

Environmental Update

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Historic Sites:

An archaeological assessment of Wenita's Maungatua Forest has been undertaken by independent contractors. Two major water races and several smaller ones were identified, along with two dams, two reservoirs and an earth-walled hut. Maungatua Forest contains a network of historic races and dams that were designed to bring water into the gold workings adjacent to and in the general vicinity of Post Office Creek. Management plans have been written for harvest and forestry contractors working in these areas.



Forest Public Use:

Permitted public use of Wenita forests has been high with 1,894 permits being issued in the year June 2007 – June 2008. Motor-biking and hunting continue to be the most popular recreational activities. Wenita thanks forest users for taking the time to obtain a permit and use the forest safely. We hope to make permits easier to obtain for walkers and mountain bikers in the near future - we'll keep you posted.

Monitoring:

1. Biodiversity Monitoring

Vegetation species surveys continue within Wenita's estate. To date 1418 hectares have been surveyed by the University of Otago and a total of 175 hectares remain to be surveyed. Following the initial species surveys and subsequent ecological ranking Wenita then undertakes monitoring on a 5-yearly basis.

Monitoring aside, Wenita is aware that there are stakeholders who would like to be involved with the management of significant reserves (e.g. Halfway Bush). Please contact us via email or call during office hours if you would like to be consulted on reserve monitoring and management.



2. Waterways Monitoring

Wenita undertakes SHMAK (Stream Health Monitoring Assessment Kit) monitoring in the six major forest catchment streams within the Wenita estate.

Historically this has been undertaken annually, but as part of our environmental certification (FSC) review, our auditor asked us to reconsider

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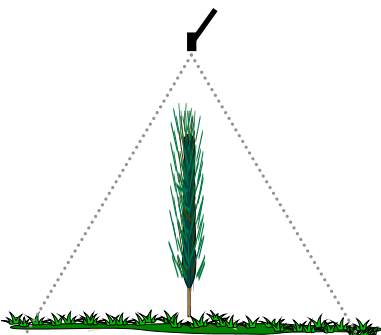
the frequency of this monitoring programme. Accordingly, we have decided to undertake this monitoring on a 6-monthly basis to increase our understanding of long-term operational effects.



3. Chemical Usage

The amount and toxicity of chemical used in 2007 is in accordance with Wenita's commitment to FSC principles and chemical reduction.

Recently, Wenita was required to apply to FSC for permission to continue to use post-planting herbicides such as hexazinone and terbuthylazine. These chemicals are generally applied using back-packs with spray guns. The herbicide controls weed growth in a 1.5 metre diameter spot around the tree. This is called 'releasing' the tree.



Wenita is keen to hear your comments about the use of such chemicals. Please contact us via email or call during office hours (details on the first page, bottom left).

Environmental Incidents:

There have been two environmental incidents since the last issue of this newsletter. The first incident involved logging slash and debris being pushed into an ephemeral waterway and the second was an unauthorised track through a non-production area. Both these incidents were disappointing, but well investigated, resulting in changes to standard operating procedures within our Environmental Management System (EMS).

Endangered Fish:

We have three fish species known in our forest that are ranked by DOC as either nationally vulnerable or in general decline. These fish are called galaxiids, and what makes them so special is that they don't live with any other fish. Therefore they can only exist in streams where there are physical barriers (waterfalls) which prevent other fish from getting there.

Known populations within Wenita's boundaries are generally confined to Maungatua (Crystals Creek, Munro's Dam, Post Office Creek), Berwick (Meggat Burn, East and West Branches of the Tokomairiro River) and Akatore (Akatore and Narrowdale Creeks). Wenita has developed a management plan for all contractors when working around galaxiid species as these fish are vulnerable to harvesting. Planting set-backs will also apply.



Mt Allan Harvest:

Good progress continues to be made with preparations for the harvest of Mt Allan Forest. Construction of the main logging access route through the forest, together with the development of the super-skid is now largely completed. Considerable consultation has been undertaken with affected stakeholders and interested parties throughout this process.

Harvesting operations are expected to begin in earnest early in the New Year.

In the interests of public safety, given the health and safety issues associated with large-scale harvesting operations, the Dunedin City Council has designated Mt Allan Road a restricted construction zone for the duration of the harvest. Arrangements have been made with affected landowners to ensure their continued access.

Further information about the Mt Allan Harvest can be found at the Wenita website under the "Management Plan" link.

