

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME 2026

Collective Action, Future Impact:
Partnering for resilient, wilding-free landscapes



TUESDAY 11 AUGUST – ASCOT PARK HOTEL, INVERCARGILL

Time	Session	Speaker
Welcome to Murihiku/Waihōpai, Invercargill		
7:15	Registration. Please arrive promptly and be seated by 8am	
8:00	Welcome from WPN & housekeeping and safety briefing	Ket Bradshaw & Jo Ritchie, Wilding Pine Network (WPN)
8:10	Ngāi Tahu Mana Whenua welcome Stories of Māori travel and significant sites	Michael Skerrett, Waihōpai Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
8:30	Address	Hon. Andrew Hoggard, Minister for Biosecurity
Local wilding context		
8:45	Southland situation overview	Jolie Hazley, Environment Southland
9:05	20 years on – Mid Dome reflections and current state	Ali Ballantine & Richard Bowman, Mid Dome Wilding Tree Charitable Trust
9:15	Southland District experiences and challenges	Rob Scott, Mayor, Southland District Council
9:30	Wilding management from an ex-CE’s and community group leader’s perspective	Rob Phillips, Chair, Upper Clutha Wilding Tree Group
9:40	Governance Group perspective	John Walsh, NWCCP Governance Group Chair, Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ)
9:50	Question time	Jo Ritchie, WPN
10:00	Morning tea	
Forestry		
10:40	The farm forestry experience	Neil Cullen, NZ Farm Forestry Assn.
11:00	Forestry in Southland – industry perspectives	Rachel Millar, NZ Forest Owners Assn.
11:10	Wilding Tree Risk Calculator	Te Uru Rākau NZ Forest Service (MPI) / Bioeconomy Science Institute (BSI)
11:20	Wilding seed dispersal	Matt Scott, BSI
11:30	Case study around wilding management in Glendhu and West Dome plantation forests	Hamish Fitzgerald, Matariki Forests
11:40	Southern Environmental Working Group	Aidan Braid, Te Uru Rākau
11:50	Carbon forestry 101	Mark Belton, Permanent Forests NZ
12:00	Question time	



Contractor's Panel		
12:10	Challenges, innovations, opportunities and question time	Adam Ross, Biosecurity New Zealand
12:40	Lunch	
The Community Voice		
1:30	1. Hawkes Bay Wilding Pine Control	1. Alexia Hamelink, HBWPCT
	2. Attack on the conifer - an iwi-led initiative	2. Melanie Dalziel & Des Greer, Ngāti Kuri
	3. Community funding option	3. Peter Hore, Central Otago farmer
	4. Douglas fir in beech forest – the control challenge	4. Hamish Hutton, DOC & Aaron Watson, Central Tree & Landcare Services
	5. The role of the community coordinator	5. Haeleigh Turner, Wilding Free Mackenzie
	6. Landowner assistance days	6. Aimee Pitcher, Central Otago Wilding Conifer Control Group
2:45	Question time	
3:00	Afternoon tea	
Farming		
3:30	DOC grazing trial	Connor Hines, DOC
3:40	A farmer's perspective	Jeff Keen, Tomogalak Gorge/Mid Dome Trust Trustee
3:50	Wilding management on large farms	Luke Wright, Pamū Lower South Island
4:00	Impacts on QE2 reserves from wildings	Jesse Bythell, QE2 Trust
4:10	Federated Farmers update	Jim Ward, High Country Industry Group, Federated Farmers
4:20	The science on suppressing wildings on farms	Duane Peltzer, BSI
4:30	Question time	
4:40	Day one ends	
6:00	Mid Dome Trust celebration - The Mid Dome Wilding Tree Charitable Trust warmly invites you to share some nibbles as they celebrate their 20 th Anniversary. Please RSVP when you register to secure a space at this small celebration.	



**NATIONAL WILDING CONIFER
CONTROL PROGRAMME**



Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



**Wilding Pine
Network**



WEDNESDAY 12 AUGUST – MURIHIKU, SOUTHLAND

We thank the Programme Partners in Murihiku Southland for their input and support for the field trips. As always at conference, the aim is to showcase the challenges of wilding management in our regions and show what is being done on all fronts.

For those not taking part in a field trip, we recommend taking in some sights around Invercargill, including Motupōhue Bluff Hill where wilding work has been done in the past. Consider supporting local business and enjoy what the local area has to offer.

Field trip times are included below:

Please note:

1. 4WDs will be limited to those organised by WPN.
2. Lunch will be provided.
3. There will be convenience stops along the way.
4. You will be advised if you need to complete a Matariki online HSE prior to conference.
5. Detailed run sheet and specific wardrobe and a safety requirements will be provided.

Field Trip 1: Takitimu & West Dome

\$65 per person

Assemble 6:45am outside the Ascot Park Hotel & collect packed lunch

A stunningly scenic bus ride that takes in three unique Southland landscapes being impacted by Douglas fir. Hear about the joint community, farming and forestry efforts to slow the invasion: Te Waiau Mahika Kai Trust restoration project, visit the Wilderness Reserve - a pine bog community saved by removal of shelterbelts but still under threat.

Includes West Dome visit.

Field Trip 2: Mid & West Dome

\$140 per person

Assemble 7:00am outside the Ascot Park Hotel – lunch provided during the trip

Take a short helicopter ride over Northern Southland. See and hear how after 20-years' work by the Mid Dome Wilding Tree Charitable Trust and farmers, their victory against Contorta is being stolen by Douglas fir.

Includes West Dome visit.

West Dome: Both trips will include a visit by 4WD via Matariki Forest to West Dome, a forestry plantation adjoining a conservation reserve where the legacy Contorta battle has been won, and yet where this ultramafic reserve is impacted by Douglas fir wildings – hear how the neighbouring foresters are working hard to reduce spread and the challenges they and the Department of Conservation face.

6:00pm – 10:00pm

Conference dinner at Ascot Park Hotel



THURSDAY 13 AUGUST – ASCOT PARK HOTEL, INVERCARGILL

Time	Session	Speaker
8:00	Arrive	
8:15	<i>Field trip question time</i>	Jo Ritchie
National Programme and planning for the future		
8:30	National Programme update	Sherman Smith, Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ)
8:45	National Strategy refresh update	Andrew Harrison, Andrew Harrison Consulting
8:55	DOC national update	Sandra Wotherspoon, DOC
9:05	How a Pine Population Model can support long-term planning in wilding control	Rebecca Turner, Bioeconomy Science Institute
9:15	Regional pest management plan reviews (RPMPs)	Panel discussion
9:35	<i>Question time</i>	
Drones		
9:45	Drones for wildings	Scott Spooner, SPS Automation
9:55	Drones – advancing skill and technology	Khan Adam, Provision
10:05	<i>Question time</i>	Adam Ross, BNZ
10:15	Morning tea	
Research		
10:45	Biocontrol	Ronny Groenteman, BSI
10:55	Safe fire management	Craig Chambers & Darrin Woods, Fire & Emergency New Zealand
11:10	Fire as a tool for wilding control: Evidence from two case studies	Shana Gross, BSI
11:20	Research panel	Jennifer Agaldo, BNZ
11:40	<i>Question time</i>	
Fundraising		
11:50	South Marlborough fundraising experience	Ket Bradshaw & Hayleigh McCairns, South Marlborough Landscape Restoration Trust
12:00	WPN fundraising national strategy	Ket Bradshaw & Jo Ritchie, WPN
12:10	<i>Question time</i>	



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Restoration		
12:15	Craigieburn Restoration Trust: After the fire	Nick Ledgard, Craigieburn Restoration Trust
12:25	Revegetation 101	Arne Cleland, Upper Clutha Wilding Tree Group
12:35	Mō Tātou, Mō Kā Uri — Ko Wai Ka Kawe? <i>For us, for the descendants — who will carry it?</i>	Julia Rata-Te Raki, Kati Huirapa ki Puketeraki / Taha Tika Taiao
12:45	Rotoroa Island – 18 years from shelterbelt removal	Jo Ritchie, WPN
12:55	Question time	
Closing		
1:05	Sponsors' spot	
	Prizegiving	Marcus Girvan, Boffa Miskell
1:20	Karakia kai & closing	Ket Bradshaw and Jo Ritchie, WPN & Sherman Smith, BNZ
1:30	Lunch – Conference end	

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