbers are maintained at their present low levels.

Had the Wildlife Service spent their efforts trying to locate more takahe in the Kepler Mountains, where some of the more recent documented sightings over the years have been made, and also the mountain ranges to the south they may have found more takahe colonies themselves, but it would seem they have been more interested in trying to find justification to relocate takahe in the heart of the wapiti area in an attempt to destroy the interests of the hunting fraternity and future generations of New Zealand citizens.

As a recreational hunter I will be happy to sit down with all parties concerned to formulate a management plan for the retention of wapiti as a recreational resource (as has been directed by Government), and also for the preservation of the takahe within Fiordland National Park.

S. L. G. Rees

Gore

Pilot chopped

DEER recovery operations attract men of the "devil-may-care" type who tend to live on their nerves and take chances.

So said Auckland barrister, Kevin Ryan, when he appeared in Rotorua Court for Opotiki helicopter pilot, Wellwyn Harris Collins, who is generally known as Joe Collins.

Collins originally elected jury trial on two charges of dangerous flying and two of flying with false registration numbers, but changed his plea to guilty on all counts.

On the dangerous flying charges, Judge Fenton Latham fined him a total of \$800, disqualified him from flying for a year, and directed him to pay \$400 towards the cost of his prosecution. He also fined Collins \$200 on each of the false registration number counts.

Mr Ryan said Collins faced a sterile future. He'd already been banned from flying for three years — after a Rotorua jury found him guilty of dangerous flying in March (Truth, March 16).

The registration number charges related to incidents at Taupo in November, 1980, and the dangerous flying ones to the same month, but at Ohope.

Support For Wapiti

The Southland United Council yesterday gave roaring support for the retention of wapiti deer in the Fiordland National Park.

That move was not surprising, as the Southland and Wallace County Councils had previously decided to oppose relocation of the herd outside the park.

The council listened to the arguments for and against the removal of the deer from the park — already well under way yesterday morning.

The chairman of the Southland Parks and Reserves Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, explained why the wapiti could not be protected in the park.

Two recreational hunters, Messrs J. H. McKenzie and W. Taylor, said why they thought the deer should be retained in the park.

The council took only 10 minutes to determine its policy when the meeting reconvened in the afternoon.

It passed a two-pronged resolution, proposed by Cr H. L. Smith, which will be conveyed

to the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy.

He will be advised the council supports the retention of the wapiti in the park for recreational and scientific purposes and keeping the animal population to a level that did not infringe park values.

The council decided that after "recognizing the wapiti is long-established in the Fiordland National Park area and being satisfied the greater public interest is best served by the retention of the wapiti herd."

Wapiti Issue

Sir, — It must certainly be an indication of justice starting to work again when democratically elected representatives of local councils pledge full support for the retention of wapiti in Fiordland. A big thank you is extended to the Southland United Council.

The likes of Mr C. J. McFarlane and Mr L. Henderson, of the Southland Parks and Reserves Board, have gone to extremes to prove their point. In the last 15 months I have spent 31 days camping on the ridges and valleys of George and Bligh sounds. I have a large collection of slides taken on these ridges and valleys and wherever there was deer sign. These slides were taken at random and clearly illustrate that these people have painted the worst possible picture.

I like and appreciate the birds and trees as much as I enjoy the wapiti and believe a healthy environment supporting a herd of wapiti is a most desirable optimum.

All armchair conservationists should spend a week or two in the heart of the wapiti area before mouthing off. In addition, I would like to know where the act of extermination fits into the umbrella of conservation.

If justice, common sense and democracy win the day for the wapiti, I also hope a close look is taken at the way the Southland Parks and Reserves Board is set up.

P. Glaister

Deer Marketing 'Shambles'

(PA) AUCKLAND
A deer farmer yesterday called for a statutory board to be set up to regulate the export of venison.

Mr Hans Fitz, a director of Game Meats Ltd and former vice-president of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, said the international market was in a shambles because of exporters undercutting each other.

"I would like a statutory board with some teeth to give exporters guidelines. The board should have the power to cancel export licences if they do not comply with the guidelines. It would be far more effective than creating a monopoly selling authority."

Mr Fitz said the authority could act as a single seller to start off with until exporters'

guidelines had been drawn up. It would stop too many people selling the same meat on the same market.

"The Deer Farmers' Association has set up a Game Industry Advisory Board and also we have got an exporters' council and there is some communication between the two bodies, but it is still at a very early stage and how they are going to work it I don't know."

"Unless exporters can have some system or guidelines, I think they will do a lot of damage in the market place. At present it is a real shambles. Too many people are trying to sell the same product to the same importers."

Wild Animal Reports

6/11/82

QUEENSTOWN

In a report to the Wild Animals Advisory Committee, this week, Mr J. Von Tunzleman, Forest Service officer-in-charge at Te Anau, said ground operations had continued in the Murchison Mountains takahē areas resulting in 52 wild animals being killed during the year, including one male chamois.

Since mid-winter, hunters and staff spent 33 days positioning and checking 175 stoat traps. Aerial operations for the same time accounted for 53 live and 27 dead deer.

In respect of chamois control, Mr Von Tunzleman said six chamois were located and destroyed on the coastal face of Mt Pembroke and in the headwaters of the John O'Groats river.

In his report about the lakes district, Mr R. Martin, Forest Service officer-in-charge at Queenstown, said 80 goats were destroyed in Cardrona and another six on Mt Burke.

They were escaped domestic goats (from a wild strain) brought in during the goat farming boom.

In respect of thar, 20 had been shot during an aerial search-and-destroy operation. There had not been any commercial activity this winter, Mr Martin said.

A light deer population increase had been noted in the Hunter and Matukituki valleys.

Commercial operators had been advised and had taken some animals, and recreational hunters had been encouraged but kill results had not been good for the number of permits issued.

Chamois, like deer, would increase over the next few years, Mr Martin said, because they are not being commercially hunted and are only shot when encountered and where no search time is required.

Measurements were continuing on bird populations in the region and the immediate pest poisoning monitoring showed an increase in population. The demand for hunting remained constant, Mr Martin said.

Recreational hunters were maintaining good control in the Caples/Greenstone recreational hunting area but red deer had become more noticeable in the Lower Dart Beasburn and Rockburn regions.

White tail deer were holding their population level. With the 'no shooting' embargo on State forest south of Chinaman's Bluff, some of those animals were more readily seen.

In his report about the Taupō district, Mr H. Maunders said animal damage had been

kept to a minimum and night shoots had been maintained.

Ferret farming had become established and held promise as against opossum farming, Mr Maunders said.

With an outbreak of Tb in a herd of cattle grazing in the Waitahuna block of Berwick forest in early June, 217 opossums had been caught for post-mortem by Invermay staff to try to establish whether or not the opossums were responsible for the outbreak.

None of the opossums tested showed signs of the disease and Mr Maunders said they could only assume that the disease was brought in by cattle.

Deer Population Drops In S Fiordland

6/11/82

QUEENSTOWN

In a survey operations report to the Wild Animals Advisory Committee meeting at Mosgiel this week, Mr M. J. Slater, a forester at Invercargill, said deer had been drastically reduced in the Grebe Valley, southern Fiordland, since the 1976 survey.

In 1976, the only opossum sign recorded was in the lower Jacquery and Island Lake area, but by last year, they had colonized right down the Borland road and were present in the Percy Valley.

Colonization had been hastened by the Manapouri hydro scheme road which provided ready access.

The Fiordland National Park Board had subsequently carried out control measures accounting for 152 opossums. In the Lake Hauroko-Eastern Mountains region, deer had been reduced by 66 per cent to an overall low density.

Pigs are there in low numbers at the southern end of Lake Hauroko on the true right on the terraces and into the lower Rata Burn, Mr Slater said.

In a summing up of the Fiordland deer reduction numbers, Mr J. P. Harty, District Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill, and former chairman of the Fiordland National Park Board said that six years ago, about 18,000 deer were being taken from the park, but this year the number was about 4500.

In the Blue Mountains recreational hunting area, between 1980 and last year, a 70 per cent reduction was indicated, but that will be confirmed after a survey next summer.

If those results were correct, then Mr K. A. Mawhinney, Forest Service senior ranger at Invercargill, said there was a strong likelihood that hunter satisfaction would decline.

Animal management needed to be looked at sooner than anticipated and baseline data collection work had started, he said.

The management of recreational hunting areas had received some 'flak' from the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association through its president, the chairman of the advisory committee, Mr K. W.

Prior said, but everybody seemed to be happy with the Blue Mountains management and, in Southland, there had been better acceptance.

In respect of the Wakatipu recreational hunting area in the Caples-Greenstone Valleys, 22 submissions had been received for the draft wild animal control plan, with only one from the Otago Catchment Board being opposed to the concept.

Following analysis of the submissions, the final control plan has been prepared and is awaiting printing.

Mr Wallace Ramsay, chief soil conservator for the Otago Catchment Board, explained the board's concern about weaknesses in legislation which enabled the area to be gazetted before the board was consulted.

Mr Ramsay said a draft land improvement management plan prepared in agreement with the neighbouring runholder involved retiring the high country of domestic stock.

The catchment board relied on the Forest Service to control the wild animals on those retired lands.



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Deer Problem On Island

6/11/82

QUEENSTOWN

The continuing deer problem on Stewart Island drew some strong comments from Mr K. W. Prior, Conservator of Forests, Invercargill, and chairman of the Wild Animal Advisory Committee, at the committee's meeting at Mosgiel this week.

During discussion about the reductions in deer numbers there, following the Forest Service 1080 poisoning campaign almost two years ago, Mr Prior said he was totally dissatisfied with the situation.

If deer were as bad as research indicated, then the conservancy should recommend to the Minister of Forests, Mr Elworthy, that more

action should be taken.

"There has been too much shuffling about and I am not going to shuffle about the deer situation on Stewart Island," he said.

In northern Stewart Island there had been a substantial reduction in deer densities to the point where they were not having any dramatic effect on the vegetation.

The early 1080 poisoning carried out along the northern coastline accounted for the lowering of the numbers, and subsequently, deer populations had been held down by animal recovery and recreational hunting.

Post poisoning research had continued on the south-east coast where 300 deer had been accounted for during the 1080 operations two years ago.

This was a problem area where deer were coming back to that region from other

parts of the island.

A spokesman for the deerstalkers submitted that the recreational hunters' contribution had been underestimated. But Mr R. Tindal, Forest Service officer-in-charge on the island, said recreational hunting parties were only accounting for about 60 animals a year in the two trial areas.

The vegetation on the south coast was much worse now than it was 18 months ago, although 300 animals had been taken out of there.

Ground shooters had been unsuccessful in the region for the past six years, Mr Tindal said.

Mr J. C. Aspinall, of Wanaika, said even if poison was used on half of the island, there would still be ample deer for recreational hunters, but only surveys would indicate how successful they had been.

Mr Prior said he would not think of blanket poisoning on the island.

Summing up the implications of surveys, Mr K. A. Mawhinney, Forest Service senior ranger in Invercargill, said research showed deer were returning to the south-

east coastal area between Ocean Beach and Tikotatahi Bay, near Port Adventure, in such numbers as to minimize the expected results of re-vegetation.

The Forest Research Institute at Ilam, Christchurch, had suggested there should be another attempt at reducing the animal density, he said.

The matter had been further complicated through recent moves by Rakiura Maori Land Inc for proposals to vest other land in the research area in the incorporation.

Forest Service personnel were hoping to negotiate with

Maori landowners about implementing further research into animal control.

Members of the Wild Animal Advisory Committee have twice inspected the die-back problem on the Rata-Kamahi coastal forest on the island. Two years ago they gained permission from the then Minister of Lands, Mr Young, to use 1080 poison for a trial test in the research area of about 15km by half a kilometre between Ocean Beach and Tikotatahi Bay to reduce the white-tailed deer and opossums in the hope of saving the forest.

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6/11/82



Members of the Wild Animal Advisory Committee outside historic Drakes cottage in Berwick forest near Mosgiel. They are, from left, at Messrs P. Hollard (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dunedin), J. C. Inall, (Wanaka Federated Farmers Otago High Country representative), F. (Nokomal, Southland Federated Farmers High Country rep), A. Waghorn (New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Invercargill), Taylor (Lands and Survey

Department, Dunedin), A. G. Hall (Conservatory of Wildlife, Queenstown), J. P. Harty (Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill), T. Arthur (New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Dunedin). Seated in front from left: Messrs K. W. Prior (Conservatory of Forests, Invercargill and chairman of the committee), W. Ramshaw (Otago Catchment Board, Dunedin), C. Acker (New Zealand Forest Service, Invercargill).

ay Again Open land to Public

Secretary Island, part of the Fiordland National Park, may soon be open to the public again.

Island in Doubtful as first declared a "no-go area" in 1963 and at that time on, closed to the public.

no classified in order to protect the island's special flora and fauna because at that time it was believed that it had never in-

ice estimates that 1.4 deer have been shot for every helicopter hour on the island.

Yesterday's board meeting was told that total eradication was no longer possible and asked that the board change its formal attitude to the island.

No Lessening

The Forest Service guaranteed that no lessening of effort to keep deer numbers to a minimum would be allowed.

The board decided to recommend that Forest officers look at other islands in the park as alternative pristine flora and fauna areas and to investigate what would be involved in cancelling the special area designation.

ce of a single deer in 1965 but it could not be destroyed. Forest Service officials said there were deer on one small island. After and ground was stepped up during the 1970s. Also, 1080 poison was used. In 1978, the Forest Serv-



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Thar Control Plan

QUEENSTOWN
The Canterbury Conservancy of the Wild Animal Advisory Committee is preparing a draft wild animal control plan for South Canterbury which will include a section on thar control.

Southland and Westland conservancy staff are involved in this to ensure that thar do not spread south to the Mt Aspiring national park.

This was included in a report to the Southland conservancy by Forest Service senior ranger, Mr K. A. Mawhinney of Invercargill, at Mosgiel this week.

He also reported on progress made on the waterproof 1080 poison gel which had withstood considerable rain and remained toxic.

Its palatability to animals continued to be a problem in spite of research during the past year and field trials in different parts of the country.

Animals act on sight as well as odour and taste, and little progress has been made with the screening of the odour which occurred with the waterproof gel, he said.

Mr J. P. Harty, Invercargill Commissioner of Crown Lands, moved that the committee support the Forest Research Institute for its work in developing 1080 and also the Chemistry Division of Otago University for its contribution towards the use of attractants.

Two representatives of the Deerstalkers' Association at the meeting voted against the motion.

Mr Mawhinney said that, in respect of capture pens in the takahe area, prolonged negotiations by the Forest Service with a current pen operator had resulted in agreement for the Forest Service to operate them on a trial basis for a year.

It had not proved viable for the private owner to continue because of the remote region, but Forest Service and Wildlife Service staff could check

them periodically without having to make special trips.

The suggestion that a radio controlled pen be tried in Takahē Valley had not been taken up.

The low deer population in the valley and the expense of setting up the trial were considered to outweigh the likely benefits, but Mr Harty thought it would be well worth while.

Pockets of pigs in the lakes district are concerning the committee because of the illegal liberation of the pigs.

Mr R. Martin, Forest Service officer at Queenstown, made an extensive survey throughout the Clutha and Lindis valleys to assess the numbers.

A meeting called to discuss action included representatives from Federated Farmers, Agriculture and Fisheries Department, Lands and Survey and Forest Service.

Farmers have agreed to encourage recreational hunting and the situation will be watched and further action taken if necessary.



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Fell Out Of Helicopter

(PA)

CHRISTCHURCH

A 17-year-old South Westland youth may have opened his safety belt to look out of a helicopter while chasing deer before falling to his death on Saturday morning, Constable Rodger Millard, of Haast, said last night.

Gerrard Scott had gone for a ride with his cousin, pilot James Scott, of Karangarua, and the shooter on a deerstalking expedition, David Hetherington.

At about 8.30am, the helicopter was flying over the Paringa and Otoko rivers, seeking deer, when one was spotted.

The machine was making sharp turns, chasing the deer, when Mr James Scott and Mr Hetherington suddenly found a door unfastened and Gerrard Scott missing.

The helicopter immediately landed and Mr Hetherington began a ground search while Mr James Scott flew to Paringa to telephone Constable Millard.

Constable Millard said last night that 14 searchers had gone into the area with torches and searched until one o'clock yesterday morning, when they found Gerrard Scott's body.

It was possible young Scott had opened his belt to get a better view of the deer chase he said, but this was not certain.

The body was taken to Grey Hospital for a post-mortem examination.

Wapiti Policy Reversed

In a complete reversal of policy, the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board has accepted a proposal from the National Parks Authority that wapiti be retained in the Fiordland National Park.

According to minutes of a meeting between the Southland board and the authority in September which were sent to The Southland Times, the board accepted a proposal to recommend to the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, that the policy of providing a recreational hunting area in the park for wapiti should continue for a further five years.

The public has always understood, and it is the board's stated policy, that the wapiti strain could not be preserved in Fiordland. The board chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, has acknowledged the board's support for relocation of the animals.

According to the minutes, the proposal recommended for consideration by the Minister was subject to a number of conditions. They were that:

- The area be redefined to take into account existing and potential areas of takahe habitat and food sources.
- The shooting season apply for the whole 12 months, and be open to all recreational hunters.
- A scientific committee be established to determine conclusively, and with public acceptance, that there is no such thing as a wapiti which justifies a different policy.
- The animals already removed from the park should be sold to provide income for the monitoring of the wapiti area.

Members of the authority claimed that the thinking behind the proposal was to suggest to the Minister that the policy on relocation should stop, because of the effect on the rest of New Zealand.

According to the minutes of the meeting, this was supported by Mr McFarlane, who said most of the controversy in Southland had arisen because people saw the wapiti going out of the province.

"Mr McFarlane said he realized that the board's opposition was bad national parks public relations, but he held a firm view that the board could not be seen to compromise," the minutes said.

When contacted last night for further comment on the proposal, Mr McFarlane did not wish to discuss it. He said he understood the matter had been taken in committee.

However, a well-known pro-wapiti member of the park board, Mr Jack McKenzie, was prepared to comment. He acknowledged that the board's acceptance of the proposal was a "reversal of policy."

Authority

"I think the authority was sent down here to resolve this, and that was what they came up with," he said.

"I gathered that within that five year period the problem of whether or not we have wapiti has to be solved, and also the matter of the takahe. I believe both these matters could be solved now, and the takahe could be well taken care of. I believe there are possible takahe habitats that haven't yet been investigated."

Mr McKenzie said the board had "little option" but to accept the proposal, because the National Parks Authority was the senior controlling body. Deerstalkers' representatives had discussed the same proposal with the authority, and he said they had "agreed not to blow the gaff" until the Minister had considered it.

Ample Time

"He's had ample time to do so, but we've heard nothing,

and I'm glad it's being made public," he said.

"I think it would be a great loss to the country if we lost the wapiti from Fiordland. While it wouldn't be true to say there are no hybrids, they are a distinctive animal."

Mr McKenzie said, however, that if it came to the crunch between the wapiti and the takahe, the birds would have to come first, because they are a native species.

The removal of the wapiti from Fiordland began at the beginning of this year. A new site for them has still not been decided, although an area in Nelson is being investigated.

Environmentalists have wanted the animals out of the park because of the threat they claim is posed to vegetation and the takahe. Deerstalkers, on the other hand, have been fighting to retain the wapiti, saying the hunting provided is a unique sporting experience.

A change of Government policy in July, this year, meant that at the end of the two year removal contract, the "leftover wapiti" will remain in the park. This was described at the time by the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon, as a compromise which he thought would work.

First Deer Killed

(PA) ASHBURTON

The first deer were killed yesterday at the Seafield venison and lamb processing factory near Ashburton.

The factory is the first in the South Island which specializes in the processing of farm deer. Sixteen stags were ready for slaughter as a trial run.

Boning-out of the venison carcasses will be done today and killing will resume next week.

It is planned to start slaughtering about 20 deer and gradually increase to 80. The maximum capacity of the eight-man chain will be 100.

Wapiti Slanging Match Calms a Little

The slanging match between the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association and the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board over relocation of the Fiordland wapiti herd calmed a little yesterday.

At its monthly meeting yesterday, the board decided to simply acknowledge its most recent letter from the association, dated November 17.

That letter is the latest of a series of letters between the board and the association's

national secretary, Mr Shelby Grant.

The association is opposed to the board's decision, now about a year old, to relocate the wapiti herd. That decision is in line with the Government's policy that national

parks should not shelter introduced flora or fauna.

Turned Blind Eye

Mr Grant's letter reiterated association claims that the board, in bringing down its decision to relocate the herd, had turned a blind eye to public opposition and "therefore has not discharged its proper function to advise the Government for policy-making purposes."

Once a satisfactory breeding herd is brought out of the park, the board intends to begin an extermination programme on the remaining wapiti.

"There are many areas in which we would agree and others where we would disagree," the chairman, Mr J. McFarlane, said. "But there was one aspect of the letter that gave me some hope that it was over."

Mr McFarlane was referring to a statement by Mr Grant that the NZDA did not want protection of wapiti. "It's the most constructive point in all of the correspondence, and I think it should be acknowledged."

However, Mr Grant's letter said the association was very concerned with retention of the herd, not protection.

The NZDA representation on the board is through its affiliation to the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand. That body, with a membership of more than 50,000, has a policy that the wapiti herd be managed at a level which would not affect the environment.

Opposed

It is opposed to either the removal of the wapiti area or the relocation of the herd to any other area outside the park.

Board member, Mr D. Wilson, said the FMC is concerned that the "wapiti problem" could be introduced to another area. "That's why they are opposed to relocation," he said.

Mr L. Henderson said this also applied to other environmental groups. "It's not that they are opposed to control, they just don't want the problem shifted anywhere else," he said.

"That's not really support for the NZDA stand."

More Than 4500 Deer Captured

Between 4500 and 5000 deer have been captured by helicopter operators in the Fiordland National Park in the past 12 months.

The park's chief ranger, Mr Paul Green, told yesterday's meeting of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board that those figures were accurate to the end of November.

The matter arose from a discussion with the Southland conservator of forests for the New Zealand Forest Service, Mr K. Prior. He questioned the board on its insistence of remaining with the system of licensing helicopter operations for deer recovery in the park.

Almost all other parks allowed "open slather" operations to clear the introduced deer from their areas. Mr Prior questioned the Southland board's motives for continuing with its block allocation system.

Ensured Coverage

The board's chairman, Mr J. McFarlane, said the board stuck with the system because it ensured all areas needing attention were worked by the catchers.

The board assigns its 10 blocks to operators who change blocks each month, thereby ensuring all areas are hunted.

Later in the meeting, board member, Mr J. McKenzie,

asked what the position was with the removal of wapiti by the Government-contracted consortium.

66 Wapiti

Mr Green said that 66 wapiti deer had been captured and taken to the Government's farm herd on the West Coast. Eventually there are to be 200 prime wapiti on that farm.

Of the 66 animals, 48 were cows and 18 bulls. The first year of the consortium's two-year contract will be completed on December 31.

"I can't say precisely how many they have because the farm stock is being continually reappraised," Mr Green told the meeting.

He said that the 10 ordinary blocks were reallocated by ballot recently. Only one operator withdrew. The individual company results were not open to the public, he said.

Mr McFarlane said he was able to say the numbers were decreasing and "this is most gratifying indeed."



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Contact our deer specialists

Ray Smith Ph 75-233 Invercargill
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Deer Farmers' Association. The association has been fortunate in obtaining displays from approximately 20 organizations associated with the deer industry.

The directors believe it is essential that every visitor to the show pays a visit to the Centennial Hall to observe the exhibits on display.

Velvet

An added attraction as part of the Deer Farmers' Association pavilion activities, is the inaugural velvet competition. Entries have been received and each entry has included a photograph of the velvet still on the animal with the eartag number clearly visible and this has accompanied the entry of the velvet.

As an incentive to entrants, the top 10 entrants in each class will have their entry fee reimbursed and the total prize money will be \$1500 including a trophy.

The fact that the competition appears to be the first velvet competition organized in New Zealand is somewhat of an achievement for the local association. It is hoped this competition will be a success and become an integral part of future Summer Show activities.

Dalgety

Dalgety will again require a quantity of Stags suitable for killing this season. A nett price per kg will be paid on any animal over 35kg nett weight.

For further details contact:

B. G. Gallagher
B. N. Monk

Mossburn 53
Invercargill 75-384
78336

19/1/83

Deer Velvet

The new velvet competition, organized by the Southland branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers Association, attracted considerable interest in the Centennial Hall.

This is the first competition of its kind in New Zealand and possibly in the world. It was designed to encourage interest in the breeding of deer and the production of top quality velvet.

The chairman of the Southland branch of the NZDFA, Mr P. Ryan said that the competition had attracted 19 entries from as far away as the Bay of Plenty and Canterbury, as well as from Southland deer farmers.

Mr Ryan said that he was more than satisfied with the

support given by deer farmers and this had ensured that the velvet competition would remain a permanent event at future shows.

The standard of the velvet entered was considered to be very high and a credit to the entrants, Mr Ryan said.

The winner of the Red deer class and recipient of the Wilson Neill Ltd trophy was Mr R. Swann of Fairlie with Mr H. Whyte of Invercargill second. Third placing also went to Mr Swann.

Today is Peoples Day and another full programme is planned.

Wapiti Trophy Dates 15/12/82 Welcomed

The dates of next year's wapiti trophy shoot in the Fiordland National Park have been received with satisfaction by deershooters.

Before settling on the period between March 20 and April 10, the Lands and Survey Department's administration officer, Mr J. R. Fraser, discussed the matter with Mr Jack McKenzie, a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, and a keen recreational hunter.

Other hunters yesterday also voiced their approval of the period. Last year there was considerable dispute over the date, with some hunters claiming the shoot was held too late.

Mr W. B. Taylor, from Gore, said yesterday he had no argument with the timing of the shoot. He was, however, concerned that helicopter capture of live animals was to continue to within a day of the shoot opening.

"That it should be only one day is provocative and crazy," he said.

Acceptable

Mr Alan Rodger, from Wana, who last year tried to organize an alternative private shoot to that sanctioned by the authorities, said the dates were "quite acceptable."

"I'm very pleased that it's going to be a wapiti trophy shoot, not just a trophy shoot, because the various authorities have been trying to tell us that there aren't any good wapiti trophies there any more," he said.

"This is an admission that there are trophy animals there."

Both men expressed concern, however, at a report in last Friday's Southland Times which said the parks board intended to begin an extermination programme on the wapiti remaining when the capture consortium's removal contract expires.

Contradiction

This would be a direct contradiction to an announcement by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, in July, to the effect that the Government caucus had agreed to a management plan being drawn up by the park board to

control these remaining animals.

Mr Rodger said the board was dreaming if it thought it could carry out a policy of extermination.

The board chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said yesterday that members had not yet decided what to do with the remaining wapiti.

"Extermination isn't practical. Although the Act refers to extermination of red deer and others, the practicalities of that solution are impossible to overcome," he said.

"The reality is that there should be a level of control, and this applies to red deer as well as wapiti and everything else. Most of the doubt revolves around what that level of control should be."

Obstacle

Mr Taylor felt that there was only one obstacle to a management plan being prepared and put into operation right away — the consortium with the contract to remove the wapiti.

"These four men are standing in the way of game management being commenced right now," he said.

"If the culling was done in the field by taking the red deer and hybrids out, the problem would be solved. We (the NZ Deerstalkers' Association) have always wanted these out of the park."



The chairman of the Southland branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, Mr P. Ryan, with the winning red deer velvet entry by Mr R. Swann of Fairlie, exhibited at the Southland A and P show yesterday.

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The best velvet of the season, according to buyer Mr Allan Bradley, was this 5.55kg set worth more than \$700. What makes the velvet particularly good is the fact that it came from only a three-year-old hybrid deer. Mr Bradley says most deer do not reach their full potential until they are eight to 10 years old. The velvet is from a deer reared by Mr Findlay Sutherland, of Eastern Bush.

Dalgety

FARM VENISON

Dalgety New Zealand Limited, now wish to purchase Farm Venison to the following schedule. Details are as follows:
FIRST GRADE: Under 2½ years. Lean Meat up to 65kg with good muscle conformation and no defects — \$3.50 per kg hook weight.
2nd Grade: Over 2½ years. Lean Meat over 65kg with good muscle conformation \$3.00 per kg.
Third Grade: Overfat and damaged carcasses with poor muscle conformation and/or defects — \$2.50 per kg.
Manufacturing Grade: Aged animals including culled hinds, old stags and meat suitable only for manufacturers — \$1.50 per kg.
IMPORTANT: Please note that this is a straight out purchase price. All byproducts remain for our account and we pay all killing and processing charges. Payment will be made seven days after slaughter.

Owners wishing to book killing space should contact:
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B. N. Monk 75-384 Invercargill 79361

Wapiti Shoot Dates

Next year's wapiti trophy shoot in the Fiordland National Park will be held from March 20 to April 10.

This was confirmed yesterday by the Lands and Survey Department. Applications for the 24 blocks will close on February 7 at 10am with the commissioner of Crown lands in Invercargill.

Both the park headquarters in Te Anau and the department's office in Invercargill may be contacted for application forms. The ballot for the blocks will be drawn within a fortnight of the closing date.

Helicopter operations in the area involving the removal of live deer will continue until one day before the shoot, and resume immediately afterwards.

The shoot will be advertised throughout the country at intervals from Saturday, December 18.

One Trophy

Conditions for the shoot are basically the same as those in force last year. Only one trophy per person will be permitted, with a maximum of four trophies per party. There

will be no limit on red deer trophies.

The minimum number in a party is two, but there is no maximum limit. Last year there were applications from 180 parties, representing 434 people. The 24 successful parties included 91 individuals, but only 73 actually turned up to shoot.

Last year's applications were the highest on record. The previous year there were 426 people involved, and in 1980, there were 387.

A briefing meeting will take place in Te Anau the night before the shoot begins. This is confined to party members actually taking part in the shoot, and the only subject permitted for discussion is the shoot itself.

Wrightson
NMA

12/1/83

DEER FARMERS

We are now accepting Deer for slaughter at the Mossburn Game Facility. Enquiries to

Alan Bradley
Phone: 7440 Te Anau

77960

Deer Being Imported

(Special) WELLINGTON

Thirty-five deer, being imported from Britain, are expected to arrive in New Zealand on Monday.

The deer will be held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' quarantine station at Silverstream.

The 28 red deer, six fallow deer and one sika stag are being imported by three groups, and will be quarantined for 30 days.

An Ayrshire bull and seven horses will arrive from Britain with the deer.

Wrightson
NMA

12/1/83
WRIGHTSON
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Our Velvet Buyer will be available at the factory corner of Annan and Tweed Streets, Invercargill, Thursday afternoon January 13. Thereafter Friday afternoon as usual. Enquiries regarding velvet and deer sales.

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A. Bradley 7440 Te Anau
Ray Smith 75-289 Invercargill

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For further inquiries and bookings contact Evan Mackie

Phone 59-364 Invercargill

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MAF Sure Meat From Horse

(PA) WELLINGTON

Horsemeat may have been sold through a retail Wairarapa butchery, it was reported yesterday.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries meat division staff seized a large heart from the shop-window of a Wairarapa butcher 10 days ago.

The Ministry is confident further analysis will show it is a horse's heart, according to the report.

Wairarapa Ministry officials confirmed late on Monday the Wallaceville test station had found the heart not to be that of a cow.

The station was seeking a horse heart to make direct comparison before releasing its final finding.

Discovery of the heart follows a Ministry swoop on Wairarapa butchers to stop illegal sales of farm-killed meat to the public and, in some cases, to Wellington butchers and restaurants.

Been Visited

All Wairarapa butcheries, from Featherston to Woodville, have been visited by meat division inspectors, and it is known there is at least one case with the Crown Law Office relating to the retail sale of farm-killed meat.

The Meat Act 1981 outlaws the sale of farm-killed or ungraded meat and its being processed by butchers, unless supplied for farmers' own use.

Butchers handling meat on farmers account must keep separate records of the meat, keep it separate from graded works-killed meat and not present it for public sale.

The conditions for selling pet food are equally strict, with the meat having to be sourced from a pet food factory licensed to kill and process the meat.

There are several grades of pet food, with that sold in cans or rolls having to be sterilized and fit for both human and animal consumption.

Other pet food must be fit for animal consumption and must not be offered alongside graded meat where contamination could occur.

Not Marked

However, Ministry sources say the heart seized recently was not marked as either horse meat or pet food and that it came from a pet food plant not licensed to kill at the time. Although the plant was normally licensed, upgrading necessary at the time the heart was found meant it was not entitled to kill horses.

A Ministry regional veter-

inarian Mr Tom Dysart said from Hastings that the Ministry did not believe it was a cow's heart but had "every reason to believe that it is a horse heart."

He confirmed the pet food plant from which the heart had come could not get a licence to kill horses until it was upgraded.

Meat both graded and ungraded, and even horsemeat, was virtually unrecognizable once turned into sausage mince or wrapped in a vacuum pack with any grading marks on the fat trimmed off, Mr Dysart said.

In the light of the Australian horse meat and kangaroo meat scandal the Ministry took the problem very seriously, as it put New Zealand's public health and \$2000 million meat exports at risk.

Firm Pressure

"It's too easy for people to use complacent talk and say it couldn't happen here. It did happen in Australia and we have been under firm pressure from United States' authorities particularly to make sure it could not happen here," Mr Dysart said.

The Ministry was also concerned at recent comments that farm meat tasted better and indicating the hygiene requirements of freezing works

were superfluous.

The rules were there to protect public health, the consumer and exports, Mr Dysart said. Consumers had a right to expect the meat they bought to be from the kind of animal they expected and to be clean and disease-free.

There was nothing to stop "unscrupulous people" passing off meat and offal from animals which had died of natural causes, Mr Dysart warned.

Wairarapa was in particular danger since tuberculosis had a strong presence in pigs and beef, he said.

With Wairarapa's Waingawa freezing works no longer killing pigs, the Ministry was increasingly aware of large-scale farm-killing of pigs for sale illegally through local butcheries.

While the Ministry is not trying to stop farmers eating their own meat, spokesmen say it must act to protect the consumer from misleading meat sale practices and to enforce laws aimed to protect health and the economy.

A Featherston butcher, Mr Maurice McNabb, has confirmed a heart was seized at his butchery, and he says of the case before the Ministry that he will claim the heart belonged to a cow.

He said the heart had been displayed in the petfood corner of his shop window along with pet-food sausages.

Mr McNabb said he would defend his case on the grounds that Ministry officers had visited his shop two weeks earlier and seen large hearts in another area of the shop and had not told him he could not sell them.

Not Health Risk

Mr McNabb said he believed there was no way the heart could have spread bacteria or other organisms posing a health risk to other meat in the window.

Mr Barry Gerrand, another Featherston butcher and president of the Wairarapa branch of the Meat Retailers Federation, knew of the horse heart case and the campaign against farm-killed meat. He believed it was in the interests of all butchers to ban illegal sales.

Former federation president, Mr Max Stevenson, of Masterton, said his members and another Wairarapa butcher were "dead against farm-killed meat being sold."

Most killed and processed sheepmeat into small goods for farmers but did so separately and legally from their commercial operation, he said.

SOUTHLAND S.F.C. FARMERS

VENISON SCHEDULE (RED DEER) 5/2/83

Owing to increased demand in export markets and some new developments in cutting and packing techniques, the Southland Farmers' Co-op Assn Ltd Export Department are able to offer the following schedule for deer slaughtered at the Mossburn D.S.P.

This schedule is effective from Monday, February 7 1983 for the following week and thereafter will be reviewed on a weekly basis.

GRADE AL \$4.10/kg Carcass weight (lean up to 65kg)
GRADE AH \$4.30/kg carcass weight (lean over 65kg)
GRADE AD \$3.00/kg carcass weight (overfat animals)
GRADE AM \$2.00/kg carcass weight (manufacturing)

The above prices, inclusive of all by-products, will be paid seven days after slaughter.

The killing charge is \$35.00 per head which will be payable by the supplier and deducted from schedule proceeds at the time of payment. NZDFA levy of 8c/kg will also be deducted at this time unless we are otherwise instructed by suppliers.

As well as the above schedule, suppliers have the alternative of owners accounts in which case an interim payment will be made on the same basis as above.

Any adjustments to the schedule will be advertised and enquiries regarding booking space and up-to-date schedule levels should be directed to.

Evan Mackie Phone Business 81-929
Home 59-364

84238

Helicopter Crashes

25/1/83

TE ANAU

Two men escaped injury when their Hughes 300 helicopter became caught in a deer net and crashed above Lake Alabaster, in the Fiordland National Park, on Wednesday night.

The men, Mr Ray David Nicholson, the pilot, aged 29, of Te Anau, and Mr Alistair Robert Borthwick, aged 22, of Tuatapere, were on a deer recovery mission in the Hollyford Valley.

Police in Te Anau said last night they had apparently netted a deer when the net caught in the skids, causing the helicopter to crash.

The machine was extensively damaged, but the two men were not hurt.

Yesterday, leaving Mr Borthwick with the crashed machine, Mr Nicholson made his way down the mountain slopes to get help, coming out at Pyke Lodge about 3.30pm.

However, the alarm had been raised yesterday morning by another member of the team, who reported the helicopter overdue from its deer recovery trip.

Police were called about 11.30am and by 1.20pm had located the crashed helicopter in a valley above Lake Alabaster.

Constable T. Henderson said he expected the crashed helicopter would be lifted out of the bush when it had been cleared by the inspector of air accidents.

Taken Along For Ride

10/2/83

ROTORUA

(PA) A Kaingaroa Forest Service ranger was jammed to the bonnet of a poacher's getaway vehicle during a 20km chase up Mt Tarawera on Tuesday night.

About 11pm, rangers on patrol disturbed a group of deer poachers in the Waiotapu recreational area. As the poachers attempted to get away in a four-wheel-drive vehicle, Mr Stewart Henderson, of Kaingaroa, was jammed between the vehicle's bonnet and brush guard.

A high-speed 20km chase to the top of Mt Tarawera followed along winding, metal-lined forest roads.

The acting conservator of forests, Rotorua, Mr C. A. Skudder said yesterday the chasing vehicle made radio contact with police in Rotorua, who dispatched cars to the scene.

At the top of the mountain, the pursued vehicle was stopped and it, along with several rifles, was confiscated.

Mr Skudder said that during the chase, Mr Henderson was very frightened and extremely cold.

He was quite shaken, but otherwise unhurt, yesterday.

The Waiotapu area has been closed due to the fire risk and because Sambur deer are being monitored in the area.

Mr Skudder said the Forest Service may refer to the Crown Law Office to recommend poaching charges.

The Southland Times, Friday, January 28, 1983. 3

Butcher Had Horsemeat

(PA)

WELLINGTON

A heart seized from the window of a Featherston butcher by the Ministry of Agriculture was horsemeat, the Ministry said yesterday.

It said it had referred the case to the Crown Law Office after scientists at the Wallaceville Research Station confirmed the heart was from a horse.

Meat Division veterinarians, who seized the heart from the window of the shop three weeks ago, were confident the heart was not from a cow, based on a visual examination, but sent the suspect heart and a cattle heart to the station for comparison.

Initial tests showed the heart was not bovine but the station then requested a known horse heart for comparison with that seized from the butcher.

If prosecuted, the butcher

who offered the heart for sale, Mr Maurice McNabb, could be fined more than \$10,000.

At the time the discovery of the heart was reported in Wellington, Mr McNabb said he would defend his case on the grounds that the Ministry officers had visited his shop two weeks earlier and seen large hearts in another area of the shop and not told him he could not sell them.

Mr McNabb said the heart was on sale as pet food and could not have contaminated meat for human consumption in the display case. He said he would be claiming the heart to be bovine.

He could not be contacted for comment on the Wallaceville findings.

Deer Pen Raided

TE ANAU

Two deer have been stolen from the pen on the Fiordland coast.

Police in Te Anau said last night the deer pen operator had flown over his pens in the Preservation Inlet-Cunaris Sound area on Wednesday.

A hind and fawn were seen in one of the pens.

When he returned by float plane on Thursday to pick up the animals they were gone and all that remained were footprints where the deer had been taken under the fence.

Police inquiries are continuing and they said this was not the first time deer have been taken from deer pens.

Wrightson NMA

5/2/83

VENISON SCHEDULE (RED DEER)

Owing to increased demand in export markets and some new developments in cutting and packing techniques, Wrightson NMA Ltd are able to offer the following schedule for deer slaughtered at the Mossburn D.S.P.

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As well as the above schedule, suppliers will have the alternative of owners accounts in which case an interim payment will be made on the same basis as above.

Any adjustments to the schedule will be advertised and enquiries regarding booking space and up-to-date schedule levels should be directed to

Phone Business 81-969

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Te Anau 7746
Invercargill 75-289

26/1/83 DEER FARMERS VELVET

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SOUTHLAND S.F.C. FARMERS

DEER AUCTION

ROSEDALE SELLING CENTRE

TUSSOCK CREEK

12/2/83

Tuesday, March 24, 1983

THE SOUTHLAND FARMERS CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LTD wish to announce they are conducting a Weaner Hind and Stag Auction at the Rosedale Selling Pavilion, on Thursday March 24, 1983.

Entries for this sale are invited.

For further particulars contact

Mr Geoff Erskine

Phone 78-097 Invercargill

OR

Mr Evan Mackie

Phone 59-364 Invercargill
84233

Wapiti Dissatisfaction Endorsed by County

The Wallace County Council has again taken up the cudgels over the wapiti issue.

This follows a council meeting yesterday, at which the MP for Wallace, Mr D. A. Angus, described the wapiti relocation issue as a "stupid exercise" by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy.

The council was discussing a letter from Mr Warren Taylor, of Gore, expressing frustration at the lack of action in response to the requests that wapiti be retained in Fiordland National Park, and requesting that the council write to the Minister or the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon, supporting this concern.

Mr Taylor said last year, the council had resolved to support protest against the decision to relocate the Fiordland wapiti to another area of New Zealand.

"...largely because of this support, Mr Muldoon agreed to meet me to discuss the matter. This meeting proved to be fruitful as not only did Mr Muldoon personally volunteer to discuss the problem in Cabinet the following Monday, but Mr Derek Angus was successful the following day in obtaining a Government caucus decision to permit recreational hunting under management in the park, subject to the agreement with the capture consortium running its course until December 31, 1983," Mr Taylor said.

"Whitewash"

"Most of us were aware of the degree of 'whitewash' involved, but I had hoped we had seen the conception of enlightened thinking at last and that the gestation period would not approach that of an elephant, or longer."

Mr Taylor said following the announcement of the caucus decision last July 20, the Minister advised the National Parks Authority of the decision by letter and met the authority for further discussion.

The authority met a group of local people in Gore and in Invercargill in September to establish areas of common agreement and to initiate negotiations regarding managed hunting of wapiti in the Fiordland National Park as an acceptable long-term park activity.

No Reply

"I am advised that immediately following these meetings, the authority wrote to the Minister setting out its recommendations, one of which, I believe, was the authority's opposition in relocation. As of last week, the authority had not received a reply, and no doubt the authority members are just as concerned about this as I am."

"I believe the authority is anxious to have the whole matter resolved and adminis-

trative detail in train, but are frustrated in this by the inactivity on the part of the Minister. Perhaps the Minister sees himself politically as being in a 'no win' situation, but we are not," Mr Taylor said.

Of more concern, he said, was the apparent change in the capture arrangements under agreement between the Crown and the capture consortium.

"At a meeting in Te Anau in late December 1981, the Minister agreed to let me have a copy of the signed agreement as it was 'a public document.' Shortly afterwards I learned that no such agreement existed and that the arrangement was held together by an exchange of correspondence between the Minister (or someone) and the consortium."

"I understand the formal agreement is dated July 6, 1982, which was one week before I met with Mr Muldoon and obviously after the Minister was made aware of very strong objection to the proposal. I am left to wonder what the situation would be now if my meeting with Mr Muldoon had taken place before July 6, 1982," Mr Taylor said.

Bulls

Referring to one of the clauses in the agreement, Mr Taylor said one of the requirements of the consortium was to supply a certain number of male animals.

"My information now is that the Crown, since before Christmas, has not required any more male animals as all breeding will be sired by imported pure-bred bulls, or by artificial insemination. This effectively means that the consortium may now keep all male animals for themselves."

He said a further effect is that the consortium now had "full inducement" to take out wapiti bulls and quality hybrids, whereas under the original arrangement they might have been tempted to "overfly" these animals, as their capture was a total loss to them.

As an indication of this, Mr Taylor presented the county with a photograph of a set of antlers from a bull which was captured in the wapiti area last month by a member of the consortium. He said the asking price for the bull was \$8000.

Mr Taylor said the events that occurred after the council first supported the protest, indicated that:

- The Minister was stalling and appeared not to be heeding opposition.

- There was plenty of time between December 1981 and

July 1982 for the Minister to acknowledge the opposition and modify the capture operation after consultation with interested parties.

- The capture operation was not now proceeding in terms of the agreement.

- The capture operation for relocation or for extermination within the park was a failure and should cease immediately.

- In spite of Park Board statements to the contrary, there are quality wapiti in the park.

- The entire operation is now almost 100 per cent a financial operation of benefit to the consortium.

Totally Opposed

"I am totally opposed to the exercise," Mr Angus told yesterday's meeting.

"I intend to stop it whenever I get the chance but we are stuck with a contract which can't be completed until the end of this year."

Mr Angus said the Southland Parks and Reserves Board was reluctant to accept there would be a recreational hunting area in the Fiordland National Park.

"They have failed to recognize this directorate from the authorities. We'll establish a recreational hunting area in the park, that will be no problem. The trouble will be find-

ing the boundaries between the takahe and the wapiti."

Earlier Mr Angus had suggested that the takahe and other rare birds in the park could be relocated on the red tussock reserve at Gorge Hill.

Cr C. N. Tauri suggested that the Eglington block near Te Anau Downs could be a suitable area for the relocation of the wapiti.

"The deer would be in Southland, they could be easily managed and there are possible tourist attractions," Cr Tauri said.

Mr Angus said he would investigate the possibility.

Cr E. P. Wilding, said a lot of questions raised by Mr Taylor needed to be answered. He said the original contract was now being abused by members of the capture consortium.

Mr Angus said he had already written to the Minister asking that no more male deer be taken out of the park.

The council resolved to send a telegram to the Minister asking for the capture of male deer to stop immediately. It will also write to Mr Elworthy asking his policy on the relocation of the deer.

The council will also write to the Southland Parks and Reserves Board asking what it is doing to provide recreational hunting in Fiordland National Park.

Venison sales soon

Venison is expected to be available in some Dunedin supermarkets within three months.

Both export quality venison and venison smallgoods, supplied by at least two companies are expected to be on sale.

The Canterbury Venison Company, which began selling the less expensive cuts of export quality venison in one Christchurch supermarket on Thursday, is looking at promoting the product throughout the South Island.

A company marketing spokesman said in Christchurch yesterday she expects the products to be on sale in Otago, through a South Island promotion, before North Island markets are supplied.

The company has started supplying the Supervalu chain of supermarkets in Christchurch from its Seafield plant which opened early in December.

About half a tonne of meat, including steaks, mince, casseroles and sausages, was sold on the first day. The top steaks fetched \$7.89 a kilogram, the mince \$3.99 a kilogram and the casserole venison \$6.79 a kilogram.

"In some cases the prices were lower than for beef and were competitive with other forms," the spokesman said.

Recipes and cooking techniques have been demonstrated alongside the sales counters by the company.

SMALLGOODS

Meanwhile, Wilson Neill Ltd, the Dunedin-based company, should be selling venison smallgoods in Dunedin within a few months.

It will be the culmination of a pilot marketing and promotional scheme which has been under way for some months, according to the assistant general manager of the export division, Mr J. D. Scandrett.

He does not believe there is sufficient demand in Otago for the top quality venison products, 85 per cent of which have been exported to West Germany in the past.

"Because of test marketing that we did three years ago, we are convinced there is no substantial retail market in New Zealand for top quality steak lines," Mr Scandrett said.

"We will attempt to move into the lower end of the market, providing a wider range of goods."

He believes there is a small but steady demand for such items in Dunedin, but the new lines will need promoting.

"A promotional package is being prepared, but the whole thing will be subject to price. That will be the key," Mr Scandrett said.

Through its Mossburn factory, Wilson Neill processes more than 200 deer (10 tonnes of venison) a week. Although West Germany is by far the strongest market, outlets are being developed in Australia, Japan and the United States.

The Southland Times, Saturday, February 12, 1983. 25

Wapiti Trophy Shoot Ballot Held

The ballot for 24 parties to take part in this year's wapiti trophy shoot in the Fiordland National Park was held in Invercargill on Wednesday.

When applications closed last Monday, 121 parties, representing 458 hunters, had applied for shooting blocks.

Those who were successful were: L. Hookes, Hamilton, Upper Glaisnock; G. Sinclair, Auckland, Catseye; Q. Hansen, Featherston, George Sound; G. Teklenburg, Te Kauwhata, Whitewater; D. Curd, Gore, Worsley Stream; F. N. Ryan, Thornbury, Lake Kathrya; T. J. Meikle, Oamaru, Lower Glaisnock; H. J. Shaw, Te Anau, Stina Burn; P. Hutton, Christchurch, Luga Burn; P. J. Anderson, Wyndham, Wapiti River; D.

L. Payne, Dunedin, Bligh Sound; J. McIlwrick, Lumsden, Billy Burn; M. Freeman, Te Anau, Looking Glass; W. S. Murray, Stirling, George River; B. Cornish, Dunedin, Caswell Sound; B. W. Parker, Dunedin, Hankinson — Loch Burn; R. Hanock, Dunedin, North-western; J. E. McGriffin, Taradale, Charles Sound; P. Broome, Ashburton, Large Burn; B. L. Youngman, Te Anau, Narrows Creek; G. Bergamini, Timaru, Charles Caswell; L. J. King, Timaru, Doon River; S. Hall, Dunedin, Mt Tanilbra; M. J. Whyte, Christchurch, Mid Burn.

The trophy shoot will be held from March 20 to April 10.

Winton Bridge Club

A Winton Bridge Club pairs match recently resulted:

North-south: Dr T. Wilson and Mr R. Gwatkin, 62.45 per cent, 1; Mrs Young and Mrs Lilico, 62, 2; Mr Gilkison and Mr K. Dunlop, 61.09, 3; Mr R. Crowe and Mr Carr, 60.73, 4.

East-west: Mr Simmers and Mr Wheelley, 62.82 per cent, 1; Mrs J. Scarlet and Mr H. Ryan, 61.09, 2; Mr and Mrs R. Thomson, 60.27, 3; Mr and Mrs L. Norris, 59.91, 4.

Raids in Hunt For Illegal Meat

26/2/83 (PA) CHRISTCHURCH
Fifty food outlets on the West Coast and in South Canterbury were visited by Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries officers yesterday in their escalating war on illegal meat trading.

About 15 kilogrammes of illegally-killed hogget meat was seized at a Greymouth hotel, and Ministry officials were led by the police to a truckload of sheep offal, which had been dumped beside a remote forestry road outside Hokitika.

The Ministry's regional meat veterinarian in Christchurch, Mr K. A. Thaisen, said the Ministry staff had swooped at 2pm on 50 hotels and other food outlets in Westport, Greymouth, Hokitika, on the West Coast, and Fairlie in South Canterbury.

Mr Thaisen said the Ministry had received "excellent" co-operation during the simultaneous visits, which lasted only an hour and a-half, "because people tend to use the telephone to ring around."

Asked why such a big operation had been mounted, Mr Thaisen said: "We just wanted to show the flag, and show

that we mean business."

The pelts, guts and heads of about 12 hoggets had been found dumped beside a forestry road near Hokitika.

The offal had been found by a woman out for a walk, who reported it to the police.

"It had obviously been dumped by a tip-truck," said Mr Thaisen.

Inquiries leading to the seizure of hogget meat from

the Greymouth hotel were continuing.

Mr Thaisen said that in spite of extensive publicity about the blackmarket meat trade, "some people obviously have still not got the message."

Last Tuesday, about 200kg of illegally killed pork, with a value of about \$1000, was seized at a restaurant in central Christchurch.

HYBRID STAGS

For Sale one year old master stag, potential Phone 597 The Key. 2/2/83 84657

More Raids For Meat

24/2/83 (PA) CHRISTCHURCH
The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is determined to stamp out the illegal meat trade, especially in view of the Australian Kangaroo meat export scandal.

The Australian operation had started in a small way, but had grown to the stage where some of the meat was being exported, the Ministry's regional meat veterinarian in Christchurch, Mr K. A. Thaisen, said yesterday.

"Complaints to government departments and others were not acted on: We are not going to fall into that trap," said Mr Thaisen.

A butcher's shop, a private club, and two other premises were visited by Ministry officials in Christchurch yesterday in the continuing search for illegal meat outlets.

No illegally killed meat had been found, however, a spokesman said.

On Tuesday, about 200kg of illegally killed pork, with a retail value of about \$1000, was seized at a Christchurch restaurant.

Ministry officials have also found an unlicensed slaughterhouse in the nearby Kalapoi-Rangiora district. The investigation was continuing day by day, the spokesman said.

The Ministry was still keen to receive any information from the public.

Another Ministry veter-

inarian, Mr Ken Luckin, said yesterday that there were a number of ways in which uninspected meat could reach human food outlets.

"Perhaps the most common is the illegal sale, either direct to the buyer who thinks he is getting a bargain, or through a third party, such as an agent, shop or eating house," said Mr Luckin.

"In each case, law-abiding farmers, butchers and restaurateurs are disadvantaged because the illegal sale meat is produced with lower overhead charges, such as transport and abattoir running costs," he said.

There was also the problem of substitution, especially from processed meats, sausages, and pies.

Mr Luckin said that uninspected carcasses were readily identifiable through the use of branding in abattoirs and export freezing works.

The abattoir brand is red, and the export works brand usually brown.

The brands were kept under meat division control, and were locked away at the end of each day's processing. Fresh carcasses also carried grade stripes.

Mr Luckin said that stock was inspected before and after slaughter, to detect disease.

Contamination by dirt, faeces, or hair could occur during dressing, processing, or transport of meat.

Hunting Committee Visits Caples

4/3/83 QUEENSTOWN
Members of the national recreational hunting advisory committee spent two days this week in the Upper Caples region at the northern arm of Lake Wakatipu inspecting the fallow deer population there, and the vegetation trend.

The 10-man committee, headed by the director of environmental forestry, Mr Ken Miers, of Wellington, arrived at Queenstown at midday on Tuesday.

In the afternoon, the group travelled by helicopter from Birchdale Station into the Upper Caples, accompanied by five members of the Forest Service. They were the officer-in-charge at Queenstown Mr R. K. Martin, Chris Main and Kerry Mawhinney, forest rangers of Invercargill, forster Mike Cuddihy and Mike

Slater, also of Invercargill.

The committee was set up two years ago to advise the Minister of Forests on the setting up and management of recreational hunting areas. This was its first field inspection of the Upper Caples, Fraser Creek and Top Flat area which was officially designated as a recreational hunting area last year.

The committee spent Tuesday and Wednesday nights at the Upper Caples Hut discussing each night matters arising from the days' inspection, and other recrea-

tional hunting areas and proposed areas.

Yesterday, they walked out to the new car park at Greenstone Station on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, and travelled via the new Kinloch-Greenstone road at the head of the lake, back to Queenstown.

Last night a private meeting was held in Queenstown between the committee, deerstalkers and other recreational hunting organizations from Invercargill, Wanaka, Gore, Te Anau and the Wakatipu districts.

Discussion Expected On Hunting Relationships

9/3/83
The relationship between the NZ Recreational Hunting Council and the National Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee is expected to be discussed at the annual conference of the NZ Deerstalkers' Association to Te Anau in June.

According to the national secretary of the NZDA, Mr Shelby Grant, the NZRHC was set up two years ago as a formal unit incorporating all five hunting organizations in the country.

It was designed to show that a body of experts at no cost to the taxpayer could provide as good an advisory service to the Government as the committee established for

that purpose.

Mr Grant said there was some ill feeling between the two because when nominations were made to the advisory committee from the NZRHC, they were considered not to be suitably representative of the various organizations.

Gagged

"They were told that any business of the advisory com-

mittee could not be discussed or reported to their nominating organizations — they were gagged," he said.

"Because of the advisory committee's original intrusion into the setting of rules, ethics and so on for hunting, which had always been the traditional role of elected hunting representatives, it was decided to form the five organizations into one cohesive unit."

Lately however, Mr Grant said the NZRHC understood there had been some discussion within the Government itself of the need to retain the advisory committee. This was likely to generate considerable discussion at the council's annual meeting on the last day of the NZDA conference.

Wait-and-see

"As far as we are aware at the moment, we have adopted a wait-and-see attitude," Mr Grant said.

"We had a meeting (the two bodies) in January and the advisory committee undertook to provide us with all reports and documents that passed over its table, and we agreed to forward the same to it.

"In the last couple of weeks we have received the first copies of the committee's minutes."

N.Z. world leader in deer farming

19/2/83
New Zealand is in the forefront of developing a new domestic animal — the red deer, the closing session of the international conference on the biology of deer production was told in Dunedin yesterday.

Professor Roger Short, of the Western Australian University, said that while red deer have long been used in game parks, New Zealand was among the first to farm the animal.

He recalled visiting New Zealand 13 years ago and inspecting the country's only deer farm. Progress since then has been staggering, and entrepreneurial efforts of the farmers and scientists have made the country a world leader, he said.

During the conference, researchers were able to see the latest trials and share information. Delegates attended from 11 countries associated with deer, from the game parks of Scotland to the rangeland herds of Alaska.

Although the papers were generally of a scientific nature, there were several deer farmers among the delegates. Topics included animal

health, reproduction, antlers, and products.

A paper delivered by Dr Yun Cheung Kong, a biochemist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, dealt with research into antlers and deer by-products in Chinese medicine.

While velvet is best known, 23 other body parts are used in medications. Ailments that are claimed to be cured include goiter, palpitations, dermatitis, bleeding, diabetes, impotence, stress, painful limbs, infertility and insomnia.

Dr Kong told the delegates that the belief that velvet is a potent aphrodisiac is not without foundation. Trials have shown the blood flow is increased, causing some stimulation.

Although nothing definite was decided at the conference, the organiser, Ken Drew, said it is hoped another will be held in two or three years.

Approval For Deer Units

4/3/83
The Wallace County Council has approved the first subdivision of an economic farm unit into four economic deer units in the county.

At yesterday's county meeting, a scheme plan for the subdivision of a privately owned farm in the Mararoa Survey District was presented.

The scheme proposed to subdivide the farm into four economic deer units and gave details of four proposed purchasers.

The MP for Wallace, Mr D. A. Angus, who attended the meeting, said he hoped the council would look favourably

on the subdivision. "There is a shortage of land in Te Anau and this has become a serious problem," Mr Angus said.

He said he knew of 40 or 50 other "landless people" who wanted land in the Te Anau area but could not get it.

The council resolved to approve the subdivision, subject to the condition that deer fences be erected on the properties before the title plan be approved.

Red Deer Imported From Britain

10/3/83

The foundation stock for the first purebred British red deer herd in Southland arrived last week.

Since they began deer farming in 1978, Fortification deer farmers, Harold and Norma Robinson have had difficulty in buying what they considered were top quality velvet producing red deer stags.

This deficiency in New Zealand herds convinced them of the need to look to Britain for genetically superior blood lines.

The Robinsons began their Cranbrook stud with only 14 in-calf hinds and in four years has built up a 400 strong herd of red and hybrid deer on an 80 hectare deer unit on their 800 hectare farm at Fortification.

Their aim is to eventually run a herd of around 700 deer at a stocking rate of eight per hectare.

The first importations of British red deer were made during the latter part of the 1800s and early 1900s and liberations were made in many parts of New Zealand.

These deer quickly established themselves and soon became sought after by trophy hunters. Some of the best trophies came from feral herds in the upper reaches of the Rakai river in Canterbury and in the high country around Wanaka.

However, it is generally accepted that the genetic capability of the New Zealand red deer has been weakened since those early importations and with the advent of commercial deer farming, farmers have sought to improve both venison and velvet production.

Many farmers have begun cross-breeding programmes using red deer, wapiti and elk.

Mr Robinson considers the best future is still with red deer, provided new blood lines can be introduced.

For this reason he has imported an in-calf hind from the Duke of Bedford's Woburn Abbey stud and a spiker stag

from the renowned Warnham Park stud.

"These will give us the basis for a purebred British herd as well as improving our present herd," Mr Robinson said.

The first group of deer imported from these English studs for commercial production in New Zealand was made in early 1982 by two Taupo deer farmers, Mr Bob Deadman and Dr Whitley Ottway.

Mr Robinson negotiated successfully with them to take two deer from their second consignment of 25 stags and 10 hinds which arrived in New Zealand in January after an isolation and quarantine period of six weeks in Britain.

Mr Robinson received the young deer on March 8 by road transport after a further one month quarantine period at Silverstream in the Hutt Valley.

Understandably, at a landed cost of \$10,000 each they are being given preferential treatment.

The main problem is that they have come from an English winter into a New Zealand winter.

"It will take them at least 12 months to acclimatize themselves," Mr Robinson said.

The hind is in-calf to a 20 pointer three-year-old Woburn Abbey stag and is due to calf in May or June. The young stag has begun to grow

a set of velvet and a summer coat.

Mr Robinson said the average New Zealand red deer stag produced around 1.5 to three kilograms of velvet. The Warnham Park stags were renowned for their antler growth—up to 48 points—with weights up to 11kg recorded.

It was this genetic material he hoped would be infused into hinds selected from their own herd he said.

"These deer will put us five to eight years ahead in our breeding programme," Mr Robinson said.

Mr Robinson intends to travel to Britain next year to select additional purebred animals for stud.



Settling in to their new Southland environment are two purebred British red deer imported from the Woburn Abby and Warnham Park herds by Mr and Mrs H. Robinson of Fortification.

Te Anau To Host Deerstalkers

9/3/83

Te Anau will be the venue for this year's annual conference NZ Deerstalkers' Association, from June 29 to July 2.

It will be held at the Fiordland Motor Lodge and between 200 and 300 delegates are expected to attend.

A number of Members of Parliament have been invited to the conference, along with some special guests, including NZ Forest Service, Lands and Survey Department, and National Parks Authority personnel.

Guest speakers for the official opening have yet to be confirmed, the association's secretary, Mr Shelby Grant, said from Wellington yesterday.

Among the topics for discussion are the freeholding of pastoral leases, the wapiti situation, recreational hunting

and the new Firearms Act, which is to be introduced to Parliament next year.

In conjunction with the conference the association is putting out a new publication designed to stimulate interest in the Te Anau area, and Fiordland National Park in particular.

"We are trying to point out to the public at large the recreational potential of the area. We don't think it has been publicized enough," Mr Grant said.

Other interested parties such as the South Island Promotion Association are involved in the publication. Extra copies will be printed for members of the tourist industry to use in their motions, and some sent overseas.

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Premium \$3.50
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Two tidy wooden homes. Implement shed. Large barn, 50 acres, deer fenced, 30 deer traps.
Price \$380,000.

Farm Deer Killing To Cease

12/3/83

Reluctance of farmers to bring forward deer will see the closure within the next fortnight of Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd's slaughter facilities at Mossburn.

The Mossburn operation had been processing feral deer for more than 20 years, but about two years ago extended its facilities to cater for farm deer.

Farmers have been reluctant to bring forward deer for slaughter this season, with fewer than 4000 processed nationwide since early November. The season ends late in May or early June.

Last season 13,500 deer were slaughtered.

The game meats manager for Wilson Neill (export division), which operates the Mossburn plant, Mr John Scandrett, said from Dunedin last night that the plant will be

closed within the next fortnight for the killing of farm deer.

The feral section of the plant will continue to operate. Mr Scandrett said the company was interested in getting deer through the plant but farmers were not bringing stock forward.

One reason for this could be the high price of velvet, with many farmers preferring to keep stock for velvet growing.

Mr Scandrett said this was a national trend this year and the farmers should not take the blame. He could see their point of view in weighing up their own prospects.

The company had advertised for animals hoping to

bring a few "out of the woodwork" but this had got little response.

The company wants farmers to let their agents know just how many animals they have for slaughter and if sufficient were available the plant might reopen towards the end of the season, perhaps about May, he said.

Stewart Island County Disputes Deer Claim

19/3/83

Deer are an asset to Stewart Island and cause little damage, according to the chairman of the Stewart Island County Council, Mr Ian Johnson.

Mr Johnson's comments were made at this week's council meeting when the council criticized the Southland Catchment Board's submissions to the Forest Service Wild Animal Control Plan.

When the Board discussed the submissions, its chairman, Mr R. D. McKenzie, said the potential for more damage caused by deer on the island was "alarming."

Cr Ian Munro said he thought the Southland Catchment Board was only going to be involved in the classification of the water around Stewart Island "and they were staying out of this area."

"I can't see how he (Mr McKenzie) can make comments like that when they've only been to one small place. I would like to see Mr McKenzie to clarify his points," Cr Munro said.

"We don't have an erosion problem. We should recognize the importance of the healthy animal-healthy forest concept," Cr Max Kershaw said.

He conceded some poisoning from the Neck to Port Adventure would be needed.

"I don't think these powers-

that be recognize the benefits to the island of hunters coming here," Mr Johnson said.

He said the recreational aspects of the island were improving and the money spent on the wild animal control would be better spent encouraging hunters to come to the island.

Cr E. H. Hopkins said the Southland Catchment Board knew nothing about vegetation die-back and was in no position to make a comment on the subject.

Because of the strong feelings on the subject, a special

committee was formed at the meeting to prepare submissions for the Forest Service.

The council will ask for permission to lodge its submissions later than the March 24 deadline.

Fallow Deer Study

At Ruakura

Research into the reproductive cycle of farmed fallow deer will begin soon at the Ruakura Agricultural research centre.

The work is aimed at investigating the factors necessary to adjust the breeding cycle of the deer.

Under New Zealand conditions, most births occur in December. However, earlier fawning would be a big advantage to the deer farming industry because it would enable better alignment of the animal's feed requirements with seasonal pasture growth.

Fallow deer make up about 14 per cent of farmed deer in New Zealand. Most are farmed in the North Island where large wild populations exist.

The scientist in charge of the fallow deer trials, Mr Geoff Asher, said any successful modification of an animal's breeding cycle depended on a sound understanding of its reproductive biology.

He said a huge body of data existed on the reproductive physiology of female sheep, cattle and goats and this had laid the foundations for further studies on other farmed animals.

Little Effort

However, as deer farming was a relative newcomer to the agricultural scene, little effort had so far gone into monitoring reproductive traits of the various species and little was known about their breeding cycle.

The Ruakura work will get fully under way at the peak of the rutting next month. The trials are likely to run at least three seasons.

Mr Asher said data collected would include a record of the onset of puberty and subsequent oestrus cycles, the duration and variance of the oestrus cycles, and the number of uninterrupted oestrus cycles in one season.

The scientists will also record dates of conception, ovulation and pregnancy rates, and measure the duration and variance of gestation.

Bucks

A further project is planned to investigate the onset of puberty in fallow bucks and the seasonality of fertility.

"Once the basic aspects of the reproductive biology of both male and female fallow deer have been quantified, we can look at manipulating reproduction," Mr Asher said.

He said future work in this area would consider such things as synchronizing oestrus, increasing ovulation rate by hormone therapy and immunization, and advancing the calving season.

This work, however, would not commence until the background data on the biology of reproduction had been collected.

Allegedly fired at helicopter

Rotorua (PA). — A 42-year-old unemployed Matahi man appeared in the Whakatane District Court, charged with shooting at a helicopter in the Urewera National Park on Monday.

Thompson Tuna was charged with firing a .303 rifle at the Hughes 300 helicopter, owned by Mr Noel N. B. Galloway, with intent to cause danger to the machine.

He entered no plea, and his counsel, Mr W. H. Jones, said the defendant had told him the incident occurred on a block of Maori land and he thought the helicopter was trespassing.

Mr Jones said Tuna told him he had warned the pilot to leave the property, before firing.

Tuna was remanded until March 16, on bail of \$1,000 and a similar surety.

Queries On Wapiti Area

Sir, — I was intrigued to read the reference by Cr Tauri to the Eglinton block during the discussion by the Wallace County Council on the wapiti issue, reported in your paper on March 4, 1983. I am aware of various correspondence in 1979 among (inter alia) the Commissioner of Crown Lands, the MP for Awarua, Mr Austin, and a group of interested Te Anau people, but was not aware that the proposal is still "alive." Would the Commissioner please advise through this column if negotiations are currently taking place in respect

of this land, and, if so, under which section of the Land Act 1948 would the land be disposed of.

Also, would the Conservator of Forests or the Chairman of the Southland Parks and Reserves Board confirm that parties of departmental employees are at present in the wapiti area conducting a "survey," and that these parties will come out of the area on March 19, the day before the official 1983 trophy shoot commences? If the parties are in the area could the public please be advised of the purpose of the "survey," if the parties are carrying rifles, and if it is considered to be a fair go for this activity to take place

during the week immediately prior to the trophy shoot at a time when disturbance of animals would frustrate the efforts of recreational hunters who will go into the area next week at considerable expense and with high expectations?

If rifles are carried and an animal of whatever species is shot, is any compensation payable to the Crown or to the Te Anau consortium?"

Warren Taylor

Gore

[Asked to comment, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr J. P. Harty, said: "This department has not received any recent formal approach regarding the utilization of the Eglinton block. The Land Settlement Board proposes to develop this area for settlement of economic farm units, but the final utilization of the area will be determined by the management plan which is currently being prepared by the department. The public have been invited to make submissions to assist the department in the preparation of the plan.

"It is correct that a party of 10 people, made up of Forest Service and park personnel, entered the wapiti area on March 14 and will come out on March 19. The purpose of this ground survey is an attempt to assess the number and type of animals in the area during the roar. Rifles are not being carried and any disturbance is expected to be negligible. It must be remembered that trampers can walk through this area at any time.

"A small New Zealand Forest Service party undertook a routine survey of pellet lines in the Catseye area from March 10 to 16. Again, no rifles were carried."]

Shot disables helicopter

ROTORUA (PA). — A deer recovery helicopter operating in the Urewera National Park on Monday afternoon was hit and disabled by a rifle shot as it was lifting a deer from a clearing.

What is believed to have been a .303 bullet ripped through the oil sump of the Murupara-based Hughes 300 helicopter while it was operating in the Waimana Valley, near the village of Matahi.

According to the owner, Mr Noel Galloway, of Murupara, the crew — Mr G. Kane, the pilot, and Mr W. Brown, the shooter — were "lucky to be alive."

The bullet hit the machine's engine — under the crew's seat — and Mr Galloway said it was a race against time for the pilot to find a safe landing place.

"It's a wonder the helicopter did not seize up or explode," he said. "The men told me this guy just stepped out of the bush about 50 metres away and fired at the machine (from below).

"They saw him through the smoke from the oil pouring on to the engine exhaust."

Mr Kane flew the machine — shedding a cloud of oil smoke — to a paddock near the Matahi village. The helicopter was still there yesterday under police guard.

Mr Galloway said: "If that motor had not been there (under the crew's seat) someone would have been dead."



Wrightson NMA

VENISON SCHEDULE (RED DEER)

Owing to increased demand in export markets and some new developments in cutting and packing techniques, Wrightson NMA Ltd are able to offer the following schedule for deer slaughtered at the Mossburn D.S.P.

This schedule is effective from Monday, February 7 1983 for the following week and thereafter will be reviewed on a weekly basis.

GRADE AL \$4.10/kg Carcass weight (lean up to 65kg)

GRADE AH \$4.30/kg carcass weight (lean over 65kg)

GRADE AD \$3.00/kg carcass weight (overfat animals)

GRADE AM \$2.00/kg carcass weight (manufacturing)

The above prices, inclusive of all by-products, will be paid seven days after slaughter.

The killing charge is \$35.00 per head which will be payable by the supplier and deducted from schedule proceeds at the time of payment. N.Z.D.F.A. levy of 8c/kg will also be deducted at this time unless we are otherwise instructed by suppliers.

As well as the above schedule, suppliers will have the alternative of owners accounts in which case an interim payment will be made on the same basis as above.

Any adjustments to the schedule will be advertised and enquiries regarding booking space and up-to-date schedule levels should be directed to

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92384

SOUTHLAND S.F.C. FARMERS

VENISON SCHEDULE (RED DEER)

SOUTHLAND FARMERS' CO-OP ASSN LTD Export Department offer the following schedule for deer slaughtered at the Mossburn DSP.

This schedule is effective from Monday, February 14, 1983 for the following week.

GRADE AL \$4.10/kg

GRADE AH \$4.30/kg

GRADE AD \$3.00/kg

GRADE AM \$2.00/kg

The above prices, inclusive of all by-products, will be paid seven days after slaughter.

The killing charge is \$35.00 per head which will be payable by the supplier and deducted from schedule proceeds at the time of payment. NZDFA levy of 8c/kg will also be deducted at this time unless we are otherwise instructed by suppliers.

As well as the above schedule, suppliers have the alternative of owners accounts in which case an interim payment will be made on the same basis as above.

Any adjustments to the schedule will be advertised and enquiries regarding booking space and up-to-date schedule levels should be directed to:

EVAN MACKIE Phone Business 81-929
Home 59-364

84607

SOUTHLAND S.F.C. FARMERS

10/3/83

VENISON SCHEDULE (RED DEER)

The Southland Farmers' Co-op Assn Ltd Export Department offer the following revised schedule for deer slaughtered at the Mossburn DSP.

This schedule is effective from Monday March 21, 1983 for the week following

Grade AL \$4.50/kg carcass weight (lean up to 65kg)

Grade AH \$4.30/kg carcass weight (lean over 65kg)

Grade AD \$3.40/kg carcass weight (overfat animals)

Grade AM \$2.00/kg carcass weight (manufacturing)

The above prices, inclusive of all by-products, will be paid seven days after slaughter.

The usual killing charge, levy, and owners account options apply.

Further enquiries should be directed to —

EVAN MACKIE

Phone business 81-929

Home 59-364

93181

HUGHES 269C HELICOPTER ZK-HOF

The above helicopter, which has sustained accident damage, is offered for sale by tender on an as is where is basis. Inspection may be carried out at 47 Henry Street, Te Anau.

Tenders close with the undersigned at 4pm March 29, 1983.

The highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

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HAMILTON

9182

Doubts On Future Of Wapiti

The last article I wrote for this newspaper was entitled "Wapiti have place in Fiordland."

On July 21, 1982 this contention was conceded by the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon. That same day the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, said that the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board should develop a plan to allow a controlled number of wapiti to remain in the Fiordland National Park for recreational hunting.

This represented a major change in direction by the Government and was a red letter day for those of us who had been involved in an almost continuous 30-year struggle to retain the resource — the only free ranging herd of wapiti in the Southern Hemisphere — in this part of New Zealand.

Although a sense of unease is developing over the matter I like to take the positive view. We have won this long battle and intend to see that a high quality herd of wapiti is re-established in this area of Fiordland.

There will be a need for vigilance. Unwarranted demands for large areas in the wapiti area for takahe habitat, and red herrings like the move to have Fiordland declared a World Heritage National Park — at this stage — can well be regarded with suspicion.

The effect of the deer industry on the wild deer herds in New Zealand could be compared to the probable effect of a nuclear war on the human race. Only those that have been well hidden away have escaped the holocaust. The effect on the sport of hunting has been disastrous.

There is another side to the coin.

By JACK MCKENZIE, of Leithen Downs, a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board.

the presence of deer still continues and it seems to me that the stoat gets an easy ride.

A recent report quoting Mr G. W. F. Thompson, MP for Horowhenua and political head of the Wildlife Service as saying that the wapiti relocation programme had removed much of the competition for the takahe's food supply is evidence of the confusion which exists about the wapiti and takahe areas. They are two separate areas though a few takahe live on the fringes of the wapiti area. The great majority of the wapiti caught so far, perhaps all of them, will have been taken from areas that have not seen a takahe in 100 years.

Fiordland Mystique

One of the greatest attractions in Fiordland, for me anyway, is its mystique. Even though they have been domesticated and can be seen on many farms, wapiti are still part of that mystique. Equally so are the rare birds. Though none of us would like to see takahe die out, or be taken away from the park, it seems obvious that their only chance of survival is in the park.

park and could carry out the breeding and upgrading programme. The contract was awarded to a Te Anau based consortium.

Relocation

The fateful decision to proceed with the project was announced in one of his first decisions by the new Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy on December 17, 1981. The timing of the announcement, and the fact the animals were to be removed almost immediately without any relocation area being selected made many people very angry.

The storm raged for nearly seven months. Mr Warren Taylor met the Prime Minister Mr Muldoon, in July. After a discussion with his colleagues Mr Muldoon issued a statement which had the effect of defusing the matter.

The National Parks and Reserves Authority visited the south in September largely to satisfy a wish by the Minister that they should investigate the wapiti matter and report back to him. While in the district they twice met representatives of the hunting fraternity. The wapiti



This magnificent bull wapiti was bred by Mr Evan Meredith, of Te Anau, from Fiordland stock. It is thought to weigh about 450 kilos. At this weight it would be nearly twice the weight of a red deer and in the top bracket for American wapiti.

Rodger, of Wanaka, that he was prepared to carry on the capture programme for the next two summers. If that is so then the second summer

scarred by earthquakes. Hunters say that the country is poor, as have been the deer and trophies taken there. It is over-run with goats. Many farms surround the area and I am told they

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Mr Douglas sees his role as working with MPs with responsibility for portfolios such as tourism, trade and industry, manufacturing and agriculture.

"The present Government's investment strategy during the past few years has gone entirely wrong. The market has been put into a few 'Think Big' baskets."

"That has not met our objective of more employment, control of inflation and easing overseas funds."

"Tourism, for instance, is an area which is labour-intensive and can earn overseas funds. The sort of approach I would want is for myself and the tourism spokesman to work alongside the private sector to plan for the number of tourists from each country."

Mr Douglas said that he was not in principle at all, but he said it all sub- on objectives. We might put a disagree. We certainly agree area where we necessarily "I do not know of any major incentives to all including farm- d there was evi- anti-farmer ap- Labour's new centives were re- uld mean 'a ma- collapse."

ected Douglas said that days said that the must be pro- awarded. There ys we can ensure export are re- their income The question is s are the best be done through a described Mr e most irritation- about MPs. eved in the al- get then he had mind in three e's going to tensive and can earn overseas funds. The sort of approach I would want is for myself and the tourism spokesman to work alongside the private sector to plan for the number of tourists from each country."

anything. "It would be in- ers of such im- and every three e's going to tensive and can earn overseas funds. The sort of approach I would want is for myself and the tourism spokesman to work alongside the private sector to plan for the number of tourists from each country."

Fuel Contamination Blamed For Crash

Fuel contamination probably caused a fatal helicopter accident near Milford Sound in 1979, the chief inspector of air accidents, Mr R. Chippindale has said in a report.

As well, one of the occupants was not wearing the prescribed safety harness and this could have affected his chances of survival.

The accident report has just been released.

Deer shooter, Mr Alan MacDonald died from his injuries a few hours after the accident. The pilot and owner of the Hughes 369HS helicopter, Mr Robert David Richardson received serious injuries and was rescued two days later.

The accident occurred a few kilometres south-west of Milford Sound on August 12, 1979 while the helicopter was on a deer recovery expedition.

Outlining the facts leading up to the accident, Mr Chippindale said the aircraft left Te Anau at about 10am. It refuelled first at Cascade and again about 3.2 kilometres from the accident site.

While flying down the Arthur river, about 24 to 30 metres above the ground at 40 to 60 knots, the red "engine out" warning light came on.

The pilot looked for a suitable forced landing area. Lake Ada lay directly ahead and a steep cliff to the left.

An attempt was made to manoeuvre the helicopter to a small beach beside the river.

After the aircraft hit the ground the shooter set up the emergency location transmitter and protected the pilot with a "space" blanket and two deer bags. He then covered himself.

During the night the shooter died and the pilot remained immobilized until he was found by the pilot of a searching helicopter about 51 hours later.

Medical evidence showed the shooter's injuries were consistent with his being thrown from the aircraft when he slipped through his improvised harness during impact. They precluded any chance of survival unless he had been rescued shortly after the accident.

The pilot's injuries were consistent with being securely held in by a full harness as the helicopter collided with the ground and then being thrown clear as the harness came undone during the aircraft's rebound.

His chances of survival were significantly enhanced by the actions of the shooter in covering him before the onset of heavy rain and snow showers.

The pilot had made reporting arrangements with his wife. She was not unduly concerned when the first schedule was missed as it was only two hours after departure.

When the third schedule on the morning of August 13 was

not kept, she contacted a Fiordland National Park ranger who referred the matter to the Te Anau police.

No Reply

The Christchurch Rescue Co-ordination Centre was advised but did not reply that day.

The first search aircraft was tasked at about 1.45pm on August 14.

Referring to the helicopter, Mr Chippindale said the owner had experienced some problems with water contamination in the fuel filter bowl. He had taken the precautionary measure of draining water from the bowl more often than was normal.

The bowl had been drained only six hours flying time before the accident, but it contained a significant amount of water when opened at the accident site.

Contrary to Instructions

In his conclusions, Mr Chippindale said the pilot's method of draining the aircraft's

fuel filter bowl was contrary to the instructions relating to disturbing the fuel system.

His use of a hydraulic filter to remove contaminants when refuelling out in the field was unsatisfactory.

Nor was refuelling with aviation kerosene which was displaced from drummed stocks by unfiltered bleed air from the helicopter's engine compressor an approved system. It included a potential for contaminating the kerosene with water.

The probable cause of the accident was the loss of the aircraft's engine power due to fuel contamination when it was flying over terrain unsuitable for a forced landing.

The pilot's reporting arrangement was a common sense alerting system for initiating search and rescue action in an area almost devoid of Civil Aviation Division facilities.

The response of the RCC co-ordinator to notification by

police that an aircraft was already 24 hours overdue was unreasonably tardy.

Mr Chippindale said the pilot was invited to make representations and raised the following points:

- He was operating the helicopter too close to the minimum speeds to hold a reasonable chance of a successful auto-rotational landing in the area of his operation.

- The absence of suitable water drains in the fuel system was due to the delay in the supply of ordered parts.

- No suitable harness had yet been devised to hold a shooter securely while giving him the necessary freedom to aim accurately and shoot quickly at fleeing game.

- The harness fitted to the pilot's seat was frequently knocked undone in flight and he recalled the same action occurring during the accident sequence.

Gov't Policy On Wapiti Opposed

The Southland United Council yesterday unanimously decided to oppose the Government's recently announced policy on the presence of wapiti in the Fiordland National Park.

The substance of the policy was that wapiti be allowed to remain in the park for another five years, during which time recreational shooting would be allowed all year round.

They will be subject to selective control measures aimed at enhancing opportunities for recreational hunting during the five years the wapiti area would be re-examined and, if necessary, re-defined. A special scientific committee will monitor the events of the period on national park values.

A written report on the policy was prepared for the council by the principal officer, Mr P. W. Jones. He said that un-

less somebody was prepared to stand up and oppose the policy, it could become permanent.

He suggested that the Government was being inconsistent in its attitude towards the animals. They had originally been a gift from the United States Government, and as such, Mr Jones said, they should remain in this country in perpetuity.

Cr R. D. McKenzie said it was evident there was no chance of completely eradicating the animals, and no other area was willing to take the responsibility which relocation would mean.

"If all the wapiti-type animals were taken out during the next five years there's no doubt what would happen. I don't think this is desirable," he said.

The council's chairman, Cr C. E. Bowmar, said he was surprised at the attitude of the National Parks Authority. The new Government policy was almost identical to suggestions made to the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, by this body.

"I'm somewhat amazed at its stance," Mr Bowmar said.

"I thought the members had it clearly demonstrated to them last year what Southlanders felt about the future of the wapiti in Fiordland."

"Very Opposed"

"I don't think it would be too difficult to manage them in the specified area, but if this is the Government's policy then I would be very opposed to it. We must be strong, and demand that the wapiti be retained in Fiordland and managed in a manner which will give to the pro-

vince the inheritance it had, and still wants."

Cr E. P. Wilding said that since the first wapiti had arrived in New Zealand, the animal had developed into a distinctive strain.

"It's bureaucracy, really and truly, at work and I would oppose this policy very strongly. It's nothing but putting off the evil day and diminishing the herd in the process," he said.

Cr H. L. Smith said the united council should point out that what was required was maintenance of the present herd under a properly managed plan.

"That necessarily takes into account the presence of superior type animals to maintain the quality of the herd, and this would probably mean doing away with year round shooting," he said.

Highest Authority

Originally, the council decided to write letters of opposition to the NPA, the Minister of Lands and the Labour spokesman on lands. Cr Bowmar was not happy with this, however, and he moved that the protest should go to the highest authority possible — the Prime Minister.

This was eventually adopted as a course of action, with copies going to the aforementioned people.

Wapiti Hunters Delayed

Strong and at times gale force south-westerlies in Fiordland on Saturday and yesterday prevented some of the hunting parties in the wapiti trophy shoot from going into the field yesterday.

A total of 95 participants were originally balloted for the 24 blocks, and about 80 were due to go into the blocks from yesterday.

A briefing in Te Anau on Saturday night was attended by 70 hunters and the rest will be briefed as they arrive in Te Anau later this week.

Senior ranger, Ted Atkinson, said last night the hunters involved in the trophy shoot had generally been well informed and appreciative of the efforts involved in running a trophy shoot.

Several parties who had planned to go into their blocks yesterday were foiled by the strong south-westerlies which pounded the area all day. Most parties going into the eastern blocks were able to go into the field.

Two Killed In Crash

(PA) WELLINGTON

Two people were killed when a helicopter crashed on takeoff near Taupo last night.

They were the pilot, Joseph Charles Keeley, aged 35, and his passenger Miss Rose Westerman, aged 22, both of Taupo, Rotorua police said.

The Hughes 500D helicopter was taking off from a Taupo farmlet at 8.10pm when the accident occurred. A police spokesman was unsure where the helicopter was going.

Police said an inspector of air accidents would be at the scene this morning.

Deer Plant Extension

Deer slaughtering facilities at the Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd Mossburn plant are expected to remain open until the middle of next month.

The company initially expected slaughtering would cease by the end of this month because of the low demand for killing space.

However, more animals have come forward since the company announced its intention and the facilities will remain open for a few weeks yet.

The game meats manager of the export division of Wilson Neill Ltd, Mr John Scandrett, said from Dunedin yesterday slaughtering was under review on a weekly basis.

But he said he expected the facilities would be operational for at least two weeks

after the Easter break. Slaughtering continued until the end of May last season.

High Price

It is thought the high price of velvet has encouraged farmers to retain their stock.

A small seasonal workforce is employed to handle the slaughtering.

The factory will remain open to process feral deer.

Wilson Neill and Alpine Helicopters Ltd hold 52 per cent of the shares in the Mossburn-based company. The remainder is held by Southland Farmers' Co-operative Association Ltd and Wrightson NMA Ltd.

Supply Of Deer Continues

A continued supply of deer for slaughtering has been received by the Southern Lakes Venison Packers Ltd Mossburn plant.

The company initially expected to curtail its slaughtering season by the end of last month because of a low demand for killing space.

However, since the company announced that intention, a continued supply of animals has been put forward for slaughter.

The game meats manager of the export division of Wilson Neill Ltd, Mr John Scandrett, said from Dunedin yesterday slaughtering would continue for at least another two or three weeks.

That would mean the slaughtering season would not be much shorter than last season after all.

But he said he expected the kill would be down at least 25 per cent on the 3200 total last season.



Deer Control 10/5/83 Discussed

WANAKA

Deer numbers would rise throughout the Southland forest conservancy, should there be a sustained reduction in commercial recovery operations, the Otago National Parks and Reserves Board heard on Friday.

The board was considering a reply from Mr M. J. Cuddihy of the New Zealand Forest Service, based in Invercargill, to a question raised by the board.

Mr Cuddihy said that if deer numbers increased to the point where Forest Service control action was necessary, bearing in mind financial limitations, control would be undertaken according to a set of regionally determined priorities.

Establishment of those priorities would be a matter for the Forest Service in consultation with the park boards, Mr Cuddihy said.

Commercial hunting pressure had been maintained

since the 1977-78 survey of the park and on that basis, population densities could be expected to be even lower than the low levels recorded then.

The control plan for the park prescribed a 10-year re-measurement cycle.

"Our experience has been that that time period will remain adequate for vegetation, where changes are slow," he said.

Animal populations could increase or decrease more rapidly so the general policy was to reassess wild animal populations on a five-year basis.

A wild animal survey will be programmed for the park for next summer, Mr Cuddihy said.

This 10-point hybrid head is one of the better trophies to come out of Fiordland in the wapiti trophy shoot this year. The successful hunter, Mr Piki Amo Amo, of Te Anau, described the head as of medium quality. He shot it this week in the Stina Burn, an area where he shot a better quality trophy in 1975. Mr Amo Amo plans to have the trophy mounted. The shoot finishes this weekend.



First Annual RED DEER FAWN AUCTION

Account

MARANOA

(I.B. & J.W. Spiers)

and Associates and by invitation entries a/c of:
DUNROBIN STAG RANGE, Mosburn, Southland
DEER ENTERPRISES (Mr and Mrs R. Herrick's property)
Tautane Stud, Onga Onga, C.H.B.

STEVENSON AND LEE, Waipukurau

PORANGAHAU DEER FARM

(J.S. Tully and Co., Porangahau)

to be held on the property —

'MARANOA', Takapau

on Tuesday, May 17, 1983, at 1.30pm

An exceptional yarding of 280 Red Deer fawns comprising:—

135 farm born and bred weaner hinds

145 farm born and bred weaner stags

280 Will be offered.

Other entries include:—

40 18 month hinds a/c Stevenson & Lee,

Waipukurau. (Well grown attractive hinds).

13 18 month hinds a/c Deer Enterprises (Mr and

Mrs R. Herrick's property) Onga Onga, CHB.

(Well grown attractive hinds).

53

6 Mixed age hinds (good mouths).

8 Mixed age hinds (low sound mouths).

8 Mixed age hinds (didn't rear fawns last year).

22

Total Deer: 355

Auctioneers Comments:

All fawns are T.B. tested, farm born and bred capital stock from specially selected base hinds from Criffel Game Park Ltd, Mararoa Station Ltd, Papamoa, Te Awarua (R. Jennings, Southland), Dunrobin Stag Range (Mosburn, Southland), West Dome Station (Southland). Sired by top Rakaia and Dunrobin Stag Range master stags. Fawns have been drenched and handled regularly and have also been vaccinated with 5 in 1 vaccines. Fawns are all used to eating grain (maize and barley) and hay. Average fawn weights will be announced on day of Auction.

All hinds are T.B. tested and have been running with top master stags. We confidently recommend this yarding to buyers requiring genuine quality farm deer.

For further information please contact:

David Ward 750-161 Hastings after hours, or
HBF Dalgety Ltd 66-116 Hastings business, or
Ian Spiers 38 Takapau

2% rebate commission will be paid to non-participating companies purchasing deer at this Auction. Light luncheon available.



MR YEATES



Hunter Killed In 23/4/83 Crash

"He was a very, very fine man," Mr R. D. Spary, general manager of Alpine Helicopters, said last night of 37-year-old Colin Geoffrey Yeates, of Te Anau, who was killed in a helicopter crash on Thursday night.

Mr Yeates was "a very good, long-term employee" of Alpine Helicopters, which employed him as a deer hunter, Mr Spary said.

The Hughes 500 Alpine helicopter was carrying Mr Yeates back to the company's base ship, the Ranganui, after a day's hunting. It crashed at Crooked Arm, in Doubtful Sound.

The Te Anau police were notified at 9.30 on Thursday night that the helicopter was overdue.

At first light yesterday, a search was activated by the

Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Christchurch, using local craft and operators.

The crashed craft was found only 11 minutes after the search began, when a signal from its emergency locator transmitter beacon was picked up.

Location of the helicopter was further helped by a fire, lit by the pilot, 25-year-old Stuart John Feaver.

Mr Feaver, another Te Anau employee of Alpine Helicopters, received a broken ankle, severe bruising about his right eye and bruising about the rib cage in the crash. He was taken to the Te Anau Medical Centre, treated and discharged.

An inspector of air accidents will investigate the crash site today.

The wreckage of the Hughes 500 helicopter, which crashed at Crooked Arm, in Doubtful Sound, on Thursday night, killing Mr Colin Geoffrey Yeates, of Te Anau. The pilot, Mr Stuart John Feaver, also of Te Anau received minor injuries.

Mr Spary said that until his findings were released, the cause of the accident would not be known.

Mr Feaver was also the pilot of a helicopter involved in a fatal crash between Waiohau and Ruatahuna, in the eastern Bay of Plenty, on June 8, 1981.

Two former Te Anau men, Bernard Cyril te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa Milroy and John Redmond Githrie, were killed in that crash.

Mr Feaver received serious head and chest injuries.

7/5/83 Fourth Annual RED DEER FAWN AUCTION

Account
CENTRAL GAME PARTNERSHIP

and by invitation entries account of:

MR D.C. MALING (Haunui Farm), Wanstead
MR B. LINDEMAN, KALIMNA LODGE RED DEER STUD,
Greenmeadows, H.B.

SKAGEN DEER (Bruce and Clint Thomsen), Takapau.

TANIWAHA GAME FARM (B.E. & R. Mabin),
Taniwha, Waipukurau

to be held on the property —

'TANIWAHA', Waipukurau

on Wednesday, May 18, 1983, at 1.30pm

An exceptional yarding of 335 Red Deer Fawns will be offered comprising:—

175 farm born and bred weaner hinds

160 farm born and bred weaner stags

335

Auctioneers Comments:

All fawns offered are farm born and bred capital stock from specially selected base hinds from Criffel Game Park Ltd, Mararoa Station Ltd, Mt Peel Station and Dunrobin Stag Range, and other well known South Island properties.

All fawns are T.B. tested, drenched and handled regularly, sired by top master stags, vaccinated with 5 in 1 vaccine and Salmonella vaccines. All fawns are extremely quiet and used to handling and have been fed concentrates i.e. grain and hay on a regular basis. We confidently recommend this yarding to buyers requiring genuine quality farm deer.

For further information please contact:

David Ward 750-161 Hastings after hours, or
HBF Dalgety Ltd 66-116 business hours.

2% rebate commission will be paid to non-participating companies purchasing deer at this Auction. Light luncheon available.



15459

13/5/83 Deer Farming Enters New Era

By JOHN CUTT, Agricultural Editor

Southland deer farmer and businessman, Mr Herby Whyte, has been appointed one of five deer farmer representatives on the Game Industry Board, soon to be formed.

Formal legislation to establish the new body is expected in the next few weeks and, when formed, the Game Industry Board will attempt to co-ordinate the exporting of all farmed deer products into a single strong marketing system, possibly on similar lines to that set up for the kiwifruit industry.

The principal function of the board will be to issue and control export licences, as a positive means of strengthening the export of deer products, Mr Whyte said. It would also monitor the quality standards of such products.

"At the moment we have 70 exporters chasing after around 500 tonnes of product and none of them have the economy or scale to carry out this function efficiently. Also, most of these exporters are new to exporting and virtually none have experience in marketing venison, let alone farmed venison," Mr Whyte said.

Mr Whyte has been actively promoting deer farming in Southland for several years and has been the secretary of the Southland Deer Farmers' Association since its formation three years ago.

Concern

Over a period of time, the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, game industry exporters and processors have been concerned at the method of marketing venison and it is this concern that has resulted in the industry's united determination to come together to sort out mutual problems.

"The move to establish the Game Industry Board arose out of the common interest of all parties involved in the deer industry," Mr Whyte said.

A Game Export Advisory Committee was set up some 18 months ago, made up of four deer farmers' representatives and four representatives of game industry processors and exporters.

This was a liaison committee designed to sort out each other's problems, and investigate proposals to put before Government for legislation to be brought down to set

up a Game Industry Board.

Mr Whyte is the only South Island deer farmers' representative, along with four from the North Island, appointed by the new Zealand Deer Farmers' Association. There are also four representatives from the game processing industry and one exporter.

Confident

Mr Whyte said he was confident that the Game Industry Board would be the beginning of a new era in the New Zealand farmed deer industry.

"From my own point of view as a farmer, I believe we should be able to maintain our present prices, or better, for venison."

Last season the average price for venison was around \$4.10 to \$4.50 a kilogram, Mr Whyte said. By-products returned around \$50 per carcass.

Mr Whyte's involvement in the farmed deer industry has been the natural result of his philosophy of achieving the maximum returns possible through the most efficient and economical use of the resources of land and capital.

This philosophy developed while he was completing an engineering apprenticeship in Invercargill. At the same time he was also growing potatoes for the local market on small plots of leased land around the city outskirts.

Mr Whyte quickly came to realize that a good return was possible from potatoes providing the operation was mechanized. He therefore imported specialized equipment and began to grow large acreages that had previously been considered unpractical for Southland conditions.

Company

From only a few acres, he gradually increased the area in potatoes to around 90 hectares grown on leased land over a wide part of the province.

The unavailability of the machinery in New Zealand that he required to plant and harvest this acreage, led to the formation of Farmrite

Ltd, a specialty agricultural equipment importing and distribution company, which last year extended its operations to Australia.

"By growing on leased blocks I found where potatoes grew best," he said. "The Ryal Bush-Lochiel area consistently produced the best crops so that was where I concentrated my operations and eventually took up several long term leases with the option to buy."

That was back in 1971.

In order to spell the blocks from continuous potato cropping, Mr Whyte began to grow cereals. Crop rotations are now potatoes from grass for one year, followed by two crops of wheat, one of oats and back into grass.

"This was quite profitable in the early 1970s when costs were relatively low. But by the mid to late 1970s inflation went ahead of our income and we also began to experience an increasing disease problem in the crops."

"So I began to look for something that would give better returns out of grass than that from sheep or cattle."

Research

The fattening of several hundred cattle and the rearing of two-tooth ewes had been a part of his overall farm operation for the best part of 10 years.

The decision to convert his sheep and beef area into deer was made in 1976, after he had seen the results of research work at Invermay.

This research had shown that deer were twice as efficient converters of grass to lean red meat as sheep or cattle. The financial returns possible from farmed deer were also estimated to be at least twice that gained from other livestock.

The sale of the cattle and sheep enabled him to move quickly into a deer breeding operation.

"What we did was to buy in a herd and we were deer farming instantly," Mr Whyte said.

Mr Whyte has close to 360ha running a large scale com-



Mr Herby Whyte

mercial red deer herd and elite breeding herd.

This elite herd consists of animals that have been selected for such traits as bone weight growth rates at months, looks, conformation and animals that are true type. Stags are assessed three and four years of age both their velvet production and growth rate.

As a further move to continue a planned improvement in breeding performance and both velvet and meat production, a number of Canadian wapiti and elk were imported in 1981. These were joined last month by a second importation of 10, nine-month males.

Mr Whyte said the elk had been selected as they were even better converters of grass than red deer.

Mr Whyte contributed much of the success of his farming operation to his farm manager, Mr George Holman, an Australian who has worked for him since 1969.

"We both share the same philosophy and are completely in tune with each other's thinking," he said.

Profitable

"I believe we can produce a profitable quality red meat product from grass with deer that doesn't have any competitors. No other country is at present able to market farmed deer for export like New Zealand," Mr Whyte said.

Although there were countries with large deer herds, they were years behind New Zealand in terms of technology and practical experience and breeding, he said.

Deer farming was a unique New Zealand industry and he could not see it being overtaken by any other country until at least the turn of the century.

"And we know we are able to command a high price for the products on the world markets through a united strong marketing front," he said.

"Deer products should be promoted at the price they can command," he said. "The Game Industry Board will endeavour to see that this is done to the benefit of the deer farmers and the country."

30/5/83 Wapiti Management Area Possible

(Special)

Objectives of both hunters and environmentalists can be met on the issue of wapiti in the Fiordland National Park, the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy said on Saturday.

DUNEDIN

Mr Elworthy told the National Party's Otago-Southland conference in Dunedin these objectives could be met by the establishment of a wapiti herd in a defined area in the park in numbers controlled in such a way as to have a negligible impact on the natural ecosystems and national park values.

As a result of sustained national representations from recreational interests the formation of a wapiti management area in the park will be investigated.

A committee has been set up to review the situation during five years and hunting permits will be available.

The committee will report on the effect of a wapiti man-

agement area on park values and the takahe habitat.

"At the end of the five-year trial, the National Parks Authority and the Southland Park Board will have sufficient information to make a recommendation on long-term policy," Mr Elworthy said.

"I have acknowledged the possibility of returning the up-graded wapiti to the management area."

"If, in fact, a wapiti management area is created, I see no reason why the animals in that area should not be up-graded by the introduction of high quality livestock," the Minister said.

A contract is being carried

out to remove wapiti from the park and cross them with imported beasts to improve the herd. The contract will end in December, and no decision has yet been made on relocating the herd, he said.

In spite of Mr Elworthy's assurances, the conference carried a remit from the Wallace and Clutha electorates which strongly disapproved of the removal of the deer from the park.

The remit criticized the "apparent lack of action on the part of the Minister of Lands and Forests" in implementing a National caucus decision requiring management of wapiti in the park for recreational hunting after December this year.

Plan for Wapiti Supported

Establishing wapiti in a defined area of the Fiordland National Park was a "good idea," the vice-president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr John Bamford, said last night.

Mr Bamford was replying to an announcement at the weekend by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, that the objectives of both hunters and environmentalists could be met by the establishment of a wapiti herd in a defined area of the park, in numbers controlled in such a way as to have a negligible impact on the natural ecosystems and national park values.

Mr Bamford greeted the announcement with "guarded optimism." Upgrading the wapiti and putting them into a defined area in the park was something the recreational hunters had been seeking for four to five years, he said.

However, the association was guarded in its optimism that this would happen because of problems in the past with the Southland Parks and Reserves Board.

"I have no faith in the ability of the board to reflect public opinion," Mr Bamford said.

"Until the Minister or the National Parks Authority can get the board to come into line with what they are saying

we have got to be guarded.

"The Minister has the power to direct the board but he hasn't shown a willingness to do this at this stage," Mr Bamford said.

Also, he said, the recreational hunters were not convinced of the need for the committee set up to review the wapiti situation during a five-year period.

Already Available

Mr Bamford said the information to be gained by such a study was already available through the Forest Service Research Institute and local knowledge, especially from the Southland conservancy of the New Zealand Forest Service.

He felt the committee was a waste of time and a "fob off."

The Recreational Hunting Council has been asked to nominate somebody to the committee but has not done so at this stage.

"It probably will, but it is not certain it will go along with it," Mr Bamford said.

Other parties to serve on the committee had already put forward their nominations.

"We have had five-year type periods before, and all was lost at the end of it."

Animal numbers were getting low, and the wapiti numbers were even lower.

Protection

He did not think the wapiti herd could stand a five-year lapse without some sort of protection on the shooting of the animal.

This protection should take the form of the enforcement of a park board policy such as shooting the red deer and leaving the wapiti until an area was defined.

"I don't think the herd can stand a holding period of five years," Mr Bamford said.

The association's national executive will meet with the park board on June 29, in Te Anau, and Mr Bamford said he was hopeful some good would come from this meeting.

He agreed that the takahe should have first priority for food and habitat, and for people to talk about relocating the bird into the wa-

piti area was foolish.

The bird would not survive against the predators, he said.

The two areas — the wapiti and takahe — did not clash at present as they were divided by the middle fiord.

However, there were moves to reduce the size of the wapiti area and the association would be guarded in its approach to that, he said.

There was talk of a line being drawn along the divide which takes virtually all of the eastern watershed out of the wapiti area.

"That is not acceptable."

Mr Bamford said he wanted to thank the Minister for what he was trying to do in an awkward situation. It was difficult for the Minister to move, and that was why it was going to take a long time to sort the matter out.

A strong campaigner to keep the wapiti in the park, Mr Warren Taylor, of Gore, also complimented Mr Elworthy for "making sense" of the issue.

Wapiti Programme

Not Notified

The chief ranger of the Fiordland National Park, Mr Paul Green, has had no official notification of the proposal to reintroduce an upgraded strain of wapiti to the wapiti management area of the park.

The proposal was made by the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, to the National Party's Otago-Southland conference in Dunedin last Saturday.

Mr Green said that the proposal would no doubt be investigated by the committee

set up to undertake a five-year study of the long-term policy to be adopted for the future of the wapiti.

The committee will comprise representatives from the Forest Service, Lands and Survey Department, Southland National Parks and Re-

serves Board, New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association and the Wildlife Service.

The study period will begin when the commercial helicopter wapiti relocation project finishes on December 31.

Mr Green said that after this date, recreational hunting of all types of deer would be permitted in the wapiti block all year round. Helicopter operations would be restricted to the capture of red deer and hybrid species only.

Applications for hunting permits would be processed through the usual channels at Fiordland National Park headquarters, Mr Green said.

CHOPPER HUNTERS ENRAGED!

By Graeme Colman

Threat to shoot back

Court punishment meted out to a man who last month shot down a helicopter is enraging the country's airborne deer hunters.

They say the sentence is too light to "make the skies safe".

And they're saying if the men on the ground are going to "win" in court, then the men in the air are going to start

shooting back.

Unemployed 41-year-old Thompson Tuna, of Waimana, has been fined \$500 and ordered to pay \$20 court costs and \$4056 restitution for firing a .303 rifle at a Hughes 300 helicopter on March 7.

The sentence was handed down by Judge D. B. Wilson in the Whakatane District Court when he found Tuna guilty of firing the rifle "with intent to cause danger" to the aircraft.

But the helicopter's pilot, 29-year-old father of four Gordon Kane told Truth: "The sentence is too light. I've talked with deer recovery operators throughout the country and they say this guy (Tuna) has got off sweet."

Mr Kane said the shot Tuna fired into the helicopter, flying 100 metres above him at Matahi, in hill country 40 kilometres south west of Whakatane, could have killed.

The bullet penetrated the oil sump — and more than three quarts of oil poured out on to the hot exhaust system.

Bullet and engine casing fragments stopped the piston engine.

Higher

"If that bullet had gone a little higher it would have gone through our backs," Mr Kane told Truth.

He had talked with the Commissioner of Police and the Director of Civil Aviation before charges were laid against Tuna — and claimed both said the gunman would be "taken to the cleaners".

"The charges should have been a lot more serious. Our lives were endangered," Mr Kane said.

It was the first charge

laid relating to a shooting in which a helicopter had been shot down.

In other incidents pilots had been shot at — but had kept flying.

Said Mr Kane, a pilot for six years and now flying tourists at Fox Glacier: "A lot of the (deer recovery) pilots were watching this as a test case."

"The police have often said that if someone fired at an aircraft and brought it down the charge would be attempted murder."

"Now this guy (Tuna) has got a fine and a 'please pay to fix it'."

"I'm concerned about what might happen now."

"Up till now the recovery operators haven't fired back. Now the person on the ground seems to be the winner, and there is talk in the pubs of shooting back."

Truth could not obtain comment from Civil Aviation last week on whether it was still investigating the chopper downing and whether further charges against Tuna were being considered under the Civil Aviation Regulations (1953).

The regulations make it an offence for anyone to act in a way which affects the safety of an aircraft or its crew.

Information Sought On Shooting

As of last night, no information had been received regarding the Anzac weekend shooting of a stud red deer hind at Criffel game park, near Wanaka.

The \$2000 hind was found dead about two days after it had been shot with a high powered rifle. It was the only animal injured among the 3000 herd on the three farms that comprise the game park.

The manager of the game park, Mr Les Smith, said last night he suspected the shooting had taken place at night, with the aid of a spotlight. He knew of no motive for the shooting, and no meat had been taken from the six-year-old animal.

There was no precedent for the killing, he said.

A \$1000 reward has been offered by the game park for information supplied to Wanaka's Senior Constable Pierson, which results in the conviction of the person or persons involved.

Deer Industry Has Good Record

Deerfarming now had an "air of confidence" as it consolidated its position as an acceptable form of farm diversification.

The retiring president of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, Mr Bernard Pinney made this observation in his report presented at the association's annual general meeting in Wellington, yesterday.

"Our deerfarmers have effected one of the most interesting livestock developments in thousands of years in successfully domesticating a large wild beast. In twelve years the New Zealand deerfarming industry has been developed to a position of world leadership," he said.

Prices were firm for all classes of live deer, one of the

indicators of the confidence that there now was in the industry. The limited amount of farmed venison and an increasing supply of high quality velvet antler had both been selling for satisfactory prices, he said.

"The past year has seen a substantial number of new deerfarms established all over New Zealand by a farming community disenchanted with the future prospects for some of the traditional farming systems.

"We have also seen solid progress made towards the establishment of the proposed Game Industry Board, and commendable harmony between the production, processing, and marketing sectors, besides a productive research effort going on on many fronts."

Finance

Mr Pinney had some strong opinions on the future financing of the industry and recent taxation amendments.

A steady flow of investment capital was crucial if further development of the deerfarming industry was to proceed. Such capital had played an important part in the establishment of the industry, he said.

"The restraints on city investment have meant that most of the impetus for present and future capital investment is now coming from the farming community itself.

"To be fair, there is a feeling in some farming areas that this is where the main drive should come from anyway."

Mr Pinney said he did not entirely accept that view, and considered there was room for a mix of both city and rural involvement.

"In fact one can argue that this mix is highly desirable in that it forces a closer rapport between the two sectors, which, sadly to say, have been steadily moving further and further apart in recent years. Anything which bonds a community must be preferable to systems which divide it," he said.

Taxation

Following the August 1982 budget, which was aimed at reforming the taxation system as it affected city investment in farming and land development, the NZDFA had made submissions to the Government pointing out some of the contradictions and injustices which the budget imposed.

Mr Pinney said the association had been particularly concerned at the budget's retrospective clauses and had been pleased to see that some had been modified prior to

necessary to avoid recovery of the development expenditure deductions severely inhibiting the use of small deer farms as stepping stone units for young farmers. The recovery of interest on property disposals could similarly handicap the young farmer trying to progress to a larger operation.

"The final version of the Income Tax Amendment (No 2) Bill was passed near Christmas. It extended relief from the 10 year clawback provision to cover earlier omissions like disposal of a deceased person's land and court orders made under laws such as the Matrimonial Property Act.

"Section 31 was completely rewritten. This now limits to \$10,000 the amount of tax loss arising from any specified activity in the 1984 or later income year which may be offset against assessable income from other activities. If anything, the redrafted section is tighter than the initial version and the Government did not accept any of the proposals to lessen its impact," Mr Pinney said.

Mr Pinney added that the Government had altered the taxation requirements for syndicates of more than six people and had subtly and sensibly modified the provisions regarding stepping stone farmers by exempting those on their first move only.

Tuberculosis

The TB problem in farmed deer was also of concern to the association. In spite of the information on TB, Mr Pinney considered there was still some uncertainty among deerfarmers about compulsory TB testing.

"The NZDFA has not wavered in its pursuit of this objective," he said, "and has kept up pressure in conjunction with Federated Farmers to establish compulsory testing.

"The industry cannot afford to carry on any longer with some of the sloppy attitudes towards the eradication of this disease. Whilst we appreciated the research effort being applied at Flock House we are disturbed that the Ministry has still not come up with acceptable proven procedures for testing and eradication of this insidious and apparently highly infectious disease.

"Prevention in the form of regular checks and by making certain that all deer bought are certified clear fore being landed on the property can certainly help. But the MAF and the NZDFA can also help deerfarmers check the disease status of herds which have deer for sale."

ing with Wapiti would also be seen in the carcass weight of slaughtered deer as well as spectacular increase in antler weights.

"The fact that some deer species are not present in New Zealand now is no valid reason why they should not be allowed in future. The Forest Service argument to date, whilst valid in the past, is a shallow one today now that our 'noxious animal' is under control. A vigorous helicopter deer recovery industry run by private enterprise will keep the feral deer under control.

"Supply and demand should keep both automatically in balance."

Farmers should never forget that the fundamental products of the deerfarming industry were velvet and venison and these must be produced and marketed more economically than other livestock alternatives if the industry was to continue to grow, he added.

"We now have a level of stability and will have to work hard to maintain it. I believe we have a good record of facing up to and solving our problems," Mr Pinney concluded.

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This is the first occasion in New Zealand that Progeny by imported Canadian Elk out of New Zealand Wapiti have been offered for sale and as seen by live weights above they are truly a magnificent example of the cross. All weaners have been weaned for 8 weeks and fed under cover. All stock can be thoroughly recommended to intending purchasers.

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Helicopter pilot Mr Trevor Green holds a wild young hind captured on farmland at Rakauhauka yesterday.

Deer Close To City

Not only people are moving from the country to the city in greater numbers in modern times — the trend affects wild deer too.

Wild deer have been spotted living far from their more recognized habitats in the bush areas of Southland, on the outskirts of Invercargill.

They have been seen in the Awarua Bay area around Seaward Bush, off Tiwai road and in the peat bogs around Makarewa and Rakauhauka.

The operator of a live deer capture business using helicopters, Mr John Dennis, said he knew of at least four or five wild deer living at Seaward Bush at the moment. He said he thought the attraction could be the number of deer farms in the area.

Mr Dennis's firm has been capturing 10 to 15 wild deer in the vicinity of Invercargill every year since 1974.

He said the amazing thing to him was how they had got there and lived right on the door step of the city without anyone knowing about them.

One deer caught recently had been living in a patch of chounmoellier and using it as cover from the surrounding area.

Another had been running up and down the back fence of a deer farm near Seaward Bush at night.

The deer living in the Rakauhauka and Makarewa areas must have come from

the Hokonui hills, he said. To do this they would have had to cross large areas of farm land, probably moving at night.

Pet Food Supplies Seized

Pet food processed in a large-scale illegal operation has been marketed throughout Southland and Otago.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries inspectors have uncovered a processing and distribution operation which has been supplying illegal pet food to retail outlets from Oamaru to Invercargill, and in Central Otago.

As a result of these intensive investigations during the past three weeks, the prosecution of one person is pending for allegedly processing pet food on unlicensed premises.

"Tonnes" of pet food had been recovered, the supervising inspector of the MAF's meat division in Otago, Mr

David Gowan, said in Invercargill last night.

The operation had been "fairly large" and well set up, he said. He had been "somewhat amazed" by the amount of meat involved.

While tests on meat seized had not been completed, he believed the majority was horse flesh. There was also meat from cattle beasts.

Mr Gowan warned retailers to check that all meat they handled had been processed on licensed premises. He said that, unfortunately, in this

case, it appeared that retailers had been selling the pet food, believing "in all innocence" that it had been processed on licensed premises.

The meat processed illegally had been retailed through three shops in the Invercargill area, he said.

There are no plans to prosecute local retailers, but Mr Gowan warned that retailers, for their own good, should know they could be prosecuted for having uninspected meat on their premises.

Wanaka Game-raising Seminar

Aspiring Breeders' List Suggested

23/6/83

WANAKA

Farmers thinking of diversifying into deer breeding should settle three questions before starting to work on the figures.

They have to ask themselves whether they want a new challenge, will they accept the risk and what does the family think about it.

All this should be assessed in a written list of the objectives, the positive and negative aspects, the cost of getting started and the likely returns.

This was the initial formula offered would-be deer farmers by Mr Ewan Talbot, a Ministry of Agriculture adviser of Alexandra, at a seminar on game-raising in Wanaka this week.

He said it was important to find out how the family viewed such a venture because it was going to be heavily involved.

After the key questions had been resolved, the farmer could go on to look at the economic side, and the limitations imposed by land, labour and finance.

All Information

Mr Talbot suggested the aspiring deer breeder collect all the information possible from all sources, not just from Ministry experts or field days.

Dr Geoff Moore, of the Invermay research centre, gave the audience of nearly 80 people some details of antler comparisons and the introduction of wapiti strains in the red deer herds to increase the production of velvet.

He said that in the United States wapiti produced up to four times as much velvet as red deer, while the Korean market put a premium of 200 to 300 per cent on wapiti velvet.

He suggested that in New Zealand, after allowing for

extra feed and other costs, wapiti strains might give a return of \$168 in antler velvet for every \$100 earned from red deer.

Prevention

Mr Gilbert Van Reenon, a Wanaka veterinarian, urged deer farmers to go for prevention rather than cure in

their attitude to animal health.

He said disease and infections developed much more rapidly in game than in domestic stock and some treatments such as drenches which were effective on cattle and sheep did not work on deer.

NZDA Conference 29/6/83 Opens Tonight

The MP for Wallace, Mr Derek Angus, will officially open the 35th annual conference of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in Te Anau tonight.

Between 200 and 300 delegates are expected to attend the four-day meeting, which is being held at the Fiordland Motor Lodge.

As well as a long list of remits, about 15 supplementary discussion papers and reports will be presented, along with the annual reports from the wapiti committee and the national president, Mr J. B. Henderson.

Conference business will occupy all of tomorrow morning. In the afternoon delegates will be able to take a launch trip around Lake Te Anau, before resuming their business in the evening.

All of Friday and Saturday will be taken up with conference matters, which are expected to be completed by 5.30pm on Saturday.

Guest speakers will include the chairman of the NZ National Parks Authority, Mr D. Thom; the conservator of forests for Southland, Mr Keith Pryor; and a representative of the Rakiura Maori Land Trust.

Arms Statistics

One of the more controversial topics for discussion will be a paper on police firearms statistics. It covers six months research by the NZDA into the validity and accuracy of police offences reported involving firearms abuse.

Among the remits is one which brings attention to the ongoing destruction happening to hunters' vehicles at car parks within forest parks and recreational hunting areas.

The NZDA contends that neither the NZ Forest Service, the Government nor the national recreational hunting advisory committee "seem willing or capable" of preventing this vandalism.

The report of the wapiti committee, prepared by national vice-president, Mr J. C. Bamford, condemns totally the "meanderings of the Minister of Forests, Mr Elworthy, and his administration in their misguided efforts to commercialize and relocate the only herd of American elk in the Southern Hemisphere." These efforts, the report says, are against advice from conservationists, recreational hunters and some departments within the Government itself.

A report is to be presented by the national big game trophy committee outlining the finalization of the printing of the first "New Zealand Big Game Trophy Record Book," due for release in the near future.

Wapiti Relocation Personal Policy of Minister

The wapiti relocation policy now appears to be the personal policy of the Minister of Forests, Mr Elworthy, backed by his advisory committee, according to the annual report of the national executive of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association.

The report was addressed to the NZDA's annual conference which opened in Te Anau yesterday.

"We are sure no one else advocates such a bizarre undertaking and our stand is adamant that no liberation should take place," said the executive.

"The wapiti area of Fiordland should be the site for any efforts to tap the recreational value of our New Zealand wapiti."

The executive recorded its appreciation of the open contact prevailing between it and personnel from the Lands and Survey Department and the National Parks Authority.

"Regrettably, we can not report a similar state of affairs with respect to the head office of the Forest Service. One meeting with the Minister of Lands and Forests was arranged (during the year) only after persistent requests on our part, and our efforts to plead with him to reverse his policy with respect to wapiti relocation were denied," the report said.

On the international scene, the NZDA last year gained membership of the prestigious Safari Club International — an affiliation which has seen that organization publish a number of NZDA views and policies.

"The organization's con-

tact with SCI is seen as a means of reinforcing our ties with the international hunting and shooting fraternity," said the report.

The association was invited by the Invermay Agricultural Research Centre to take part in the first international conference on the biology of deer last February. Mr J. A. Anderson and the NZDA's executive officer attended.

Interest

The conference has already produced interest from highly respected researchers wishing to come to this country and undertake game animal studies for the direct benefit of the NZDA.

While the number of NZDA branches has maintained or increased in the past year, the concern among the members about actual membership numbers.

"Both Motueka and Rangiora sub-branches continue to develop and are pleasing to welcome the efforts of Palmerston (S) to go it alone by applying for incorporation.

"The Twizel branch is solidating and addressing itself to a future incorporation as the Waitaki branch, a new group to be known as the Waikaremoana branch in the process of formation the report said.

However, the association which showed a loss of \$1000 in the last year, is keeping membership of individual branches increase.

"Crucial Base"

"Membership will always be the crucial base on which our success as a national organization rests, and executive regrets it lacks sufficient information from branches and capitation receipts to report the upward trend in numbers many branches are reporting individually.

"The simple solution is for each member to make an effort to recruit one new member in the coming year. "Our problems would largely disappear and capitation could fall substantially," the report said.

Hitting Wrong Target

30/6/83

TE ANAU

Members of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association were hitting the wrong target in shooting at the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, according to the chairman of the board, Mr Jim McFarlane.

Addressing the association's 31st annual conference in Te Anau last night, Mr McFarlane said the function of the board was to assist in policy formation within the constraints of the National Parks Act.

The board was not in the business of changing policy, but worked within it.

The business of policy formation in national parks was now complex and convoluted with large numbers of people, organizations and bodies involved, Mr McFarlane said.

Under the terms of the 1980 Act, policies must be expressed through management plans which resulted from public comment being processed by the board and the Commissioner of Crown Lands. These submissions were presented to the National Parks and Reserves Authority which presented its conclusions to the Minister.

With respect to the wapiti issue, he said, the board was guided by the Fiordland National Park management plan of 1981 which referred to the extermination of introduced animals within the park and it was this provision which upset association members.

Mr McFarlane said the wapiti issue was not the only concern of the board and matters such as the Milford road, the proposed incorporation of part of the Waitutu State forest into the Fiordland National Park and the export of water from Deep Cove where other immediate concerns of the board.

RGH Concept To Be Considered

The national executive of the NZDA is to consider the advantages of having the concept of recreational hunting areas (RHA) changed to one of Recreational Games Hunting (RGH), within a defined area. At present, RHAs are confined to State forests, and animals straying outside Crown or privately owned land can be freely commercialized.

Members at the association's conference in Te Anau on Saturday were told that management purposes of the area containing the RGH would still have definite boundaries, but in a broader sense than the present RHAs.

Members at the conference believe the recreational concept should be changed from the land to the animal.



A SNOWY landscape which prompted many anxious inquiries into the state of the roads greeted members of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association and the Southland National Parks

and Reserves Board in Te Anau yesterday. 30/6/83

Before the opening of the NZDA's annual conference last night, the two bodies met to discuss their respective

attitudes towards game control in the Fiordland National Park.

PICTURED: From left, the chairman of the parks board, Mr C. J. McFarlane; board member, Mr Les

Henderson; national secretary of the NZDA, Mr Shelby Grant; national president of the NZDA, Mr John Henderson; and the national vice-president, Mr John Bamford.

Reference Terms Cause Concern

30/6/83

Concern at the composition and terms of reference of the scientific committee proposed to monitor the five-year period of reference given to Fiordland wapiti from 1984, was expressed yesterday by the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association.

The association's executive met for three hours at Te Anau with members of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board in an attempt to clear up the attitude towards the question of wapiti in the Fiordland National Park.

National president, Mr Henderson, said he believed some of the terms of reference to be too narrow. It also seemed, contrary to what was understood, that the scientific committee was to have the capacity of a management committee.

It was taken up by the national vice-president, Mr Bamford, who asked if it was true that a management committee was going to be set up under the control of the board.

Board chairman, Mr McFarlane, replied that it was not, and that management of the park was done by the Department of Lands and Survey.

Delay Tactic

Mr Bamford said the scientific committee was a delay tactic to buy off another lapse of years.

"We've had these five year periods before and always the association has lost out," he said.

He opposed to the whole idea. If the recreational hunters can't be involved in the type of management of the area then I don't think there is anything in it for the NZDA.

The NZDA has made a submission to the scientific committee, but it has yet to be approved by the annual conference, which opened in Te Anau last night.

Mr Henderson said there seemed to be a problem with interpretation of the park to be done by the committee.

"Lucky"

"We will be lucky if any wapiti are produced at all," he said, referring to a re-

quirement in the terms of reference that the committee report regularly to the Minister of Lands.

"Nowhere does it show that the committee will make any difference to what's physically going to go on in Fiordland in the next five years. I think this is how

a lot of people will interpret it."

Mr McFarlane said the establishment of the committee had been decided by the Minister. If the NZDA could not accept this, then it should put in writing an alternative which it would like to see achieved.

Agreement to Review Management Plan

30/6/83

The Southland National Parks and Reserves Board yesterday agreed to publicly review its management plan for Fiordland National Park in terms of its policy on introduced animals and plants.

This was the result of a near three hour discussion with executive members of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in Te Anau.

The proposed review will need the consent of the Southland conservator of forests, Mr K. Pryor, whose department drew up the management plan. A hastily convened "meeting within the meeting" of the parks board showed there was no opposition to the idea from members.

It was eventually suggested by the board chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, in reply to the vice-president of NZDA, Mr J. C. Bamford, who expressed disappointment that after such protracted discussion no resolutions had come forward.

The NZDA's main concern was the future of recreational hunting in Fiordland when the capture consortium operating there ends its contract with the Government in December.

Mr Bamford said the board's policy seemed to be one of having a wapiti area free of all animals, something not acceptable to the NZDA.

"Would the board accept, as part of its management plan, a moderate number of animals in the wapiti area?" he asked.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands for Southland, Mr J. P. Harty, replied that policy was a matter for the Minister (of Lands) and it was up to his department and the board to interpret and carry it out, not to set it.

The national president of the NZDA, Mr J. B. Henderson, agreed that both parties "were largely talking about the interpretation of words."

"There will be a remnant of deer in the park (after the consortium pulls out). We want to make sure that they are going to be made available to recreational hunters," he said.

"The alternative is that we will continue to lobby ignorant politicians who will continue to make the same yo-yo decisions they have in the past few years."

Mr McFarlane said that while extermination of in-

roduced animals was a requirement of the National Parks Act, the board had accepted it was not possible to achieve that end.

Board member, Mr Les Henderson asked why the NZDA did not encourage hunters to go into some of the more remote areas of the park instead of concentrating on the "wapiti area."

Mr Henderson replied that people could not be forced to go into these areas if the only animals available to them were "miserable red deer." They needed some kind of incentive in the way of trophies to hang on the wall before they would move to new territory.

Added to this, it was becoming increasingly expensive for North Islanders to come south to hunt, and when they did get here, the wapiti

area was among the easiest to enter, being accessible from the lake front.

Mr McFarlane said that even if there were 500 animals left in the wapiti area after December, it would not worry him if they were wapiti or red deer.

"I think, however, it would be quite improper for us to declare ourselves one way or another on the retention of animals in the wapiti area," he said.

A review of the management plan in respect of introduced animals would allow the NZDA to make submissions along the lines suggested by Mr Bamford through the proper channels. The board would then consider any such submissions along with others which such a review would produce.

Included in the review

would be the supplementary document on wild animal control, also prepared by the NZ Forest Service.

Mr McFarlane also sought an assurance from the NZDA that the term "game management" in its (the NZDA) opinion, did not mean a proliferation of animals.

"It would be most helpful if the deerstalkers association could come up with a statement assuring us that it doesn't agree with that. Such an attitude hasn't come through on the local scene," he said.

Mr Henderson, who had earlier described this term as well known overseas, said it meant the exact opposite.

"We have never envisaged in Fiordland National Park anything but a very tightly screwed down population of animals," he said.

Victims of Deer Mismanagement

30/6/83

"The deer in Fiordland National Park have been very poorly mismanaged by administrators over the years and we have been the victims," the national president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr J. B. Henderson, claimed yesterday.

Mr Henderson was speaking at a meeting between the NZDA and the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board in Te Anau, before the NZDA's annual conference which started last night.

"What's going on now is the worst that's ever happened in this saga."

"Allowing commercial operators to take animals (out of the park) at the expense of the public is contrary to the spirit of the National Parks Act."

Mr Henderson said it was only with difficulty that the Minister of Lands (Mr Elworthy) was persuaded to allow a trophy shoot there this year.

"Ridiculous"

"We don't blame the board for this ridiculous policy of re-

location but at no stage did it ever make any sense to us."

"The NZDA wasn't prepared to stick its neck on the block and risk the wrath of the environmental movement by supporting the relocation of a wild animal somewhere else in New Zealand."

"We didn't believe the public would accept this. We would have been faced with disaster if we'd gone along with it."

Mr Henderson said he still believed the NZDA had taken the right course of action, and history would prove it right.

In spite of his criticism of animal management in Fiordland National Park, he said the NZDA had never been hostile to national parks administration.

"Apart from minor con-

Differing Views On Control Plan

2/7/83

There will be widely differing public views on the draft wild animal control plan for Stewart Island, according to the Conservator of Forests (Southland), Mr K. W. Prior.

Speaking at the 31st conference of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in Te Anau yesterday, Mr Prior said the draft was being prepared by a Southland con-

servancy and to date replies have been received from selected organizations.

On completion of the draft, it will be submitted to the public for comment.

"Fairly comprehensive animal and vegetation surveys have been completed over most of the island," Mr Prior said.

"In one area, white-tailed deer were considered to be causing unacceptable damage to vegetation. This in turn became the site of Forest Research Institute investigations involving the use of poison."

Investigation

Subsequently, Mr Prior said, a proposal by the National Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee for a recreational hunting area led to an investigation and report on State forests in the northern

half of the island.

A decision on this is being held over until completion of the wild animal control plan for the whole island.

"It is already clear that there will be widely differing views by the public. This could lead to conflict. It is necessary that the various interested groups have organization to present and support their interest. In my opinion, it is equally important that balanced objectives, if not totally satisfactory to any one group, be accepted," Mr Prior said.

During an open forum, concern was expressed by an NZDA member about ecological zones existing in recreational hunting areas.

Mr Prior assured the conference there is no danger of such zones being introduced in existing hunting areas.

Inclusion To Be Resisted

2/7/83

TE ANAU
The Rakiura Maori Land Incorporation will resist any suggestion of compulsory inclusion of the society's land in the wild animal control plan for Stewart Island.

Addressing members of the 35th conference of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in Te Anau yesterday, the president of the society, Mr Rewi Fife, said there was no need for the Stewart Island plan to either maintain or establish deer control on the society's land.

"The Crown might need it with theirs to help set values, but we know our values," he said.

"The Crown needs to identify its priorities on wild animals as seen against other uses of its land. It has to deal with the public interest. We do not have this problem, working as we do for ourselves and our land."

The Rakiura Maori Land Incorporation allows recreational hunting on blocks of its land in the Lords river area of Stewart Island.

Mr Fife emphasized that the private recreational hunting use of the land was only possible through the efforts of

hunters themselves in maintaining hunting pressure on the deer.

Hunting

There was an increasing number of people wanting to hunt on the society's land, especially in April when hunters were having to be turned away.

"This would suggest that the greatest desire of the recreational hunter is the trophy head. We do not mind this attitude, providing that a certain percentage of deer are bagged."

Mr Fife said that if hunters allowed too many deer to "pass their sights" then it was their sport which would suffer ultimately.

"Hunters have the opportunity to control deer to our satisfaction but in the event of not bothering to take advantage of this opportunity, then we, as the land controlling authority, would have no option but to seek alternative control methods," he said.

In Danger of Losing 4/7/83 Right to Hunt

The average New Zealander is in danger of losing his right to hunt and shoot in this country, according to the outgoing president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, Mr J. B. Henderson.

In his annual report given at the 35th conference of the NZDA in Te Anau on Saturday, Mr Henderson said that "glib-tongued entrepreneurs" were selling the gimmick of New Zealand under the guise of the necessity to develop commercial and, more especially, tourist activities.

Mr Henderson said New Zealand's fish and game sportsmen had, for more than 100 years, enjoyed a blessing almost unique in today's world — the right to hunt and fish publicly-owned resources at modest cost.

In most other countries, he said, the right to hunt was reserved for those with money or social status.

Abandoned System

"It was no accident that our pioneer forefathers left behind them in Britain that pernicious system that awards the ownership of fish and wildlife to the land occupier as his exclusive property to be used by him at his pleasure and sold by him at his price and convenience.

"Early New Zealanders were determined to desert the feudal trappings, the snobbery and the cult of privilege. And desert them they most certainly did, in order to present us with a legacy second-to-none of which we should not only be proud, but extremely jealous."

Mr Henderson said there would be nothing more damaging to New Zealand society than the injection of private wealth and privilege.

"Similarly, if we allow the trend to develop where the millionaire tourist is wooed, we are inviting him to demand that anti-social level of opulence he is accustomed to extracting from stricken societies hidden behind the facade of Cannes or a Monte Carlo or a Las Vegas.

"In next to no time our lands, especially those associated with the pleasant scene of the recreational resort, along with many other social values and traditional rights, will be seized from our control and priced out of the reach of New Zealanders by the familiar racketeers and their clicking turnstiles that have ruined so much of the earth and alienated so much of the good life from ordinary people," Mr Henderson said.

Protection

Protection from such damaging influences could be achieved in the long term by proper Government action and legal safeguards. However, Mr Henderson said, the main danger was the fact that New Zealand had a "money-grabbing Government, dominated by men who have long been cross-eyed staring at

dollar signs." He said these men were prepared to convert anything to cash in return for the irretrievable loss, often to foreign interests, of public resources including fish, wildlife, minerals, land, water and the social values associated with them.

Already in this country, the right to hunt wild animals could and was being sold with impunity, and the \$1000 trophy was now part of the New Zealand scene.

Mr Henderson said even the New Zealand hunter's rights on Crown land, comprising national and forest parks together with recreational hunting areas, were threatened.

He reported the case of a recent total ban placed on shooting or capturing sambar deer anywhere in New Zealand, on the grounds that the species was dying out and needed protection.

However, farmers in the North Island began to complain of crop damage caused by the sambar, and the Minister of Lands "signed away" to a consortium of farmers, the sole right to take sambar deer and to use and sell them for safari hunting purposes.

"So the calculated insult is delivered and the public ownership of wildlife takes another lurch down the tubes, as this ghastly precedent is set not by accident but by design," Mr Henderson said.

"If you want to shoot a sambar without committing a criminal act, you can pay one of a number of privileged farmers whatever price he chooses and thus buy your way out of prosecution — and that is the only way you will legally shoot a sambar."

"That ought to make them worth a packet eh! Perhaps \$1000 a stag if you have the money or maybe a tourist hunter will find \$2000?"

Mr Henderson concluded his speech by attacking the Government for its intrusion into the sport of hunting after having guaranteed not to interfere with sports administration.

Public Ownership 4/7/83 Policy Reaffirmed

Members of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association on Saturday reaffirmed the association's policy of favouring the public ownership of wildlife, during its weekend conference at Te Anau.

The conference condemned any attempt to create privileged hunting preserves and/or exclusive access to the publicly-owned fish and wildlife assets of New Zealand.

The reaffirmation came after the retiring president of the NZDA, Mr J. B. Henderson, delivered his annual report in which mention was made of the Manawatu farmers consortium which had been given sole rights to the shooting of sambar deer.

Criticism was directed by some NZDA members towards the National Recreational Hunting Advisory Com-

mittee which originally advised the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, to ban all shooting of sambar deer. They were unhappy that the ban had been lifted to the extent that some farmers were now privileged in that they could shoot the deer by reason of alleged defence of their properties.

Five members of this committee are members of the NZDA, three of them also having been former national presidents of the association.

"How can these men represent the NZDA and sit on a government policy-making

committee and come out with such things that are diametrically opposed to this association's beliefs," Mr A. Frampton, of the Wellington branch, asked the conference.

"I think the NZDA should ask these five members whose side they are on, and if they continue to go against the interests of the NZDA, they should be asked to resign from this association."

Contact Minister

The conference resolved to direct the national executive of the NZDA to contact the Minister and object to the deviation of the moratorium allowing the killing of sambar deer, until such time as the ban had run its course.

The national executive is also to write to the five association members of the committee reminding them of the moral obligations membership of the NZDA impose upon them and requesting them to adhere to, and promote, the policies of the association.

Items in Brief

Items in brief from the conference included:

OFFICERS: Mr John Bamford, of the South Otago branch, has been elected national president of the NZDA. The new vice-president of the organization is Mr David Hodder, of North Canterbury.

CONFERENCE: The 1984 New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association annual conference is to be held in Oamaru.

Telegram Sent To Minister 4/7/83

The New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association has sent a telegram to the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, calling for an immediate halt to live capture operations by the consortium working in the Fiordland National Park wapiti area.

Speaking at the NZDA conference in Te Anau on Saturday, Mr Warren Taylor, of Gore, said the Government's contract with the consortium ended at the end of this year. While it had looked as though the contract would be renewed for a further three years, the NZDA had succeeded in halting the capture of the deer until the end of the December.

A breeding programme for a relocation herd is to be continued until 1986.

"The Minister has indicated the possibility that the wapiti will be relocated back in the park," Mr Taylor said.

"It is absolute nonsense to continue with the live capture in the park. Leave them where they are."

Members at the conference also asked the national executive of the NZDA to consider formulating a policy for the release of captured wapiti-type animals into the wapiti area.

Campaign To 4/7/83 Fight Reclassification

A national campaign has been launched by the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association to fight the Government's intention to allow Crown pastoral lease land to be reclassified as renewable leasehold.

The NZDA's conference in Te Anau on Saturday, believed this move was a political one which effectively disinherited New Zealanders of up to 3.5 million hectares of public land in favour of a few hundred lessees currently paying "perppercorn" rentals.

Mr Mark Dunajtschik, of the Wellington branch of the NZDA, described the intended reclassification as the most important issue affecting the association.

He suggested the establishment of a fund to help fight the cause, pledging to himself to give \$1 for every \$1 raised by NZDA, regardless of the upper limit.

National executive member, Mr David Hodder, told the conference that if the land was reclassified, about one quarter of the South Island would be "up for grabs."

"Not only is there the question of the land itself, but such a move would seriously affect land access to most of our hunting, tramping and climbing country," Mr Hodder said.

"Gross Contradictions"

The NZDA called upon the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Elworthy, to account for the "gross contradictions" of his policy thrust with respect to all past protestations of the need to protect this land.

Offence Reports 4/7/83 'Misleading'

"Misleading" statements in the media on firearms offences is having an adverse effect on hunters, according to members of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association.

In a paper presented at the association's conference in Te Anau on Saturday, the national secretary of the NZDA, Mr Shelby Grant, drew the audience's attention to a newspaper report which quoted the Deputy Commissioner of Police as saying there were 1600 gun-related offences in New Zealand each year.

However, Mr Shelby said this was misleading, as there were not 1600 separate instances each year, since one incident could result in as many as four different offences.

"The statistics used by the Deputy Commissioner are for

an in-house indication of the police force work-load," Mr Shelby said.

"What is the Deputy Commissioner doing using statistics like these in a government statement... The use of statistics by any Government department must be qualitative and give a true indication of the state of affairs."

The conference was told that in 1980, there were only 361 charges laid arising from offences related to firearms.

A remit was passed urging the Government to take more notice of the association's policy on firearms.

Some Members Back In 1952

TE ANAU

The roles of both the National Parks Board and the National Parks Authority had been areas of considerable personal concern during his period in Parliament, the MP for Wallace, Mr Derek Angus, said in opening the 31st annual conference of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in Te Anau last night.

Mr Angus said the National Parks Act of 1980 should have provided a new administrative structure for New Zealand's national parks and reserves.

The concept of the new legislation was one of a partnership between the National Parks and Reserves Authority and the 12 National Parks and Reserves Boards on the one hand, and the Department of Lands and Survey and the Minister of Lands on the other.

However, Mr Angus said there could be some members of the authority — and there were undoubtedly members in the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board — who were looking at their administrative responsibilities in terms of the 1952 act, and who had not been prepared to shift to the principles and aims of the 1980 act.

"I believe that if these people are not prepared to administer their responsibilities as directed by the Government, then they should resign from these positions and make way for people who are more in tune to local issues and who are prepared to be guided in some way by the public opinion expressed on issues of concern."

Wapiti

Speaking on the wapiti issue, Mr Angus outlined the proposal to set up a scientific team, drawn from a number of sources, to determine whether the wapiti was a manageable, recreational resource taking into account the habitat requirements of the takahe.

The most important factor

was whether enough animals with wapiti characteristics remained to insure that they could re-assert themselves as the dominant hunting animal.

Mr Angus said the task would be difficult as of the 1250 animals taken by the commercial consortium, only 133 were regarded as predominantly of wapiti blood.

"The capture and upgrading of wapiti for the possible establishment of a second wapiti herd must be considered as part of the total wapiti issue. While all capture of wapiti ends as of December 31, the upgrading with Canadian wapiti blood is to continue until the end of 1986."

Mr Angus said the Forest Research Institute's report on the suitability of the West Nelson area, surveyed last summer, would be critical in deciding whether a second wapiti herd would be established or not.

Members should welcome the recent statements made by the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, that if a wapiti management area was created in Fiordland, then there was no reason why animals in that area should not be upgraded by the introduction of high quality livestock.

"Close"

"I think you will all agree that at last our Minister is getting close to what is wanted to preserve the Fiordland wapiti herd and in the place where they ought to be."

Mr Angus said he was in no doubt the objectives of both hunters and environmentalists could be met by the estab-

lishment of a wapiti herd in a defined area of the park.

This represented a common sense approach to a problem that had caused a lot of ill feeling throughout the country for a long time.

"Granted the wapiti are introduced animals — they are a recreational resource located in an area set aside for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. Granted that in excessive numbers the animals can damage the vegetation in the park, but the helicopter has given the park authorities the tool to keep animal numbers to prescribed limits. If a special area is set aside for them, the animals from outside that area can be controlled or killed and those within it strictly controlled," Mr Angus said.

Vote of No Confidence In Parks Board

A vote of no confidence in the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board was expressed in a remit passed unanimously at the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association conference in Te Anau last night.

The remit, moved by Mr Warren Taylor, of Gore, asked the conference to note with dismay the continuation of the belligerent policy of the board, including its stated intention to reintroduce the shooting of all red deer and wapiti in the wapiti area.

This, the remit said, was in defiance of a massive display of public opinion, reasonable and realistic approaches from the National Parks Authority and local bodies, and favourable decisions and undertakings from the Government and the Labour opposition.

The conference resolved to work with Government administration other than the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board in the implementation of animal management, habitat conservation and research activities in relation to the future of the wapiti area.

In moving the remit, Mr Taylor told the conference that having regard to the board's past performance in administering selective culling operations, he could not trust it to embark on a proper selective culling operation without direction.

"This remit is basically a vote of no confidence in the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board," he said.

The conference also received a report from the NZDA wapiti committee, prepared by Mr John Bamford of

the South Otago branch.

Mr Bamford said the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon, the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, the National Parks and Reserves Authority, the Labour Party, the Southland, Wallace and Clutha county councils and the Southland United Council had all said wapiti had a place in the Fiordland National Park. However, the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board has said they have not got any place there.

"The chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, and the board are indeed ignoring stated policy decisions with regard to wapiti relocation," Mr Bamford said.

"They are protected by their appointment to this board and the only interest they have in wapiti in the park is to see they are eradicated."

Mr Bamford said the NZDA was "appalled" to find terms of reference and composition of the scientific committee to be set up by the Department of Lands and Survey were far removed from what the association had envisaged.

Rejected

The conference was told Mr Elworthy had rejected objections to the terms of reference made by the NZDA and it also disallowed alternative terms put forward by the association.

The committee is to be es-

tablished for a term of five years from January 1, 1984.

Generally, it will oversee and advise the Minister through the National Parks and Reserves Board on the implementation of interim selective wild animal control measures. These measures will be aimed at maintaining the opportunities for recreational hunting of wapiti-type deer in the Fiordland National Park.

"It is my view, and this is shared by a number of others, that NZDA should in no way endorse this committee, with the present composition and terms of reference," Mr Bamford said.

The authority, he said, must be viewed with suspicion after the report of the "leaked in committee minutes" from the meeting of the National Parks Authority and the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board of September 17 last year.

"The NPA leaked minutes indicated that the aim is to prove no wapiti qualify."

Committee

However, Mr Bob Badland, of the Thames Valley branch, said the NZDA should recognize the importance of the scientific committee and pursue the nomination of an association member to the committee.

After further discussion, Mr Taylor moved that the

conference find the scientific committee, and its terms of reference acceptable, provided a management advisory committee was appointed.

This committee would advise on the management of wapiti recreational hunting at the local level during the term of the scientific committee.

"If the setting up of the management committee is not approved, then we must oppose the terms of reference of the scientific committee."

Mr Taylor proposed that the management advisory committee would consist of one representative from the Lands and Survey Department, two from the Forest Service, and four from the users.

The management committee would advise on the management of recreational hunting of wapiti in the wapiti area during the term of the scientific committee.

It would also advise on the method and extent of selective culling operations in the wapiti area, periodically assess and report to the authority on the condition of the wapiti herd, and formulate management plans.

Mr Taylor said he was concerned about the fate of the management and relocation of the wapiti herd between the date of the termination of the deer capture consortium agreement on December 31 1986, and the end of the term of office of the scientific committee.

Mr Taylor's motion was accepted and passed.

Other remits passed at the conference included:

MEMBERSHIP: The NZDA is to set up a working group to look at possible opportunities for the establishment of compulsory membership of all New Zealand hunters to a national hunting organization. A report from the group will be presented to the 1984 conference.

MYXOMATOSIS: The association reaffirms its policy of opposition to the introduction of myxomatosis.

VANDALISM: Concern was expressed at the growing incidence of road end vandalism to motor vehicles in a remit moved by the Wellington branch. The national secretary is to write to the relative Government agencies expressing the NZDA's concern. Members have also placed themselves at the disposal of the police to help in this area.

Remits Passed On Helicopters

Three remits dealing with helicopter hunting were passed at the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association conference held in Te Anau on Saturday.

One asked that the association request Government action to stop all helicopter shooting and live capture of deer, chamois and thar in the watersheds of the South Island rivers, flowing into most of the southern, eastern and northern coasts of the island, for the next five years.

This remit was submitted by the Southern Lakes branch of the NZDA.

The second remit, submitted by the North Canterbury branch of the NZDA, asked the national executive to increase its efforts to have the Forest Service implement a system whereby it can control illegal helicopter hunting in recreational hunting areas.

Red Deer Ban

The association also intends pressing for a total ban on helicopter hunting of red deer in the Rakaia watershed.

The conference was told by a member of the Ashburton branch, which presented a remit asking for the ban, that in view of the historical and gene pool values of the Rakaia deer herd and because of its extremely low numbers, the control of red deer was no longer required.

This remit was specifically directed at red deer because it was felt there would be no chance of a helicopter hunting ban if thar and chamois were also included.

Extermination Main Policy

The extermination of introduced animals in New Zealand's national parks must remain the primary policy of the National Parks Authority, the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association was told on Saturday.

Addressing the 35th conference of the NZDA in Te Anau at the weekend, the chairman of the NPA, Mr David Thom, said the weight of history, legislation and scientific research all led collectively to the fact that the authority had "no room to move" on its extermination policy.

Mr Thom said he hoped both deer hunting organizations and national parks authorities would come together to look at the issue of introduced animal control during the next 10 years.

Deer Auction Held Near Wanaka

WANAKA

A 129kg weaner stag, the progeny of a Canadian elk bull and a New Zealand wapiti cow, fetched top price of \$12,600 at a deer auction near Wanaka yesterday.

The stag was bought by Mr R. Olderman, of Taupo, who also paid the top price of \$7000 each for a pen of four weaner females.

The auction, at the Criffel Game Park, was the first time deer farmers have had the opportunity to bid for the offspring of Canadian and domestic wapiti cross.

The 26 lots brought a total of \$424,000, or an average price of \$2944.

Mr N. J. Dowling, of Wrightson NMA in Alexandra, who did the selling with Mr E. Mackie, of Southland Farmers Co-op, Invercargill, said the result was "very good, overall."

Buyers from the North Island were well represented in an attendance of more than 300 at the sale and interest in the stags was greater than expected.

The elk-wapiti cross lines were offered in lots of three and four, with the successful bidder having the option of one or the lot.

Top Stags

Mr Olderman bought some of the top stags at \$6500 to \$7000, but the second-best price of \$12,500 for the weaner heavyweights was paid by Mr R. W. Jennings, of Awarua.

One lot of seven stags, which included the two highest-priced of the sale, fetched a total of \$53,500.

Most of the elk-wapiti offerings went up quickly in \$100 bounds.

A pen of five wapiti weaner females from all-New Zealand stock went at \$4200 apiece to Southland Farm Produce.

NZDFA Recommends Tb Policy

15/7/83

Tuberculosis in farm deer is of concern to every responsible deer farmer. In response to this, the council of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association has issued a policy statement and recommendations for Tb control.

In view of a greater volume of tuberculin testing over the past year, post mortem inspection of farm deer at deer slaughter premises, and a concerted research effort by the animal health division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the council considers it is timely to assess the incidence of the disease and to reaffirm the industry approach to combating it.

The MAF has listed 107 deer herds as being infected with Tb. Since April 1982 nearly 40,000 deer have been tuberculin tested and 640 reactors detected, giving a prevalence rate of 1.6 per cent, considered to be a low rate.

Because of the so far, low rate of incidence and problems associated with the sensitivity of the tuberculin test, the MAF considers the test to be a means of controlling the spread of Tb in deer and reducing the incidence, rather than a tool capable of eradicating it.

Factor

This factor, plus the MAF assessment that Tb does not represent a major economic consideration, counts against a Government funded compulsory scheme being introduced in the near future.

Nevertheless the NZDFA council considers the present voluntary scheme will at least contain Tb in deer while more accurate methods of diagnosing the disease are sought, provided deer farmers follow the council's recommendations.

The council states that deer farmers who do not test for Tb take the risk of Tb spreading through their herd undetected.

Handling infected deer, particularly in confined spaces, such as deer yards, carries the potential threat of human infection.

The council reminds deer farmers that New Zealand enjoys a reputation for high standards of animal health in food importing countries and the venison industry must not be seen to be falling behind in maintaining this standard.

Where deer are found to be Tb infected during post mortem inspection at a deer slaughter premise, no ex gratia compensation is payable.

The NZDFA council recommends that a complete deer

herd test should be carried out once a year and infected herds should be tested at three-monthly intervals and again within 30 days before any herd movement away from the farm.

There are certain precautions that buyers can take to help prevent the spread of Tb.

Buyers should not take delivery of deer without first obtaining a certificate signed by a veterinarian confirming that the deer have been Tb tested with a negative reaction.

Test certificates should quote the deer tag numbers and claims that deer which cannot be individually identified have been tested, should be treated with caution.

Buyers should also check whether the vendor's property is subject to a Disease Control Place Notice. The onus is on the buyer to inquire whether such a notice exists, not the vendor.

Deer Sales

Where deer sales are held, at which invitation entries are invited from other breeders, these should be held at Tb free properties.

Deer should not be accepted for auction unless accompanied by a certificate of negative tuberculin test.

Selling agents should be able to inform prospective buyers of the Tb status of the vendors on whose behalf they are acting.

Deer transport crates should be thoroughly washed between loads especially where deer being moved have come from a property under a DCP notice.

Wild Animal Account Wound Up

26/7/83

The special purpose account established by the former Fiordland National Park Board for wild animal control measures is to be wound up with the purchase of a field radio to be used in introduced animal control.

Approval for the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr J. P. Harty, to do this, was given at yesterday's meeting of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board.

In a memorandum to the board, Mr Harty noted that all commitments against the account have been met and a balance of \$1880 remained.



20/6/83

27/8/83



RELATIVE ANIMAL DENSITIES IN THE GREBE CATCHMENTS AND LAKE HAUROKO (EASTERN PRINCESS MOUNTAINS)

This report by Peter Willemse is now available from the Conservator of Forests, 5th Floor, State Insurance Building, Don Street, Invercargill or by mail at the prepaid price of \$2.00 plus 50 cents for postage and packing.

A copy is available for inspection at the NZFS offices at Invercargill, Dunedin, Tapanui and Tuatapere.

K. W. PRIOR
Conservator of Forests

49471

27/8/83



MOUNTAIN FOREST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN A PREVIEW

This plan prepared by the New Zealand Forest Service, Southland Conservancy is now available from the Conservator of Forests, 5th Floor, State Insurance Building, Don Street, Invercargill or a copy will be forwarded by mail at the prepaid price of \$3.50 plus 50 cents for postage and packing.

K. W. PRIOR
Conservator of Forests

49469

Mr Dennis White is one of a growing number of Australian farmers who are realizing the potential for good profits from domestic deer production. On his 40 hectare farm at Goulburn, on the southern tablelands of New South Wales, he runs about 160 deer and intends to increase the number to 500. Commercial interest in deer is growing in Australia, and there are about 200 deer farms with venison bringing about \$A7 a kg. According to Mr White, this is about seven times the current return from beef — from animals that can produce as much meat a hectare as either sheep or cattle.

All Operators Retained

All operators of helicopter venison recovery in Fiordland National Park have been retained for the 1983-84 year and no new applicants have been approved.

This was decided by the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board at its meeting last Friday after consideration of a report from the Commissioner of Crown Lands for Southland, Mr J. P. Harty.

When submissions on helicopter animal recovery closed on June 20, 11 applications had been received. All six of those already licensed reappplied, along with three more from Otago-Southland and two from the West Coast (Haast and Hokitika).

Of these, four favoured the system of block allocation, three wanted open competition and the remainder stated no preference for either.

The rotating block ballot system has been in operation since December, 1982, with the exception of the winter months when it was open slaughter. Because of the flexibility offered by this system,

it was favoured by most of the operators.

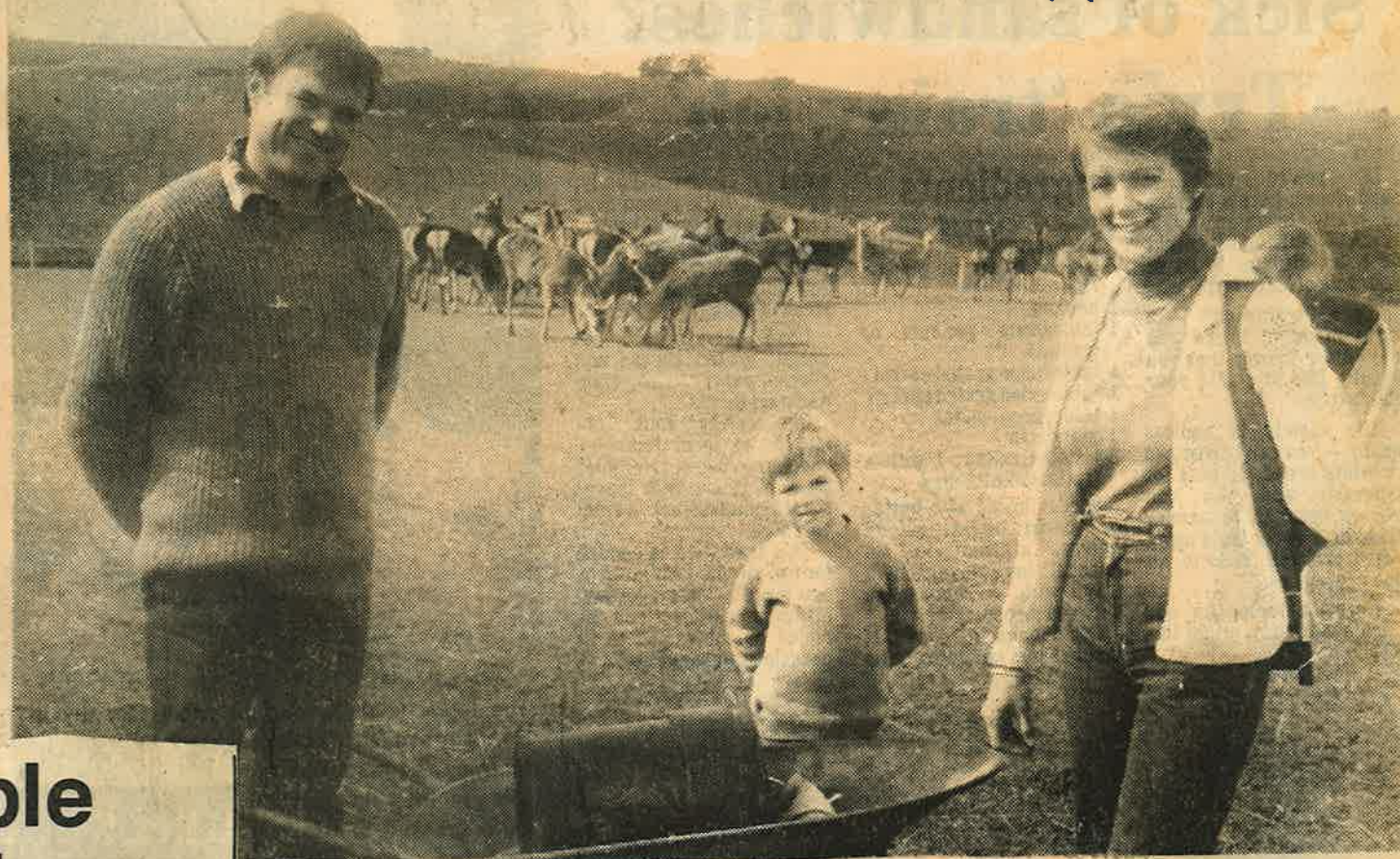
Mr Harty's report notes that emphasis is on live animal capture because the price has remained relatively stable compared with that of venison. The total number of animals taken between December, 1982, and May 1983, in either form, was 278, excluding those which came out of the wapiti area, which numbered 551.

The wapiti area had to be considered separately from the other blocks.

Mr Harty said it appeared as if from January 1, 1984 (following the withdrawal of the capture consortium) these blocks may be available as the past for recovery of deer and hybrid animals.

The new season starts on September 1. From then until April 30, 1984, a rotational block system will be in operation, and from May 1 to August 31, 1984, the open system as experienced this season.

16/9/83



Small farm viable with deer farming

Faced with a choice between a high return operation or moving to a larger property to remain viable, Pukepito farmer Craig Rutherford opted for deer farming. The move seems to be paying off.

16/9/83

With 104 hectares (260 acres) and no cash surpluses, his approach to the farming venture has been cautious. It started 13 years ago when a friend suggested a partnership. The deer would run on Craig's farm; the friend would buy most of the deer, with a 50/50 split of the progeny. The first deer arrived 13 years ago and by the end of the season 20 had been purchased. With all weaner stags sold this year the total now stands at 37 hinds, 20 stags and 9 fawns.

Craig admits he is not a typical Otago deer farmer, but they are usually well established and looking for breaks. For him the deer are a means to an end on a larger farm. With the dramatic rise in the price of live farmed deer, the farm could soon be realisable.

But he said during the last three years he had built up a wealth of experience in deer husbandry and deep appreciation of the animals. If prices held steady there was the option of selling put and expanding the deer farming operation.

At this stage the four hectare (10 acre) unit and four hectares planned extension had little impact on the sheep farming plan. Since the sheep numbers had to be reduced, the future would be assessed and the future policy made.

HANDLING

While deer numbers had built up he had learnt how to handle them. They were similar to cattle, only they

had to be worked with more care and quietly. He felt with 1,000 breeding ewes and 200 replacements he had the time to look after a significantly increased deer herd. He had even considered making the whole farm into a large deer unit, with sheep used to tidy up paddocks and the steeper pinches.

The deer numbers had increased to the point where sales could be made and this year 20 mixed age stags had cut \$1,600 worth of velvet (they are still young). So, after a period of high capital cost, the venture was starting to show a return.

His own establishment costs had been low. With the partnership deal and building up slowly, his share of the stock and the fencing had cost about \$12,000. Based on present costs for stock and materials this figure today would be about \$50,000.

LONG ASSOCIATION

Craig's association with deer goes back to his days mustering above Queenstown. On some of the stations there were a lot of deer and poaching was inevitable.

It was in the late 1960s and early 70s, before deer farming was legalised. While live capture was still to come, shooting for venison was a growing business.

One station owner decided to remove most of the deer from his property before the poachers took over. In about 10 days 1,000 deer were killed. It was a highly organised operation, using helicopters and

hunters on foot, one of the architects of the plan was helicopter pilot, Tim Wallis.

Born and raised on Inch Clutha, Craig worked on the home farm for a year before taking up a job at Walter Peak Station. From there he took on a range of work such as mustering, fencing, and lambing on properties throughout Otago and Southland. He eventually returned to the home farm and in partnership with his brother ran a dairying and sheep operation. This partnership ended six years ago when Craig and his wife Michele moved to the present farm at Pukepito.

FUTURE

Future plans would probably concentrate on breeding stock. Although there was good money in the velvet, the bigger stags were hard on fences, and they also seemed more difficult to winter.

But, as he would need breeding stags, it seemed to be worth keeping a few extra animals for velveting. All the weaner stags were sold this season.

All the stags had been kept in a shed this winter and fed on 1.2kg of oats each with as much meadow hay as they could eat. The hinds were wintered on grass with about .8kg of oats and meadow hay. They calved in late November or early December. The fawns were also wintered on grass, with .5kg of oats and hay.

The existing facilities could handle at least 100 animals without much extra effort.

Deer prices rocket

16/9/83

As the number of deer for sale dries up, prices for in-calf hinds have rocketed from a viable \$1,200 12 months ago, to a speculative \$2,400 on today's market.

The \$2,400 mark is for top animals, and sales of 18 month in-calf red deer hinds have averaged about \$2,000 in recent months.

Stock agents dealing in deer said that when more deer were available ordinary animals were still selling for about \$1,800.

They agreed the market had taken off in the past two months to the point that helicopter-caught animals were commanding high prices, and some vendors were selling forward.

Yet the great strength of the market was the people wanting to get into deer farming. They were farmers who saw deer as a long term diversification.

They said good quality mixed aged hinds were selling for \$2,000 to \$2,200 with lighter animals from \$1,700 to \$1,900. Aged animals with failing mouths had jumped in value in recent weeks and were now making \$1,000 to \$1,200. These were animals which could be expected to breed for another two years on easier country.

Weaner hinds were making \$1,000 to \$1,500 and some farmers selling forward for delivery in April were getting \$1,200 to \$1,400. Wild captured weaner hinds were worth about \$800 and mixed aged hinds \$1,500 to \$1,600.

The high prices for breeding stock had lifted the value of stags. These were making \$120 to \$200 as weaners with older animals valued at \$250 to \$350. Quite a few farmers were getting their first taste of deer farming (and having something to put behind the high fences) by starting off with a few stags.

DIVERSIFICATION

Diversification seemed to be the main reason for the interest and it was coming from a wide section of the farming community. It was no longer the wealthy looking for tax breaks, but more the average farmer worried by the state of the lamb and mutton markets.

The agents felt the presence of North Island buyers had helped fuel the present boom. Many farm-

ers had been putting up their deer fences and were now looking for the deer.

Others saw the venture as a retirement plan. Rather than buy more land for a son, they had set up a deer farm. In the future they would ease out of the main farming operation and as sons took over, the deer farming provided another interest and income.

INVESTMENT

As a business venture people buying deer at the present price would have to rely on livestock sales staying at the same level for several years, according to Balclutha MAF farm advisor, Joe Clough.

But he said there were factors other than profits and these included tax advantages, diversification, and a love of the animals.

It was not easy to diversify out of sheep or cattle on Otago hill country. But deer farming was able to be slotted into hill country operation with few extra management changes. With a few changes in fencing, the farmers' facilities and expertise could be adapted to handle deer. It was not like horticulture, which

Thirteen years ago Craig Rutherford was hunting deer — now he is farming them on his small Pukepito farm. Deer could make the unit viable or make enough to finance him into a larger property. Helping him feed the red deer hinds are Jeremy (4), his wife Michele, and young Rhys is in the back-pack.

required major readjustments.

The typical deer farmer was generally well set up and financially able to afford the risk of the present high prices. Over the previous five years there had been 25 deer farmers in Otago. Most started off with a few animals and built up. Over the past 12 months there had been a quite dramatic increase in the numbers of new farmers.

Otago and Southland had been fortunate in the calibre of people leading the industry and over the years management techniques had been developed, along with recording and selection. The quality of southern deer was certainly appreciated by North Island deer farmers.

He doubted if the present high prices were related to quality, and felt they were the result of supply and demand. One of the strongest indications that the current demand would last was the presence in the field of the traditional farming money sources. Stock and station agencies were setting up deer representatives, as they realised the potential of the industry.

Dr Specht headed the judging panel in New Zealand for the inaugural Haig competitions in 1982. He feels there is perhaps not enough competition in New Zealand to enable riders to get enough experience to improve quickly. He was convinced that within two or three months' intensive training, New Zealand riders could improve dramatical

Forest Service Outlines Animal Control Plans

QUEENSTOWN

The extermination of the goat population in the Mount Aspiring National Park is one of the priorities of the Lakes region wild animal control five year plan.

The plan, which co-ordinates wild animal control within the Lakes region of the Southland Conservancy of the NZ Forest Service and covers the period 1963-68, was presented to a forestry seminar in Queenstown yesterday.

While the plan has specific objectives for wild animal control, it also aims to encourage and direct commercial and recreational hunting within the region, as

means of achieving those objectives. It also seeks to promote hunting as a recreational activity within the region.

Research will be carried out into aspects of animal and plant ecology and the interaction between the two, long term and animal vegetation trends and techniques for improving control.

The plan notes that the commercial recovery of deer, thar and chamois by helicopter has largely resulted in an effective level of control. The Forest Service's control activity is directed at animals or areas which are not used by commercial and recreational hunters or where a reduction is required to levels below that

which is commercially viable.

The rationale for reducing the thar population to low levels is based on the protection of soil and water, as well as the need to prevent the colonization of Mount Aspiring National Park south of the Haast highway.

The Forest Service is monitoring the thar levels and where necessary will undertake search and destroy operations, the first priority being the Wanaka and Hawea catchments.

Commercial and recreational hunters will be encouraged to recover thar, the Forest Service providing the latter with information of the animal's distribution and habits.

High goat densities in the

Shotover catchment pose a soil and water erosion hazard.

Goats were introduced to the Shotover region in the 1800's and flourished in that environment. Although Government control operations began in the 1940s, they were spasmodic until 1970.

However, since 1970 70,000 goats have been destroyed and since 1975 the annual kill rate has been established at between 1500 and 4000.

The primary method of goat control in the region will be ground and aerial hunting by the Forest Service, while recreational and commercial hunting will continue to be encouraged.

The first priorities for goat control will be holding the Shotover population at a low

level, reducing and if possible preventing further infiltration into the park, reducing to low levels the population in Mount Aspiring Park and containing the small populations west of Lake Wakatipu.

The second priority will be the extermination of goats within the park.

Fallow Deer

The plan's prescription for the control of fallow deer is to implement the Wakatipu recreational hunting area wild animal control plan, to monitor the density and distribution of the animal outside the recreational area and to introduce control action, of colonization of Mount Aspiring park seems likely or if there is a threat to water and soil values.

The density and distribution of whitetail and red deer will also be monitored and they will be removed as they are encountered during other control duties.

The presence of chamois will also be monitored and commercial and recreational hunting of the animal encouraged.

Chamois will be removed from the national park as they are encountered and the plan proposes to prevent their southward infiltration into Fiordland National Park and to remove them completely from the Remarkables mountains using helicopters.

In the region commercial hunting of possums, which have had a low impact on the beech dominated forest of

the region, will be encouraged.

While the densities of the red-necked wallaby in the region are low, the plan provides for their extermination through ground hunting and poisoning operations.

There are also proposals to remove wild pigs within state forest and national park areas in the district and to encourage commercial and recreational hunting in other areas as the first means of control.

Control operations against rabbits, using shooting and poisoning techniques, will also be employed where necessary. The plan notes that while the rabbit is present throughout the region it was usually found within state forests in small numbers.

Drop in Helicopter Deer Hunting

Helicopter hunting of deer in state forests has declined during the past 12 months, the Director-General of Forests, Mr G. M. O'Neill, says.

In his annual report, released this month, Mr O'Neill said only 49 of the 67 helicopter hunters with licences to operate in state forests were using them.

The downturn was due to seasonal winds which reduced flying time, high operating costs, low financial returns and low numbers of deer present in most hunting areas.

However, deer farmers are continuing to pay high prices for animals obtained by live-capture methods. The establishment of deer slaughter premises and the increase in wapiti and deer farming were indications of continuing development and growth in the industry.

Lower numbers of goats

have also been recorded in areas where the New Zealand Forest Service has been practising wild animal control, Mr O'Neill said.

Major advances had been achieved in the use of poisons, especially in the Bay of Plenty area, where trials by the Forest Research Institute had proved as successful as ground hunting in reducing goat numbers.

"Poisoning could possibly replace hunting, where population levels are high," Mr O'Neill said.

New Hunting Areas

Three new recreational hunting areas in state forests were gazetted last year, bringing the national total to nine.

Recreational hunting in

areas under Forest Service control are supervised by the National Recreational Hunting Advisory Committee, which maintains a balance between recreational and commercial shooters.

The committee also "champions opportunities for recreational hunters on appropriate land," Mr O'Neill said.

Hind Stolen From Farm

A hind, valued at \$3000, has been stolen from a farm at Pukemaori.

Constable K. R. Robinson, of Tuatapere, said last night the theft took place some time between November 8 and 12.

The hind, a high-bred wapiti-red deer cross, had no ear markings.

The police would like to hear from anybody who may be able to help them in their investigation into the theft.

Open Slather Hunting

Plans to allow year-round hunting of wapiti in Fiordland National Park are "a recipe for disaster," according to a member of the Southland National Parks and Reserves Board, Mr J. McKenzie.

Speaking about the draft wild animal control plan for the park at last night's board meeting, Mr McKenzie said the recommendation that recreational hunting of wapiti and other species of deer should be allowed all year was "open slather hunting."

"The public must be made aware of this danger or I can guarantee that the hunting resource will be lost to the country," Mr McKenzie said.

The board's chairman, Mr C. J. McFarlane, said the clauses in the plan which Mr McKenzie objected to were the result of an agreement between the National Parks and Reserves Authority and the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association.

The plan was released for public comment last month and a sub-committee with representatives from the New Zealand Forest Service and the Department of Lands and Survey is to be set up to consider the submissions.

Having a joint committee should speed up the process, so approval of the plan could be given by the end of the year, Mr McFarlane said.

Care Ensures Painless Velvet Removal

Removal of velvet antler from deer is a simple and painless operation, so long as the animals are handled quietly and an adequate degree of pain killer is used.

Invermay scientist, Dr Peter Fennessy said the whole operation must be carried out with a minimum of disturbance and stress to the stag. Only as many people as were essential to do the job safely should be involved in the operation.

"Depending on the size of yards, no more than 30 to 50 adult stags should be yarded together for velveting," he said.

"If the stags are too closely confined, they are likely to stand on their hind legs and box each other with their fore legs, causing damage to velvet antler."

Dr Fennessy said it was best to draft a large number of velveting stags into smaller groups as they cast their old antler stubs.

The stags should be divided into groups in the order in which they become ready for velvet removal. This reduces the frequency of yarding and the possibility of velvet antler damage.

Yarding of stags for velveting is best done quietly and in cool settled weather conditions.

Stags which become excited should be left alone to settle down before any attempt is made to tranquilize them. A small, dark pen permits easier tranquilization of wilder stags.

Dr Fennessy said tranquilizer darts should not be used in the paddock because an excited animal took longer to succumb, and higher dose rates were usually needed.

The tranquillizer commonly used on stags for velveting is xylazine (Rompun). Low dose rates are very effective on quiet stags, but higher dose rates are needed for more excited stags.

Dose rates of 0.75ml per 100kg of five per cent Rompun or 1.5ml per 100kg of two per cent Rompun given intramuscularly, have proved effective, Dr Fennessy said.

"For quiet stags a 23 gauge

needle can be used to inject Rompun into the neck," he said.

Tranquillized

"If the stag is injected in the rump, an 18 gauge needle is suitable. Stags injected intramuscularly take about 15 minutes to become sufficiently tranquilized."

Dr Fennessy said when stags were quiet enough to be held by the head, Rompun could be given intravenously into a jugular vein at a third of the dose rates given intramuscularly. The tranquillizer would take effect very quickly, thus saving time.

After injection, stags should be left alone in an uncrowded pen. Noise must be kept to an absolute minimum to ensure they relax and the tranquillizer takes effect quickly.

Once the tranquillizer has taken effect the local anaesthetic is given, and several minutes must be allowed after injection.

Dr Fennessy said no standard velveting procedure could be recommended. The system and choice of drugs depended on the circumstances and on the experience and preferences of the farmer and the veterinarian, he said.

Tourniquet

Before removing velvet antlers a tourniquet should be applied to stags older than spikers.

Twine or elastic could be wrapped around the outside of each pedicle, crossing over between the pedicles to form a figure of eight, Dr Fennessy said.

"The antlers are cut one centimetre above the pedicle, using a medium toothed saw, such as a meat saw," he said.

"The saw should be kept sharp and disinfected regularly. Tourniquets can usually be removed five to 10 minutes after the velvet antler has been sawn off."

Dr Fennessy said it was important that the cut be clear of the coronet so that the pedicle was not damaged. Research at Invermay had suggested that damage to the coronet affected subsequent velvetting yields.

Freeze

Once the velvet antler has been removed it should be held upside down. This prevents blood loss from the cut end.

The velvet should then be hung on a rack to cool, sealed in a plastic bag and placed in a freezer as soon as possible.

Dr Fennessy said records of the weights of antlers cut from individual stags should be kept.

These would be important in selecting animals for breeding, continued velvetting, sale or slaughter and evaluation of feeding management.

Waitutu Warning To Trespassers

Trampers and deer stalkers who venture on to land owned by the Waitutu Incorporation, next to the Waitutu State Forest, are trespassing, and will be prosecuted.

The incorporation has tried to keep the public off its land for three or four years but is making a new effort after finding fresh evidence of illegal deer stalking and camp fires, its chairman, Mrs Koa Murdoch, said yesterday.

One company has a licence to trap deer for live recovery on the privately-owned land, and the husband of one of the owners is allowed to hunt pigs, but no-one has been given permission to shoot deer there.

Mrs Murdoch believed most of the trespassing is done by deerstalkers with permits granted by the New Zealand Forest Service to hunt in the adjoining Waitutu State Forest.

Hut

There is a forest service hut on the Wairaurahiri river with a swing bridge

giving access to the Maori land on the other side, and it is clear from entries in the hut's book that hunters have been shooting deer on the incorporation's land, Mrs Murdoch said.

Dog's paw marks have been found in the bush.

"The permits issued by the forest service do say not to go on to our land, but with the hut and the bridge there, hunters aren't going to struggle two miles up the river to the state forest when our land is right there," she said.

The incorporation has approached the forest service and asked to have the hut moved, without success.

Signs

Metal signs warning against trespassing which were put up three years ago have been either torn down or shot full of bullet holes, Mrs Murdoch said.

"It must have been done by the people the forest service issues permits to — our own people wouldn't be doing it, would they?" she said.

Incorporation members were worried about damage caused by trespassers who lit fires on their land, and the possibility that "trigger happy" hunters might shoot someone.

They will not be granting any permits for members of the public to have access to their land.

Lost Patience

"I don't want to be seen to be waving the big stick, but we've lost patience with people. We hope to keep people off our land

altogether," Mrs Murdoch said.

Although the review of the State forest's management plan lists the incorporation's coastal strip as the main area for recreational use in the Waitutu, this situation had arisen without the permission of the owners.

Although the Maori land adjoined the state forest, it was completely separate from it, Mrs Murdoch said.

HELICOPTER BLOWN UP

(PA)

TAURANGA

An explosive device blew up a Hughes 300 helicopter at the Opatiki aerodrome early yesterday morning.

A Department of Labour explosive expert is assisting the inquiry, but no lead on who might have been responsible has been established.

"We have nothing to go on at all," Senior Sergeant B. Guy, of Opatiki, said last night.

The police and the helicopter's joint owner, Mr Dennis Mullooly, aged 28, ruled out any link between the blast and reports of ground hunters shooting at deer recovery helicopters in the central North Island.

"The atmosphere at Opatiki between the groups is one of co-operation," Mr Mullooly said.

The blast demolished the front of the machine and damaged two main rotors with flying shrapnel.

"There is no way I could have survived if I had been in the air," Mr Mullooly said.

"I would have been history... The cabin's perspex has been blown out and my seat has just disappeared.

"The instrument panel is hanging out the front."

The 4am blast came 90 minutes before Mr Mullooly intended to begin deer recovery work.

"I didn't think I had any enemies, but obviously, I've got one," he said.

The \$120,000 machine is

jointly owned by Mr Mullooly and his partner in Easter Helicopters Ltd, Mr Lou Lawrence.

Notice to Farmers

WESTERN DEER FARMERS DISCUSSION GROUP

Annual General Meeting. The AGM of the group will be held Wednesday November 23, 8pm at the Lion Hotel, Main St. Otautau. Guest speaker will be Mr Tim Wallace of Alpine Helicopters. All interested welcome to attend.

19/11/83

76290



Would the owner of the boat which is sited at Lake Innes in Waitutu Forest, please contact the District Ranger, NZ Forest Service, Tuatapere. Phone 15 or 228 after hours.

If contact is not made by November 30 1983 the boat may be removed from Lake Innes at any time after that date and may be sold to defray removal expenses.

T. R. Pellett,
District Ranger
72867

DRAFT WILD ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN FOR STEWART ISLAND

This plan written by Senior Ranger K. A. Mawhinney of the Southland Conservancy of the NZ Forest Service is now available for public inspection.

The plan sets out control measures for Wild Animals on all land on Stewart Island. Public comment is invited. Closing date for receipt of comments is January 31, 1984.

Copies may be purchased from the Conservator of Forests, NZ Forest Service, Private Bag, Invercargill at \$2 per copy plus 50 cents postage and packing or from the NZFS, 5th floor, State Insurance Building, Don Street, Invercargill.

K. W. PRIOR,
Conservator of Forests
72844

Stalkers Against Year Round Hunting

Year round hunting of wapiti in Fiordland National Park would never be agreed to by the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association.

The president of the association, Mr John Bamford, yesterday took issue with remarks made by the chairman of the Southland National Parks and Reserves

Board, Mr C. J. McFarlane, that the deerstalkers had agreed to deer control clauses incorporated in the recently released draft wild animal control plan for the park.

"We did not agree to year round hunting, and we don't endorse the continuation of the status quo," Mr Bamford said.

The association wanted an initial no-hunting period for wapiti so the scientific advisory committee, which is to be set up to advise the Minister of Lands on control measures for the deer, could assess the situation.

But it was opposed to commercial helicopter hunting of wapiti in the park under any circumstances, he said.

The draft plan proposes to allow the commercial hunting of wapiti in areas where recreational hunters are unable to keep deer numbers down to a satisfactory level.

Endorsed

At the last meeting of the Southland board on Tuesday night, Mr Jack McKenzie said the new plans for wapiti control were "a recipe for disaster" and amounted to "open slather hunting," and Mr Bamford yesterday endorsed these remarks.

The association will be putting in written objections to the plan, which will be considered by a committee with representation from the New Zealand Forest Service and the Department of Lands and Survey.

"The wapiti section of the plan in its present form is completely unacceptable. The board is out of touch with public opinion and Government policy on this matter," Mr Bamford said.

He criticized the board for continuing to take issue with the MP for Wallace, Mr Derek Angus, for remarks he made about it at the NZDA conference in July. "The board should stop criticizing Mr Angus and start taking notice of what he said.

Management Plan

"The wild animal control plan is part of the park's management plan and must be clear and precise. It should reflect public opinion, not just the views of the Parks and Reserves Board," Mr Bamford said.

He and two other members of his association had met Mr McFarlane, the Director-General of Lands, Mr P. H. C. Lucas, his assistant, Mr K. J. Cooper, the director of national parks and reserves,

Mr N.D. R. McKerchar, and the chairman of the National Parks and Reserves Authority, Mr D. A. Thom, in August, to discuss the proposed scientific advisory committee.

They agreed to the committee's formation, but not to any of the guidelines incorporated in the draft control plan, Mr Bamford said. He had been told that no guidelines had been drawn up and although some suggestions had been circulated at the meeting, these had not been accepted.

Mr McFarlane had reported to the September meeting of the Parks and Reserves Board that the draft plan "was accepted as reasonable by all parties."

He could not be reached for comment last night.

New Trophies For Velvet Competition

Entries are being called by the Southland branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association for the New Zealand Deer Velvet Competition being held at this year's Southland A and P Summer Show.

This is the second year that the competition has been held and attracted more than 20 entries last year as well as considerable public interest.

Three major awards will be at stake.

The Wilson Neill Red Deer Trophy will be awarded for the best pure red deer velvet and the Wrightson NMA All Comers' Trophy which is open to all breeds of deer, will be awarded for velvet which is superior in its class.

In order to make the velvet competition a truly national event, a Challenge Shield will be awarded this year, for the first time, to the provincial branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association whose members accumulate the most points in the two velvet sections.

The Southland branch is hopeful this new trophy will provide friendly rivalry between producers throughout the country and bring prestige to the area as an indication of the standard of velvet its farmers are able to produce.

Entries close with the Southland Deer Farmers' Association, PO Box 844, Invercargill, on November 30.

Hinds Need Good Pasture

Deer farmers should attempt to maintain good quality pasture for lactating hinds during summer.

This is the advice of Mr Geoff Asher, a scientist at the Ruakura Agricultural Research Centre.

Mr Asher said deer farmers should keep their pasture short before fawning, then allow it to become leafy.

"However, some areas should be allowed to go rank, to provide the newborn fawns with a place to hide in," he said.

"This can be done by cutting off areas in the paddock with an electric fence."

Mr Asher said different fawning groups should be separated by fawn-proof fences to prevent the fawns getting into the wrong group.

He also recommended that farmers vaccinate the hinds with five-in-one vaccine about six weeks before the onset of fawning. This would probably pass on immunity from clostridial diseases from the hind to the fawn.

"Farmers in areas prone to leptospirosis should also consider vaccination against leptospirosis at this time," Mr Asher said.

Vapiti Herd Important

The Southland United Council is seeking a firm assurance from the Minister of Lands, Mr Elworthy, that selected wapiti be returned with a minimum of delay to their established Fiordland habitat once culling is complete.

At its meeting yesterday, the United Council agreed the maintenance, development and management of a wapiti herd in a selected area of Fiordland was of prime importance to the region and the nation.

Steps should be taken to introduce wapiti to Fiordland under a management plan as soon as the wapiti sortium's capture programme finished in about a month's time.

A report entitled 'Wapiti: The Southland Wapiti Point' the council recommended the recognition of a new wapiti area, consisting of the portion of the existing wapiti area north of Te Anau-George Sound.

This area was where the numbers and best quality of wapiti were before the capture programme started. The southern portion of the existing wapiti area could be managed as a buffer zone between the wapiti and the takahe area, the report said.

Constant helicopter pressure on the Murchison Mountains and the adjacent area to the west should be maintained to protect the takahe from deer of any species and to minimize hybridization.

The report also said that: The upgraded animals must be released somewhere and problems of vegetation damage and hybridization will be inevitable whatever area is chosen.

If the genetic upgrading programme can be done now at little cost to the Crown, it can be done as necessary in future, as part of the ongoing herd management programme.

Helicopters provided the means to control all deer to levels acceptable anywhere in Fiordland.

The wapiti management programme can be recognized as a legitimate exception to the national policy of extermination of introduced animals under the National Parks Act.

Great Majority

The report said the great majority of Southland people wished to see a viable wapiti herd retained in a suitable area of Fiordland National Park because the wapiti were regarded as Southland's heritage and because a much smaller group prized the wapiti for recreational hunting.

Velvet Levy Approved

Deer farmers are to be levied \$2 per kilogram of green weight of velvet to assist in financing the Game Industry Board.

There has been some delay in formalizing the regulations for the Game Industry Board, but the final draft regulations were approved by the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association council and the Game Export Advisory Committee on October 28.

Provided there are no further bureaucratic holdups, the regulations are expected to be gazetted this month.

The need for funding the board in its formative years while it develops the marketing of farm deer products, had been seen as a priority by the NZDFA council and the majority of its members, the association's president, Mr John Burrowes said.

A collection is already being made on venison but while throughputs are limited no significant increase in this levy can be contemplated.

Mr Burrowes said the NZDFA council and the Game Export Advisory Committee were committed to the collection of a velvet levy.

Collected

This has been set at \$2 per kg green weight and will be collected from producers when the velvet is purchased and accounted for by the buyers at the game packing houses.

"At this level, the velvet levy represents a similar proportion of the order of two per

cent of the return to the producer as does the venison levy," Mr Burrowes said.

He expected farmers would support the levy which is expected to receive statutory approval early in the velvet season.

He also expected the major companies in the industry would co-operate in assisting to collect the levy as they had done with the venison levy.

2 The Southland Times, Thursday, October 27, 1983.

Deer Farmers To Hold Seminar

The Southland Branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association is to hold a seminar in Winton next Wednesday.

The seminar which will be held at the Central Southland Lodge will cover the

subject of velvet, fawning management and progress on game industry board negotiations.

A velvet buyer will address the seminar on what the market requires this year, and a veterinarian will speak on velvet removal, especially in relation to drugs used.

Mr Alan Bradley will talk on fawning problems with feral deer, and the Southland representative on the New Zealand deer farmers' council, Mr Peter Ryan, will give an update on ensuing game industry board regulations.

Mr Rob Brookes will show a film on his recent trip to Europe and a combined Wrightson NMA and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries film entitled "Behind the High Fence" will

also be shown.

The seminar will begin at 8pm.

AUCTION

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Wild Animal Plan Public Comment Invited

Public comment has been invited on the draft wild animal control plan for Stewart Island recently released by the New Zealand Forest Service.

The objective of the plan is to control wild animal populations at a level which will allow the natural values of the land to be maintained. The natural land value levels, the draft says, are those determined by the land controlling authorities with statutory responsibilities for land use.

The draft lists eight different aims:

- To reduce wild animal populations within nature and scenic reserves to the lowest possible level.

- To maintain whitetailed deer populations within the northern State forest to provide for recreational hunting.

- To protect kakapo habitat against wild animal damage should a conflicting relationship be shown to exist.

- To protect other rare species from wild animal depredation.

- To keep the islands of Paterson Inlet free from wild animals.

- To eradicate opossums from Codfish Island.

- To control wild animals on private and Crown leasehold land at levels which do not affect adjacent land values.

- To prevent the possibility of the introduction of new species of wild animals to all lands and the spread of existing species to land not already occupied by that species.

The methods suggested in the plan to attain its objective are to direct commercial and recreational hunting to achieve maximum effect, to undertake control programmes using State forest resources where commercial and recreational hunting cannot achieve the objective, to undertake research and to liaise with private land owners and Crown land lessees, Government departments and local authorities and user groups.

"Constant Review"

"The plan is considered as under constant review and the need to make major changes will also require that the public be given the opportunity to comment," the draft says.

"Changes in animal populations, vegetation conditions, policies of local and land controlling authorities, or Government are examples of factors causing major review."

Comments on the draft plan should be addressed to the Conservator of Forests, New Zealand Forest Service, Private Bag, Invercargill, and close on January 31, next year.

Wrightson NMA



DEER VELVET

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Contact

B. Duggan — Winton 333 until November 28 then 358-189
A. Bradley — Te Anau 7602



The Wild Animal Advisory Committee met in Glenorchy this week. Back row, from left, they are Messrs R. Martin (Forest Service, Queens-town), R. Hickey (Forest and Bird Society), J. Von Tunzelman (Forest Service, Te Anau), R. Tindal (Forest Service, Halfmoon Bay), J. Asp, Arthur Waghorn, Chris Main (Forest Service, Invercargill), Mike Kirby (Federated Mountain Clubs), B. Monaghan (Mataura), C. Acker (Forest Service, Invercargill), J. van Zwart (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dunedin), J. Allan (Department of Lands and Survey, Dunedin). Front row, from left, Mike Slater (Forest Service, Invercargill), F. Hore, K. Prior, Terry Arthur (New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association), A. G. Hall, Fergus Sutherland, J. Harty (Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill), Brian Booth (Alexandra).

Release of Pigs Concerning

GLENORCHY

The illegal liberation of pigs throughout the area of national park at Martin's Bay concerned the Wild Animal Advisory Committee when it met at Glenorchy this week.

Members considered it a thoughtless, senseless act which led to considerable expense to the taxpayer.

They said that if it had been a helicopter operation involved the person responsible ran a serious risk of losing his licence.

The Forest Ranger at Te Anau, Mr J. R. von Tunzelman, reported to the committee that park staff had visited the area several times in an attempt to locate and destroy the pigs before they became established.

A Forest Service hunter had also spent two weeks with the park rangers and when the hunter made a 10-day return trip he destroyed a large boar.

It is not known how many more pigs remain there.

Eliminating Deer

Discussion centred for some time at the meeting about the former policy of eliminating all deer on Secretary Island at the entrance to Doubtful Sound.

Mr von Tunzelman said the population was extremely low there now but that the Forest Service did not have either the technology or resources to eliminate the remaining deer to restore the island to its pristine condition as was initially intended.

If the last one was killed, he said, another may swim over from the mainland.

Work on the island had been greatly assisted by the Fiordland National Park staff who had encouraged hunters to shoot in the mainland areas near the island to reduce the chance of deer swimming to the island.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands,

Invercargill, Mr J. P. Harty, hoped the pressure would be maintained so the objective may eventually be realized.

The committee chairman, Mr K. W. Prior, the Conservator of Forests, Invercargill, made it clear that although the policy in the Murchison Mountains' takahe area and at Secretary Island was for extermination of deer, if technology and resources did not permit the Forest Service to achieve that members had to distinguish between what was policy and what was possible.

Research was being done in an attempt to achieve the aim but, in the meantime, several other islands had been investigated for extermination of wild animals to restore them to their original condition, Mr Prior said.

Stoats

Hunters in the Chester Burn, Snag Burn, McKenzie Burn and Ettrick Burn in the Murchison Mountains region have combined hunting with stoat control to add variety to their work as well as being useful.

The venture was a joint operation with the wildlife division of the Internal Affairs Department. This is the second year of operations and results so far appear successful.

Mr von Tunzelman said it would take some years before it could be assessed whether the reduction in stoats had a direct bearing on takahe survival.

Mr J. C. Aspinall, of Wanaka, suggested that an easy way of catching stoats was to play a tape recording of a bird in distress.

Hunting Of Thar Prohibited

GLENORCHY

A moratorium has been placed on thar hunting for one year by the Minister of Forests, Mr Elworthy.

This is a reprieve for the rare animal which not long ago was regarded as a noxious animal. With this new concept, it is protected.

The moratorium is to provide time for an assessment of the value of thar in safari hunting as a means of earning overseas finance, the case for a thar recreational hunting area, an assessment of population and an evaluation of their role in high country erosion.

The prohibition will apply to all commercial carcass recovery but recreational foot hunting will not be affected.

Live capture of thar on leasehold or freehold land to stock approved zoos or safari hunting farms will be allowed under permit.

Game depots will be asked to stop buying thar carcasses.

The Forest Service will monitor and, if necessary, introduce eradication operations on thar within Mount Cook National Park, the headwaters of the Rakaia and Whitcombe rivers, and any area north of there, and the ridge between the Hunter valley and the Ahuriri valley and any areas to the south of there.

Two Survive Air Crash

(PA)

CHRISTCHURCH

A Haast helicopter operator whose engine cut out over the Thomas valley on Tuesday night, described yesterday how his machine plunged through bush and disintegrated.

Deer hunter Harvey Hutton, aged 26, and his shooter Phil Silcock, aged 31, were picked up in the Thomas River area at 5am yesterday by another helicopter operator who was called into search.

The two men escaped unscathed and walked down the river until they "ran out of daylight" then "kipped" under a tree.

"The only thing that got us was the mosquitoes," Mr Hutton said.

Third Crash

The crash, his third, wrecked his Hughes 300C helicopter when it came down at 8.30pm, off the north branch of the Haast.

"It happened so fast, you didn't have time to think

about it," he said. "The shock usually comes about six hours later."

"We looked for a clearing but there was none. It happened that quick, we were on the ground before we knew it."

Three Haast helicopters scoured the heavily-bushed terrain on Tuesday night after the men were reported overdue.

As the crashed hunters resumed their hike down the Thomas river at first light yesterday, they flashed their torch at a search helicopter and the pilot, Doug Maxwell, was able to land and ferry them back to base.

Both hunters were unharmed.

The wreckage will be inspected.

Deer Carcass Taken

A deer carcass was taken from a collection depot freezer near Waikaia on Monday night.

The carcass, of a red deer hind, was unskinned and had a bullet hole in it, Constable Dickie of Riversdale said.

It had been removed from the unlocked depot on the Glenary road about 10.30pm, he said.

He would like to hear from anyone with any information about the carcass.