

Wilding Tree Control – Flock Hill Station June 2008

Background

The Canterbury Regional Council (Ecan) allocated the sum of \$15,000 for the control of wilding trees on Flock Hill Station. Errol Barnes of Ecan asked Dean Turner (Department of Conservation) to manage the contract on Flock Hill Station. Ecan wanted to utilise existing Department contractors and documentation.

The wilding pine control company Independent Environmental Contracting was used for this contract.

Site

After discussions and a site visit with Errol Barnes the site identified for control was the Western Ridge Control Block (Site 'I', Priority 1) as identified in the Wilding Conifer Management Report for Flock Hill Station prepared by Darrin Woods. This is a west facing slope ranging in height from about 900m amsl to 1128m amsl. The higher take-off part of the block was targeted as there was insufficient funding to control the entire block.

Access

Richard and Anna Hill of Flock Hill Station were consulted about access to the site. They advised they did not want large vehicles operating on the farm track. Access was by ATV along a farm track to the base of the hill on which the block is located. Contractors then had to walk uphill for approximately 40 minutes to reach the block.

Control Methods

A combination of chainsaw, scrub bar and hand pulling techniques were used on the trees in this block. Scrub bar work was charged out at a higher rate but the efficiencies gained in higher productivity using this method far out weighed the additional cost.

HSE

Independent Environmental Contracting provided a comprehensive company HSE safety manual and associated documentation including hazard identification, emergency procedures, safety meeting minutes and accident reporting procedures.

The contractors were given a Departmental HSE induction before work commenced on site (form attached). There were no accidents, incidents or near misses reported. The crew were audited for safety equipment and safe working techniques on two occasions during the contract (form attached).

Duration of Contract

The crew started on Wednesday 11th of June and finished on Thursday 26th June. A list of hours worked each day is attached. The crew did a total of 352.25 person hours on this job. This includes 120.25 hours on scrub bar, 150 hours on chainsaw and 82 hours using hand tools or accessing the site.

Issues

The start date was delayed several times due to other work commitments for the crew, and then snow on the ground on the control block. This snow covered small seedlings

on the ground on parts of the block which will have been missed. This was deemed acceptable given the site will need to be revisited within the next 4 – 5 years.

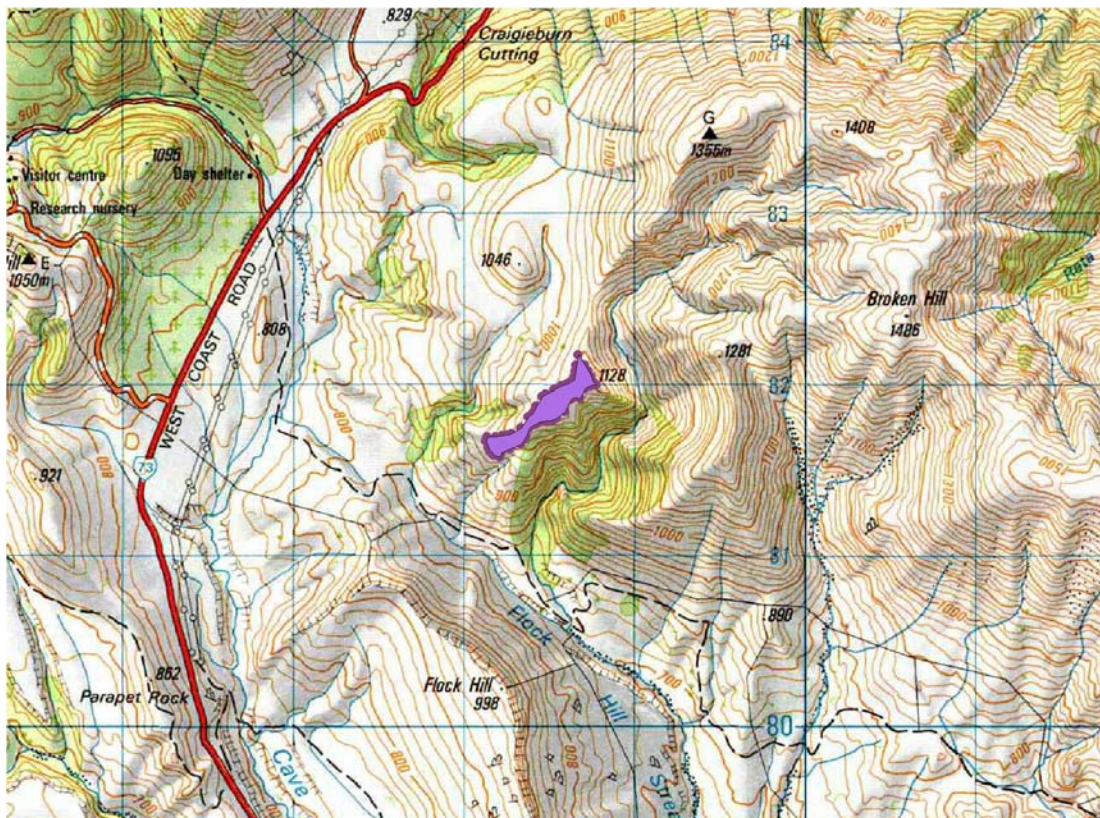
The funding provided was insufficient to cover the entire block so the higher slope on the block was targeted. The contractors worked in some pretty horrendous conditions and it is a credit to them that they achieved what they did.

Site Visits

Several visits were made to the site before and during the contract. Errol Barns visited the area with the contract supervisor to formulate an action plan for the site. Two visits were made to check the snow conditions on the ground to see if the contractors could access the site. The contractors were visited on site four times to check progress, work quality, safety and to sort out any issues that may have arisen.

Area Covered

The area controlled was 7.571ha, this works out to \$1981.24 per ha. The area highlighted in purple on map 1 below is the area controlled.



MAP 1

Dean Turner
August 2008

Wilding Tree Control – Flock Hill Station Nov/Dec 2008

Background

The Canterbury Regional Council (Ecan) allocated the sum of \$15,000 for the control of wilding trees on Flock Hill Station. Errol Barnes of Ecan asked Dean Turner (Department of Conservation) to manage the contract on Flock Hill Station. Ecan wanted to utilise existing Department contractors and documentation.

The wilding pine control company Independent Environmental Contracting Limited was used for this contract.

Site

After discussions with Errol Barnes the site identified for control was the Western Ridge Control Block (Site 'I', Priority 1) as identified in the Wilding Conifer Management Report for Flock Hill Station prepared by Darrin Woods. Part of this site was controlled last year. This is a west facing slope ranging in height from about 900m amsl to 1128m amsl. The higher take-off part of the block was targeted as there was insufficient funding to control the entire block.

Access

Richard and Anna Hill of Flock Hill Station were consulted about access to the site. They advised they did not want large vehicles operating on the farm track. Access was by ATV along a farm track to the base of the hill on which the block is located. Contractors then had to walk uphill for approximately 45 minutes to reach the block.

Control Methods

A combination of chainsaw, scrub bar and hand pulling techniques were used on the trees in this block. Scrub bar work was charged out at a higher rate but the efficiencies gained in higher productivity using this method far out weighed the additional cost. The scrub bars had a chemical application unit attached that can apply chemical to the cut stump.

HSE

Independent Environmental Contracting provided a comprehensive company HSE safety manual and associated documentation including hazard identification, emergency procedures, safety meeting minutes and accident reporting procedures.

The contractors were given a Departmental HSE induction before work commenced on site (form attached). There were no accidents, incidents or near misses reported. The crew were audited for safety equipment and safe working techniques during the contract (form attached).

Duration of Contract

The crew started on Wednesday 26th of November and finished on Wednesday 10th December. A list of hours worked each day is attached. The crew did a total of 330.5 person hours on this job. This includes 148 hours on scrub bar, 108 hours on chainsaw and 74.5 hours using hand tools or accessing the site.

Issues

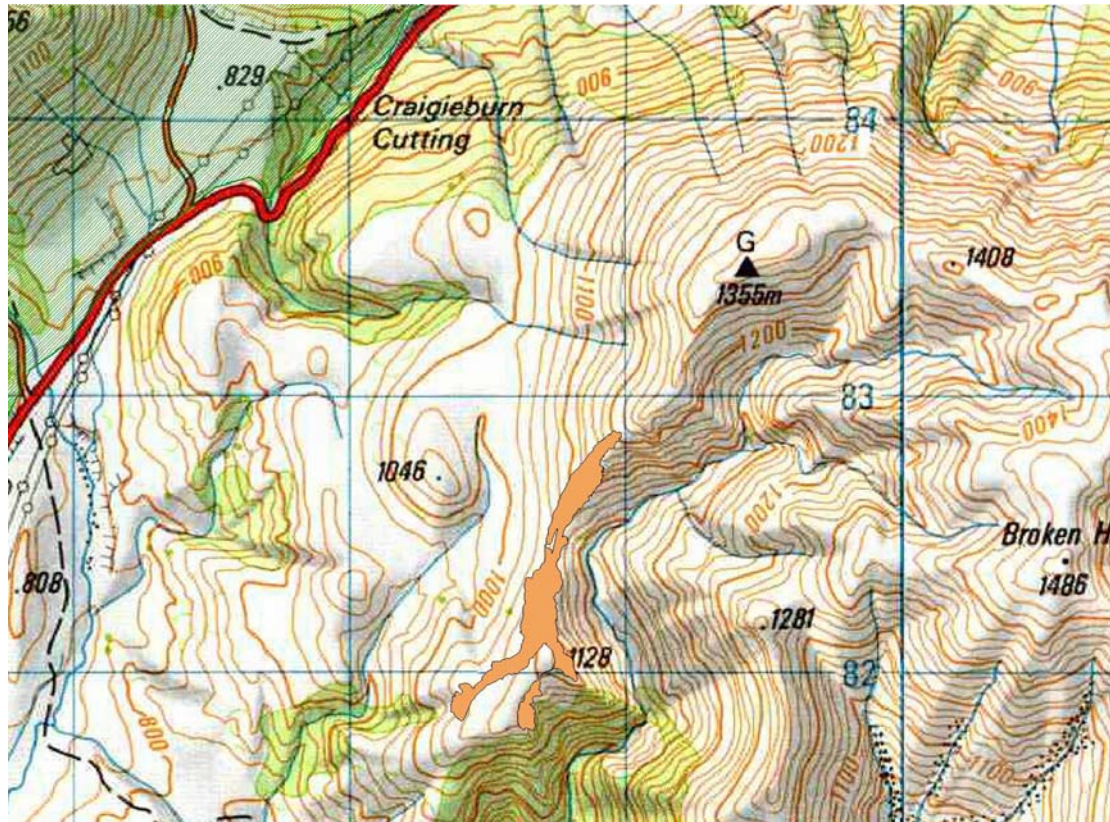
Scrub bars that were set up to spray cut stumps with herbicide were trialled on this site. This was discussed with the Station manager and they were happy for herbicide to be used. The herbicide used was Metsulfuron methyl (600g/kg) used at a rate of 10 grams per litre. The contractor claims the use of scrub bars is about twice as fast as the use of chainsaws (on the right size trees at appropriate sites) and the use of herbicide to spray cut stumps made this method twice as fast again.

Site Visits

The contractors were visited on site to monitor progress, work quality, safety and to sort out any issues that may have arisen.

Area Covered

The area controlled was 10.62 ha, this works out to \$1412.43 per ha. The area highlighted in brown on Map 1 below is the area controlled.



Map 1

Dean Turner
July 2009