

# CANTERBURY COAL REGION

## ► Location

The Canterbury Coal Region comprises several small coal deposits in the foothills of the Southern Alps west of Christchurch.

## ► Geology

Most coal seams are Late Cretaceous to Eocene in age and occur at the base of a transgressive sequence. Stratigraphy and structure are complex.

## ► Coal quality

Canterbury coals are lignite A to sub-bituminous C in rank, reaching anthracite rank in places through contact metamorphism. Ash and sulphur contents vary.

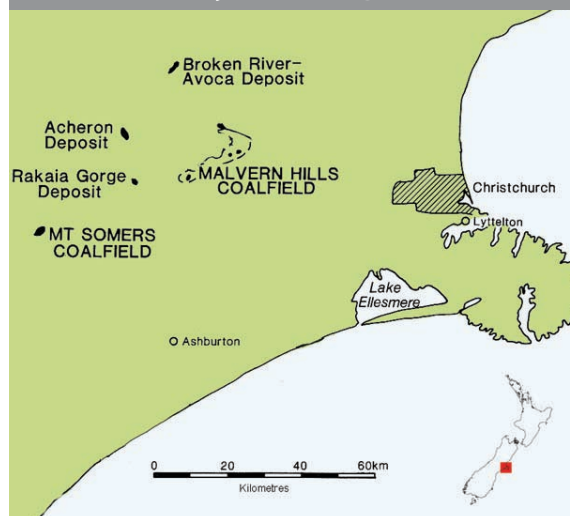
## ► Resources

The extent of seams is difficult to assess. Recoverable resources are estimated at 2.2 Mt.

## ► Exploration status

A resource assessment of the Canterbury Coal Region was carried out as part of the NZ Coal Resources Survey based on mining records and previous geological work. Resource quantities were difficult to estimate because of limited seam thickness data, the unknown extent of coal measures, and complex seam geometry and structure. Only small quantities of coal are likely to remain in the Acheron River and Rakaia Gorge deposits, and in the Mount Somers Coalfield. While the Malvern Hills Coalfield could be extensive, the quantity of potentially mineable coal is probably similarly small.

## ► Canterbury Coal Region



## ► Production

Over 120 small mines have operated since 1866, producing a total of about 2 Mt. One mine is currently operating, producing about 2000 tpa.

## ► Utilisation

Canterbury coal is mined for local industrial and household use. There is a ban on coal fires in Christchurch city.

## ► Key references

- Duff SW 1986. Canterbury Coal Region coal resource assessment. Unpublished Landmark Resource Consultants report for Ministry of Energy.
- Duff SW, Barry J 1989. Coal resource assessment of the Canterbury Coal Region. *Coal geology report 14*. Market Information and Analysis, Ministry of Energy.