

Transfer of resources and functions from MORST to FRST

In December 1992 the Government announced that the science review responsibility of MORST would transfer to FRST. FRST was also provided with the responsibility to develop strategies to implement the Government's science priorities. To enable FRST to undertake these new responsibilities, the organisation was provided with additional funding of more than \$1 million. The changes have been accompanied by the cessation of the indepth science review programme after completion or near completion of 10 science reviews.

Implications for forestry and forest products research

The NZIF considers that the results of the Government's science priority setting exercise and the transfer of responsibilities to FRST could have both positive and negative influences on future forestry

research. On the positive side, the decision to increase the PGSF funding for forest products and processing research should enable an enhanced research effort aimed at developing new and improved "clean" and efficient processing technologies and the development of new innovative value-added wood-based products for export markets. Both the NZIF and the forest industry generally strongly support this science priority direction. However, just how beneficial the funding shift will be to the profitability and vitality of the forestry sector and to the national economy will depend partly on the strategy for forestry and wood processing research currently being developed by FRST.

The decision to provide FRST with additional science policy responsibilities appears to somewhat blur the separation of policy formulation and funding allocation that underpinned the setting up of MORST to develop science policy and a

separate FRST to allocate PGSF to research providers. Furthermore, the Foundation is now in a very powerful position with the ability to set priorities and strategies and allocate funding accordingly. In developing a major research strategy for forestry and forest processing research it is vital that FRST consults widely with the forestry sector to ensure that the strategy and the detailed priorities that may be embodied in the strategy reflect the real research needs of the sector and not just the views of FRST and possibly a few advisers.

NZIF's comments and concerns about the recent changes in the Government science system have been included in a letter from the President of NZIF to the Minister of Science.

Colin O'Loughlin
Convenor
Science Working Group

Thomas Kirk Award – Peter Smail

Peter Smail was awarded the Thomas Kirk Award in 1992 in recognition of his outstanding contribution in the field of forestry in New Zealand. He will be presented with the Award at the 1993 Napier Conference. Peter is a Fellow of the Institute and has been a member since 1974. He was made an Honorary member in 1980 because of his tireless efforts on behalf of both plantation forestry and farm forestry in New Zealand. He is also a founding member and Past President of the NZ Farm Forestry Association, and is

currently an Honorary Life Member of that organisation.

On leaving Christ's College, Peter worked on farms for a few years before serving in Italy during the latter stages of the second world war. After the war, he became a farm manager until he acquired his own farm, Lynton, at Hororata in 1952. Over the next 40 years he transformed this farm of 573 ha of undeveloped light stony soil into one of the most productive in the region, and the lambs and wool he produced regularly topped

the market. A vital component of this transformation was the use of trees for both shelter and timber production in an area where low rainfall and strong dry winds are the norm.

In the early years, Peter had many battles with conservative farm advisers, forestry advisers and catchment board officials, but his innate good sense based on observation and experimentation won through, and he quickly became recognised for his expertise on shelter and farm forestry on the Canterbury plains. As a result, his advice has been keenly sought after by a number of organisations, including:

- Selwyn Plantation Board, member of 16 years, the latter five as Chairman;
- National Shelter Working Party, foundation member;
- Afforestation Working Party of the Forestry Council, member in 1974-75
- Orton Bradley Park Board, board member of 13 years;
- Mackenzie Charitable Foundation, farm shelter adviser.

In addition, Peter has published a number of papers on shelter and farm forestry, and has very actively participated in innumerable seminars on these topics organised by a wide range of organisations, both in New Zealand and overseas. His farm has been host to dozens of field days annually, including parties of students from both Canterbury and Lincoln Universities, and forestry groups from Australia, Canada, United States, Sweden, China and Japan as well as international



Peter Smail addressing the joint Australia and New Zealand Institute members, October 1991.

groups such as the International Dendrology Association. He has also led forestry tours to Australia, United States, Europe and the UK.

Although Peter is renowned both nationally and internationally for his expertise on farm forestry, throughout his working life he remained first and foremost a farmer, and a farmer of considerable merit. Until the day he retired in 1992, he was intimately involved in the day-to-day running of his farm, and everything he did with farm forestry was aimed at improving farm practice and increasing production. It is this close involvement and commitment to farming that has made him so credible to other farmers and enables him to have such an impact in persuading the farming community at large of the benefits to be obtained from wise farm forestry.

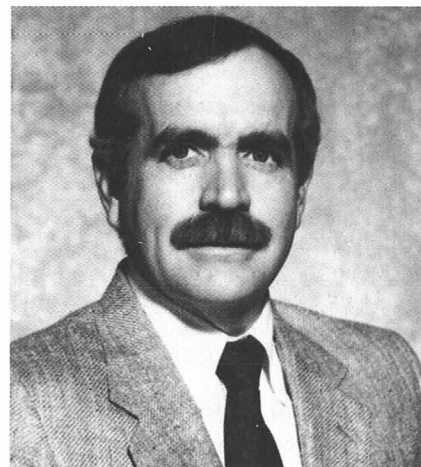
Dudley Franklin

Visiting forestry speaker

Dr Andrew W. Ezell is visiting New Zealand in May to present a paper to the NZIF Conference in Napier and to speak to NZIF branch meetings around the country.

Dr Ezell is on the faculty of the Mississippi State University and also works for the Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service. He has been much involved in the development and promotion of "Best Management Practices" in S.E. USA, i.e. voluntary guidelines and self regulation by the industry to avoid the imposition of punitive environmental law in vogue elsewhere in the USA.

His travel to branch meetings from Whangarei to Christchurch will be funded by the NZIF Travel Award, in line with the resolution at the 1992 Annual General Meeting that the funds could be used for visiting speakers alternative to supporting New Zealand members abroad. Unfortunately his schedule will



Dr Andrew W. Ezell.

not allow visits to Otago and Southland this time.

John Galbraith

Sustainability of exotic forest yield management practice in New Zealand

INTRODUCTION

This report to the Council of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry sets out the findings of a Working Group formed to examine whether or not the exotic forest estate in New Zealand has been overcut recently. Mr A.P. Thomson had raised the issue at both the 1991 and 1992 Annual General Meetings of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry. A sub-committee was set up to canvass the opinions of all Fellows and some other senior Members of the Institute. The results of that survey were contained in a report by Mr A.W. Grayburn (with assistance from Messrs O'Neill and Childs), published in New Zealand Forestry, volume 37(2) 27-29, August 1992. Mr Grayburn concluded that the Institute should not make a stand on overcutting, but should

- encourage provision of annual harvesting and replanting returns;
- provide examples of the consequences of high levels of log exports in one or two regions;
- prepare a position statement for the Minister.

Following the publication of this report, the Institute Council established the following Working Group:

M. Colley, Tasman Forestry Ltd, Rotorua
J. Fleming, CHH Forests Ltd, Auckland

H. Levack, Ministry of Forestry, Wellington

J. Shirley, Forestry Corporation of NZ Ltd, Rotorua

G. Whyte, School of Forestry, University of Canterbury, Christchurch (Chairman).

Dr B.R. Manley, a member of the Institute Council, has acted as convener. Mr P. Lane (Ministry of Forestry, Wellington) has deputised on occasions for Mr H. Levack.

Report to the New Zealand Institute of Forestry Council

In the early debates within the Institute, the issue of the potential for adding value through production of manufactured forest products being undermined because of sharp rises in log exports, was much to the fore. Nevertheless, the resolutions at the AGMs and the directions of the Council to the Working Group were clearly concerned just with overcutting, and not at all with the possible loss of potential for adding value before exporting. The Working Group, while also noting that a consequence of any premature harvesting can lead to loss of amenity and other such non-commercial values of forests, decided to retain as narrow a focus as possible in interpreting the directions for its deliber-

ations. That focus was realisable wood yield.

A basic need in this regard is an agreed definition of sustained yield. Agreement was finally reached on the following broad meaning of sustainability in the above narrow sense:

"A sustained yield can be defined as that yield, which, when harvested, does not reduce the capacity of a forest resource (i.e. estate) to supply, continuously or periodically, the same or a higher quantity of wood of the same or higher average maturity indefinitely."

The Working Group considered that this definition includes all sizes and kinds of forest estate that are likely to contribute to regional woodflows. In particular, interpretation of the word "periodically" should provide sufficient flexibility to assess individual sets of circumstances, which can vary widely from region to region, forest owner to owner and year to year.

As previously mentioned, a majority of the Working Group strongly supported the view that the focus of sustainability should pertain to wood yield alone, and that other benefits and services which forests confer (such as soil and water protection, amenity, recreational opportunities and the like) should be deliberately excluded.