THE WHANGANUI NATIONAL PARK

New Zealand’s newest National Park was created by Order in Council on December 6, 1986, and officially opened on February 7, 1987. The Whanganui National Park is centred on the Wanganui River (see map) although the Wanganui River bed is excluded from the Park. However the river is a major access route, being heavily used by canoists and other boats. Land for the Park came from scenic reserves (46%), alienated Crown land (50%), and State forest (4%). The park has an area of 74,231 hectares.

The new Park is a fitting tribute to this centennial year for National Parks in New Zealand and also to the formation of the Department of Conservation. It is also a reward to the efforts of many people interested in the beauty of the river and who have been associated with the earlier efforts to preserve its scenery.

Forestry education

Sir,

A recent contributor to your Journal (G.B. Sweet, November 1986) has an article entitled ‘Technical Forestry — A Chance for Change’ suggests the disestablishment of the New Zealand Forest Service represents a chance for change within forestry education in New Zealand. I would like to suggest the facility for change should always remain available to us.

Considering the disestablishment of the Forest Service to be an event involving both change and chance, I find the recent expansions in both teaching staff and buildings to the School of Forestry at Canterbury to permit around 45 graduates a year compared with the previous capacity of 30 graduates to be inopportune and probably unwarranted. I base this conclusion on the NZIF Education and Training Working Party’s figures for graduate and ranger/technicians (respectively 15 and 26 per year) and that the current curricula offered by the School are obviously more suited to the production of Foresters than Rangers/Technicians.

Addressing the wider issue as to what form of technical forestry education should take and the related issue of where in New Zealand that education should be provided, I find that in terms of their respective curricula, teaching staff, and teaching environments neither the School of Forestry offering B. For. Sc. nor the Forestry Training Centre offering N.Z.C.F. currently has the facility to provide the single technical forestry training indicated by your correspondent. If a search for a single technical training system were to be undertaken then perhaps a survey of potential employers conducted by NZIF or some other unaffiliated body could be used to determine requirements concerning technically trained personnel. This suggestion is made since both educational facilities have the ability to pre-empt the actions of the other.

The non issue as to where tertiary forestry education should take place in New Zealand should have been resolved prior to 1968 (the year of reopening of Forestry School at Canterbury) by following the planters rather than historical precedence. The then principals of Canterbury University are to be commended for their anticipation of the need for tertiary training in forestry; greater however would be the commendation had they recommended Waikato as the most suitable location.

L.R. Broad

Focus on skills

Sir,

It is my sincere hope that everyone remotely concerned with the profession of forestry carefully read the recent article on education in forestry by Dr Geoff Sweet. Given the accelerating rate of State and private industry resource management reorganization, it is timely and vital that we focus on the skills that both new graduate apprentices and existing staff require during this evolution.

Surely if the Institute is to currently put energy and money into addressing any ‘national’ issue it should be to widely canvass its members on the issues of:

• The standards and achievement levels to recognize of available tertiary forestry education in New Zealand.

From Centennial Contact March 1987.

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Sir,

North Westland. Noted. There was no methodology in this information is worth the effort of searching the blue-crown, though Bill Gimblett probably did once spot an orange-wattled one, in reasonable degree of certainty. Never a blue-crown. It is this forester's opinion that the time has come to address these questions frankly and with good kiwi ingenuity. I believe that much of our passion for such specialized training as logging engineering and marketing is far better satisfied by internal industry and short-term overseas training followed by some form of Institute recognition of achievement.

Finally as one who has somewhat neglected the Institute, I would gladly help the Institute survey members to determine the need for continuing education, and in what subject areas.

I have travelled enough to appreciate that New Zealand's plantation forest management is the best in the world. We've gotten there by being innovative through both our management and research. This lead will be maintained only if we recognize the need to apply some of this inspiration to our own education system's urgent needs.

D. New, Chief Forester, Tasman Forestry Limited

Birds and National Forest Survey

Sir,

May I add a little to Priestley Thomson's letter? About 1950—halfway through the ten years of National Forest Survey—some field party leaders began to regularly record birds seen or heard on or about sample plots, and this was later done by all leaders during the Ecological Survey of North Island. Field party leaders began to regularly record birds seen or heard on or about sample plots, and this was later done by all leaders during the Ecological Survey of North Island. The affordable degree of specialized education required of the University of Canterbury School of Forestry. The location of the School of Forestry which truly gives the largest possible teaching resource and integration with the industry it serves.

The role of the School of Forestry, Forestry Training Centre and Institute in serving the needs of current education. It is this forester's opinion that the time has come to address these questions frankly and with good kiwi ingenuity. I believe that much of our passion for such specialized training as logging engineering and marketing is far better satisfied by internal industry and short-term overseas training followed by some form of Institute recognition of achievement.

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Breeding Eucalypts

Sir,

I was interested to read Mike Carson's article on the Pinus radiata breeding programme (Vol. 31/4) and the emphasis he placed on selection for a range of traits, including wood properties. I believe a greater emphasis is needed in the Eucalypt breeding programme.

Scientists from the Tree Improvement Section of FRI have established trial areas over both Islands to sort out the "best" provenances of eucalypts for milling. The species are limited to those of most promise. But what is "best"? There will obviously be assessments for stem straightness, branch size and the ability to bud branches early, but most emphasis appears to be on height growth and diameter. In other words, volume.

As these trials are to sort out the eucalypts to produce timber, surely high emphasis should be on the outturn of good grades of No. 1 class sawn timber, rather than overall volume. Having sawn timber out of home-grown eucalypts for some 30 years, I have found that timber from certain species milks better than others. This indicates that good timber outturn is heritable; there can be no argument about that. Furthermore, one is very aware of great variations in sawing quality within species. South African growers have been aware of this for many years, and Marsh, whom I corresponded with some 30 years ago, put E. grandis through a series of trials over four generations (E. grandis appears to seed at around seven years), eliminating seed of all young trees which end-checked badly at each trial. Eventually he told me his trees were noted and readily accepted at sawmills for "straight boards out of the seasoning stacks" (Pers. Comm.). Australian loggers are very aware that sometimes localized stands of trees within a species are "springy", ("Put 'em down the chute, Blue!" Our own experience suggests the Bartlett strain of E. saligna is superior to some other strains planted in this country. There are within this Auckland Bartletts stand two different grain types, one being highly figured and "wavy-grained", Thul-in (pers. comm.) contended that such grain was heritable. The second strain is one (included in the trials as FRI 119) that is fairly straight-grained but interlocked on the circumference. This produces very good cutting timber from F1 plantings. Both strains are notable for their good "wide board" cutting logs. I have, as a challenge, cut a number of 300 mm x 25 mm boards from 25-year trees of the F1 Bartletts-119 home-grown trees, e.g. Smith (Marton) and Jim Barr (Whakatane) would produce young trees of much more stable timber than the faster-growing provenances from the newer and perhaps from Kanganoo Valley, NSW.

I would therefore contend quite strongly that inheritance plays by far the most important part in the "mill-ability" of eucalypt trees. Should we not then be saving seed or clonal material from the best of our sawing trees as we cut them?

I would like to suggest that when those trials of E. saligna-botryoides are being thinned to final spacings, some larger stems be allowed to dry out and the end shakes be evaluated. I would give 0.5 m, the foresters up each tree are precisely 1.1 m tall. Does FRI employ pigmies? Are they "a special-purpose radiata breed" of lightweight tree climbers? Or is this just a result of staff cuts?

John E. C. Flux

Pine Pygmies?

Sir,

The interesting paper by M. J. Carson on improving log and wood quality (Vol. 31/4: 26-30) has one curious feature: in Fig. 1, if L = 2.2 m and S = 0.5 m, the foresters up each tree are precisely 1.1 m tall. Does FRI employ pigmies? Are they "a special-purpose radiata breed" of lightweight tree climbers? Or is this just a result of staff cuts?

John E. C. Flux

Decision making

Sir,

A recent correspondent (Mr I.L. Barton, 31(3):13-14) alluded to and somewhat casually criticized a paper written by us. Since Mr Barton did not name the paper to which he was referring, we shall — it was: "Economic analysis of selected special-purpose species regimes" by R.Y. Cavana