

07 March 2022

**Crown Pastoral Land Consultation
NZ Game Animal Council –**



**Submission on Lowburn Valley
Reference: P0 256**

1.0 About the Game Animal Council

The Game Animal Council (GAC), established under the Game Animal Council Act 2013, is a statutory agency with responsibilities for, inter alia, representing game animal hunters, and advising on and managing aspects of game animal hunting. Game animals are feral pigs, chamois, tahr, and all species of deer.

2.0 Management of Game Animals on Crown Pastoral Land (CPL)

The Game Animal Council has no direct mandate over private land, however:

The Council has the following functions in relation to game animals that can apply to Crown Pastoral Land (CPL):

- (a) to advise and make recommendations to the Minister:
- (b) to provide information and education to the hunting sector:
- (c) to promote safety initiatives for the hunting sector, including firearms safety:
- (d) to advise private landowners on hunting:
- (e) to develop, on its own initiative or at the direction of the Minister, voluntary codes of practice for hunting:
- (f) to raise awareness of the views of the hunting sector:
- (g) to liaise with hunters, hunting organisations, representatives of tangata whenua, local authorities, landowners, the New Zealand Conservation Authority, conservation boards, and the Department of Conservation to improve hunting opportunities:
- (j) to operate voluntary certification schemes for professional hunting guides and game estates:
- (k) to promote minimum standards and codes of conduct for certified hunting guides and game estates:
- (l) to investigate complaints and take disciplinary action in relation to certified hunting guides and game estates:

The Game Animal Council acknowledges that lessees of Crown pastoral land have exclusive possession of the land within their lease, and they may choose to have game animals or not.

The GAC does have an advisory role if requested and wants to work with lessees to improve hunting opportunities where possible.

3.0 Lowburn Valley Hunting Opportunities

Hunting is a popular recreational activity in the Lowburn Valley area. Access in the Upper Clutha catchment continues to be one of the biggest challenges for hunters seeking to hunt and harvest game animals with limited access points. Under the current Lowburn Valley proposal, access will continue to be strictly limited by the proposed intention to freehold areas CC1, CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4 under covenant as the proposed covenants do not provide for public access.

Recommendations:

1. CC1, CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4 have high recreational value for hunters, mountain bikers, walkers, and those involved in snow sports. By linking these areas to the existing Public Conservation Land (across CA1 and adjoining public land at F, E, K, and I) and providing for the ability to 'walk at will' for the public, and for the carriage of firearms and their use, this will provide increased recreational hunting, and other recreational opportunities.
2. Cardrona Cromwell Pack Track – strongly support formalizing this formed track/road (easement A-B) to be recognised as a legal road. This will ensure clarity on access provisions and provide for enduring access.
3. Roaring Meg - Dogs are currently permitted into Roaring Meg. Support this provision being retained.
4. Roaring Meg Easement – support including this track/easement alignment and adjacent land in conservation area CA1 and provide for specific landowner requirements by concession. Allow for vehicle access to a carpark in the Skeleton Creek area. Alternatively, support developing the access route as a legal road. Access with the carriage of firearms and dogs must be provided for.
5. Mt Michael - Uphill from the Lowburn boundary, the existing track should be legalized as a road. Access with the carriage of firearms and dogs must be provided for.

Alongside the above recommendations, the Game Animal Council wishes to see the following key principles recognised and provided for in the Lowburn Valley plan:

- a. **Hunting access ways to public conservation land should be established, maintained, or enhanced, and they need to be in a form suitable for hunters carrying firearms and accompanied by dogs (where dogs are permitted on the land the access is provided for).**
- b. **Access provisions for vehicles to public conservation land are made certain and enduring; and that these vehicle access ways are maintained or enhanced.**

- c. **Access provisions should be made certain and enduring through the use of legal instruments such as easements.**
- d. **Where access is provided it should be the crown's responsibility to manage any negative effects that the access has on farming operations on that land. The cost of creating and maintaining access should be borne by the crown.**

4.0 Role of the Game Animal Council Post Tenure Review

The Game Animal Council has considerable expertise on game animal management and hunting both amongst Council members and within the wider hunting sector. The GAC offers its expertise and advice to the Commissioner on any aspects of access across CPL, policy formulation, consents for managing game animals or other hunting related matters.

The GAC is available to discuss or clarify any aspects of this submission.

Tim Gale

General Manager

New Zealand Game Animal Council

021 688 531

<https://nzgameanimalcouncil.org.nz/>

<https://www.facebook.com/nzgameanimal/>

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce, and conservation.