



FORESTRY NEWSLETTER 2018/19



The 2018/19 year was steady in Craigpine's forests. Planting, harvest and silviculture activities were carried out to plan and work continued on general maintenance of roads and weed control.

A high conservation value forests assessment was commissioned during the year and in its report Wildlands identified fifteen sites across four forests as meeting HCVF criteria for indigenous vegetation and aquatic values.

Management Objectives

The primary objective for Craigpine Forests is to produce high quality pruned radiata sawlogs. Detail on how this is achieved is published in the Forestry section of Craigpine's website, www.craigpine.co.nz. The Forestry section also includes detail of forest resources, preferred silviculture regime, harvest policy, forest monitoring, environmental safety and protection of rare, endangered and threatened species.

2018/19 Activity

27 hectares harvested | August 2017 was prepared and planting during the 2018 season. In the latter half of 2018 51 hectares of mature forest was harvested across six compartments, all within Craigpine's Waitane forest. Ground preparation was complete early in March 2019 for winter planting.

Maintenance activity in all forests was focused on road and track upkeep, weed control, fencing and security. There was thinning and pruning in most forests to ensure optimum growth targeting high value pruned stumpage at maturity.

5 hectares of new planting in Pinnacle was damaged by fire, which had crossed over from an adjoining property, all cleaned up and replanted near the end of 2018.

Rural Women

In 2018 Craigpine completed about 13 hectares of harvest work for Rural Women in the Castle Downs forest and early 2019 a small clean up of about 2 hectares of wind damage was carried out. Pruning and thinning programs continued as due.

The wetland area restoration project in the Rural Women's forestry scheme has continued. Access has improved with development off new, high ground tracks. Weed eradication and pest control programmes have shown effective to date and signage confirming QEII Open Space covenant status, location and public access to the wetland area off the Dipton to Mossburn Road has been put in place.

Log Markets

Export and domestic log markets were both subject to pressure from steady and sustained demand, particularly from China construction and manufacturing and NZ domestic building activity. Prices for all grades rose higher after steady growth in 2017/18 and by early 2019 export log prices at NZ wharf gate were at almost record levels. Logging capacity was fully utilised in Southland and woodlot activity remained high with owners looking to take advantage of the good prices.

Health and Safety

Forestry work has 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 Safetree contractor certification program has continued to attract registration and many successful inductions. Some log buyers have notified forest owners and service providers that in the near future logs will only be purchased from Safetree certified contractor operations. Craigpine is likely to take a similar position.

Environmental

There were two Forestry Stewardship Council audits of Craigpine forestry operation in 2018 – FSC five yearly Forestry Management assessment in September and FSC Chain of Custody in August. In both cases certification was confirmed with a few minor corrective actions noted and completed.

Following receipt of the Wildlands High Conservation Value Forest assessment Craigpine established a program to monitor and protect each of the fifteen sites identified. The most significant threats to be addressed are feral browsing, predation of fauna, damage from adjacent harvest activity and wilding pines. Targeted pest control has been put in place to prioritise feral browsing, incorporating monitoring fauna and wilding pine risk. Harvest planning and execution specifically includes assessment and management of risk to all adjacent land.

The National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry took 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. Craigpine has incorporated the requirements of the NES into its operations planning.

Forestry Visit

Craigpine planned to host a visit to one of its forests late in 2019. Date to be advised. Please contact Craigpine on 03 236 7533 if you wish to attend.