

Weeds threatening biodiversity

Submission on Ecan Pest
Management priorities
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This Submitter: Rhys Taylor

- MSc in Natural Resource Management (Lincoln, NZ), BA Human Sciences (Oxford)
- Training in field ecology and experience in conservation volunteer team supervision (UK)
- Recent experience with river catchment groups (South Canterbury, contracted to ECan)
- Own and manage a 3Ha QEII covenant on Geraldine Downs – done woody weed control.

Weeds threatening biodiversity remnants, in a degraded landscape



Sycamore sprayed with X-tree on basal bark to poison it, Waihi River above Woodbury (ECan funded local project)



Old Man's Beard on trees at Waihi River nr. Geraldine

Can priority is protecting existing biodiversity: pest tree control helps

Remove sycamores to aid natural regeneration



Native plant seed sources will speed regeneration

Sycamore is fast-spreading

- Each mature tree produces large amounts of viable winged seeds - spread downwind.
- Seedlings are shade tolerant so will establish under existing native bush.
- Trees fast growing and over-top native regeneration, shading it out.
- Can be killed cost-effectively using new spray onto bark: trees don't have to be ring-barked.

Existing bush remnants threatened

- Waihi Bush, Conways Bush (Woodbury) – invaded from river reserve
- West end of Centennial Reserve, Timaru.
- Opihi River Gorge.
- Peel Forest Scenic Reserve (DOC land)
- Wattie Bush (Scotsburn Stream)
- Jackson's Bush (Hunter)
- Rhodes Bush and Claremont Bush
- Kakahu Bush area.
- Teschemakers
- Opihi River margins at Fairlie and nr. mouth

Don't just monitor – take action

- South Canterbury has mostly lost its native biodiversity, to a farmed landscape of exotic species. What is left is precious and now threatened by exotic woody weeds, esp. sycamore, cotoneaster, & Old Man's Beard.
- Not acceptable to first say 'monitor' and then once too widespread say 'beyond control'.
- Riverbeds are a major source of sycamore & OMB establishment and downwind spread. ECan can influence that in its river management.

Only have one generation to act

- In the time these schoolchildren (visiting Peel Forest) grow to adults, the invading sycamores could have shaded out the bush.



SNAs now mapped – use GIS info!

- Significant Natural Areas have been identified and mapped by Timaru DC
- Make sycamore control in and upwind of those specific locations a priority for pest control, similarly OMB.
- Target sycamore and OMB species within ECan river engineering's weed management.
- Get more rivers covered by River Rating Districts so that weeds are tackled (e.g. Te Moana)