

2 December 2021

On behalf of the Mid Dome Trust, which has been in existence for fifteen years, it's a pleasure to present to you our Annual Report for the 2020-21 year.

Once again we have had a very busy and productive year.

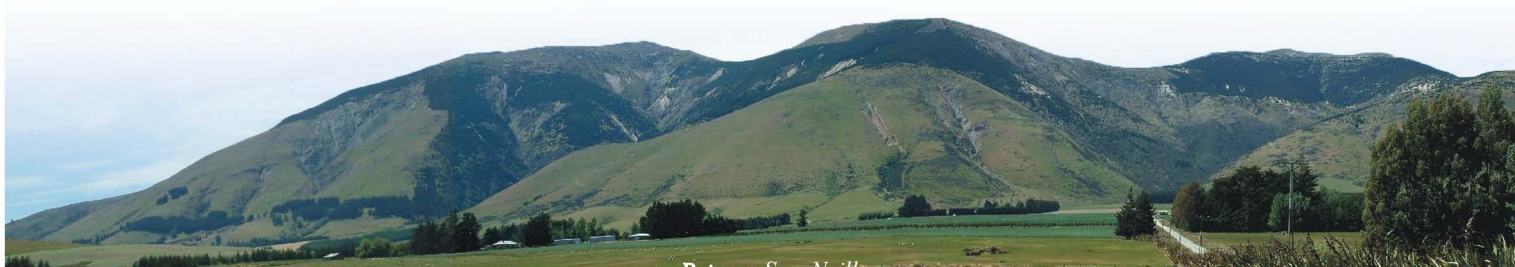
We are very pleased that we continue to receive significant funding from the National Wilding Conifer Programme which has again allowed us to significantly ramp up our wilding control work programme. The yearly contributions we have again received from our funding partners LINZ, DOC and Environment Southland currently places us in a sound financial position to be able to meet the aims of our 2014-24 Wilding Conifer Control Strategy.

The control seasons highlight for me was the 700ha of Aerial Foliar Spray Application (AFSA) control work completed over five days in January this year, a record breaking effort at the Mid Dome site. And this season's work was complemented by the continued ground and Aerial Basal Bark Application (ABBA) work on a site which often has challenging weather and access issues.

This fantastic achievement was made possible by the huge amount of planning and experience of our Programme Manager Boffa Miskell Limited (BML), in particular Marcus Girvan, Brent Rohloff and the rest of their team.

As many of you will know the Mid Dome programme area, due to its access, weather and logistical challenges is not any easy site to carry out wilding work on which means that successful wilding control work is often not easy to achieve. Our Programme Manager BML and the contractors they employ are to be congratulated for all their skilled hard work which is a key component of our work programme. It's very pleasing that the equivalent of ten FTE's were employed during the year as part of the Job's for Nature funding from MPI.

Due to very low local unemployment most of the contractors this season were from outside the region but some contractors from the Southland region were also employed on site. It's good know to know that the presence of these contractors during the control season has contribute to the local economy.



Patron: *Sam Neill*

Members: Ali Ballantine (Chair), Michael Skerrett, Geoffrey Young, Richard Bowman, Glenys Dickson, John Whitehead and Tapuwa Marapara

And our thanks go to the local landowners for the support, assistance and valuable local knowledge that they have given to the trust and BML personnel during the season.

My fellow trustee Richard Bowman and our previous Environment Southland funding partner representative Randall Milne and I attended the NZ Wilding Conifer Group's (now known as The Wilding Pine Network), conference in Rotorua in last November. This was again an excellent event with a varied and interesting programme. And as with previous conferences it was a great opportunity to hear from friends and colleagues of the different wilding challenges other face, learn about new wilding control methodologies and to catch up with friends and colleagues.

During the year we hosted a successful site visit for the Minister for MPI the Honourable Damien O'Connor, who was able to view in particular the successful outcomes of the extensive Aerial Foliar Spray programme we are currently carrying out on site.

More recently we were delighted to host a freelance reporter for TV3 on site in regard to the current inadequacies of the National Environment Standard for Plantation Forestry when it comes to being able to effectively manage wilding spread from carbon farming plantations under the Emissions Trading Scheme. It's incredibly frustrating to be spending valuable central and local government funds to remove wildings from our programme area when we see Douglas fir plantings taking place on nearby high wilding spread risk sites under the \$1 Billion Tree Scheme. We look forward to this story being screened sometime soon.

Our trust and the many other organisations carrying out similar wilding work throughout Aotearoa we will be lobbying hard to ensure that the significant gains we have made from the NWCCP are not in vain due to these legislative inadequacies.



Ali Ballantine
Chairman
Mid Dome Wilding Trees Charitable Trust



2020-21

Mid Dome Wilding Conifer Control Programme

Managed by Boffa Miskell

Annual Summary



PREPARED BY

Boffa Miskell

on behalf of the Mid Dome Wilding Tree Trust



THE 2020/21 SEASON

Highlights

- 5,281 hectares of Aerial Basal Bark Application (ABBA) was delivered
- 1,233 hectares of ground control completed
- 700 hectares of Aerial Foliar Spraying Application (AFSA) was delivered
- A total budget of \$2,753,180 was invested into the Mid Dome Wilding Conifer Control Programme, which was substantially higher than previous seasons due to the covid-19 stimulus package – Jobs for Nature
- Engaged three ground control contractors and one aerial operator to deliver the programme
- Employment of 87 people at Mid Dome, equating to 10 FTEs
- Minister Damien O'Connor visited Mid Dome in September 2020, taking an aerial flight to survey progress that has been achieved
- Efficiency was increased by providing aerial transport to ground crews to access remote areas of Mid Dome
- A successful volunteer day was held in March 2021
- \$20,241 was invested into track maintenance, improving the helicopter load site and an aerial survey to aid planning.





Ground Control

Completed by Mainland Vector Contracting,
D. M. Holdings and Trap and Trigger

Ground control techniques utilise chainsaws, handsaws, and loppers to cut trees at their base. Stumps are treated with picloram gel as insurance against regrowth. Smaller trees are removed by pulling the whole plant, including the root system, from the ground. Contractors also have the responsibility to take GPS waypoints of coning trees to assist with planning,

Ground control was carried out between November 2020 and April 2021 in the Cattleflat 2, Cattleflat 3, DOC 1, DOC 5, DOC 6, Five Rivers 2, Five Rivers 3, and Moonlight 1 operational areas. At the Flagstaff Management Unit, ground control was completed in both Flagstaff 1 and Flagstaff 2.

The boost in funding from the Jobs for Nature programme enabled a total of 87 people to undertake ground control at Mid Dome in the 20/21 season.



A ground contractor uses a chainsaw to control a conifer.

A total of **\$1,210,927** was spent on ground control 20/21 including aerial transport.

1,233 hectares was treated using ground control methods



Aerial Basal Bark Application (ABBA)

Completed by Amuri Helicopters

ABBA, which involves a person applying herbicide via a wand to the base of trees from a helicopter, enables large, sparse areas to be surveyed and treated. Information gathered while undertaking ABBA helps to inform the programme by determining priorities and control methods for future seasons. This includes gathering information on areas that may be too densely infested and require an alternative method to be utilized, and the identification of tree age and species.

ABBA was carried out in Cattleflat 1, Cattleflat 2, DOC 1, DOC 2, DOC 5, Moonlight 1 and Nokomai 2 operational areas. ABBA was also completed in Flagstaff.

A Grazon/Bioester herbicide mix was used to control the trees.



Wilding conifers browning off four months post ABBA control

A total of **\$333,016** was spent on ABBA the 20/21.

11,821 trees were controlled over an area of **5,281 hectares**.



Aerial Foliar Spray Application (AFSA)

Completed by Amuri Helicopters

AFSA, commonly referred to as 'boom spraying', is the all-over foliage cover of dense infestations of wildings conifers. AFSA operations require extensive planning and consultation, and an appropriate weather window, typically during the period of December - February.

Between the 11th and 16th of January 2021, the largest AFSA operation to date was carried out at Mid Dome.

The TDPA herbicide mix was applied via AFSA at Cattleflat 2, DOC 3, DOC 4, DOC 5, Five Rivers 1, Five River 2, LINZ 1 and LINZ 2. Two AS350 squirrel helicopters were used to deliver this work, and were supported by 7 ground crew members who were responsible for herbicide mixing and loading, helicopter maintenance, safe and efficient chemical handling, and the transportation of fuel and chemicals.



An AS350 Squirrel undertakes AFSA in January 2021

A total of **\$1,188,996** was spent on AFSA the 20/21 season.

700 hectares of control using AFSA was completed over a period of **5 days** in January



Volunteer Day

Sponsored by STIHL, PGG Wrightson and Amuri Helicopters

Special thanks to all that attended

After the previous three volunteer days being cancelled, Environment Southland hosted a group of enthusiastic volunteers on Saturday 6th March 2021 to partake in a day of wilding conifer control.

Thanks to Amuri Helicopters for supplying the aerial transport, STIHL for the generous donation of tools and PGG Wrightson for the new high-vis vests!

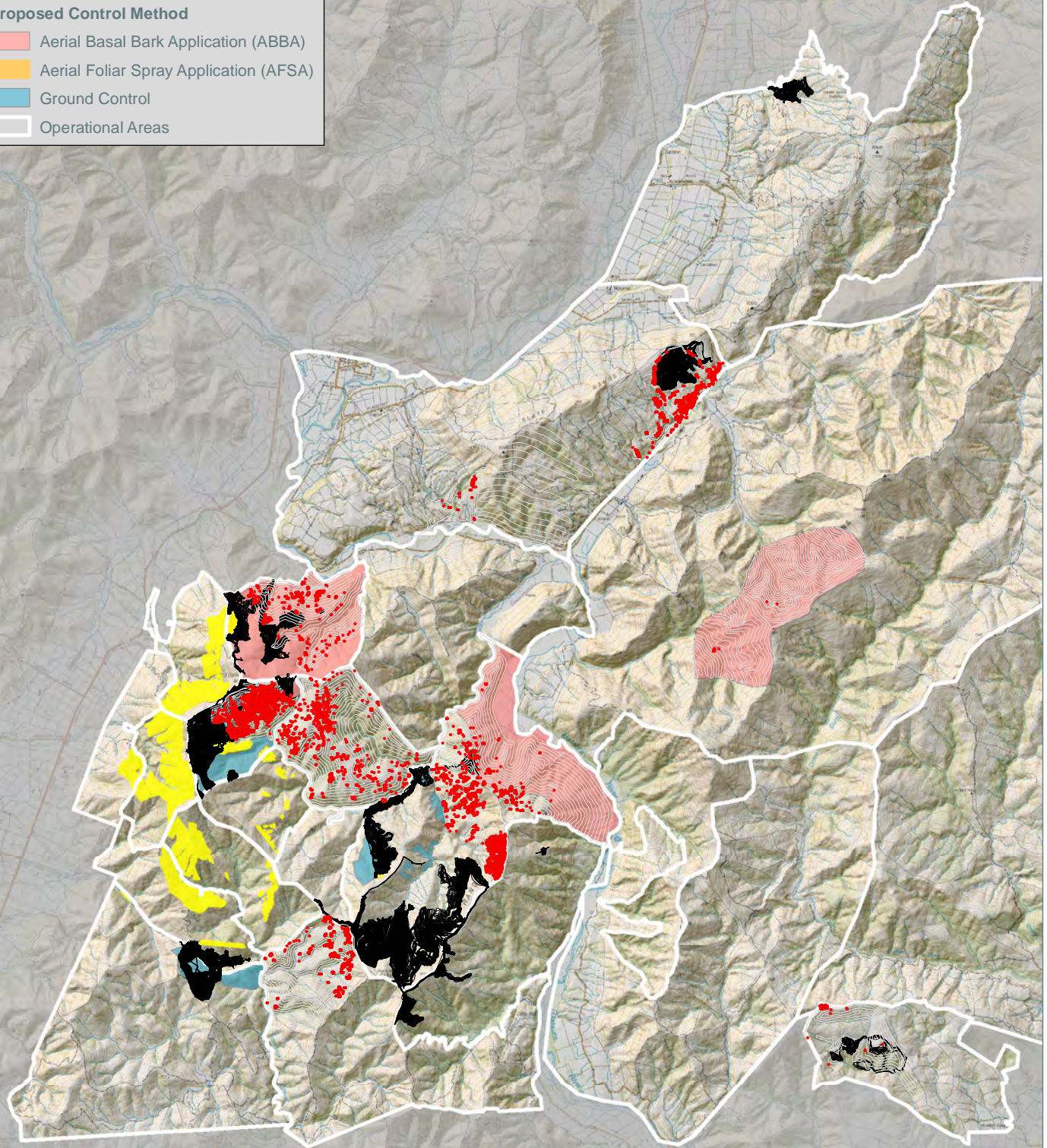


Legend

- 2020/21 Ground Control
- ABBA search area
- 2020/21 ABBA Control
- 2020/21 AFSA Control

Proposed Control Method

- Aerial Basal Bark Application (ABBA)
- Aerial Foliar Spray Application (AFSA)
- Ground Control
- Operational Areas



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