



District Councils

In February, the Project Kahikatea team will also be meeting with District Councils to find out what support District Councils can provide to landowners with kahikatea stands. Some District Councils already provide support, either through advice and information or financial assistance with fencing and planting, but others may need encouragement. If you would like to be contacted about the outcome of this meeting, please let Jan Hoverd know. Phone 0800 BIO DIV (0800 246 348).

Biodiversity Condition Fund

The Biodiversity Condition and Advice fund is a government initiative to enhance management of indigenous biodiversity outside public conservation lands (i.e. only private land - including Maori land - is funded). This includes areas of native vegetation, wetlands, and the habitats of native fish, birds and other species. Applications are invited twice a year from private landowners and community groups

for projects on private land aimed at improving or maintaining the condition of indigenous vegetation, species and habitats.

The Biodiversity Condition Fund aims to improve and maintain the condition of areas of indigenous vegetation, species and habitats. The Fund seeks to broaden community effort in the management of indigenous biodiversity, and to complement contributions for its enhancement. It will fund projects that enhance biodiversity on private land, and particularly on areas under legal protection. Projects could involve, for example, fencing or pest control.

The next funding round will be in March 2008 and the aim of Project Kahikatea is to submit an application to this Fund on the behalf of landowners. If you would like to be involved, or require further information, please phone Jan Hoverd on 0800 BIO DIV (0800 246 348).

Native Plant Nurseries

If you are thinking of planting kahikatea and other native species associated with kahikatea stands, it is always good practice to give nurseries ample time to grow eco-sourced plants for you. Below are some to consider. There are other native plant nurseries around, so talk to others and see who they recommend.

Forest Floor Native Tree Nursery (Northland) proposes that the answer to all the world's problems

is to grow more trees. It's not quite that simple, because we have to grow several billion trees to really make any difference to the way that our culture consumes carbon from forests past. At least one tree each, in other words.

Visit www.forestfloor.co.nz

Forest Flora (Ngaruawahia) is a specialist in ecological restoration. At Forest Flora we have a love of the natural world and a passion to protect and restore it. We have an enthusiasm for the plants of the Waikato and are eager to share our knowledge and enthusiasm.

Visit www.forestflora.co.nz

Pokaiwhenua Tree Farm (Putaruru) grows locally sourced native plants for farms. Phone 07 883 5763 or email jenandles@xtra.co.nz

Taupo Native Plant Nursery (Taupo) has been in existence for over 40 years now. It was part of the Department of Conservation, which was then required to grow and supply native plants for the restoration of scenic reserves, forest and national parks. Visit www.tauponativeplant.co.nz

The other alternative is to grow your own plants, as kahikatea frequently produce copious quantities of seed in March. These can be picked up from the ground, swept or vacuumed up.

The seed should be sown fresh. It germinates in 2 - 4 months depending on protection from winter cold. The seedlings will take several years before they are large enough to be planted out.



Project Kahikatea

Issue Three, December 2007/January 2008

Introduction

This is the third and last newsletter from the Project Kahikatea team under the current funding package from the Biodiversity Condition and Advice Fund. The information gathered is substantial, and the support and interest from the participant landowners was tremendous. The clear message we gained was that kahikatea remnants are very highly valued, but many landowners lack the information or impetus to move towards protecting and enhancing the stands they have.

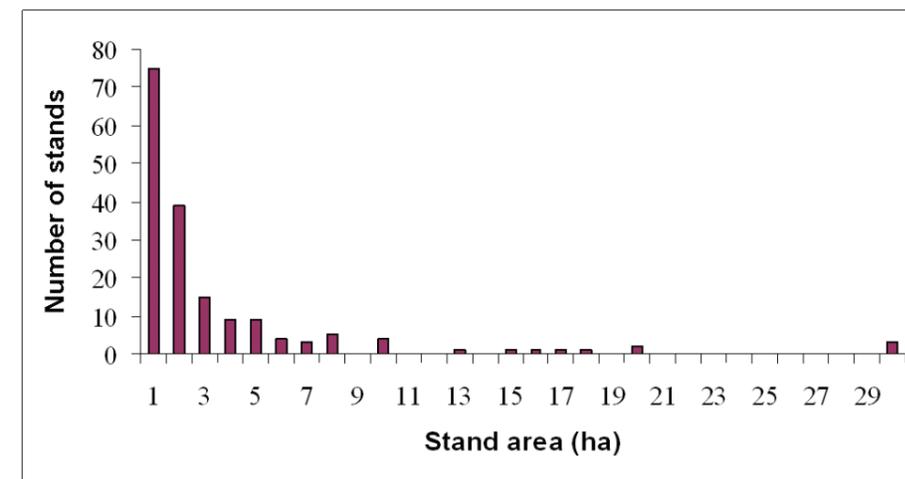
Within the Waikato the lowland kahikatea stands are the most at risk ecosystem, and the most poorly represented in terms of what once was the dominant vegetation type in the lowland Waikato.

It is intended that this Farm Forestry initiative will be followed up with a plan and process for action to better protect and enlarge the resource for both landowners and local communities. Read on for the results of the survey and ideas for future action.

Results of survey

Since late 2006, Project Kahikatea has been surveying landowners across the Waikato from Thames to Te Kuiti to find out views of the landowners and the current condition of the stands. We surveyed 171 properties. Below are some database characteristics and analyses:

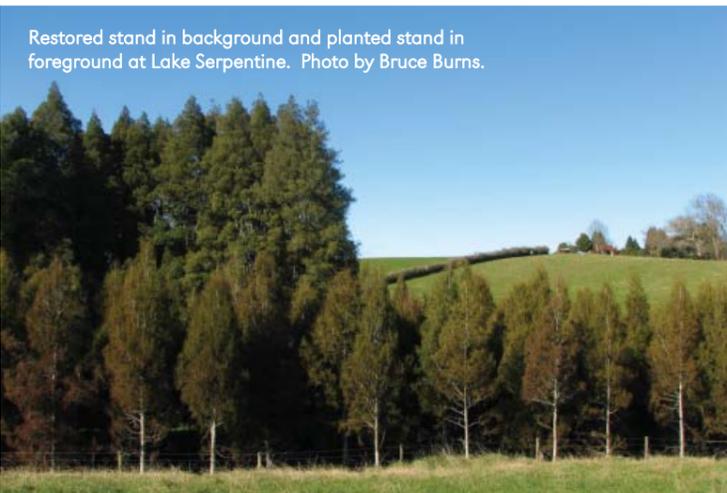
1. Total stand area: 574 ha
2. Mean stand area: 3.4 ha
3. Range of areas: 0.1 - 30 ha
4. Distribution of stand areas:



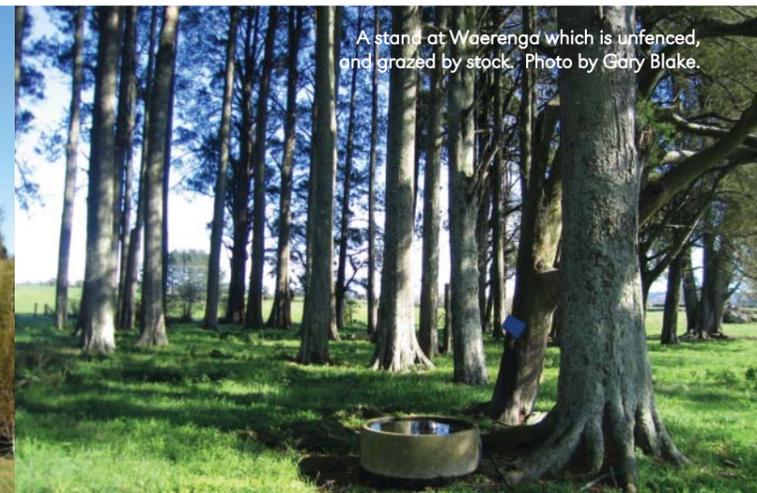
43% 1 ha or less
 66% 2 ha or less
 85% 5 ha or less

For more information and advice on kahikatea, call 0800 BIODIV (246 348)

Project Kahikatea is supported by the Biodiversity Advice Fund, Waikato Branch of the Farm Forestry Association, Environment Waikato, Biodiversity Advice Waikato, QEII National Trust, Landcare Research, Federated Farmers, Department of Conservation, Hauraki District Council, Fonterra and Waikato Biodiversity Forum. For more information, or to become involved in the Project, please contact Nardene Berry (07 825 9112 or email nardene@tepahu.co.nz) or Gary Blake (07 868 2336 or email gary.blake@clear.net.nz).



Restored stand in background and planted stand in foreground at Lake Serpentine. Photo by Bruce Burns.



A stand at Waerenga which is unfenced, and grazed by stock. Photo by Gary Blake.



Tradescantia fluminensis preventing any regeneration in a stand. Photo by Bruce Burns.

5. Fencing

Fencing condition	No. of stands	Area
Unfenced	59 (35%)	165ha (29%)
Partially fenced	29 (17%)	116ha (20%)
Fenced	82 (48%)	294ha (51%)

6. Forest condition

(a) Forest structure: cover in canopy, understorey, and groundcover tiers

Tier cover class	Canopy (% of stands)	Understorey (% of stands)	Groundcover (% of stands)
76 - 100%	50	11	67
51 - 75%	38	8	12
26 - 50%	8	16	6
0 - 25%	4	65	15

(b) Canopy health

Health status	% of stands
Excellent (scored as 76 - 100%)	55
Good (scored as 51 - 75%)	35
Moderate (scored as 26 - 50%)	8
Poor (scored as 0 - 25%)	2

(c) Stand edge cover

Stand edge density	% of stands
68 - 100%	20
34 - 67%	18
0 - 33%	62

7. Weeds

Most commonly reported weeds in stands:

Weed	Number of stands
Jerusalem cherry (<i>Solanum pseudocapsicum</i>)	54
Privet (<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i> and/or <i>sinense</i>)	48
Barberry (<i>Berberis glaucocarpa</i>)	34
Inkweed (<i>Phytolacca octandra</i>)	31
Buttercup (mostly <i>Ranunculus repens</i>)	21
Wandering jew (<i>Tradescantia fluminensis</i>)	20
Willow weed (<i>Persicaria persicaria</i>)	13
Arum lily (<i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i>)	11

8. Landowner perceptions

Landowners who view their stands as an asset: 92%

The main reasons for valuing stands are:

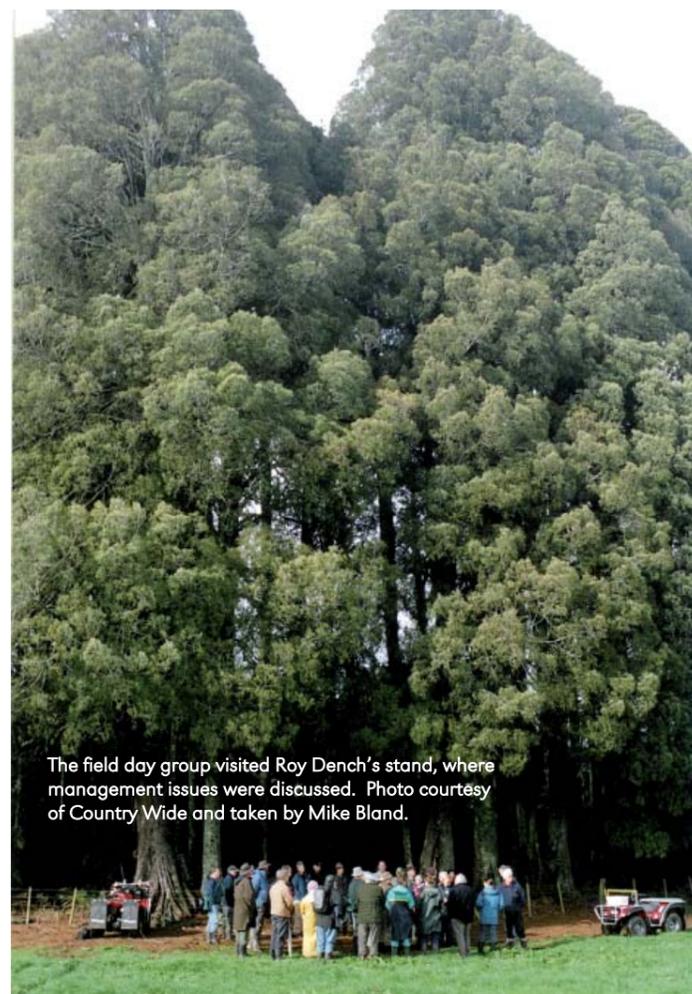
- Aesthetic value of stand 85%
- Attracts native birds 63%
- Helps stock management 62%
- Heritage value of stand 54%
- Helps water and soil protection 35%
- Recreation 2%
- Community benefit 1%
- Environmental protection and well being >1% each

9. Current Management

Information recorded for 160 of the surveyed stands includes:

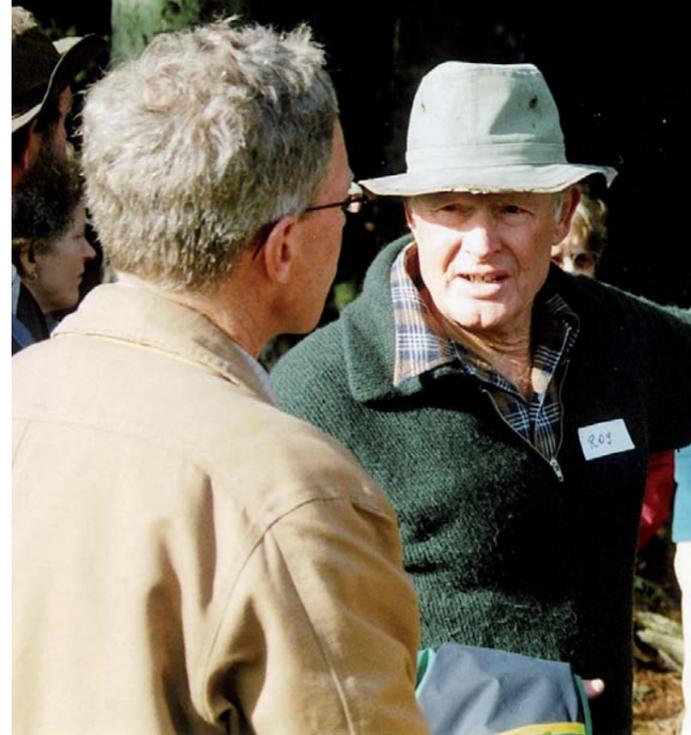
- Fenced off from stock 51%
- Weed control 49%
- Stock have access for shade 40%
- Animal pest control 30%
- Supplementary plantings 25%
- Covenanted 18%
- Use trees (timber/firewood) 7%

Interestingly, 14 of the stands were fenced off from stock, but stock were allowed access to gain shade and/or for weed control. One stand is used as children's playground and one used for waste disposal.



The field day group visited Roy Dench's stand, where management issues were discussed. Photo courtesy of Country Wide and taken by Mike Bland.

Roy Dench discussing his stand at the field day in June this year. Photo courtesy of Country Wide and taken by Mike Bland.



10. Barriers to better management

A combination of the following lack of:

- finances
- time
- information and advice

were the main barriers to better management of stands.

With regards to information and advice, Project Kahikatea team members were able to start overcoming these two specific barriers to survey participants by providing excellent information about kahikatea stands from Environment Waikato and advice through the Waikato Biodiversity Advice free phone and visit service, 0800 BIODIV (0800 246 348).

In one or two isolated cases, the barriers identified were the landowner's attitudes, including not considering the stands important, or not having the personal energy required for better management.

11. Aspirations for future management

These varied greatly and ranged from wanting to fence, covenant and plant, to sustainably harvest trees for timber, both on a small farm scale, to a large catchment wide scale.

One landowner was planning on putting a walkway through their stand, and another was married amongst their kahikatea, so were very keen to enhance their stand.

Afforestation Grant Scheme

The Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS) is a new government policy initiative that was first flagged in the *Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change: Options for a Plan of Action* discussion document released in December 2006.

Under the AGS, landowners can receive a government grant for the planting of new forests on Kyoto-compliant land (unforested as at 31 December 1989). Grant recipients would own the new forests and earn income from the timber, while the Crown would retain the carbon sink credits and take responsibility for meeting all harvesting and deforestation liabilities.

The AGS aims to encourage greater levels of greenhouse gas absorption by increasing the area of Kyoto-compliant new forest in New Zealand.

Another objective of the AGS is to establish this new Kyoto-compliant forest in areas where it will help reduce the likely impacts of climate change and generate other environmental benefits, for example, where it will reduce erosion and flood peaks.

For more information contact:

Afforestation Grant Scheme
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
PO Box 2526, Wellington
Phone: 0800 CLIMATE (254 628)
Email: climatechange@maf.govt.nz
Web: www.maf.govt.nz/climatechange

Are you interested in an AGS Tender?

The Waikato Branch of the NZ Farm Forestry Association is seeking expressions of interest from landowners wishing to participate in a cooperative bid to the AGS. This is likely to be in March 2008, but is yet to be finalised.

The tender bid will be structured to include tree stock cost, site preparation, planting and releasing costs. It is an ideal scheme to promote supplementary or expansion planting of lowland forests so fits really neatly into the Project Kahikatea concept.

We believe as a starting point we need to get a total area of about 200 ha. So if you have 1 ha or more that you would like to see a mixed kahikatea/lowland forest planting established, please contact Gary or Nardene and seek more information. We will need to get a tender bid prepared and submitted early in the new year. You need to note that these funding sources are unlikely to meet all of the costs associated with planting, and you will need to be prepared to contribute, generally via materials or labour.