



Annual General Meeting 2013

Chairperson's Report

I would like to commence this report by acknowledging the contribution Bob Leonard gave to this organisation during its burgeoning first steps. Bob was our first treasurer and a staunch supporter of what we are wanting to achieve. He was instrumental in establishing our constitution and ably assisted us during our formative years which continued on until his health precluded his input into the management of WELRA. Rest in peace Bob.

This year's control programme has been a relatively 'quiet' one dictated to by the smaller amount of funds with which to undertake a more comprehensive control programme.

The control regime has been similar to previous years – ground contractors, aerial spraying and volunteer groups.

The Ecan-organised volunteer groups (outdoor clubs, 4WD enthusiasts) undertook control projects on some new areas and those that were regrowing from an earlier sweep through about three years ago. Other groups have been involved such as school groups, polytech students, varsity students, environmental groups, a commercial business (R & R Sport) and individual community members both local and from Christchurch.

DOC has been keeping abreast with the problem on the conservation estate by removing many of the problem seeding trees and the wilding outliers.

There are still many seed sources on private land that we need to discuss with the owners/occupiers. The reserves in the Castle Hill Village contain many seed-source trees – all of which are old wildings themselves. The SDC has accepted the problem and are working alongside the Village community to remove them. Private section owners with seed-source trees are being encouraged to remove them with the help of qualified tree fellers within the Village if required.

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Castle Hill station management have been very cooperative in assisting with the removal of the wildings on their property. A number of seed-source trees have been removed near the Village and more will be removed this season. We are still negotiating on the seed trees near the C/Hill carpark.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The current Executive comprises: - Ray Goldring (Chair), Maree Goldring (Secretary), Jocelyn Muller (Treasurer) Nick Ledgard, David Hewson, James Hoban, Marion Boyd, Jack van Berkel, Steve Palmer, James Kilgour, Chris Stewart, Lyndsey Husband, David Norton and Darrin Woods.

Executive meetings this year have been infrequent. Some have been carried out through the email system as a means of expediting a particular issue at short notice without the need to have a full face-to-face meeting.

FINANCES

The financial report will contain all the details regarding the income and expenditure for the 2012/ 2013 financial year.

WERC SUBCOMMITTEE

The Sub Committee named – Waimakariri Environment & Recreation Committee (WERC) was established early in the year. It is currently chaired by Peter Dawkings of St Andrews College with Dr Claire Newell as the deputy chair. The membership is diverse and has representatives from a variety of outdoor and community groups interested in the issues of the Upper Waimakariri basin.

Already they have started to tackle the wasp invasion problem in the Craigieburn Range – particularly in the Castle Hill region. They have been discussing other projects that apply to the region.

WELRA has a MOU with DOC which creates a formal relationship with the department.

They operate a separate account of the WELRA main bank account. Currently all outward transactions are authorised through the WELRA signatories.

SAMPLING/MONITORING

Nick and Duane have been establishing monitoring plots to survey the areas for re-infestation and native vegetation recovery beneath closed wilding canopies. These plots, once established, will be monitored on a scheduled, planned programme.

PAMPHLET

Maree has produced, in association with ECan staff, a great pamphlet that we can use to advocate within the community for what we are doing. She has also produced a power-point presentation which can be used for interested groups wanting more information on the wilding problem.

BROAD STREAM PROJECT

This project has been stabilised but will need continual monitoring for any reinvasion of wildings until all the seed-sources have been eliminated.

FUTURE STRATEGIES

Apart from the future direction of the control programme established in Darrin's report, there are other areas with trees that need consideration. Some of these are – but not limited to:

- Castle Hill Station's Whitewater Stream catchment/Deadman Spur area
- The eastern shingle fan of Lake Pearson
- Various shelter belts containing contorta – Cass river, Ribbonwood stream
- Some of the more outlying stations – Mt White, Craigieburn
- Establishing monitoring plots in the Broad Stream area.

The areas available for future volunteer groups need to be identified and left for those groups to control. Any new areas are becoming less available but re-infested areas will continue to exist until all the seed sources have been eliminated.

It is intended to run a field day for past funding contributors as a means of showing them where their funds have been spent and what the situation is in case they would like to contribute further.

APPRECIATION

For this year's financial contributions I would like to pass our appreciation on to all those who have contributed. Without their generous contributions, this wilding control project would not be as successful as it has been – if at all!

I would like to thank the Selwyn-Waihora Water Zone Committee for their contributions toward improving the water quality and sustainability in the Cave Stream catchment.

We continue to acknowledge the valuable contributions of those volunteers who have given their time and effort towards this important project. They work long hours in sometimes harsh conditions and achieve great outcomes.

I would like to thank Jack and Lyndsey for their contributions to WELRA. In particular Jack for establishing and operating the web site and maintaining contact with the University.

I would like to acknowledge the work Peter Dawkins and Claire Newell have contributed in continuing the viability of the WERC group.

I also acknowledge the efforts Darrin has contributed towards giving us a direction towards the optimum use of time and funds for the best outcome for the remaining trees.

I would also like to acknowledge the valuable contribution that ECAN staff, particularly Jocelyn Muller, James Hoban and Lyndsey Husband and David Hewson (before he resigned), have rendered towards the smooth-running of the many logistical and administrative tasks required to achieve effective outcomes for the Alliance. Jocelyn has been a key person this year keeping the process well-oiled and focussed. Without her very valuable input, the WELRA machine would struggle considerably.

Our thanks to James Kilgour and, in the background, Dean Turner of DOC and Steve Palmer from ECAN for their good work in supervising the contractors to achieve the optimum “value” for the available funds.

I wish to pass on our appreciation to DOC and Flock Hill Station for their contributions towards advancing the efforts for the eradication of the wildings.

It has been noted that our written submission, along with many others, to retain Chris at Arthurs Pass may have helped influence the decision to keep him there – we like to think so anyway!

Finally – I would like to give special thanks to the members of the Executive, in particular Maree as the secretary and Jocelyn as the treasurer, for their support and constructive input during the deliberations over the various issues we have been dealing with to achieve our aims and objectives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Goldring', written in a cursive style.

Ray Goldring NZSSM
CHAIRPERSON