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| Significant Natural Area Assessment | | | |
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| Project No: <i>11001/033</i> | Property Name: <i>Ben Lomond Station.</i> Site Name: <i>Stoney Creek SNA C</i> | Ecologist: <i>Simon Beale.</i> Date: <i>12 April 2013</i> | |
| Survey Undertaken By: <i>Simon Beale and Glenn Davis.</i> | | Waypoint No (mid-point of survey area): <i>E41</i> <i>E: 2162000</i> <i>N:5584500</i> | |
| LENZ Units: <i>Predominately Q1.1c, small area in P5.1e.</i> | | Photo No.(s): <i>See attached.</i> | |
| Ecological District: <i>Shotover</i> | | | |
| Topography: <i>Steep to very steep hillslopes above Stoney Creek. Numerous rocky spurs, slabs, bluffs and outcrops.</i> | Slope: (<i>>30°</i>) | Altitude: <i>600 – 1000 m asl</i> | Aspect: <i>N - NNE</i> |
| Threatened Environment Status: <i>Underprotected and Less Reduced & Better Protected.</i> | | Area Size (ha): <i>83.06</i> | |
| Representativeness: <i>Extensive manuka scrub & shrubland community and mountain beech forest in mid reaches of Stoney Creek. Vegetation pattern reflects succession towards mountain beech forest.</i> | | | |
| Are there threatened species expected/identified in the survey area? If so, list species and threat status. | | | |
| Threatened Species | | Threat Status | |
| <i>Falco novaezealandiae</i> "eastern" (eastern NZ Falcon) | | At Risk - Recovering | |
| <i>Nestor notabilis</i> (Kea) | | Threatened - Nationally Endangered | |
| Provide onsite description of vegetation: | | | |
| Vegetation types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manuka shrubland • Mountain beech forest • Short tussock grassland | | | |
| Structural Classes: Forest, scrub, shrubland and grassland Shrubland Canopy: Manuka. Shrubland sub-dominants: <i>Minigmingi (Coprosma propinqua)</i> , <i>Hebe salicifolia</i> , <i>Olearia avicennifolia</i> , <i>Carmichealia</i> spp., <i>Hebe odora</i> , <i>Inaka (Dracophyllum longifolium)</i> , Mountain flax (<i>Phormium cookianum</i>). | | | |

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| <p>Degree of Modification: The area has experienced disturbance events in the past (e.g. fire).</p> <p>Degree of Recruitment: Extensive regeneration of forest and shrubland communities evident across the slopes above Stoney Creek.</p> <p>Overall Health: Some of the larger patches of mountain beech forest and manuka shrubland have a closed canopy.</p> |
| <p>Provide onsite description of fauna habitat: The manuka shrubland and mixed forest-shrubland-grassland mosaic provides quality habitat for insectivorous birds (fantail, grey warbler, tomtit) and favourable hunting opportunities for NZ falcon and Australasian harrier.</p> <p>The diversity of vegetation cover and rocky terrain and northerly aspect provides potentially high quality habitat for lizards such the Common Skink, Common Gecko and McCann's Skink.</p> <p>The shrubland is likely to provide important habitat (refugia and food supply) for a range of invertebrates including various beetle and moth species.</p> |
| <p>Threats/Risks to vegetation and flora/fauna species? (Weeds, predators, current management practices): The threats to the shrubland and forest are low. Invasive coniferous species are absent.</p> |
| <p>Rarity: The threatened environment classification identifies the Q1.1c environment to have 91.23% indigenous vegetation cover remaining with 19.26% protected.</p> |
| <p>Area Size and Shape (degree to which the area may be or is becoming self-sustaining): Relatively large area of open forest and shrubland of variable canopy cover. Low to moderate area/edge ratios.</p> |
| <p>Diversity and Pattern (is there a notable range of species and habitats, aspects, sequences?): The area contains an assemblage of shrubland species that are sub-dominant to the manuka cover. Intervening areas of mountain beech forest, short tussock and rocky terrain vegetation contribute to the vegetation pattern.</p> |
| <p>Distinctiveness/special ecological characteristics (unusual veg. & landform features, distribution limits?): Distinctive in terms of the extensiveness of the shrubland cover on steep rocky terrain.</p> |
| <p>Connectivity (how is the site connected to surrounding communities/areas?): Good degree of connectivity with adjacent areas of forest and shrublands within the mid reaches of the Stoney Creek catchment.</p> |
| <p>Sustainability (does the site possess the resilience to maintain its ecological integrity and processes?): The absence of further human induced disturbances (fire) will allow a more expansive forest</p> |

and shrubland cover to develop across the lower northern slopes of Mount Gilbert through successional processes.

Recommendation (Accept/Decline):



We consider this area should be designated as a SNA in view of the following ecological attributes:

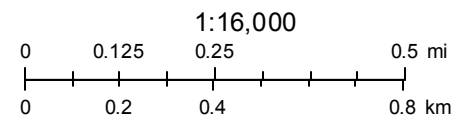
- Extensive shrubland vegetation on steep rocky terrain;
- Likely to provide high quality habitat for lizards such as the Common Skink, Common Gecko and McCann's Skink;
- The variety of habitats the area affords to indigenous fauna, providing suitable habitat for 'at risk' and threatened species, e.g. the NZ Falcon and Kea respectively.

Figure 1: The area of potential significance - Stoney Creek SNA C - G33C



September 24, 2014

- Proposed Significant Natural Area
-  Proposed Significant Natural Area
-  Parcels



Please note the area shown is indicative and only for discussion purposes.



Figure 2: Aerial view of shrubland looking in a westward direction towards Mount Butement



Figure 3: Aerial view showing variable manuka cover across rocky spurs and bluffs with patch of mountain beech forest in upper centre of photo.



Figure 4: Downstream view of shrubland showing the prominence of the rocky spurs on the higher slopes and overall steepness of the terrain.