

~~Arthur & Jackie Campbell - Eu~~  
Arthur Thomson - Evidence supplied at hearing.

This Land grab was started by the last Labour Government by Clark and O'Connor about 10 or 12 years ago.

They paid big money at North Canterbury for St James Station 40 million dollars.

North Otago Birchwood Station 6 million dollars

The Landsborough 7 million dollars.

When they came to the Westcoast they more or less locked us up with no compensation for privately owned land. And were told that we would need to apply for consent for any land development work which are difficult to get.

I received a letter and maps from Regional Council showing areas. I then rang the CEO and said what the hell is going on. He then came and had a look and removed all the ground relating to hay and fattening paddocks. As soon as the Regional Council started to take more ground out of the Wetlands area DOC put their hand up and said we want more ground put in. I still have 250ha in the Wetlands area.

Previously to this happening DOC's Chris Hickford said that the management of Wetlands was the responsibility of the Regional Council.

The Landowners are paying rates on ground that they cannot use.

If the Wetlands are of National Significance they should be brought.

DOC brought out my neighbour I spoke to DOC and asked why did you not buy me and they said I have too much ground. This in my opinion is theft by the Crown.

There is just 14% of Westcoast Land in private ownership and the Crown wants more.

The total Westcoast wet area is listed as 60333ha

Buller District Wetland is 10780ha of that 1217ha is on private land.

Greymouth District Wetland is 3244ha of that 1435ha is on private land.

Westland District Wetland is 46310ha of that 4093ha is on private land.

So I request that the Crown buy the Wetlands the reason is I am paying rates on ground we are unable to use.

# Owners kept in dark on wetlands

Laura Mills

The Department of Conservation and West Coast Regional Council are at loggerheads over why landowners were not told that wetlands on their private property were being protected under new rules.

Farmers are furious that by the time they learned what had happened, it was apparently a done deal. Landowners have been advised in writing only in the past few weeks.

In some cases the wetland covers almost the entire property.

At least one farmer has called in the lawyers to challenge the process.

The situation is the result of a seven-year, \$357,000 court battle, which concluded only last year. It means more than 200 'significant' wetlands up and down the Coast are now far harder to develop.

Two regional councillors were among those to find their own properties had been caught up in the wetlands list, but the information was kept from them during the court process.

Whataroa farm owner Sandra Dymock fronted up to the regional council meeting on Monday to vent anger at the decision and the secrecy.

She and her husband did due diligence before buying the property a few years ago, but were never told it had a potential 'significant' wetland on it.

Another Whataroa farmer Francis Graham complained that 96% of his farm had been declared as wetland.

The regional council has said all along that the Environment Court prevented it from telling affected landowners.

Because the Department of Conservation came up with the wetland list, the Greymouth Star asked Conservation Minister Nick Smith about compensation, but his office referred the query back to DOC.

DOC conservation partnerships manager southern West Coast district Chris Hickford, of Hokitika, said it was "not aware of any court directions that suppressed information about wetlands or prevented the council from communicating with landowners potentially affected by the plan".

The department had made "every effort" to work with the council to share ecological information on wetland sites and had also participated in the Environment Court mediation process.

However, the management of wetlands was ultimately the responsibility of the West Coast Regional Council, Mr Hickford said.

But council chief executive Chris Ingle, after checking his lawyer's recollection of the case, said yesterday he "firmly believed" the council would have been rebuked by the court if it had told farmers.

When lawyers had asked about telling landowners, the judge said "no", she was "not going there".

Mr Ingle said they believed the judge meant she did not want media interference in the court process, which by that stage was two years into the hearing process.

However, she did not make a suppression or declaration.

Mr Ingle said some of those with a significant wetland may still be able to get a consent to develop the land, and he encouraged people to inquire.



Department of  
Conservation  
our File: PAP 11-09-66  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

9 October 2014

Mr Arthur Thomson  
Woolhouse Road  
ROSS 7812

Dear Arthur

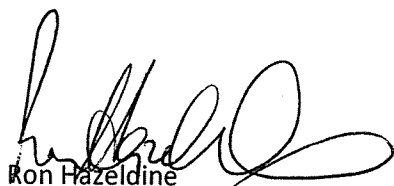
**PROPOSED PURCHASE BY NATURE HERITAGE FUND**

As I indicated to you by phone yesterday the Nature Heritage Fund have chosen to decline our application to them to approve the purchase of your property at the Totara Lagoon.

This is a very disappointing outcome because the Department has long held the view that the acquisition of your land at the Totara Lagoon would protect an important estuarine lagoon.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this ultimately unsuccessful application on your behalf.

Yours faithfully



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