



## FORESTRY NEWSLETTER 2017

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2017 has been a period of renovation following several changes in the forestry department during 2016.

Harvest supervision has transitioned to a contract based model where specialist harvest managers and forest safety specialists are contracted to work directly with harvest crews to ensure harvest operations are best practice in all aspects of health, safety and environmental protection and economic efficiency.

Forest silviculture and asset development is managed by a technical forestry company with oversight and direction from the Craigpine forestry management team.

Following completion of harvest operations at Pinnacle Pine Craigpine took ownership of the last remaining block. This brought Craigpine forest ownership back up to over 2,000 hectares following the sale of Hillfort and Wether Hills forests in 2015.

### **Harvest Activity**

Late in the winter 27 hectares of 89-92 planting was harvested at Waitane as well as 5 hectares in the Rural Women's Castledowns forest. Yield at Waitane was high at 574 tonnes per hectare and 24 percent premium pruned grade. Both harvest areas were to be prepared and replanted in 2018.

### **Forest Asset Management**

Land preparation and replanting in both Pinnacle and Waitane was completed for the areas harvested in 2016 and early 2017, 130 hectares in total. Blanking on previous plantings was carried out at Castledowns and Pinnacle. 90 hectares at Pinnacle was form thinned and 80 hectares at Hokonui was to be final thinned late in the year. Pruning was carried out in all forests except Hokonui in line with the company's policy to maintain high value forests. Roding, fencing and track maintenance programs were maintained in all forests.

## **Pest Control**

TB Free NZ had access into Craigpine's Waitane forest approved for TB vector monitoring early in 2017 for bovine TB eradication work in the Hokonui TB management area. Pig recovery was carried out by helicopter and the survey results were to help determine whether the area would be declared TB free by 2018.

## **Rural Women**

The wetland area restoration project in the Rural Women's forestry scheme was being progressed with the track marked out and partially cleared. Removal of pest weeds had started, prioritised to target the area around the main pond. Signage showing location and public access to the wetland area off the Dipton to Mossburn Road was being put in place.

## **Log Markets**

Export and domestic log markets were both subject to pressure from steady and sustained demand, particularly from China and NZ domestic building activity. Prices for all grades had been strong for many months with small fluctuations due to exchange rate and shipping costs. Logging capacity was fully utilised in Southland and woodlot activity was high with owners looking to take advantage of the good prices.

## **Health and Safety**

Forestry work had been under intense scrutiny in recent years and Craigpine crews were being audited on a weekly basis to ensure standards were maintained. The Forest Industry Safety Council was working with the industry on a contractor certification program with more than 200 contractors registered by October. Ultimately domestic buyers and exporters could choose to purchase logs that come from certified contractors only to ensure logging is carried out under best practice safety standards.

## **Environmental**

There were two Forestry Stewardship Council audits of Craigpine forestry operation in 2017 – FSC Forestry Management in January and FSC Chain of Custody in August. In both cases certification was confirmed with a few minor corrective actions noted and completed. A five year reassessment was planned for FSC Forestry Management in November.

Environment Southland visited Waitane forest in August. Environmental good management practices were acknowledged and noted. The opportunity to create a sediment fence to reduce sediment loss off a track was highlighted for consideration. This was to be constructed during the next round of routine track maintenance.

The recently published National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry was due to take effect from 1 May 2018. Using established classifications for erosion susceptibility, wilding tree risk and fish spawning protection the NES was developed to provide a universal set of specific conditions to prevent significant adverse environmental effects arising from forestry activities. Forest owners and operators will be expected to incorporate the requirements of the NES into their operations planning.

## **Forestry Visit**

Craigpine planned to host a visit to one of its forests early in 2018. Date was to be finalised during January. Please advise Craigpine on 03 236 7533 if you wish to attend.

Simon Callaghan  
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