

Hancock Forest Views



Issue I

January 2008

Welcome to Hancock Forest Views

Welcome to the first edition of Hancock Forest Views, a newsletter put together by Hancock Forest Management (NZ) Ltd (HFM) to help keep our communities, neighbours and other stakeholders informed of what is happening in our forests. If you know others who would be interested in a copy please contact your nearest Hancock Forest Management office. Contact details are included on the back of this newsletter.

About Hancock Forest Management

Hancock Forest Management (HFM) first started operating in New Zealand in 2004 when its parent company Hancock Timber Resource Group (HTRG) purchased the Tiaki forests in the Central North Island.

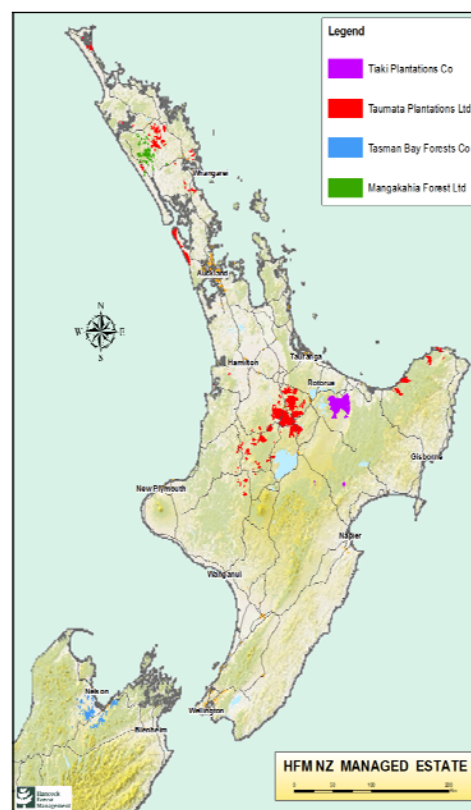
The number of people initially employed by the company was relatively small but that all changed in December 2006 when HNRG acquired the majority of Carter Holt Harvey's forests.

HFM now employs 100 staff based in its head office in Tauranga and in field offices in Whangarei, Rotorua, Tokoroa and Nelson. In addition, the company has a significant number of contractors engaged in its timberland operations which cover some 298,000 hectares of forest in Northland, Central North Island, Bay of Plenty and Nelson on behalf of Taumata Plantations Ltd, Tiaki Plantations Company and Tasman Bay Forests Company.

The local team is committed to providing the very best in forest stewardship while recognising and supporting the role that the forests play within the local community from a work, recreation and conservation perspective.

This philosophy is shared by HFM's parent company Hancock Timber Resource Group which is the world's most experienced timberland investment manager, with 1.5 million hectares of timberland and timber rights under its management in the USA, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand. The company manages timberlands and in many cases timber cutting rights on behalf of its clients, primarily institutional investors.

The combination of leading forest management techniques with outstanding environmental stewardship is a hallmark of HFM and HTRG and to this end we are proud to report on its Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification on page two of this newsletter.



Not only do we manage the core forestry and harvesting activities, but we also manage the multitude of other activities that take place in and around our forests and several of these are reported in this inaugural newsletter.

Recreational Use Of Our Forests

HFM is very aware of the importance of our forests as a recreational resource to the communities in which they are located. We encourage the legitimate recreational use of forests where this can be carried out safely and compatibly with our core operations. HFM operates a permit access system to ensure recreational use is managed to keep both visitors and our contractors safe in the forest. In 2007 HFM has so far issued more than 12,000 permits across our forests to undertake activities including walking, mountain biking, motorcycling, horse riding, hunting. Some of these permits represent large groups, so our forests are literally being used by tens of thousands of people every year. If you want to know more about recreational access we suggest you contact our nearest field office.



FSC Certification

HFM recently received confirmation that our existing Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certificate has been extended to incorporate the remainder of our forests in New Zealand.

FSC certification is a means by which consumers, investors and stakeholders can be confident that forests are being responsibly and sustainably managed. Certification gives consumers the option of “voting with their dollars,” by choosing wood and wood products that come from certified sustainably managed forests.

HFM has held FSC certification for its New Zealand forests since 2004, however the December 2006 purchase of Carter Holt Harvey's forests required the certificate to be 'extended' over the new forests under management. This has taken part through a comprehensive two stage

audit process. As a result of our most recent audit completed in November, all of HFM forests are now FSC certified, with the exception of forestry rights on Carter Holt Harvey land in the Central North Island that are planned for conversion to other uses.

The Forest Stewardship Council is an international non-profit organisation founded to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. Certification to FSC confirms that forest owners comply with FSC's comprehensive 'Principles and Criteria' which cover a range of areas from compliance with the law, environmental impacts, indigenous peoples rights, community impacts and worker rights.

More information about FSC can be found at www.fsc.org.



Mammoth Adventure Race - Hira Forest

Sunday 25th November saw seventy riders from throughout New Zealand and overseas take part in the 16th annual Nelson Mountain Bike Club's grueling 50km Mammoth mountain bike adventure race.

The race was held throughout the HFM managed Hira and Fringed Hill Forests, utilising many forest tracks and purpose built mountain bike tracks, which range in difficulty from, challenging to, “how the hell is that even possible on two wheels”. Conditions for this year's race were testing for the competitors, to say the least, with temperatures hitting 30°C, coupled with a brisk westerly wind and humidity in the low 30s.

Nelson's own Chris Burr, led the race from start to finish, finishing in 2hrs 53min, the only competitor to finish under 3 hours.



The Mammoth is just one of the many national and local club events held in the Hira and Fringed Hill forests each year. The Nelson Mountain Bike Club have created some top class trails throughout the forest, with trails available for the novice rider through to those with no fear, who seek the adrenaline rush of a competition grade downhill run.

The NMTBC currently has over 300 paid up members, all of whom are permitted, and regularly use, the Hira forest during the weekends and during the summer evenings. HFM fully support the club's activities and appreciate the hard work and dedication its members have put into creating such an awesome recreational feature on Nelson's back door.



Possum Control in Plantation Forests

HFM is about to embark on trialling a new method of possum control. One of the challenges we face as forest managers is managing the multiple and sometimes conflicting uses of our land. Possum control is one such example. With 300,000 ha of forest, control of possums is a major problem. Possums can cause huge value loss in the crop trees and significant biodiversity damage in the indigenous flora. In New Zealand 1080 remains the most cost effective means of controlling possums over large areas, but its use has always been contentious.

HFM's view is that 1080 remains one (arguably essential) tool in the war against possums, however equally we are keen to explore alternatives. To date this has involved the use of managed private possum trappers to control possums in more accessible areas, however unfortunately this has not provided a complete solution.

We have recently identified an opportunity to use a new product 'No Possums' Cholecalciferol gel bait. Based on information provided by suppliers, it is a relatively selective long life bait favoured by possums,

that presents low risks of primary poisoning to many non-target species and very low secondary poisoning risks, especially to dogs, cats and predatory birds. It is not water soluble and does not seep through soil and therefore presents a low risk to the environment.

HFM are soon to commence a trial in Kinleith Forest. Many field trials have been carried out using "No Possums" products throughout New Zealand, however the habitat was native bush, podocarp forest or bush-pasture margins (Kiwicare 2007). As such it is important that we measure the effectiveness of the product in a specific plantation habitat situation.

This new product is more expensive and labour intensive to use than 1080. Rather than becoming a replacement it may help to significantly reduce the reliance on 1080 by controlling re-infestation into blocks due to its longevity. It remains palatable and toxic to possums under high rainfall conditions for at least 26 months.

The trial in Kinleith Forest, covers two planting blocks and is planned to run for 18 months with possum densities being measured every 6 months.



The aim is to monitor the rate of infestation and the longevity and efficacy of the 'No Possums' Cholecalciferol gel bait.

Updates on trial results will be provided in future newsletters. If you are interested, more information can be obtained from the website www.kiwicare.co.nz.

Northland Kiwi Protection Project

HFM manages approximately 1,000 ha of reserve areas in our Opouteke and Pipiwai forests located in Northland. With help from the Department of Conservation predator control has been established throughout these two forests, targeting primarily mustelids (ferrets, stoats and weasels) which are one of kiwi's main predators.

Along with the predator control work, kiwi awareness education is carried out in the communities around the reserves. Dogs are also a major predator of the kiwi and Hancock's require any dogs entering our forests in Northland to have undergone 'kiwi aversion' training to reduce the chances of dog attacks. Under guidance of Department of Conservation kiwi monitoring is carried out annually in the form of call count listening to monitor the impact of the project.



The project is aimed at helping the chances of kiwi survival in Northland and has also raised the profile of kiwi management among Hancock's staff and the communities surrounding the kiwi reserves.



Tarawera River Fishing Access Project

A project by HFM to open up access alongside the Tarawera River has significantly improved access for anglers along approximately 8km of the river. The project was initiated after discussions between Hancock staff and the local Fish and Game representatives in 2006 and involved vegetation trimming, road upgrading and control of weed species to improve vehicle and foot access the river. Access to the fishing area is open to the public, and managed via permits obtained from the Kawerau Information Centre.



Woodhill Forest – The Kawasaki Sandpit 2007 Limited

Woodhill Forest has long been used by Aucklanders as a centre for outdoor activities. In November a new facility was added to the attractions with the official opening of 'The Kawasaki Sandpit 2007 Limited's Off Road Motorcycle Playground'.

The motor cycle park lease was recently taken over by Tony Beuth and Stephen Johnson (pictured below). Over the last couple of months and with the support of many willing and dedicated volunteer motorcycle enthusiasts, Tony and Stephen have created over 200km of tracks that have been groomed to perfection creating an environment which encourages riders of all abilities. A specialized area has been set aside for motocross riders as well. The feedback received by HFM staff on the new facilities has been extremely positive with a significant increase of rider numbers recorded.



NZ Environmental Code of Practice for Plantation Forestry

The NZ Forest Owners Association recently launched the *NZ Environmental Code of Practice for Plantation Forestry*. The Code of Practice is intended as a guide to best environmental practice for plantation forest management in NZ, and replaces the New Zealand Forestry Code of Practice (known as the LIRO Code) that was first published in 1990. The new code up-dates information from the old Code, but has also been expanded to include comprehensive 'Best Environmental Practices' for all types of forestry operations. The Code also provides comprehensive information on a range of topics such as environmental values in the forest, guides to planning forest operations and a summary of applicable legislative requirements. The Code of Practice is a very useful resource for a range of parties involved in managing forests including our staff and contractors, and regional and district council staff involved in developing policy or managing forestry opera-

We're on the web!
www.hnrg.com

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