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Underground Water Possibilities at Waterhouse Estate

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General

Following a request from the Land Settlement Division of the Agricultural Bank to determine suitable locations for water boring on the eastern lots of the Waterhouse Estate between Sheepwash Creek and Tomahawk River, an examination was made of the area on 29th January, 1958. On the earlier developed lots extending from Great Forester River to the old Waterhouse homestead, surface water holes have been excavated for watering stock, but this is not so in the area under review and in dry seasons lack of water for stock purposes becomes acute.

Location and Access

The Waterhouse Estate, which is being developed for settlement of ex-servicemen, is located on the coastal belt south of Waterhouse Point between Anderson and Ringarooma Bays.

The area concerned in the location of underground water lies east of Sheepwash Creek for a distance of five miles to Tomahawk River and includes Lots 17 to 23.

Road access is by way of Scottsdale in a general northerly direction for a distance of 22 miles to the abandoned town reserve of Lyndhurst. From the latter, vehicle tracks traverse the lots easterly to the vicinity of Tomahawk River. Construction of a main access road to serve each property on the estate is in progress from Bridport and will eventually pass along the mutual boundaries between Lots 17, 19, 21 and 23 on the north side, and Lots 18, 20, and 22 to the south.

Topography

The topography of the area is one of low relief, being represented by an undulating coastal plain extending southerly from Ringarooma Bay and rising 100 feet above sea level to the foothills of White Rock Tier, in a distance of about four miles.

Easterly-trending sand-dunes rise at intervals to heights ranging from 25 feet to 75 feet above the general level of the plain.

Large areas of swamps and lagoons formed between the dunes have been artificially drained and developed as pasture land.

The natural drainage of the area is effected by the north-flowing streams of Sheepwash Creek on the west and Tomahawk River along the eastern periphery.

Geology

The basement rock underlying the coastal plain consists of granite of Devonian age. This is exposed at surface on the foothills of White Rock Tier, rising at the southern extremity, and in several minor outcrops at various localities on the plain.

Overlying the granite on the plain for the most part are superficial deposits of peat, sands, silts, clays and fine gravels, extending to various depths below the surface. These deposits probably range in age from Pleistocene to Recent. The Recent deposits are represented by wind-blown sand of the dunes as well as swamp and lagoon sediments of alluvial origin. The older underlying sands, clays and gravels were laid down on the granite basement in Pleistocene times.

Underground Water

The best possibility of obtaining underground water by boring lies in the Pleistocene sands and gravels extending below the general level of the coastal plain. The thickness of these sediments has not been determined, but it is anticipated that they may extend to approximately 25 feet or more in places.

The water table is close to the surface and should be encountered at a depth of approximately 10 feet. An indication of the quantity and quality of water obtainable in this locality is shown by a well sunk on an Agricultural Department experimental plot to the east of Sheepwash Creek. Here a good flow of clear water is being pumped by windmill from a depth of eight feet during an abnormally dry period.

Bore Sites

It is recommended that initially one bore hole be sunk on each of Lots 17 to 23 in the vicinity of the proposed central access road. These should be located on the pasture land near the homestead sites on each block. This would enable water to be pumped from the bores to tanks on the adjacent sand-dunes and so facilitate gravitation for house supplies and to stock watering points.