

TR11-49-50

10. TRIAL FLATS LAND APPLICATION

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INTRODUCTION

The NW branches of the Fisheries Association seek a land application covering Trial Flats in the Upper Natone district for the purpose of constructing a dam to inundate approximately 160 acres to be specifically reserved for the use of anglers in NW Tasmania.

A short visit was made on Monday, 5th December, 1966, to assess the economic potential of the area and obtain first hand information of past mining activity. Tin was recovered from the flats in bygone days, the last time being perhaps 8-9 years ago, and from all accounts was poorly concentrated in the alluvials.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Trial Flats to the S of the Natone-Hampshire road occupies an irregularly shaped depression in a region underlain by granite and topped by a thin basalt cover. Local relief is about 100 feet. Granite ridges flank the swampy depression which is drained by a creek shown on the map as Deep Creek but which the Nomenclature Board has re-named Titigari Creek. This creek flows in a northerly direction through farming country before its confluence with the Emu River, the water rights of which are held by Associated Pulp and Paper Mills.

Various people with first hand knowledge of the flats as a source of tin include Mr Allan Crane who prospected there many years ago, Mr Bill Hayes, an oldtimer and prospector, and Mr M. A. Whitford (storekeeper at Stowport), a graduate of the Zeehan School of Mines and an ex-prospector.

Mr Crane's tin prospect was situated in an area between Falls Creek and Titigari Creek N of the Upper Natone-Hampshire road. According to him the alluvials are between 2 and 8 feet deep. Concentration of tin is poor. Mr Bill Hayes's son stated that his father recovered 8 bags of tin from Trial Flats about 8 years ago. Mr Whitford reported that alluvial tin was recovered although the concentrate averaged only about 40 per cent cassiterite, the remainder consisting mainly of magnetite. Some years ago a Mr Lee Clark of Burnie unsuccessfully sunk shafts and drove an adit in granite in a search for the source lode.

The consensus of opinion is that the alluvial tin is too low grade to justify exploitation. However, it should be borne in mind that these opinions are based on old fashioned mining methods; modern methods using pumps and nozzles might prove profitable if tin is present in sufficient quantity.

A preliminary appraisal of the tin content of these alluvials would necessitate at least a fortnight spent in sinking pits to bedrock and sampling the alluvials at different horizons to obtain a rough idea of the mineral content.

Any alluvial mining embarked on in the future would pose problems for domestic and industrial users of the water supply deriving from Trial Flats because of unavoidable pollution resulting from such mining.