

MIND THE LOG GAP

FORESTS PLANTED NEARLY THREE DECADES AGO ARE NOW REACHING MATURITY. WITH EVIDENCE OF STRONG OFFSHORE DEMAND LEADING TO LOG SUPPLY SHORTAGES FOR SOME NEW ZEALAND PROCESSORS, THE HARVEST PLANS OF BOTH LARGE AND SMALL FOREST OWNERS WILL BE CRUCIAL AND SHOULD BE WELL INFORMED.

In 2010, looking forward to 2040, the Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)'s Wood Availability Forecast for New Zealand predicted two phases of increases in supply.

The first was a lift between 2009-2012 from 18 to 24 million m³ a year, mainly from large-scale owners' harvests, particularly in Central North Island and Northland.

The second phase was a rapid leap between 2015 and 2025, up to 35 million m³ a year from the early 2020s, mostly due to small-scale forest owners who planted in the 1990s.

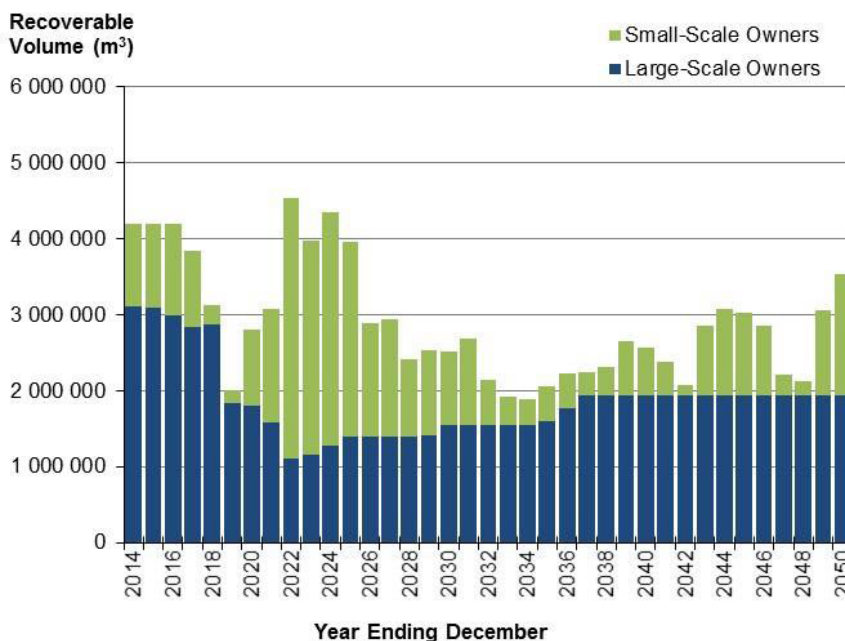
The actual timing of harvests during the two phases, it noted, would depend on market conditions and decisions made by individual forest owners. These might be particular objectives, forest age, log prices,

demand by local wood processing plants, perceptions about future log prices and future wood supply.

Northland, the second largest forestry estate in the North Island, has been in the spotlight recently with media reports suggesting the second phase has come early, exacerbated by strong offshore market demand and attractive log prices encouraging smaller forest owners to harvest earlier than anticipated.

Even though demand is now weakening, there is an 'acute log supply shortage' for local mills in the region, a situation that is also starting to be experienced elsewhere.

NZ Forest Owners Association (FOA) chief executive David Rhodes confirms this. "There has been an increased level of competition, including by offshore traders, for raw logs and this is creating supply problems for some local wood processors."



Northland radiata pine availability under Scenario 1 – all owners
 Source: MPI/Indufor Asia Pacific

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He adds however that the issue is not being driven by foreign-owned forest companies, but generally by domestic owners of smaller forest blocks exercising their right to accept the best price on offer.

Nearly half of the wood produced in New Zealand goes to domestic supply which illustrates how important this market is for forest growers.

"It is important for the industry not to become too reliant on any market and an increasing reliance on offshore markets is not consistent with the Wood Council's strategy to increase on-shore processing."

MPI's most recent Wood Availability Forecast for Northland, updated in 2015, was prepared by Indufor Asia Pacific Ltd, working in conjunction with the National Exotic Forest Description (NEFD) Steering Committee.

The Forecast uses data gathered from nine of the region's 13 large-scale forest owners, including five of the largest, and assumes the actions of small forest owners. It gives four availability scenarios for radiata pine, the predominant species in the region, and assumes all areas are replanted.

FOA technical manager Glen Mackie points to scenario one, which shows what could happen if large-scale owners harvest at their stated intentions and small scale owners harvest their trees at year 28 (see graph) in favourable market conditions.

The MPI Forecast suggests that up to 2018, large forest owners will maintain their annual volumes at 2.8-3 million m³, then

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EUCALYPT BEETLES TEST GIA

IT'S PROBABLY BEST TO DESCRIBE THE FIRST TWO FOREST INDUSTRY EXPERIENCES, OF OPERATING UNDER THE GOVERNMENT INDUSTRY AGREEMENT (GIA) ON BIOSECURITY, AS A LEARNING CURVE.

GIA's are being signed across the primary industries, with the intention of sharing both decision making and costs between a primary industry group and the Ministry for Primary Industries. For both of these areas working out what sharing means is taking some time.

As MPI describes the arrangement "It gives industry bodies a formal role, alongside MPI, in making decisions about biosecurity readiness and response activities, and what can be done to help prevent biosecurity threats reaching our shores or getting past the border."

Traditionally, MPI made all the decisions and covered the cost of an incursion. If something gets through the border, the expense of control, eradication or just living with the pest or disease, can be huge.

A range of horticulture industries have signed on to a GIA. FOA entered into our GIA last November. Surprisingly, in the animal industries, only the pig and horse industries are part of a GIA. The big players of sheep and cows have yet to come on board.

The first two tests of how the GIA works for forestry have both involved an incursion by a eucalypt beetle species – the first was last summer in Hawke's Bay and then more recently another beetle, which also feeds on eucalypts, was rediscovered on the Kapiti Coast.

In the first instance the disclosure that such a beetle had arrived was made public by a former president of Federated Farmers

who had found some on his property. The disclosure in this manner was not a good look to our trade partners.

In the second case, the circumstances of the find in a piece of firewood taken from Waikanae, persuaded MPI that an attempt to eradicate the beetle was not warranted. FOA and FFA found themselves disputing this conclusion due, in a large part, to not having been sufficiently involved in the decision-making process. It was something of a black box operated by MPI.

In other words, we believe that a GIA means 'a formal role alongside MPI' is indeed such a role right through the process. It is not where an industry is presented with a decision and if it doesn't like that decision only has the option of taking control measures by itself.

We have made our position clear to MPI and I am pleased that officials understand and support us having earlier and closer involvement in any readiness and response for a forest incursion. Already I have been involved with a group that is looking to learn from this and other experiences with a view to making quick improvements and is being watched by other groups who are members of the GIA "Deed Governance Group".

At the same time, forest growers are discussing operational agreements under the GIA with MPI. This issue here is demarcation between what costs are specifically industry good and which address the risk and damage to public amenities, which is what MPI ought to

cover.

High Risk Site Surveillance (HRSS) for example, in other words monitoring at the ports and airports, is more of a public good activity than forest surveillance, which is what the industry conducts and pays for. HRSS was instigated to pick up pests that slip through the border, particularly around ports and at the 6000 transitional facilities that MPI has authorised over the past 15 years.

It is early days in working such issues through, and our industry was something of a pioneer well prior to GIA.

MPI is having to adopt to new ways of operating. But then so too is industry in order that we fulfill our role in the partnership. This is behind our efforts to establish a regional biosecurity network, dubbed PineNet. PineNet is the network for communication and service delivery to allow key stakeholders in the forestry sector to respond quickly to an incursion. We are also working to ensure we have the right mechanisms to fund our share of any response we agree is warranted.

We anticipated some difficulties. But we do need to make it clear that in entering into the GIA we are entitled to a position at the decision making table of government. Indeed, there is a collective view amongst those of us who sit around the GIA Deed Governance table that we are an integral component of the system described under the new Biosecurity 2025 strategy and we will be one of the voices determining change and priorities.

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A logo for the forest growers commodity levy, featuring a stylized pine needle and cone in shades of green and brown.

ASSURANCES FOR FOREST OWNERS IN NEW SAFETREE CONTRACTOR CERTIFICATION SCHEME

THE SAFETREE CONTRACTOR CERTIFICATION SCHEME IS SCHEDULED TO LAUNCH EARLY NEXT YEAR. IT WILL RECOGNISE COMPANIES WHICH MEET A SAFETY BENCHMARK.

Knowing a company is actually competent to do the work you've hired them for is pretty important – particularly when someone's safety is on the line.

All sorts of businesses doing safety-critical work, from airlines to adventure tourism operators, are required to be certified. This certification gives an assurance that the company has the equipment, systems, staff and training to do the job competently.

The 2014 *Independent Forestry Safety Review* report made an industry-wide certification scheme for contracting companies one of its key recommendations.

At the time of the report, forestry was New Zealand's most dangerous industry. Ten workers lost their lives the previous year. But despite the risks, there was no industry-wide scheme to certify that the companies working in our forests (or the people they employed) were capable of working safely.

The launch of the Safetree Contractor Certification scheme fills this gap. The Forest Industry Safety Council (FISC) – which includes representatives of forestry owners, managers, contractors, workers, ACC and WorkSafe – led the development of the scheme on behalf of the industry.

The scheme will set a transparent benchmark for what good practice looks like and will supply industry-wide recognition for companies which meet that benchmark. It will cover contractor companies working in forestry, particularly those delivering high risk services such as tree felling, extraction, processing and loading.

The scheme will complement the *Safetree Professional Forest Worker* certification scheme that FISC already has.

The contractor certification scheme is being trialled with contractors during the next

two months and feedback from the contractors will 'sense check' and improve the scheme. FISC will provide the industry with more information on the scheme and what people need to do to get involved before it is launched in early 2017.

The obvious benefit of the scheme to forest owners and managers is greater assurance about a contractor's suitability for work and making the contractor selection process more efficient.

The scheme also benefits contractors through clear standards, sets a level playing field of operation and makes multiple and confusing alternative certification less likely.

But the most significant outcome of the scheme is to our workers and their families because it will improve their employment conditions and make their working environment safer.

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reach a low point of 1.1 million m³ in 2022. Within this scenario, it believes that a total annual harvest of 3.5 million m³ is possible from the region over the next decade.

“As with a number of the other wood supply regions, a significant portion of the future wood availability will come from the region's small-scale forest owners who established forests in the 1990s. Market conditions and logistical constraints will determine the actual rate of harvest increase and what level is reached.”

With the increased demand, an adjustment now to harvest intentions by large and small forest growers would ensure supply consistency, which will be important for New Zealand wood processors.

Glen Mackie suggests that although there is a short-term reduction in supply forecast for the years from 2018-2021, if some forest owners bring their harvest forward a few years for some blocks it will help even out supply.

However, the harvest is going to have to drop from the current level of just over 4.0 million m³ to closer to 3.5 million m³ over the next few years.

“There will be an increasing percentage of supply coming from smaller owners and we recommend they get professional forestry advice before committing to sell to any entity – whether that be a local mill or export log buyer,” Glen Mackie says.

NORTHLAND FORESTRY FACTS

Total exotic forest area is 191,512 ha (10.6% of the national total) and it is the second largest estate in the North Island*, **

Large scale forest owners (over 1,000 ha) account for 65% of the forest area, with half of the remaining 30% of forest area held in forests of less than 40 ha*

13 large forest owners, four of which are overseas corporates*

Five forestry investment syndicates are represented in the ownership of the estate*

Four large wood processors: Juken NZ Ltd, CHH Woodproducts, Rosvall Sawmill, Northpine Sawmill#

97% of Northland plantations are radiata pine (compared to 90% nationally)**

Total log removals in the Northland region were estimated to be 4.2 million m³ to the year end 31 March 2014**

Sources: * = New Zealand Wood Availability Forecast, MAF, 2010; ** = Wood Availability Forecast – Northland 2014, MPI/Indufor Asia Pacific, June 2015; # = 2014 Facts and Figures – NZ Plantation Forest Industry, NZFOA brochure



Overseas demand is putting pressure on domestic processors

ENVIRONMENT

1991 FOREST ACCORD ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

AN ACCORD OVER THE FUTURE SCOPE OF COMMERCIAL FORESTRY WAS SIGNED SOME 25 YEARS AGO BETWEEN THE INDUSTRY AND A COALITION OF CONSERVATION GROUPS LED BY THE ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY.

A function was held in Wellington in early August to celebrate the pioneer Accord and its continuing relevance today.

The Accord is a commitment to maintain and enhance the existing area of natural indigenous forest in New Zealand, while acknowledging plantation forests are an essential source of renewable fibre and energy.

Today, 99.72% of timber harvested is from exotic plantation forests.

FOA President Peter Clark told the celebration that there is no industry appetite to plant land which has mature or regenerating indigenous forest growth, due to the cost alone of land clearance.

“Furthermore, the proposed Plantation Forest National Environmental Standard will steer potential forest investors away from the most erodible land,” he said, which he expected to revert to native species.

Associate Primary Industries Minister Jo Goodhew’s remarks concentrated on the collaborative process which resulted in the original Accord.

“Agreements such as this are less about making speeches from the side lines, and more about sitting around the

table together and getting things done.”

“We need that collaborative effort to face the challenges that the future may bring, particularly the challenges associated with climate change, and the Accord will continue to be the framework for ‘round-table’ discussions.”



Above: FOA Research Manager Russell Dale with Farm Forestry Association President Dean Satchell



Above: Green Party MP Kennedy Graham with Maruia Society’s signatory on the original Forest Accord, Guy Salmon



Above: Original Forest Accord signatory Barry Weeber

ONLINE

FOREST PORTAL GOES LIVE

AN ONLINE FOREST DATA WEBSITE WAS LAUNCHED BY ASSOCIATE PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTER JO GOODHEW AT THE JOINT FOA/FFA SITE AT THE NATIONAL FIELDDAYS AT MYSTERY CREEK IN JUNE.

The New Zealand Planted Forests Portal is a web based interface using forest indicators developed as part of the Montreal Process for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests.

The forest indicators span sustainable forest management criteria; biodiversity, productivity, health, soil, water, as well as institutional and legal aspects of forestry.

The website is designed as a one-stop shop which links through to information held on other sites.

It is updated annually and also uses the Five Year Montreal Process Report on New Zealand’s sustainable forestry produced by MPI.

Input into the site continues with, for example, a PhD student collecting forest indicators specific to Māori, and there is further development as part of the National Science Challenge.

Development was through Future Forests Research, Scion MBIE, FOA, FFA and MPI.

<http://www.nzplantedforests.org>



Above: Peter Weir, Chair, FOA /FFA Environment Committee

“The portal complements the NZ Wood website www.nzwood.co.nz and for those involved in forest harvesting www.safetree.nz

RESEARCH

FORESTS OF TOMORROW

THE LATEST ADVANCES IN FOREST SCIENCE MEANS THE FORESTS OF TOMORROW COULD BE EARNING AT LEAST \$600 MILLION A YEAR MORE THAN THEY ARE CURRENTLY, IF GENETICS AND BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH IS COMBINED AND TARGETED.



The next generation of improved *Pinus radiata* starting out under lights at Scion's laboratories in Rotorua

The rapid development of genetics has revolutionised scientific understanding of how a plant's instruction codes and genes direct its growth and development. This has added to the forestry industry's understanding of how genes in every tree can deliver desirable traits.

Forest Owners Association (FOA) R&D manager, Russell Dale believes genetics, and its sister discipline biotechnology, offer exciting prospects for this sector.

"Not only can gains be delivered from genetic improvements but, using a combination of genomics and biotechnology, those gains can also be realised faster than they would have been through the traditional routes," he says.

At least six forestry research and development programmes incorporating genetics/biotechnology are already underway, many through the Crown's forestry research institute Scion. These include the Radiata Pine Breeding Company (RPBC)'s breeding consortium, which runs the progeny trials for identifying elite clones, and its Genomic Selection Partnership which is developing genomic resources and genotyping tools.

Scion is also looking at *Phytophthora* diseases in the Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) funded Healthy Trees Healthy Future programme. Findings are being applied to screening elite clones for disease resistance. Scion has also invested its own core funding into DNA sequencing of radiata pine and has a long-running programme of genetic improvement.

Next generation phenotyping methods, predicting what trees will grow well and where, are being used in the MBIE-funded Growing Confidence in Forestry's Future (GCFF) programme. LiDAR and multi-spectral cameras are collecting data comparing many top performing trees.

Meanwhile, Scion's work with tissue culture also means that research material is ready for genetic improvement, alongside new techniques to rapidly multiply elite seedlings in the future.

The research is impressive and diverse, but Dale argues the problem to date has been the forestry industry's lack of a strategic and joined up approach to genetics and biotechnology. The science has been developed in a piecemeal way to suit different organisations' needs and

timetables.

"Collectively, it adds up to a complex picture that we believe needs to be better coordinated. The time is ripe for the entire genetic-related R&D to be better integrated for whole of industry benefit," he says.

"We need to make more effective use of Scion's research into new genetic technologies and capitalise on its international networks of research providers, spot where there are gaps, focus future research efforts on industry-agreed goals and, so, attract and better target research funding."

In addition, he says, the new breeding/gene editing technologies for forest trees are not 'genetic modification' as generally understood by most people.

"These are technologies that we should be evaluating proactively so we have the evidence on their benefits and risks and are able to use them confidently in the forest industry's tool box to address biosecurity threats and accelerate productivity gains."

He points to an example – and a major problem in the South Island – 'wilding pines', which are the focus of an MPI control strategy.

"If a sterile Douglas-fir could be developed, it would be such a conservation bonus by saving industry considerable costs in preventing wilding establishment."

Dale says it has taken a while for industry to work out how it all fits together, but FOA, in conjunction with Scion, is starting to develop a proposal for a more comprehensive approach. Over the next year, its Forest Research Committee will be looking at how such research can be sped up, better integrated and how limited resources can be better used.

"Currently, we are at step one: agree an approach and research strategy and the most cost effective means to deploy the outputs from this. Step two will be to obtain funding," he says.

Funding might be found partly, he suggests, through a forestry industry levy on seedlings, through Scion's MBIE strategic (internal) funding and, potentially, a MBIE partnership.

Long-term, the benefits of fully integrating breeding, genomics and biotech capabilities, could see the forests of the late 2030s returning significantly more value to industry, says Dale. The result will be more productive and resilient forests.

"Early conservative estimates show gains could be somewhere in the region of \$600 million a year, thanks to the potential increases in productivity and major cost savings in spraying and management."

WAIKATO PLAN CHANGE MISSES THE MARK

NEW LONG TERM LAND USE RULES PROPOSED FOR WAIKATO WATERWAYS WILL NOT PRODUCE THE AIM OF A HEALTHY SWIMMABLE OR FISHABLE RIVER SYSTEM ANYTIME SOON.

In mid-September the Waikato Regional Council approved notification of Plan Change developed by a Collaborative Stakeholder Group for the Waikato and Waipa catchments.

This interim outcome, and the way it was reached, sends warning signals to anyone wishing to embrace the collaborative process for environment regulation. Collaboration has become a popular way to replace the traditional RMA Schedule One

approach of Councils drawing up plans, hearing submissions with parties ultimately trying to resolve outstanding differences through the court process.

But collaboration has downsides. It is hugely resource and time hungry. The Waikato Healthy Rivers Collaborative Stakeholder Group met at least two days a month for the 32 months with large amounts of ratepayer funds invested on expert advice.

Who and how many represent particular interests can be critical. If voting is allowed, then it is unfair to minorities. The Waikato CSG had two dairy farmers and two other members with dairy backgrounds. Forestry had one representative as did drystock farming. The economic modelling had a strong dairy bias.

Outcomes were predictable. If the apparently agreed goal of Waikato

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BIOSECURITY

EUCALYPT BEETLE BACK AGAIN



Adult Eucalypt variegated beetle active this spring at Esk Valley in Hawkes Bay

ANOTHER DISCOVERY OF EUCALYPTUS LEAF BEETLE IN NEW ZEALAND IS A DISAPPOINTMENT AFTER MPI HAD DECLARED IT ERADICATED IN 2015.

MPI's response also raises some further questions about the best way to work through the process of the Government Industry Agreement (GIA) on forest biosecurity.

In July this year, six of the beetles were found in a firewood branch collected under a belt of eucalypt trees near the Waikanae River on the Kapiti Coast. The man who discovered them posted pictures of the unusual insects on the NatureWatch website. MPI was alerted, tracked down the man to Trentham in Upper Hutt and positively identified the beetle as the Eucalyptus leaf beetle (ELB) *Paropsisterna beata*.

In 2012, ELB was first found at Whitemans Valley in Upper Hutt. MPI decided to try to eradicate it. The cost of ELB establishing in New Zealand was calculated at that time

as potentially being \$23 million over 20 years of lost pulp production from eucalypt trees. MPI had said ELB 'could become a serious pest' if established.

The intensive campaign over two years of localised pyrethroid insecticide attack on relatively isolated trees and surrounding ground was deemed to be successful and MPI declared ELB to be eradicated last year.

MPI entomologists have concluded that the new find at Waikanae indicates ELB is likely to be at other sites in the region, in order for it to have been present on both sides of the Akatarawa Ranges at a similar time. They conclude at least that the Whitemans Valley and Waikanae infestations are related.

MPI has decided furthermore that the density of eucalypts in the Waikanae

district – stands are almost contiguous both north and south of the Waikanae River along State Highway 1 – means another attempt at eradication would be very difficult and is not feasible. It intends therefore to take no further action.

Unlike Whitemans Valley, Waikanae is an urban area with many of the eucalypts in peoples' back gardens. The Waikanae River is also a town water supply. Both factors make insecticide spraying a difficult project.

MPI has now revised down its previous estimate of the cost of ELB on the present 100 species and varieties in the 23,260 planted hectares of eucalypts in New Zealand.

ELB is furthermore difficult to locate and monitor for control measures. A fruit-fly infestation for instance can be accurately measured for density and presence over a wide area through using pheromone traps. There are no such traps for ELB.

Another important contrast is between the ELB and another eucalypt pest *Paropsisterna variicollis*, the Eucalyptus variegated beetle, EVB. EVB was discovered earlier this year in Hawkes Bay, north and inland of Napier. MPI believes EVB to be a more serious threat to eucalypts than ELB.

FOA has questioned the qualitative decision making process by MPI to rule out any further action and has requested earlier involvement with industry and MPI in future so such decisions can be made jointly.

The New Zealand Institute of Economic Research recently ranked the importance of eucalypt trees as New Zealand's 23rd most economically important plant with an impact on GDP of \$41m per year.

RESEARCH

TELEHARVESTER ON WAY TO GETTING BOOTS OFF THE SLOPE

PROGRESS WAS ON DISPLAY IN NELSON RECENTLY FOR WHAT MAY SO FAR BE THE WORLD'S ONLY TRUE REMOTE CONTROLLED TREE FELLER BUNCHER.

The John Deere 909 is operated from a nearby cabin with full duplicate controls and three video screens which select from four video cameras mounted in strategic points on the feller. They give a live feed-back to the operator, who doesn't need a line of sight to the machine.

The Future Forests Research Primary Growth Partnership Project for the Steepland Harvesting Programme began with feasibility studies in 2011 under Future Forest Research. Funding initially came from industry and the Primary

Growth Partnership fund and more recently was supported by the forest growers levy.

A driving force behind the project has been Ross Wood of Wood Contracting Nelson, who recognised that as timber terrain got steeper there was a need to develop remote-controlled technology to give workers a safer working platform. Such technology is used in the mining industry, but not yet in forestry.

Not only will the operator be safely removed from the perils of working on a

slope, but in future felling machines can be built without the need for a cab at all, which increases stability and reduces both fuel consumption and soil compaction.

Operator time is reduced as well. Ultimately the operator may be able to drive a feller from a completely distant location saving travelling time to the site.

One tweak the operators would like is a 'full sensation' feedback from the machine, so they can feel their way around a tree as well as being able to see it on their screens.



The John Deere operating on the slope with the operator 100 metres away



Ross Wood of Wood Contracting Nelson, a driving force behind the project since 2011



The operator controlling the John Deere guided by the remote camera video

supported by
forestgrowers
commodity levy

IN THE NEWS

CATTLE-STOP INSPIRATION FOR RIVER CROSSINGS

Some clever thinking about how to get logging trucks across Otago streams without dipping the wheels or going to great expense constructing a bridge or culvert, has brought local government recognition of a worthwhile and practicable device.

Axle count pass limitations under the Otago Water Plan, to reduce sediment discharge from trucks, have been threatening to restrict truck crossings on some sites to just once a day and so disrupt the harvesting operation.

To solve the problem, Ernslaw One's Greg Kendall and Paul Hart have developed a temporary device which is based on the farm cattle stop.

The wooden structure is supported by the stream-bed, lets the stream and fish-life freely flow or swim through it, and keeps the mud on the trucks and out of the water. The ideal construction material is untreated rough sawn Douglas-fir or Larch, braced by steel cross ties. It costs about \$5,000 to build and should last between five and ten years.

A steel tether rope prevents the structure heading off downstream if there's a flood, so even if it is dislodged it can easily be reinstalled.

Greg Kendall and Paul Hart recently won the Otago Regional Council Forestry Environmental Management Excellence Award for their invention.



Paul Hart and Greg Kendall, inventors at Ernslaw One. Photo ORC

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discharge reduction was to be achieved, one sector or another was going to be constrained. The collaborative group voted to consolidate the discharge status quo – grand-parenting by another name, despite strong objection from drystock.

Under the proposed rules all land owners in the catchments are restricted to their 2014 – 2016 nitrogen discharge levels, with only 25% of dairy farms having to reduce their nitrogen leaching rate over a ten-year period. Vegetable growers are likewise restrained to their current acreage but are not obligated to reduce their nitrogen leaching rates.

One of the new rules that took immediate effect prevents land being converted to a "more intensive use" without going through a consenting process. Intensification means converting 'woody vegetation' to

farming, and drystock or cropping land to dairy farming, but not intensifying on 75% of existing dairy farms.

Forestry, which contributes negligible nitrogen except immediately after harvest, is constrained from changing to any other land use and hence its land value is depressed. This sends a perverse signal to any land owners contemplating planting trees because to do so will decrease the asset value of the underlying land.

Farmers will have little incentive to reduce their leaching for at least 10 years, and perversely are likely to be motivated to keep their leaching rates up to their benchmark levels for fear of losing land use options by a similar bench-marking process in future.

The Waikato Regional Council notifies the plan change in October, followed by submissions and hearings in the usual way during February 2017.

NZIF AWARD TO SALLY STRANG



Sally Strang, Environment Manager for Hancock Forest Management (NZ) Ltd was awarded Forester of the Year at the NZ Institute of Forestry Conference in Dunedin in August. NZIF President, James Treadwell described the award as one of the highest accolades in the industry, recognising contribution, leadership, excellence and integrity.

"The awardee is an engineer, farmer, protector of the environment and our sector, and has spent almost a decade debating the merits of one environmental standard. Sally is very deserving of this recognition." As Environmental Manager for HFM, Sally Strang has been responsible for managing environmental compliance for approximately 250,000 ha of plantation forest, including legislative compliance, risk management, sustainability certification and external stakeholder relations.

She says it was a huge surprise and honour to win the award. "Over the years I have been fortunate to have been in a number of interesting and challenging projects which I hope will benefit the industry in the longer term, not least of the all the National Environmental Standard which has dragged on much longer than any of us could have anticipated at the outset. I am passionate about the importance of a healthy vibrant forest industry in the New Zealand landscape, which makes it easy to be in an advocacy role."

Sally Strang holds a B Civil Engineering and was previously employed by Carter Holt Harvey.