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<b>Significant Natural Area Assessment</b>			
Project No: 11001/002	Property Name: <i>Branch Creek</i>	Ecologist: <i>Glenn Davis</i>	
	Site Name: <i>Branch Creek SNA B</i>	Date: <i>3 November 2010</i>	
Survey Undertaken By: <i>Glenn Davis and Ralph Henderson</i>		<u>Waypoint No (mid-point of survey area):</u> <i>E: 219 5266</i> <i>N: 559 1645</i>	
LENZ Unit: <i>N4.1d and Q2.2a</i>		Photo No.(s): <i>See below.</i>	
Ecological District: <i>Wanaka Ecological District</i>			
Topography: <i>Hillslope</i>	Slope: <i>&gt;25°</i>	Altitude: <i>500 - 760 masl</i>	Aspect: <i>SW</i>
Threatened Environment Status: <i>Chronically threatened and critically underprotected</i>		Area Size (ha): <i>29.31</i>	
Representativeness: <i>Grey shrubland – dominant indigenous vegetation cover in the drier areas of the Wanaka Ecological District, Lakes Ecological Region, and N4.1d environments.</i>			
Are there threatened species expected/identified in the survey area? If so, list species and threat status.			
Threatened Species		Threat Status	
<i>Falco novaezealandiae</i> “eastern”		At Risk – Recovering	
Provide onsite description of vegetation:			
Vegetation type: Shrubland consisting of matagouri ( <i>Discaria toumatou</i> ), <i>Olearia odorata</i> , <i>Olearia bullata</i> , <i>Aristotelia fruticosa</i> , <i>Coprosma propinqua</i> , <i>Coprosma tayloriae</i> , <i>Carmichaelia petriei</i> , sweet briar ( <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> ), elderberry ( <i>Sambucus nigra</i> ), <i>Melicytus alpinus</i> , <i>Rubus schmidelioides</i> and <i>Meuhlenbeckia australis</i> .			
Degree of Modification: The area has experienced historical disturbance (fire), but has not been disturbed for a long period.			
Overall Health: The shrubland is largely intact and is dominated by mature indigenous species with a minor introduced component of briar and elderberry.			
Provide onsite description of fauna habitat:			
The shrubland provides habitat for a variety of passerines that are prey for the eastern falcon that is present in the Branch Burn. The population of mature <i>Olearia</i> is expected to support a unique, diverse and abundant invertebrate fauna.			

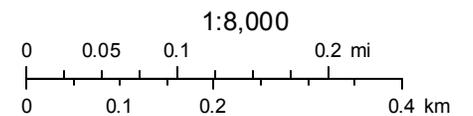
<p>Threats to vegetation and flora/fauna species? (Weeds, predators, current management practices): The presence of weed species, i.e. elderberry and briar.</p>
<p>Rarity: The threatened environment classification identifies the Q2.2a environment to have 39.92% indigenous vegetation cover remaining with 5.07% protected, and the N4.1d environment has 18.6% indigenous vegetation cover remaining with 2.3% protected. The remaining indigenous cover associated with the N4.1d environments is not sufficient to maintain the biodiversity of communities reliant on this environment.</p>
<p>Area Size and Shape (degree to which the area may be or is becoming self-sustaining): The size and shape of the shrubland is dictated by ecological processes rather than pastoral activity and is therefore inherently self-sustaining.</p>
<p>Diversity and Pattern (is there a notable range of species and habitats, aspects, sequences?): The shrubland contains a diverse range of the grey shrubland species and is notable for the presence of a good population of mature tree daisies.</p>
<p>Distinctiveness/special ecological characteristics (unusual veg. &amp; landform features, distribution limits?): The shrubland is distinctive within the ecological district for the population of Olearia within the shrubland. Many of these shrublands are dominated by matagouri and briar.</p>
<p>Connectivity (how is the site connected to surrounding communities/areas?): The shrubland is connected to shrubland patches that extend throughout the Branch Burn catchment down onto the Branch Burn flood plain.</p>
<p>Sustainability (does the site possess the resilience to maintain its ecological integrity and processes?): The shrubland is currently in good condition with a diverse range of mature shrubs and creepers and a predominantly closed canopy. The shrubland will continue to develop providing it remains free from inadvertent fire events.</p>
<p>Recommendation (Accept/Decline): The shrubland is a good example of vegetation that is representative of this environment. Indigenous vegetation cover in these environments is severely reduced from its original extent and less than 6% has any formal protection. It is also important as habitat for a diverse and abundant invertebrate fauna and passerines that are critical for the maintenance of the eastern falcon population. Given the high level of representativeness and rarity of quality grey shrubland in these LENZ environments we consider the area should be considered for designation as an SNA.</p>

Figure 1: The area of potential significance - Branch Creek SNA B - F2B\_1&2.



September 29, 2014

- Proposed Significant Natural Area
- Parcels
- Proposed Significant Natural Area



Please note the area shown is indicative and only for discussion purposes.



**Figure 2:** Branch Creek SNA B (lower Branch Burn).



**Figure 3:** Branch Creek SNA B.



**Figure 4:** Branch Creek SNA B (lower Branch Burn).



**Figure 5:** Branch Creek SNA B.