

Native Vegetation Reserve Inspection Report

Client: Wenita Forest Products
Liaison Officer: James McEwan
Date: 3/7/2017
Site: Popham's Block
Compartments: R134
Size: Unknown
Criteria: 3.5 Moderate to Very Good

Comments:

Sitting on the eastern side below the summit of the Ferry Hill the Popham Block takes in several minor creeks that run to a wider stream that flows northwards into the Taieri River. The site is dominated by older Kanuka with a central lowland forest area running along the eastern boundary northwards. On the fenced eastern boundary a creek/wetland assemblage sites below the bush edge.

The Kanuka shows good growth and a strong understorey with only peripheral woody weed species growing along the cleared forestry boundaries.

The central lowland forest area is of some interest as it includes several large Totara and Matai as well as some strong sun canopy species and this area is well intact. Noted on the site was some storm or lightning damage to one of the older Totara on the eastern edge.

Several Kereru were noted in the area.

Weed Species:

Mature and new gorse was noted on the periphery of the site along with some Himalayan Honeysuckle. Mature Hawthorns were found on the bush edge on the eastern boundary.

Conclusions:

This is a very distinct site in the wider production forest landscape and provides a natural biodiversity link between the adjacent Taieri River, wetlands and agricultural pasture. It also acts as a catchment site running water from within itself out to the stream that feeds wetland on the Taieri Ferry Road and the Taieri River. With that said, care to protect the wetland valleys at the head of the catchment are important for the environment, water quality, water plan compliance and for Wenita in its ongoing forestry business.

Recommendations:

1. Ensuring edge damage of pinus felling is limited to ensure the integrity of the forest fringes.

2. Protecting the bush fringes from invasive weed species once felling is completed and re-sowing is undertaken as part of that activity.
3. Issuing regular hunting permits to keep browsing animal numbers down.
4. Keeping the fence on the eastern boundary maintained and clear of forestry slash.



Figure 1 the eastern boundary showing the creek catchment and podocarp forest edge. A small portion of the Kanuka dominated fringe and core is visible on the right of the picture.



Figure 2 the eastern boundary includes an intact creek/wetland plant assemblage that is important to the wider connection to the Taieri.

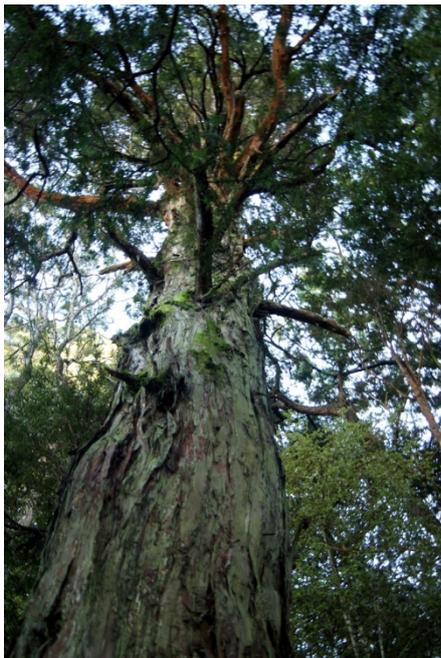


Figure 3 an example of the significant Totara and strong sub-canopy in the Pophams site.