



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

6 December 2017

Tim Dennis  
Southern Land  
[tim@southernland.co.nz](mailto:tim@southernland.co.nz)

Dear Tim,

### **Fauna Values Cromwell Gorge Area**

Thank you for your enquiry regarding fauna values in the Cairnmuir Special Lease/Cromwell Gorge area.

Based on the knowledge we hold of the area; the Department believes no further survey is required. I have summarised the information we hold below.

#### **Herpetofauna**

The Cromwell gorge is home to a variety of herpetofauna comprising of both geckos and skinks.

The McCann's skink (*Oligosoma maccanni*) is the most common lizard and the common skink (*Oligosoma polychroma*) is also present. Both species are present throughout the area and are active during warm days. The Cromwell gecko (*Hoplodactylus* "Cromwell") can also be found in the area.

There is a threatened species (Roys Peak gecko *Hoplodactylus* sp. "Roys Peak") known from the Cromwell Gorge, and there is the possibility that additional species may also be present in the wider area. These species however have specific habitat requirements which are not present in the vicinity of the proposed cycleway, and none have ever been observed near there.

Accordingly, it is the Department's view that any lizards affected by the cycleway are common in the wider landscape and that further work regarding the herpetofauna present is not required.

#### **Avifauna**

The Cairnmuir Special Lease Area contains a number of common native and introduced birds.

Native birds include:

- Black-billed gull *Larus bulleri*

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- Bellbird *Anthornis melanura melanura*
- Black-backed gull *Larus dominicanus*
- Grey warbler *Gerygone igata*
- New Zealand pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae*
- Paradise duck *Tadorna variegata*
- Sacred kingfisher *Todiramphus sanctus vagans*
- Swamp harrier *Circus approximans*

All these species are widespread in the surrounding areas and have large ranges so are unlikely to be negatively impacted by the construction and usage of a cycle trail. The black-billed gull is the only threatened species on that list and, as it does not use the area for breeding or feeding grounds, the proposed cycle trail will not have a negative impact on the population.

### Invertebrate Fauna

The Department has considered the location of potential habitat and the suite of non-threatened invertebrate species *likely* to be present in the vicinity of Lake Dunstan in Cromwell Gorge. Given the depleted nature of native vegetation, it is unlikely that invertebrate fauna is a major component of inherent values along the track corridor. It is unlikely any threatened species or other species of note will be present in this area. The Department considers that the activity (earth disturbance for construction of a bike track) causes only minor effects; for the reason that disturbance to invertebrate habitat is confined to the narrow track corridor at any given location.

Regards



John Keene  
Senior Ranger Biodiversity  
Department of Conservation Central Otago District

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