The world's biggest *Pinus coulteri*

Sir,

My letter in the February 2003 edition of the Journal suggested that Southland may possess the world's largest *Pinus coulteri.* The claim has not been challenged so far by anyone in New Zealand but some figures sent to me from the USA hint that the international claim may be debatable.

Mr Bill McKinnie, a consulting forester from Corvallis, Oregon, emailed me on the subject to say that his dendrology book indicates that coulteri in the USA typically reaches a height of 40 to 50 feet, with a diameter of 15 to 30 inches, adding that he had 'a cryptic note suggesting that it might grow to as large as 144 feet and 5 feet dbh' – but no specific tree mentioned. He had also contacted a Mr Maynard Dawson, another Oregonian, whose 'passion in life is locating large trees'. Mr Dawson mentioned that as of 5 or 6 years ago the largest coulteri that he knew of was on record as 17.5 feet in circumference and 80 feet in height'.

So far so good, but then Bill came back with another, from the Dendrology Professor at Oregon State University. According to him the largest US coulteri is in San Diego, California. Its measurements are 152 inches in circumference (1.23 m diameter), 141 feet in height (43 m), with a crown spread of 72 feet (22 m). That leaves Southland a little short on height (41.5 m) but with a more impressive waistline (1.5 m). I think we may have to check that height.

John Purey-Cust

recent news

Software helps planners show compliance for certification criteria

Moira Finn
Communications Manager, Remsoft Inc

Canadian software developer Remsoft Inc. has released a major upgrade to its forest management software system that will benefit organisations trying to show compliance with forest certification criteria.

The upgrade to Remsoft's Spatial Planning System - comprised of three software packages, Woodstock, Spatial Woodstock and Stanley - is a major boost for forest product companies and public agencies. These organisations are under mounting pressure to demonstrate they are preserving wildlife habitat, sustaining biodiversity levels, protecting watersheds and recreational sites and considering the aesthetic of the forest – all while conducting harvesting and other interventions on the forest landscape. The ability to demonstrate that harvesting and related activities are being carried out at sustainable levels and in support of other forest values is a major component of forest certification programs such as SFI, FSC, CSA and ISO. The vast majority of forest product companies and other private land owners in New Zealand and elsewhere are registered for one or more of these programs.

What makes forest management planning enormously complex is the fact that planners typically have to consider vast areas of land and all the relationships of things on the land, over long periods of time – all of which is represented by millions of data records. What planners and analysts have to do is harness all this data and formulate plans that meet their commercial objectives but do so sustainably.

The new versions of the Remsoft Spatial Planning System – Stanley version 5, Spatial Woodstock version 3.25 and Woodstock version 3.25 – include a number of new tools that give analysts greater control in the creation of management plans and more insight in to how to revise plans, making it easier to balance competing objectives – such as timber yields and long-term sustainability targets.

This release marks a tighter integration of the three complementary software packages and new and existing users of the System will enjoy the enhanced performance of having a single interface instead of having to move back and forth amongst the software packages to perform certain tasks.

To learn more about the Remsoft Spatial Planning System please visit the Remsoft Web site at www.remsoft.com.

Senior Scholarship award

NZIF student member Krysta Giles-Hansen, in the final year of a joint BForSc/BSc degree, has been awarded a University of Canterbury Senior Scholarship. These scholarships are awarded to the top 25 final year honours students across the university.