

# WELRA AGM 18th September 2012

## ECan, Lincoln Offices

### Present

James Hoban, (ECan), David Hewson (ECan), Darren Woods (Consultant), David Brittain (Kiwicare), Chris Stewart (DOC), Dean Turner (DOC), James Kilgour (DOC), Jocelyn Muller (ECan), Ray Goldring (Chair), Duane Peltzer (Landcare), Steve Palmer (ECan), Nick Ledgard (Braid), Maree Goldring (Secretary)

### Apologies:

Kevin Dunn, Pete Wakefield, Dick Moore, Jack Van Berkel, Peter Dawking, Christine Fernyhough, Gerald Bruce-Smith, John Reid, Marion Boyd, Mark Fraundorfer.  
Apologies accepted. David H/Nick

### Minutes of Previous Meeting;

Moved as a correct record: Nick, Seconded Steve. Passed

### Matters Arising:

- Chainsaw ringbarking confirmed to be effective.
- Alpine Highway group about to become reformed to focus on Springfield.

### Action List from last AGM/Executive meeting.

Nick commented that we should think about replanting beech into areas where they will not regenerate.

***Motion: WELRA to order 200 eco sourced beech seedlings annually for planting in controlled areas.*** Moved Nick, seconded David H. Passed. Nick to action.

- Need to include SDC more closely in communications – i.e. send minutes.
- Flock Hill – tried to communicate but difficult to get response to issues.
- Suggest sending report to Zone committee re progress – Dean to make brief report, and send Ray's annual report. Send to Maree for forwarding.
- Ngai Tahu - David to follow up to get a letter of support.

### Finance:

No annual report – still with accountant. Will be circulated when available.

Current financial status; **\$20,515.44, plus \$10,633.84 GST returns.**

Query LINZ left-overs from Dean.

### Funding available:

New fund from MFE Community and Environment Fund - \$160,000 plus GST for this year, and \$80,000 and \$70,000 over next two years.

ECan's contribution will be \$65,000 exclusive GST, and potential for further contributions.

Auditors – current BDO. Continue to use them: Moved Maree/Seconded James Passed

Funding opportunities for the next two years: Jocelyn to look into future possibilities.

### Financial and Programme controls:

Last year rigorous controls, all invoices approved by Dean and Ray. Sent to David or James Hoban to sign off, and sent accordingly to contractor or funder.

James Kilgour to now take Dean's role.

## **Report:**

Chair: *Moved that it be accepted. Ray. Passed*

- Discussion: Flock Hill will be asked for a map of area they have done so far, if at all.
- David and Dean working on map of what has been done.
- Darrin has original shape files up to January this year – to fill gaps if necessary.
- Map to look at future volunteer work areas as well. Cheeseman Skifield road, Craigieburn Valley, potential areas of future volunteer attention.

Dean: (DOC) Various activity throughout 2011/12.

- Spent money from 8 different funding sources.
- Tried new methods, aerial spraying a 'dream' as opposed to ground work.
- Lots of organisations working together.
- Successful year, and hope to continue.
- New techniques were a revelation.
- 88 hectares of aerial. Majority will be basal bark in future as denser areas are aerial sprayed/completed.

Discussion: May be possibility of comparison of basal and cutting trials this year – it is faster but is it delivering as good results? Chemicals are not killing seeds in cones. DF is showing slower response to spray.

Steve (ECan): Flock Hill section – refer Deans report. Added \$3,250 for University work on Cass Hill. University put in \$14,000: this was a top-up.

Broad Stream: Southern Trust report sent in March; extremely difficult area to work and hard for maintenance control. Huge number of seedlings to be removed. Source was arboretum which is currently being felled. Spent just under \$20,000 ex GST. Spent LINZ and WWF funding. Small amount – about \$3,000 of LINZ.

David Brittan: (KiwiCare) Comes from a pest eradication background, bio security, now spraying. Spoke to Pete Raul. Outlined planned improvements in current spray available, and now are ready to trial in the field. To talk to Dean re setting up trials with contractors. Has talked to Ray re sites. Also looking at damp/wet applications. Suggest that small areas on the flats be reserved from Flock Hill action for trials.

Nick: Monitoring:

The purpose of monitoring is twofold:

- To assess the success of control operations (variations involved)
- To assess reinvasion/plant succession/native regrowth.
- Going to need data if we are going to be successful in future funding.
- Transects – metal stakes, every 50 metres, GPS, count 2 metres either side, species, age, size.
- Give data in future. Simple means of monitoring.
- Hopefully by this time next year will have some hard data.

Discussion: David – Flock Hill part of high country monitoring programme – part of network monitoring sites already. Suggested finding out what they are doing. Darren pointed out a culpability issue working under stands of dead trees melting. Nick to look into.

### Duane – Remeasurement to assess recolonising.

- Lead block of work around ecosystems, woody weeds. Conifers that could use a lot more research.
- Also looking into native diversity recolonising.
- What research do we have to help?
- How do we do monitoring in various places? What set of standards do we have?
- Who looks after the data etc. also part of study.
- Funding opportunities – can leverage some research funding.

Discussion: Chris - Landcare based at Craigieburn for some time – some data already. Need before management measurement and after. Better off doing fewer plots and doing over time than whole lot at once. Ideally before treatment, shortly after, and then over a period of time.

Nick pointed out Southland's existing SOPs re monitoring. Dean mentioned control plots in Hanmer.

Next month get method sorted, where is management going to be this season to get in before it starts – talk to Dean.

***Motion: That future monitoring is undertaken, with Nick liaising with Duane, working with DOC staff and others as appropriate. Moved Nick/Seconded Maree Passed.***

### **Election of Officers:**

Chair: Ray (Nick/Steve)

Secretary: Maree (Nick/Darren)

Treasurer: Jocelyn (James/Maree)

Executive: Nick Ledgard, David Hewson, Marion Boyd, Chris Stewart, Darrin Woods, Jack Van Berkel, James Hoban. Moved Ray. Passed.

### **General Business:**

Darrin/Dean/Steve to talk about plan for this summer, ready for first milestone at the end of this month, which has been extended. Overall map of Waimakariri basin important to visualise the programme for this year.

Grasshopper protection programme – small amount of money left over. Could use GST funds if more needed. James/Dean with Chris and Darren.

### WELRA/DOC Recreation and Environment Advisory Committee:

This is in the process of being formed to look at recreational and environmental opportunities in the basin. An MOU already been signed between DOC and WELRA. Group to be formed in near future. Potential unknown. Liaison between this group and other groups with potential to work with WELRA, ECan and other groups working in the basin. Formation of committee is happening. DOC's mandate is to engage with the community for future purposes.

Nick commented that our name is very useful for such purposes.

AGM closed 12.15 p.m.

## **ACTION LIST**

**NICK** – to order 200 local-sourced beech seedlings for future plantings

**JOCELYN** – to look into and organise future funding for the continued wilding control

**DEAN** – to send a copy of his report to Maree for forwarding onto the Zone committee

**DAVID** – to send a letter to Ngai Tahu to get their support for the wilding project

**NICK** – to work with Duane to undertake the monitoring project

**RAY** – to undertake to progress the new sub committee

**DARRIN** – to work with David to produce a map of all the wilding locations in the basin



## Annual General Meeting 2012

### Chairperson's Report

This year has been one of the most successful due to the extent of the funding available for the wilding control. We managed to spend over \$300,000 for the Flock Hill areas and over \$30,000 for the Broad Stream rare grasshopper ecosystem protection. The work on the highest priority areas continued with some further significant seed takeoff sites completed.

This year we were able, with the permission of Flock Hill (and the University of Canterbury) to log some of the merchantable trees adjacent to the State Highway. As a result, some of the profit was donated to WELRA for use on further wilding control areas on the property.

The control work was undertaken with ground contractors and helicopter spraying contractors. The logging was undertaken by a commercial logging company.

In conjunction with this commercial control effort there has been the excellent work done by the various volunteer groups to clear the outlying and lightly infested areas of wildings.

Along with the field operations there has been an underlying administrative cadre that have continually kept the wheels turning - paying accounts, keeping records, organising volunteer groups, developing further funding submissions and monitoring overall progress.

Dean Turner from DOC has produced a very comprehensive report of this year's control operations. Some of the following information has been extracted from his report. His full report will be on the WELRA website.



## CONTROL METHODS

A combination of chainsaw, basal bark spraying, hand tool and hand pulling techniques were used to control trees on Flock Hill Station. A helicopter was used to access remote parts of the blocks high up the slope, and to position bulk supplies of fuel and equipment.

Basal bark spraying is the application of chemical directly onto the trunk of the tree. The chemical penetrates the bark with the assistance of an oil based carrying agent. This technique is very quick in the right situation and has recently been developed. It is suitable for trees up to 15 centimetres in diameter and can be used year round as long as the tree is dry.

## FUNDING

There were several sources of funding utilised this year.

Lottery Environment & Heritage Fund -	\$233,000
Solid Energy	\$5,000
Ecan (including \$40,000 for Cave Stream project)	\$105,000
Pacific Development & Conservation Trust	\$20,000
Canterbury Community Trust	\$18,000
Southern Trust	\$20,000
LINZ	\$15,700
Malvern Community Board	SDC Resource consent cost

The Department of Conservation provided a staff member for the management of operations this season.

## SUMMARY OF WORK DONE

### *Flock Hill*

Good progress was made this year on controlling wilding pines on Flock Hill station. Seeding trees have been controlled at critical take-off sites, thereby protecting areas downwind of the controlled area.

Progress was made on spraying some of the dense stand with the helicopter boom spraying technique.

The overall outcomes on Flock Hill for this year were:

Area covered	529 hectares
Money spent	\$366,711
Cost per hectare	<b><u>\$693.00</u></b>

The advent and use of GPSs has meant we have been able to more accurately determine the areas covered and any areas that have been missed. The GPS tracks are loaded down onto a map to show where contractors and the helicopters have covered.

### ***Broad Stream***

Much of the work on the Broad Stream grasshopper ecosystem protection area has been completed. Both ground cutting and helicopter boom spraying were carried out on the wilding Douglas firs adjacent to this site.

We are hoping in the coming year to start felling the seed-source trees within the public estate.

### ***Cave Stream***

This was a special project to protect the upper catchment areas of Cave Stream. The banks of this Stream have been cleared of wildings. Funding for this came from a special Ecan grant.

### ***Logging***

Permission was sought from DOC, Flock Hill and the University of Canterbury to fell the merchantable trees adjacent to SH73. We were successful in being granted resource consent by the Selwyn District Council, the cost of which was funded by the Malvern Community Board. There were certain conditions related to the Consent which included working through the ETS minefield as well.

This operation was undertaken by a commercial logging company. About \$20,000 of the profits from the logs have been donated to WELRA for further wilding control work.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteer groups such as tramping club members, conservation volunteers, Ecoquest, community groups, school groups, 4wd clubs and individuals continue to make inroads into the outlying lighter density areas of the infected area.

Non-powered hand tools such as loppers, jacksaws, pruning saws and axes are the weapons of choice for these groups. Some have used chainsaws as well.

## **FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

Funding for the new season is actively being sought. One large contribution has been allocated from the Ministry of Environment's Community Environment Fund. This will give us over \$90,000 per year for the next three years.

Solid Energy will also be donating a further \$5,000 this year as well as doing their staff volunteer day(s).

Ecan and DOC will also be contributing as their budgets allow.

## **EXECUTIVE MEETINGS**

The current Executive comprises: - Maree Goldring (Secretary), Nick Ledgard, David Hewson, James Hoban (Treasurer), Pete Wakefield, Ray Goldring (Chair), Marion Boyd, Jack van Berkel and Darrin Woods. A permanent invitation to attend meetings has been extended to DOC and Ecan staff and Chris Stewart and Steve Palmer have taken the opportunity to attend.

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.

## **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!

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 also like to acknowledge the valuable contribution that ECAN staff, particularly David Hewson, James Hoban and Donna Woodley, have rendered towards the smooth-running of the many logistical and administrative tasks required to achieve effective outcomes for the Alliance. We welcome the addition of Jocelyn Muller from Ecan to the project – she has already made some great contributions and we look forward to working with her this coming year.

Our thanks to 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.

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



Ray Goldring NZSSM  
CHAIRPERSON