

Media Release

New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF)

For Immediate Release

NZIF Honours Forestry Excellence at Awards Dinner in Nelson

Last night, the New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) hosted its prestigious annual awards dinner in Nelson, recognising outstanding achievements within the forestry sector. The awards celebrated a diverse array of contributions, from grassroots initiatives to impactful policy development and academic leadership.

Kirk Horn Award: Bill Liley

The Kirk Horn Award, one of the most esteemed honours in New Zealand's forestry sector, was presented to Bill Liley. This award recognises exceptional contributions to forestry and is steeped in history, commemorating the legacies of Thomas Kirk, a prominent botanical explorer, and Captain Inches Campbell-Walker, New Zealand's first Conservator of Forests.

NZIF President James Treadwell praised Liley, describing him as “down to earth, highly professional, and a fierce intellect.” In addition to his impressive professional career, Liley continues to manage his own forest and operates a small sawmill to process timber from his land.

Forester of the Year: John Hura

The New Zealand Forester of the Year award, a highly coveted recognition, was awarded to John Hura for his exceptional contributions to the forestry sector over the past year. Hura played a pivotal role in leading one of New Zealand's largest salvage operations following Cyclone Gabrielle, ensuring environmental sensitivity and high standards of health and safety throughout the process.

Treadwell highlighted Hura's leadership in Māoridom's forestry industry, stating, “His strong morals and ethics have earned him respect across the industry. His refusal to bow to political pressure has only enhanced his standing, both within Māori and non-Māori forestry circles.”

FRESTRA Young Forester of the Year: Sarah de Gouw

In a historic moment for the industry, the inaugural FRESTRA Young Forester of the Year Award was presented to Sarah de Gouw. This award acknowledges a young forester who has demonstrated extraordinary dedication to both their profession and community, reflecting the values of FRESTRA and Future Foresters.

De Gouw was commended for her remarkable efforts in raising forestry awareness, particularly through outreach programs in local schools. She has become a passionate advocate for forestry, engaging with students and teachers alike, and inspiring the next generation with activities ranging from reading forestry books to operating drones to showcase the sector's opportunities.

Prince of Wales Sustainability Cup: Chris Ensor

The Prince of Wales Sustainability Cup, established in 2017, was awarded to Chris Ensor of Nelson for his unwavering commitment to sustainable forest management. This award recognises individuals who embody the principles of sustainability in policy, planning, and practice, while also actively engaging with the public to promote forest conservation.

Treadwell highlighted Ensor's selfless dedication, noting, "His commitment to sustainable management is so strong that he frequently volunteers his services, despite his salary barely covering his costs. His actions are a testament to his intent to improve the forestry sector for the benefit of all."

The forestry industry continues to play a vital role in New Zealand's economy, with its contributions extending beyond economic growth to include carbon capture, biodiversity, recreation, and overall well-being. "We are fortunate to have such a skilled and dedicated group of professionals who set the benchmark for excellence in our industry," Treadwell said. "The NZIF is proud to celebrate and champion the achievements of this year's award recipients."

For further information, please contact:

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About NZIF

The New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) is the professional body for New Zealand's forestry sector. It represents the interests of foresters, forest scientists, and other professionals involved in the management of all forests. The Institute advocates for sustainable forest management and promotes the role of forests of all types and forestry in mitigating climate change.



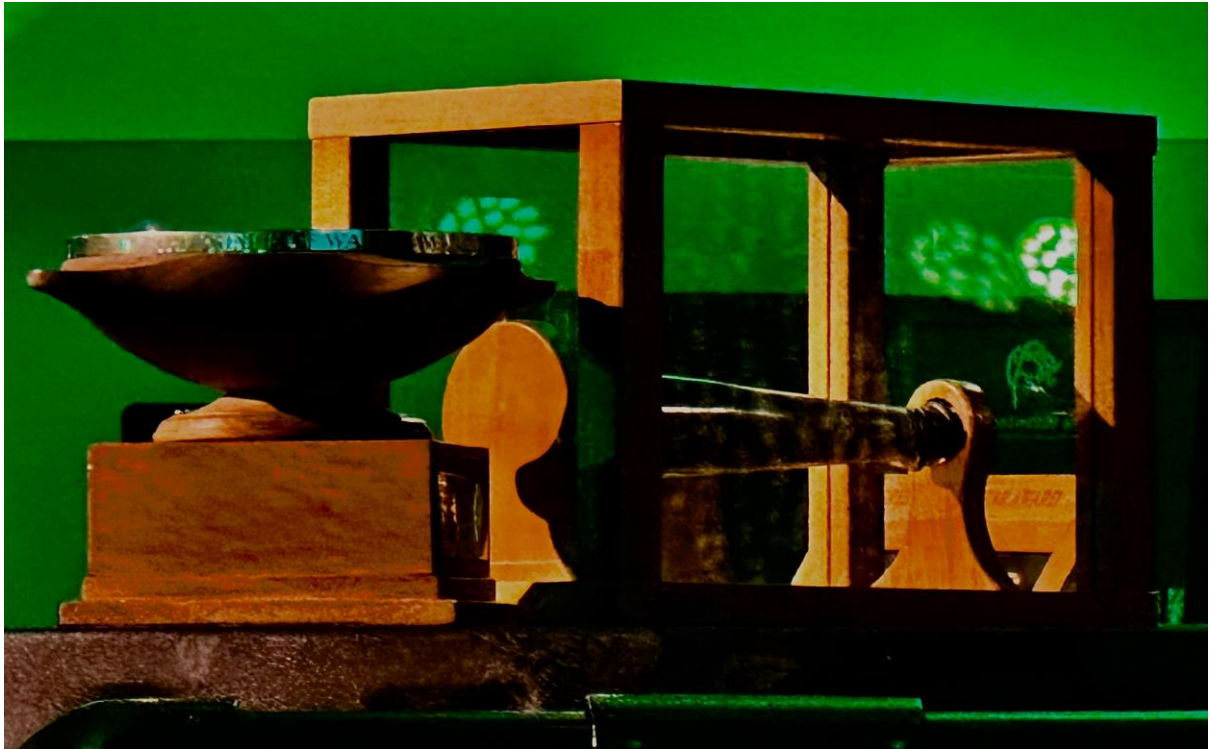
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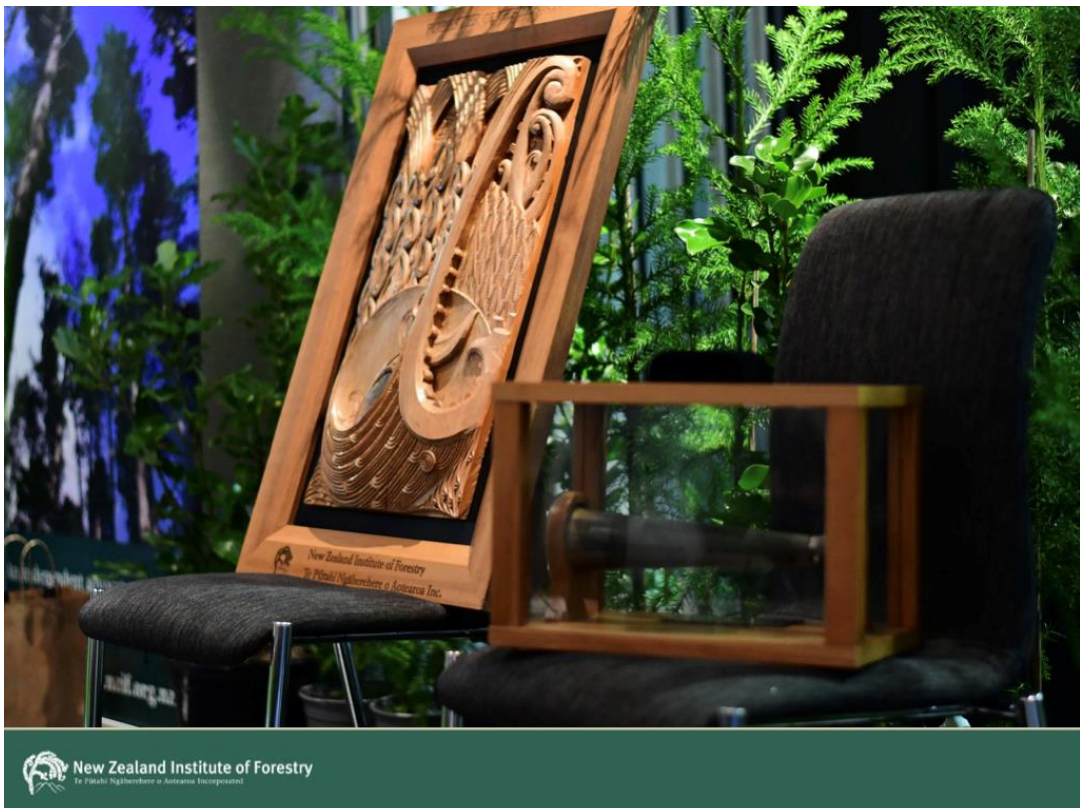
Kirk Horn Awardee, Bill Liley



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Kirk Horn Award



Forester of the Year Carving



FRESTRA Young Forester of the Year award



Prince of Wales Sustainability Cup



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