

## THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE HUON-SERPENTINE IMPOUNDMENT, AND AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF RESTORATION OF LAKE PEDDER

Anne McConnell<sup>1</sup>

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*This paper summarises the known archaeological data (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) for the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, comments on the likely effect that restoration of Lake Pedder will have on this cultural heritage, and makes recommendations for the appropriate treatment of the cultural heritage as part of the Lake Pedder restoration process.*

*Only a single Aboriginal archaeological site is known in the vicinity of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, but little investigation for such sites has been carried out, and visibility for sites is generally poor. However given the widespread distribution of known sites in the interior of southwest Tasmania, and the local environment characteristics, it is considered likely that there are other as yet unlocated sites in the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment area.*

*Given the apparent lack of Aboriginal surface sites in the vicinity of Lake Pedder, and assuming that restoration can be achieved with minimal erosional disturbance to the now inundated landforms of the area, then draining the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment is not considered likely to adversely affect the Aboriginal archaeology of the area. Once the Impoundment is drained however, rehabilitation and management activities have the potential to impact archaeologically sensitive areas. For this reason, it is recommended that all areas which have potential to contain Aboriginal archaeological sites be surveyed after the Impoundment is drained, but prior to any other ground disturbing activities in those areas. It may also be of value to carry out a systematic survey around the present shoreline of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. Because of the significance of Aboriginal cultural heritage to Aboriginal people, they should be fully consulted regarding all Aboriginal cultural heritage matters relating to Lake Pedder and its restoration, including with respect to determining the social value of the area for Aboriginal people, and their views on the restoration of Lake Pedder.*

*Only a small number of non-Aboriginal (historic) cultural heritage sites are known in the area of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. These are the Port Davey Track (south), the Port Davey Track (north), the Old Huon River Crossing on the Port Davey Track, McPartlan's Canal, Strathgordon, Red Knoll Quarry, and the Huon River Old Tip and Gravel Pit. As in the case of the Aboriginal cultural heritage, there has been no comprehensive systematic survey of the non-Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area. However, given the history of the area, the potential for additional non-Aboriginal sites to occur in the area is considered low.*

*The Port Davey Track (north and south) and the Old Huon Crossing relate to the early exploration and settlement phase of southwest Tasmania, and are regarded as having high cultural heritage significance. It is considered that these three sites will not be adversely affected as a result of the restoration of Lake Pedder as long as their significance is taken into account in all rehabilitation and management works that are carried out after drainage of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. A conservation assessment of the bridge at the Huon may be required for long term management. The other four sites relate to the history of hydro-electric development in the southwest of Tasmania and while they relate to this significant period of Tasmanian history, their cultural heritage significance remains unestablished. Their significance should be evaluated and taken into account in management where the restoration of Lake Pedder is likely to impact upon them, most appropriately as part of a broader assessment of Tasmanian hydro-electric heritage.*

**Key Words: Australia, Tasmania, Lake Pedder, archaeology, cultural heritage, Aboriginal, historic, restoration, management.**

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<sup>1</sup> Consultant - Archaeology & cultural heritage management, GPO Box 234, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 7001

## INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an overview of the current state (as at 1995) of knowledge regarding the cultural heritage, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, of Lake Pedder and the area of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. It is largely based on background notes prepared in late 1994 (McConnell, Jan 1995) for the Lake Pedder Restoration Committee. The background notes were intended to form part of an information base for the Lake Pedder Restoration Committee, for use as a reference document, and to inform decision making regarding management and further research of the resources and values of the area. This paper is a published version of the same information, with some minor update where required. The comments and opinions are solely those of the author, except where indicated.

In discussing the cultural heritage, the review has limited itself to sites, or places, and focuses on those which have 'historic' value, ie, relate to past human activities. It does not include contemporary values, either Aboriginal or non - Aboriginal. Geographically it is concerned with sites within the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, however some reference is made to the larger regional context in which it belongs.

This report only summarises existing data. Unfortunately the existing data is very limited and there is considerable scope for more field and archival research, as well as investigation of contemporary values.

The report looks firstly at the Aboriginal cultural heritage, and secondly at the non-Aboriginal cultural heritage. For each of these groups the following aspects are discussed:

- the nature of the resource;
- its Tasmanian context;
- its significance;
- an assessment of the effects of restoration versus conservation under present conditions; and
- future research requirements or other recommended considerations, e.g., consultation with the Aboriginal community.

The comments and recommendations provided use as a basis the principles embodied in the *Burra Charter* (ICOMOS Australia 1988).

A 'Gazetteer of Sites' has been included which lists all known cultural heritage sites within the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment.

The original version of this paper (McConnell, Jan 1995) has been endorsed by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, and their comment has been incorporated into the paper. It is strongly recommended that there is ongoing consultation with the Aboriginal community for all matters relating to the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area, and to ascertain the Aboriginal viewpoint on the restoration of Lake Pedder generally.

## ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

### *Resource*

No Aboriginal archaeological sites have been noted or recorded in the area of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment and only one site is known in adjacent areas (TASI Register, PWS; Peter Sims *pers comm*). The known site is a single stone artefact [TASI 3241] which appears to have been located on the Port Davey walking track, approximately 2 km south of the shore of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment.

The only investigations for Aboriginal archaeological sites in the area were by Peter Sims prior to the flooding of the area, and a recent survey of a small part of the shoreline of the present lake (du Cros 1992). In addition a three week natural environment study carried out prior to inundation (by Ellis and Bryden) also failed to locate any sites, although the study was not specifically looking for archaeological sites (Peter Sims *pers comm*).

The survey for archaeological sites by Peter Sims was carried out prior to inundation of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. Despite intensive survey around the margins of Lake Pedder and particularly on the eastern shore dunes, Sims found nothing (P. Sims *pers comm*). It should be noted that the survey carried out by Sims was not systematic and did not fully cover the whole area now inundated (P. Sims *pers comm*), and there is generally poor visibility for sites in this area due to ground vegetative cover. Sims also looked in a number of areas, both on and off walking tracks, where he felt sites might be likely to occur. His investigations did not reveal any sites.

Subsequent to inundation by the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, there has been a very limited systematic survey carried out as part of a larger study of the occurrence of Aboriginal archaeological sites in areas of erosion in the Tasmanian World Heritage Area (du Cros 1992). In the area in question, survey was carried out along the present shoreline of the Huon-Serpentine

Impoundment in Teds Beach Bay. No sites were located by this study.

### **Context**

Reports, including those by George Augustus Robinson, regarding the location of Aboriginal people at contact, have led to the commonly held belief that Aboriginal people did not live in the interior of southwest Tasmania. With Pleistocene Aboriginal occupation discovered in a number of limestone caves in the Southwest in the early 1980's (Jones *et al.* 1983), but no evidence of Holocene sites, the theory was modified to suggest that Aboriginal people lived in this region in the Pleistocene, but with changing environmental conditions (at the end of the Pleistocene), mainly encroaching forests and reduction in the food resource, people moved out from this region into eastern Tasmania.

Recent research in Tasmania has led to questioning of this theory (Thomas 1993). Work by Macfarlane & Coates (1990) and Freslov (Thomas 1993) in the King River Valley has located open sites which are as recent as 300-1200 years BP. Excavation of a limestone cave in the same area also yielded a late Holocene date (Pocock 1991), and in the Denison River valley a date of c. 300 BP has been obtained (Brown, *in*: Thomas 1993). Thomas (1990), primarily by a thorough examination of the ethno-historic literature, has also shown that Holocene Aboriginal occupation of the Southwest cannot be discounted. For example Darke, an early surveyor, records bark huts in the Vale of Rasselas, and his assistant Goodwin, an escaped convict, had previously come across many natives in the same area. This research has led Thomas (1993) to suggest that the lack of Holocene occupation evidence may only be apparent. The apparent lack of sites is most likely due to a combination of lack of investigation in inland areas for sites and the lack of development, hence ground surface disturbance, coupled with very poor ground surface visibility due to dense vegetation which makes it extremely difficult to locate sites in this part of Tasmania.

The sites in the Vale of Rasselas are amongst the closest sites to the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. There is also evidence of Aboriginal occupation (undated) in the Southern Forests in the area of the Picton/Huon confluence (McConnell 1995), and Aboriginal campsites have been exposed in the eroded south eastern shores of the Gordon Impoundment (Prince 1984, du Cros 1992). There is Pleistocene occupation evidence dating back to c. 31,000 years BP in the Weld Valley and in the Florentine Valley (Allen *et al.* 1988). Numbers of occupied limestone shelters have also been recorded in most of the main valleys of the Southwest, including the Maxwell, Denison and Franklin Valleys, and some of these sites have also

have yielded Pleistocene dates (Allen 1991, *in*: du Cros 1992). These older sites are amongst the oldest dated sites in Tasmania. Rock paintings, presumed to be of Pleistocene age (Jones *et al.* 1988) have been located in a small number of limestone cave sites, but scattered throughout the Southwest. Du Cros (1992) in reviewing the archaeology of the area notes that to 1992 "fifty caves and rockshelters with occupation deposit some of which are Pleistocene in age have been identified in the inland southwest of Tasmania and around 30 open sites (this appears not to include the King River Valley where over 80 open sites were located) ... which are mostly small and appear unstratified" (du Cros 1992, p. 19).

The above evidence clearly indicates that there has been Aboriginal occupation in the southwest of Tasmania, from the earliest period known for Tasmanian occupation, until European exploration in the area. Given this, the single artefact find close to the southern shore of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, and the current understanding of the patterning of Aboriginal archaeological sites in Tasmania (McConnell 1995), it would seem that the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment has a high potential for Aboriginal archaeological sites, especially along the main rivers and creeks, around Lake Pedder and on the edges of forest and heath in the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment area generally. This is supported by du Cros' (1992) conclusions, which include the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment shore as an area of sensitivity for Aboriginal archaeological sites.

That sites were not located in the area prior to inundation, despite survey, suggests therefore that there is either a real absence of sites or the sites are well buried by sediment or vegetation. There are implications as a result of this for future research, and for the effects of restoration of Lake Pedder.

### **Significance**

Since no sites have been located, it is not possible to discuss their significance.

If sites do occur in this area, then they are likely to be of scientific significance, especially if Holocene in age, for their ability to contribute to the understanding of the Aboriginal history of this region. It should also be noted that all Aboriginal archaeological sites are of significance to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and that a full determination of significance for these can only be done in conjunction with the Aboriginal community.

### **Assessment**

Sites, if they exist, are likely to be primarily campsite remains, with little other than stone artefacts preserved. Sites are considered to be as well protected under the current regime of

permanent inundation as they would be if the area was drained. While damage could be caused to potential sites in the current conditions, by the effects of wind generated currents, it appears from recent geomorphological studies that there is little disturbance on the floor of the Impoundment from this source. Potential damage is most likely in changing conditions, where there is risk of erosion or reworking of sites and site materials through natural processes.

As stated above, that sites were not located in the area prior to inundation, despite survey, suggests that there is either a real absence of sites or that sites are well buried by sediment or vegetation. In either case it is unlikely that draining of the Impoundment and restoration of Lake Pedder will adversely affect any sites that might be there, unless considerable erosion or other ground disturbance occurs in doing this. If there are buried sites in the area, then it will be important to minimise ground disturbance in the high potential areas such as the lake shore and dunes, the creek and river margins, and flat land which forms forest heath edges or within c.100m of these.

To minimise the potential for disturbance after draining, it is suggested that a systematic archaeological survey of all high potential areas be carried out after the Impoundment is drained, but before major disturbance from rehabilitation or other management works. Such survey work requires agreement of, and in general participation of, the Aboriginal community, currently through the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council (TALC). TALC has suggested that all areas of visibility along the current Impoundment shoreline should be surveyed before any restoration action, to provide a more reliable assessment of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area, which could then inform future decision making.

#### ***Future research and recommended actions***

There appears to be no high priority research required prior to draining the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment from the point of view of assessing or managing the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area.

The following however is recommended if the restoration of Lake Pedder is to be sensitive to cultural environment and social issues. These are in order of importance:

- Consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to investigate and document, and take into account if relevant, Aboriginal views on the land of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment and the management of potential Aboriginal cultural heritage in the area, and their response to the restoration of the area.

- Systematic archaeological survey of all high sensitivity areas (shore of Lake Pedder, all areas of dune, creek and river margins, forest/heath margins) after draining of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, to ensure there are no sites which may be affected by natural or artificial stabilisation or rehabilitation, or by other management activities.
- Archaeological survey of the current impoundment shoreline to determine if any sites are present in these areas of erosion, hence visibility. This may help understanding the Aboriginal archaeology of the area to inform future management decision making. This recommendation is not considered by the author to be of high priority, however TALC has suggested that this survey is of priority and should be carried out before any restoration takes place (see 'Assessment' above).
- That all survey for Aboriginal archaeological sites only be carried out with the approval of, and consultation with, TALC, as the Aboriginal community has asked that all archaeological survey for Aboriginal archaeological sites be carried out in consultation with the Aboriginal community through TALC.

## **HISTORIC (NON-ABORIGINAL) CULTURAL HERITAGE**

### ***Resource***

Prior to the flooding of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment there had been no systematic comprehensive survey of historic cultural heritage sites. The most notable work on the historic heritage of the area is by Gee & Waterman (1981) which lists, and briefly discusses, the history of a number of sites in the southwest of Tasmania. Their data were mostly based on secondary sources and oral information.

The only systematic study of the historic cultural heritage of the general area is a recent study by Coroneos (1993), which has inventoried the historic sites of the World Heritage Area, south of the Lyell Highway. Unfortunately this study was not exhaustive because of time/funding constraints, and has relied to a large degree on secondary sources. Very little fieldwork, other than the recording of already known sites, was carried out. As a result there may be unknown sites still unlisted, although this is considered unlikely given the history of the region.

Coroneos (1993) lists only four sites as being within, or associated with the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. These are parts of the Port Davey

Track and McPartlan Canal, and are listed and summarised below. There are other sites in the area listed in Coroneos (1993), such as the Jones Track (1881), McKay's (Huon) Track, the South Gordon Track, and the Humbolt Mine, but these are well outside of the area of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, and do not appear to be associated with sites that are within the area.

Coroneos (1993) also lists the following sites as unverified sites, indicating that their existence and/or locations, and conditions need to be checked:

- T.B. Moore's 1881 Track. From the Florentine Valley to McKays Track, via the Adams River Valley, the Wedge River and Lake Pedder.
- P. Schnell's track from McKays Track to Mt Anne, cut in 1890.
- Frodsham's old camp(s) at Frodshams Pass.
- Cairn on the Frankland-Wilmot Range, erected by F. McPartlan in 1853 for surveying purposes.

The first two may be partly contained within the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment.

The only other sites listed for the area (on the Parks and Wildlife Service THASC register, which is a comprehensive register of historic cultural heritage places (except for buildings)) are sites associated with the hydro-electricity development itself. These include Strathgordon, Red Knoll Quarry, and Huon River Old Tip and Gravel Pit. These are also discussed below.

It should be noted that existing studies have focussed on the earlier, pre-1950, sites, and there are no studies which have systematically included or considered sites in this region which are related to hydro-electricity development. While the McPartlan Canal has been listed by Coroneos (1993), and Strathgordon, Red Knoll Quarry and the Huon River Tip and Gravel Pit were registered, but not recorded or researched, there are likely to be others, such as the dam sites for the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, that might also be included if more recent sites are considered.

In summary, sites that are known in, or adjacent to, the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment are:

- Port Davey Track (south) [THASC 8111-38]
  - Built 1898, by Edward Marsden, linking Port Davey with the South Gordon Track, for sailors and mineral exploration. The track was little used, until it became a popular walking route in the 1920's. Sections of the southern part of the track were upgraded and re-routed

by M. Fletcher between 1963-1967. More recent (1970's on) upgrading has been carried out. The condition of the track varies considerably, and this is mainly terrain dependent. Around hillslopes where it was benched, the original track is well defined and well preserved. Elsewhere, although the route can be located, it is largely modified by walkers and erosion, or overgrowth. Some features such as stone embankments at creek and river crossings, and depots are still extant.

- Port Davey Track (north) [THASC 8112-21]
  - The historic details are as for the southern section (see above). This section of the track fell into disuse with the construction of the Scotts Peak Road in the 1960's. Apart from the track formation this section also has a log bridge creek crossing, a depot and two blazed trees. The southern section, approximately one third, is submerged by the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment.
- Old Huon River Crossing, Port Davey Track [THASC 8112-17]
  - The site is a bridge, considered to be part of the original track construction, although with later modifications. If so it is the only remaining river crossing on the Port Davey Track. It is of log construction. It has not been inundated by the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, however it is presumed to have had no, or minimal, use since 1974 when the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment was filled, since this section of the Port Davey Track is not generally used since the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment was filled.
- McPartlan Canal [THASC 8112 -10]
  - Little information is available. The canal was excavated as part of the construction of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment and Gordon Impoundment in the 1970's. It is the link which supplies the water from the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment to Lake Gordon.
- Strathgordon [THASC 8112-8]
  - no data
- Red Knoll Quarry [THASC 8111-16]
  - no data
- Huon River Old Tip and Gravel Pit [THASC 8111-17].
  - no data

### **Context**

While the southwest of Tasmania does not have an intensive history of non-Aboriginal occupation and use, it nevertheless has a non-Aboriginal history. It shares in the history of the quest for and exploitation of the country's natural resources that

is Australia's history (Coroneos 1993), as well as playing a role, through the activities of G. A. Robinson, in the early history of European-Aboriginal interaction. Coroneos (1993, p. 7) suggests that the history of the southwest of Tasmania is somewhat different to the Australian norm because of "its lack of "traditionally" exploitable resources in the form of suitable agricultural land, extensive stands of timber and economically viable mineral deposits" and that "the harshness of the environment and difficulty of the terrain coupled with the poverty of its soils and mineral reserves were, and still are, influential factors in the shaping of the history of the region". These factors resulted in very little activity in this region and consequently only a small number of historic sites today. A special aspect of the region's more recent history is the role that this area has played in the development of conservation in Australia, as a result of which Lake Pedder could be considered to have historic significance in itself.

Coroneos (1993) recognises the following major non-Aboriginal historic phases for the southwest:

- *Prior to European invasion (pre-1804)* Early maritime exploration of the southern ocean, with possible but undocumented landings.
- *Initial non-Aboriginal exploration (1804-21)* Exploratory expeditions out of Hobart, including by J. Kelly (1815), D. McCarty (1816), and Oxley (1820) which located Huon pine but not much else of economic worth.
- *Official constraint (1821-33)* During this period settlement and pining was discouraged on the west coast by the government because of its convict settlement and pining activities in Macquarie Harbour. George Augustus Robinson, who was locating and collecting together Aboriginal people for relocation to Flinders Island, was one of the few people in the area during this period.
- *Huon pining, whaling, and the failure of agriculture (1833-80s)* With the closure of the Macquarie Harbour penal station, exploration of the southwest recommenced. This early exploration was largely by government surveyors. In 1835, Calder and Wedge passed by Lake Pedder on their way from the Derwent to the Huon, and later Sprent spent considerable time in the region conducting Tasmania's first statewide trigonometrical survey, evidenced by the well built rock cairns on many of Tasmania's peaks. To facilitate movement in the region tracks were cut, and with the development of the Huon estuary and pining along the Huon and in Port Davey, a track was eventually cut along the Huon, initially as far as the Cracroft River (1835), but later further west to link up other tracks to connect to the west coast. Between 1841 and 1860 there were attempts at whaling in the south west following the over-exploitation of the resource elsewhere in Tasmania, but this was a brief period and coast-based. Pining declined by the 1880s and ceased in the late 1880s after the Government established a moratorium on pining to conserve the rapidly diminishing resource.
- *The search for minerals (1880s-1940's)* Following the gold rushes on the mainland and later in Tasmania, and with the tin finds in northwest Tasmania and the decline in other resources in the southwest, renewed activity came in the form of mineral exploration. It was in this period that many of the tracks were built to assist prospectors who depended on land based exploration with access being a major difficulty. It was in this phase that the Port Davey Track was cut. It was cut by Marsden in 1898, but later widened and graded to pack horse standard. In spite of the activity in the region, the only minerals that were found were limited tin in the Cox Bight-Bathurst Harbour area (1920s-30s), and osmiridium at Adamsfield (1910s-20s).
- *Recreation and the HEC (1950's to present)* Recreational interest followed closely on the mining exploration phase, and from early this century there has been bushwalking in the region, with the number steadily growing. The interest was such that in the 1950s and 1960s old tracks were being reopened, and new tracks cut. Some abandoned huts were reused and new ones built, and since the 1970's new infrastructure has been established by the land manager to cater for the large numbers of people recreating in the area. Coincident with this was the HEC's interest in the area for water storage for hydro-electricity generation. Hydrological surveys began in the 1950's, and HEC activity culminated with the creation of the Gordon and Huon-Serpentine Impoundments in the mid-1970s. Resource utilisation has been mixed, with recreationalists also using the HEC Impoundments. The HEC activity also resulted in a significant period in Tasmanian conservation activism - the fight to prevent flooding of Lake Pedder - which is regarded as of major importance in the history of conservation in Australia.

The non-Aboriginal sites in the area of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment relate to different periods of the history of the area, but mainly the later history - the late 1800's-early 1900's mineral exploration phase, and the later HEC development and recreational phase. The very early historic activity was mainly confined to the coast, and

although there was some use of the Huon, this did not penetrate as far as Lake Pedder, although the Lake was known as early as, or earlier than, 1835.

### **Significance**

Few of the above sites have been given firm significance ratings. This is mainly due to the lack of detailed investigation of the sites themselves, and the inadequacy of regional and statewide data to provide a context in which they can be assessed. Coroneos (1993) provides mainly 'interim' statements of significance for the relevant sites he lists. These are an "intuitive assessment of a site which requires more research unless stated otherwise" (Coroneos 1993, p. 32). His criteria are based on established criteria, mainly the criteria used in the Burra Charter (ICOMOS Australia 1988), with cultural landscape criteria based on McConnville (no date).

Coroneos (1993) considers that the full Port Davey Track can be ascribed a high established significance rating. This would seem reasonable given its antiquity, preservation, and its place in the early non-Aboriginal exploration and settlement of Tasmania. He ascribes an established medium significance ranking to the Old Huon River Crossing. It could be argued that this should also be ascribed high significance given that it is an integral, and mostly original, part of the Port Davey Track, which is of high significance. The McPartlan Canal is given an interim significance rating of minimal. There is no significance assessment for the other known sites, although based on standard criteria, it is likely that the unverified sites of McPartlan's Cairn, Schnell's Track and Moore's Track would also be likely to have high significance given their very early nature. (Sites, other than mining sites, from the last century with some physical remains are comparatively rare, and in some management contexts (eg, Forestry Tasmania's Management Decision Classification) it has been argued that until established significance ratings can be given, all such last century sites should be regarded as being of high significance).

In the case of the McPartlan canal and other HEC related sites, such as the damsites, Strathgordon, and the gravel pits and quarries, it could be argued that no rating can be given until the cultural heritage significance of Tasmanian hydro-electricity development is more comprehensively investigated, and the range and number of associated sites are also better known. Without this type of information and an assessment of engineering significance and social significance, it is not possible to provide any type of reliable significance assessment of these types of sites.

### **Assessment**

In terms of assessing the impact of the restoration of Lake Pedder, the historic sites can be considered in two groups, the early historic exploration related, and the more recent hydro-electricity related.

Since the preservation and general condition of the early historic sites is not well known, then it is difficult to assess the real effects of draining the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. If the Port Davey Track was well preserved then it is likely that restoration of the area would result in conditions which are poor for preservation. However, given these same conditions existed for a long period prior to inundation, and given the poor preservation generally of the fabric (generally wood cording) of the Port Davey Track where it is not flooded, and of other tracks of similar age across buttongrass moorland (*personal observations*), then it is likely that the Port Davey track is not well preserved under the current Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, except as a route. Draining of water from the area therefore will have little direct effect on the condition of the track.

While the direct effects of draining are not likely to affect the Port Davey Track, there may be indirect effects which need to be considered in the general management of the area. One likely outcome is that the track will be re-used. Since this has been its historical function, this would seem an appropriate re-use, and would also lessen the construction of new tracks. However, to ensure the track is preserved in as close as possible condition to its original condition, care should be taken that the track is not used before the ground has dried out to avoid deep rutting and widening while the ground is still soft. Care should also be taken in other activities, such as vegetation rehabilitation and track cutting, not to damage the track, particularly where original track construction may still be preserved. The Old Huon River Crossing which is a part of the Track also requires consideration in this respect. The track was not inundated by the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, but its condition has not been assessed. For long term management, a conservation assessment should be done to determine what is required for the conservation of the timbers, if warranted.

Management may also consider the removal of all human artefacts from the Lake Pedder area at some stage. If this is the case, then the cultural heritage value of the track must be weighed carefully against the improvement to natural values by its removal. It is also suggested that if there are to be access tracks into the area, then given its significance, it would be preferable to maintain and use the Port Davey Track, rather than rehabilitate it and construct new tracks. It is suggested that the use of historic tracks would add interest to, and thus enhance, the experience of visitors to the area.

The situation with the hydro-electricity sites is a little different. Sites in this group likely to be affected by the restoration of Lake Pedder are the damsites, and possibly Red Knoll Quarry, Huon River Old Tip, Gravel Pit, and the McPartlan Canal. While only the damsites are likely to be directly affected by the draining of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, it is likely there will be some interest in rehabilitating the other sites mentioned since these sites are mainly very large and intrusive in the landscape. The effect on these sites in such an event is likely to be extremely damaging. Since there is no evaluation of the significance of these sites, it is not possible to evaluate what the loss of these sites would mean. It is therefore considered important to evaluate the significance of these sites, so that potential loss of cultural heritage significance can be minimised if required, or at least acknowledged. If the sites are regarded as having some significance, then perhaps rehabilitation could be modified to retain some part of the significance, particularly for the less intrusive sites or features. For example, there may be some value in retaining as much as possible of the dam walls, which will have little visual effect on the Lake Pedder area, but would be a striking reminder of the recent history of the area, and perhaps by its visual presence, enhance the reality and longer term understanding of the history, including the restoration of, Lake Pedder.

It should also be noted that in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan (Parks & Wildlife Service 1999, p. 193) the stated treatment for installations no longer required by the "electricity entity" (formerly the HEC), will be to assess them for their cultural significance and public safety. If not of significance, installations will be removed (at the expense of the electricity entity), or left to decay, and in any instance that an installation is found to be unsafe, the electricity entity will remove it. This is, in general, an acceptable approach from a cultural heritage point of view. With respect to the safety issue however, a more appropriate approach would be to also consider options for retaining significant but unsafe installations, by making them safe. In some cases this may not be possible due to the cost.

It is possible that claims may be made that restoration of Lake Pedder may result in loss of valuable cultural heritage, ie, the HEC related sites. In my opinion, these recent sites are not of significant enough value to argue against the restoration of Lake Pedder. That is, the value of a restored Lake Pedder is not outweighed by the loss, or disturbance and partial loss, of these recent historic features. It must be re-iterated however, that any assessment of the value of these historic sites at this stage is poorly informed, and while their significance is likely to be low compared to

the value of restoring Lake Pedder, the values of this historic heritage should not be completely discounted, and need to be evaluated before any action is taken which might compromise the potential value of these sites.

In summary, the main historic values (the Port Davey Track) of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, need not be adversely affected by the restoration of Lake Pedder given care in planning and restoration, and a conservation assessment of the Old Huon Crossing bridge. The more recent historic sites associated with the hydro-electricity development of the area will be affected, but it is argued that while having some significance, they are unlikely to be of outstanding significance. Rehabilitation of the area could be managed if desired, to retain elements of this part of the historic heritage, while still proceeding with the restoration of Lake Pedder. While these hydro-electric development related sites may be seen by some as equally undesirable as the actual Huon-Serpentine Impoundment, the restoration project needs to consider these sites in a broader social context if the project is to be both environmentally and socially responsible.

#### ***Future research and recommended actions***

In order to protect the significant non-Aboriginal heritage of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment the following is recommended as part of the restoration project:

- Research into the significance and desirability of retaining the sites in the area associated with hydro-electricity development. In establishing the significance of these sites, it is important to also include consideration of social significance.
- A conservation assessment, and possibly conservation works, for the Old Huon River Crossing bridge site should be carried out prior to, or concurrent with, the draining of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment. The first step should be to determine the present nature and condition of the crossing.
- The Port Davey Track and associated features be taken into account in all rehabilitation and future management of the drained Huon - Serpentine Impoundment area. This is particularly important in relation to access and track construction, and determining the degree to which the area is to be returned to its 'natural' state.

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**GAZETTEER OF SITES IN OR ADJACENT TO THE HUON-SERPENTINE IMPOUNDMENT**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Register No.</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage</i>		
	TASI:	
Un-named isolated artefact find	3241	not established
<i>Historic Cultural Heritage</i>		
	THASC:	
Port Davey Track (1898) - south	8111-38	high
- north	8112-221	high
Old Huon River Crossing, on Port Davey Track (1898?)	8112-17	medium (high)
McPartlan Canal (1970's)	8112-10	not established
Strathgordon (1960's/70's)	8112-8	not established
Red Knoll Quarry (1970's)	8111-16	not established
Huon River Old Tip and Gravel Pit (1970's)	8111-17	not established
Moore's Track (1881).	unverified	not established
Schnell's Track (from McKays Track to Mt Anne 1890)	unverified	not established
Frodsham's old camp(s)	unverified	not established
McPartlan's Cairn, Frankland- Wilmot Range (1853)	unverified	not established