

# Wilding Conifers:

## WHY THEY HAVE TO GO

*Wilding Conifers spread rapidly and convert open land into unwanted forest. This means:*

- tussock landscapes are threatened
- native flora and fauna are smothered out
- wetlands can be dried up and river flows reduced
- pasture for stock grazing is reduced
- controlling fire in wilding forests is difficult and very expensive

### *What it costs us all*

Environment Canterbury spends \$230,000 a year of ratepayers money on eliminating wilding conifers.

Property owners also spend a lot of money eradicating trees. The longer the trees have to grow, the more money it costs:

Tree size	Age years	Tree density	Control costs /ha
Small (0-1 metres)	0-3	50	\$10
Medium (3 to 6m)	5-8	1500	\$3,000
Large (8-15m)	Greater than 15	5000	\$10,000

### *Key facts*

- Conifer seeds are spread by wind
- Most seeds are dropped within 200 metres of the parent tree, but seeds from trees on high windy ridge tops can be blown 20 km
- Seeds last only 3 to 5 years in the soil - so eradication is more achievable than for gorse or broom

For more information visit  
[www.ecan.govt.nz](http://www.ecan.govt.nz)







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## THE PROBLEM TREES

*Spreading vigour varies according to species competitiveness, palatability and seed production and weight.*

Species	Spreading Vigour	Worst Offenders
Lodgepole pine ( <i>Pinus contorta</i> ) <small>illegal to plant</small>		
Scots pine ( <i>P. sylvestris</i> )		
Mountain pine ( <i>P. mugo/uncinata</i> )		
Douglas fir ( <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> )		
Corsican pine ( <i>P. nigra</i> )		
European larch ( <i>Larix decidua</i> )		

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## WHAT CAN I DO?

*Actions you can take to help protect our iconic landscapes from the spread of wilding conifers*

### *As a landowner:*

- Use risk calculator to assess likelihood of spread before doing new planting (take a copy)
- Avoid planting on ridges and slopes exposed to strong winds. Avoid planting upwind of undeveloped or lightly grazed land
- Plant a buffer of less spread prone species such as *P.radiata* or *ponderosa* around the plantation margins

### *Control priorities*

- Eliminate *Pinus contorta* from your land (including shelterbelts)
- Remove seed producing trees first
- Remove isolated scattered trees asap - it will never be cheaper
- Target larger trees before they seed

**Tip:** Intensive sheep grazing helps control small seedlings

### *As a member of the community:*

- Support your local land owners in their efforts to remove trees
- Help with volunteer removal days

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