



## RECENT EVENTS



# News from the School of Forestry

The School is one of five Canterbury departments in the throes of preparing to be reviewed. Its University Review Committee comprises Professor Bob Park (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor Ian Ferguson (Melbourne University), Professor Bevan Clarke (Accountancy), Dr Vida Stout (Zoology), Bill Dyck (CHH Forests) and Peter Berg (Rayonier NZ and NZIF). A departmental report has been prepared and the committee will convene for a few days in September to see things for themselves, receive other submissions and conduct various interviews. NZIF members are encouraged to make any of their opinions on the School known through either Peter or Bill. The audit will be presented to the Vice-Chancellor who has the power to ensure that its recommendations are implemented. This is a major opportunity to have improvements initiated and it is hoped that NZIF members, particularly graduates of the School, will make their opinions known.

Positions for a Chair in Forestry, Senior Lecturer/Lecturer and a Lecturer are currently being advertised. Although applications do not close until September 30, 1994, it is already clear that there is tremendous interest in filling the positions.

Dr Bruce Manley has succeeded Bill Dyck as NZFRI's South Island Manager and is in regular contact with the School. The building next to the School that was occupied by the old South Island FRI and currently by Landcare and a few NZFRI staff is to be vacated by the middle of 1995 so that a Pacific Studies Unit can assume occupancy by the end of 1995. Progress has been made with a proposal to build accommodation that adjoins the School of Forestry so that NZFRI and School staff can interact more readily. This is an exciting prospect that heralds a new era of research cooperation between NZFRI and the University of Canterbury which could also extend into collaborative teaching.

This year the School has been privileged to have had some excellent speakers as part of a Dean's Lecture Series: so far we have had the benefit of Ken Shirley (NZFOA), Andy Kirkland and the Minister of Forests, John Falloon. We also had another internationally renowned speaker,

Alf Leslie, who was a visiting lecturer with us for five weeks. It is hoped that all four stimulating presentations will be published in this year's student magazine, *Te Kura Ngahere*.

John Walker was successful in securing a PGSF bid for work on facets of corewood properties of radiata pine into which several researches are contributing. He is also collaborator with Roger Keey in another successful PGSF project on wood drying. Euan Mason has been building up a strong research group in the field of establishment and initial growth modelling, that is working closely with NZFRI and the forest industry. David Norton has recently been appointed to the Royal Society Standing Committee on Science for the Environment. A final-year student, Jacqueline Sloggett, is attending an International Forestry Students Conference in Switzerland in August, thanks to some generous support from NZIF, and also

from the School and the Students' Association.

Our round of overseas delegations continues and we have had the pleasure of three, one from Turkey, a second from Indonesia and a third from China in recent months.

A small number of participants attended a seminar on "Forestry Investment" held here at the School in May. It was a disappointingly small attendance on a topical subject that was targeted outside NZIF, but widely publicised in investment analyst and investor circles. The School is running a month-long course on "Forestry as a Business" in November this year, when it is hoped that there will be greater participation. We shall, of course, be targeting NZIF members as part of the Institute's move to encourage continuing professional development for this one.

**Graham Whyte**

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## Mackenzie Transitional District Plan: Proposed Change 21

Progressing Proposed Change 21 has become ensnared within precedent setting legal proceedings commonly known as the "the Big Fresh case" (Foodstuffs Properties Ltd v Dunedin City Council).

The Big Fresh case relates in part to the duties required of a council under Section 32 of the Resource Management Act 1991. Section 32 concerns duties to consider alternatives and assess benefits and costs before adopting any objective, policy or rule in standards, policy statements or plans. The Big Fresh case has been before the Planning Tribunal, the High Court and is now (at the time of writing) before the Court of Appeal.

The High Court has indicated that where a council has initiated a plan change the council is required to produce a report setting out what has been done to meet the requirements of Section 32, that this report must be publicly available before the plan change is notified, and that

the scale and nature of the analysis can be challenged. The Mackenzie District Council has not made a report of this nature available with respect to Proposed Change 21.

It is understood that the intention of Section 32 was that the result of the analysis, that is the policy statement or the plan, could be challenged by way of normal submissions and appeals to the Planning Tribunal. However, it was apparently not the intention that the Section 32 analysis could be challenged as an independent step in the planning process.

A number of local authorities in addition to the Mackenzie District Council have been caught in this legal debate. Representations have been made to Government seeking amendments to the legislation to retrospectively remove the legal barrier these councils face in progressing their plans and policy statements.

**John Novis**