



Dr Frank Wood has been appointed to the new position of Chief Director, FRI, Rotorua. Dr Wood was the Regional Manager, MAF Quality Management North Region (Ruakura) and had responsibility for 640 staff and a budget of about \$40m.

Applications for consultant recognition

The following individuals have applied for recognition as General Forestry Consultants in New Zealand:

Julian Kohn, Gisborne
Paul D. Carruthers, Te Kuiti
Dennys W. Guild, Invercargill

Under the NZIF constitution, any members of the Institute may send objections in writing to the Registrar of Consultants, NZ Institute of Forestry, P.O. Box 19840, Christchurch.

LETTERS

A letter about everything

Sir,

My! what letters your February issue called forth. I nearly wrote myself, thinking to excoriate the Ministry for leaking stuff like the statement on indigenous forest policy or, if unable to prevent it, to say it was useless. I had not the need; Dudley Franklin (letter, May) did better. But what else?

If sums must be done on sustainable societies (of six billion and rising? Ha! The earth may flatten yet.), as does Geoffrey Chavasse, let us make proper account.

Sustainability involves regenerating what is used up, but not necessarily as the same thing. Only if more comes out than goes in is there sustained surplus. Plantations are in because they grow some hope of surplus. Elsewhere wood may grow itself: dare I say sometimes cheaper or better than when foresters help? Best, if you must go in there: cut out, get out, stay out. More honest predator than parasite. If we must meddle let us do so properly, grow plantations.

Then there was your letter from Isle of Bute, Scotland, on about our 'perpetual source of great wealth', the writer said, quoting Cockayne, 1926, meaning beech. Well, the Forest Service tried to cash in this wealth in their rush to self destruction. Trouble was, how to get out as much as would go in? So there it still is, the beech, not the Forest Service, saved by the profit and loss account, to the great satisfaction of many worthy voters.

And then there was Peter McKelvey's compulsory replanting clause on sale of State Forest. This from one who did so much to put our forestry on a quantitative basis! Look at the quantities. The 1913 Royal Commission thought we might run out of wood. A Forest Service created an exotic alternative. So also did more private persons. You remember how hard it was to sell (you do, don't you, remember?). No wonder, with twice what was needed. Then State and private sectors went and doubled again, turning on New Zealanders a flood of wood four times their willing usage.

Surely this may be a good thing. We might export some, add value even, without going bankrupt, if good account can be kept; perhaps grow some to 50, wonderful stuff, can you remember? But here, even more surely, is poor cause to compel replanting.

If trees were good, to stop farming on some lands, for instance, then by all means constrain the occupier, but all, not just those on land sanctified by passage through the Forest Service. Good law picks on the general not the particular. Legislate, and if you must, but treat everyone the same, count yourself in. Don't turn a great institution, in its day, to bitter legacy.

B.J. Allison

Wild deer

Sir,

John Holloway claims that the view that a general recognition in policy that wild animals such as deer are permanent components of the New Zealand ecosystem is "to say the least, contentious".

This is clearly not so. Like blackbirds and thistles, deer are here to stay. We may regret their presence, no more, and there have always been very clear signs of opposition to any genocidal technology which might prove otherwise.

Opposition to the wide use of poisons, and in another situation to the introduction of myxomatosis into the rabbit population are obvious statements of these attitudes.

While the view that deer are undesirable may be widely held amongst those who are interested, it is not totally shared, and the strength of opinion varies.

I recall reading, some years ago, submissions on the Raukumara Wild Animal Control Plan. Expressed views fell clearly into three parts:

- business or sporting interests who viewed deer, rather than the forest, as the resource to be managed;
- people and groups with a wide range of interests, including hunting, who saw the need to control deer, but

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invites you to submit material for inclusion in this publication

We accept:

- articles on a wide variety of forestry topics;
- comment on forestry or Institute of Forestry affairs;
- items on current events;
- letters to the editor;
- items from local sections;
- advertising.

Comments, letters, news items, and Institute news need to be with the Editor at the beginning of the month prior to publication.

favoured pragmatic solutions which achieved results, such as recreational and commercial hunting;

- those who took a fundamental view that the introduction of deer was a sin which it was the duty of the Government to correct. Therefore no method of control which gave either pleasure or profit could be tolerated as official policy. The cost would be the punishment.

This last view is one which has given birth to a number of DOC's problems, and which contributes throughout the developing world to escalating environment decay as the better-off half becomes too precious to sustain its own resources or to restrain its own demands.

Many have commented on the confusion between conservation and preservation inherent in DOC's mandate, and there is a client imposed unwillingness to become involved in any form of sustained use management which is seen to conflict with an idealised view of what ought to be. Also, if the quotation from Dr Carolyn King's book reads true, we are still expected to be guilt driven.

For masochists that may be an end in itself, but it is no way to solve the problem of ungulate pressure on forests, which is presumably what we, as foresters, want to do. But relief of pressure, not extinction, because we know that extinction is not possible.

But how to do it? Technological holocausts are out of the question, even if they work, and significant Government funding is unlikely.

Dogma aside, put to the vote, where would deer control rank as a competitor for funds alongside old-age pensions, health and education? The response would simply be that DOC must reorder its priorities and spend its vote there instead of somewhere else.

The Institute should therefore support any initiative to promote the value of wild deer as a resource, highlighting their differences from the farmed variety, either as stimuli to the ardours of ancient Chinese or to teutonic cuisine or in any other way which applies.

Wild venison has been a valuable by-product of sporting estate management in Britain, and interest in deer farming is growing. In neither case (as in New Zealand) is the meat readily available on the domestic market. It is seen, like rabbits or rats, as something which people in foreign parts are silly enough to like, and pay for too.

As a result, and not at all entirely because of Chernobyl, prices have fallen as the kinky customers begin to wonder whether they really are doing the right thing.

DOC's problems arise whenever it is seen to do anything remotely commercial. The most successful and acceptable way to control deer so far is by hunting

for profit or pleasure, but this seems to offend a vocal section of its clients.

The Institute's role must therefore be to assist DOC in keeping before the public and political eye the need to control deer in an acceptable and economic fashion. There is no sin involved, for deer were not originally excluded from New Zealand by divine displeasure but by geology.

John Purey-Cust

What is the problem?

Sir,

New Zealand is a "backwards" nation. But then, I'm an American. Water goes down the drain the opposite way I'm used to. Cars travel in the opposite lane. Pedestrians pass each other on the opposite side of the footpath. Electrical switches turn "on" by being flicked down, not up. South-facing is cold and a nor'west breeze is warm. The list goes on.

These aren't complaints, they're observations. New Zealand is just back-to-front from my perspective. I'm not advocating change, even if these things could be changed. They help to make this country New Zealand and not a carbon copy of the United States. That's good.

But from a planning perspective, being back-to-front isn't an advantage. Dr. Bruce Smith, from the Brookings Institution in Washington DC, spoke at a recent Wellington conference, Sci-Tech 2000, or "Strategies for Science and Technology to the end of the 20th Century and Beyond." After extensive discussions regarding the recent reforms in science and technology he had to ask: "What was the problem to which these reforms were the solution?"

What is the problem? What are the options? By what criteria will we rank the options? Which option is "best"? How will we implement the chosen option? How will we monitor the results? This is the usual planning sequence. But it is not the sequence typically followed by recent New Zealand Governments.

A high-ranking civil servant once put it to me: "From Government's perspective, if you've already made your decision, why would you want to commission independent research which would (a) take time; (b) cost money; (c) might come up with recommendations contrary to what you've already decided?" I couldn't refute his argument, even though we both knew it wasn't rational from a national viewpoint. Why confuse the issue with fact?

There are no doubt problems. And there are no doubt inefficiencies in New Zealand society. But the best way to change is first to identify the problems and inefficiencies and then identify the causes. Once the causes are identified, then options can be identified. After the benefits and costs of all the options have been evaluated then one option may be chosen and implemented. And after this has been done, then the solution needs to be monitored to see if the problem is ameliorated and if the benefits and costs worked out close to their estimates. If they didn't, then the reasons need to be identified.

That is the sequence we need to follow if we are to learn by our decisions. It is also a sequence which encourages good research and good decision making. It's standard textbook material. But at the highest levels, it doesn't appear to be routinely followed.

In many ways, it's good to live in a "back-to-front" nation. There are a lot of things about New Zealand I wouldn't want changed. But I do wish more government representatives would begin their "solutions" by asking "What is the problem?"

E.M. Bilek

(Dr Bilek is Lecturer, University of Canterbury, School of Forestry. The views expressed here are his own and do not represent the views of the School of Forestry or of the University of Canterbury.)

Weather data for 1955 Balmoral Fire sought

Sir,

K.W. Prior (1985. N.Z. J. For. 7 (5):35-50) has provided an excellent account of the man-caused fire which burned-over 3152 hectares of exotic pine plantation at the Balmoral State Forest in November 1955. Besides being the second largest pine plantation wildfire in New Zealand's history, the 1955 Balmoral Fire is also of significance because of two aspects related to the free-burning fire behaviour exhibited on flat topography - i.e., documented crown fire spread rate of 1.6 km/h and the "tree-crown street" pattern (cf. D.A. Haines. 1982. Horizontal roll vortices and crown fires. J. Appl. Meteor. 21:751-763) left in the aftermath of the fire's major run on November 26 (see Plate 5 in Prior's article).

My interest in the Balmoral Fire stems from the fact that I'm currently on education/professional development leave from Forestry Canada working on a Ph.D. degree in the Department of Forestry at the Australian National University. My Ph.D. thesis investigation

deals with "fire behaviour in exotic pine plantations of Australasia", with particular emphasis on the requirements for crown fire development. Mr A.N. Cooper, Chief Protection Officer with the NZ Ministry of Forestry, has kindly provided me with the 9 a.m. meteorological observations taken at the Balmoral headquarters station for September to November, 1955. However, Neill has been unable to secure a copy of the 1

p.m. fire weather observations associated with the fire danger rating system in use at that time. I'd very much appreciate receiving any information on the possible whereabouts of these data. I can be contacted at: Bushfire Research Unit, CSIRO Division of Forestry, P.O. Box 4008, Canberra, ACT, Australia 2600. Phone (06) 281-8220. FAX: (06) 281-8348.

The antecedent weather data asso-

ciated with the Balmoral Fire is a prerequisite for any sort of meaningful analyses of fire moisture conditions and velocity. One immediate benefit which could be realised is the hindsight calculation of the six components of the Fire Weather Index System. It'd be a real shame if this were not possible.

Martin E. Alexander

FORESTRY CONSULTANT RECOGNITION CRITERIA

1. Recognition is a service to the public at large carried out by a professional body (NZ Institute of Forestry through the Forestry Consultants Committee who maintain a list of recognised consultants which is published and open for public inspection).
2. Recognition operates under an independent "Code of Ethics", maintained by the NZ Institute of Forestry Council.
3. Recognition is open to NZ Institute of Forestry members, Honorary, Fellow and Full. Council will accept a fast track to seeking Full Membership by firstly applying, then gaining Consultant Committee recommendation to become a Recognised Forestry Consultant.
4. Before consultants are finally recognised evidence of professional indemnity cover must be produced. (The Committee has arranged a Group Scheme which successful applicants can join.)
5. Applicants can choose to be recognised as either General or Specialist Forestry Consultants depending on their estimate of their skills.
6. In selection, the committee is guided by:
 - (a) Competence displayed by applicant in chosen field.
 - (b) Applicant must be qualified, both academically and by sufficient working experience to operate in their chosen field.
 - (c) Applicant must be seen to conduct himself/herself in a professional manner.
 - (d) Applicant must be reasonably available.
 - (e) Applicant must display ability to operate independently and in the best interest of the client.
 - (f) Commission agencies and percentage sales on goods are considered to unduly influence an unbiased professional service to clients and are therefore not condoned.
7. The committee uses the following methods to help selection and maintain standards:
 - (a) Advertises each application in NZ Forestry, seeking membership objections on any grounds.
 - (b) Receives a formal signed application making a declaration regarding the submitted contents and also compliance with the "Code of Ethics".
 - (c) Committee asks for three referee reports.
 - (d) Committee asks for a full curriculum vitae.
 - (e) Committee asks for copies of recent reports, projects, etc, to support achieving recognition.
 - (f) Committee interviews each applicant at applicant's own expense.
 - (g) Applicants pay a non-returnable fee of \$50.00 which, if he or she is successful, counts as the first year or part year's consultant fees.
 - (h) Committee receives complaints against recognised consultants from dissatisfied clients and determines if there has been any breach of the "Code of Ethics".
 - (i) Committee reviews consultant recognition:
 - (1) At least every five years.
 - (2) By direction of Council.
 - (3) When a complaint is received.
 - (4) When circumstances of original recognition are thought to have changed.