

**ROCKLANDS ROAD WEEDBUSTERS
PROJECT 2 – FIRST NEWSLETTER DEC 2010**

Welcome to the first newsletter of the properties on the lower side of Rocklands Road and including properties from Bird's Road through to Packards Road.

Firstly, thank you to those that came to the meeting a few weeks ago at the DOC offices. It was heartening to meet and talk with so many of you. It has reinforced the same story again that on your own the fight against reinfestation by pest vines is overwhelming and success can only occur when we get together and work as a group to really stop the seed production and respread to our neighbours far and wide.

COMMUNITY AWARD

The Rocklands Road Weedbusters project was entered into the environment awards given out by the combined Nelson City and Tasman District councils in the Community category. The councillors who came to look at it were very impressed with the logistics of the mapping, plant counting and GPS tracking that we are using to make sure we are being effective with our work. As you have probably seen in the paper last week, we co-won. It was very pleasing to be recognised for all this work and a big thank you to you all for being part of such a large scheme and all the contributions you and the support team at DOC, TDC and Forest and Bird have made to make it a success. The bonus for us in winning the award is that we received a cheque for \$500. This is very timely as we need some \$ to get the assessments of the properties underway.

ASSESSMENTS

We are now at the next stage to apply for the grant, which involves producing a report to quantify the amount of work that needs to be done. Two members of our weed team, Brian Alder and / or Sarah Sherrat, will be visiting all the properties over the next few weeks. They will try and contact you beforehand to arrange a suitable time to assess the extent and types of vines on your property. Hopefully this will go smoothly. For those properties that are unoccupied, we will presume that it is ok to visit, unless we hear from you shortly. We managed to do it with the first project in one day, but because of the number and extent of the properties, it will take a few. This assessment not only helps with the reporting, but sets up a framework that the weed team can use when they come back to start the clean up. Any help you can give with showing them around will be great and any tracks that you can keep clear or open up will make the whole process so much easier. They can give some advice at the same time and have also proposed showing the land carer the methods being used by the weed team to (poison) destroy the vines most effectively.

This can also be done when the team starts work on your property.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION & AGREEMENT SHEET

Most of you have given me the sheet of paper which states the number of hours which you or others on your property have worked on pest vines. The hours and \$ contributions are adding up well and with those outstanding to add in, the figures hopefully will be close to what we are going to need to do the work. This will become evident when the assessments are finished. I will be contacting you soon if you haven't returned the sheet yet, BUT, please do not stop yet! It is almost a year before we can get the \$'s, assuming we get the funding and any effort between now and April, when the application goes in will also be counted. I will send a reminder in March for you to send me a final hours and \$'s up date of your efforts between when you filled in the sheet and then. We are covering a lot of properties and any seedlings you can pull or bigger vines you can cut and poison will be helping the work load later. I still have Vigilant available for top ups of the dispenser, or you can use concentrated glyphosphate 1:3 with water, on the cut vines straight after cutting.

WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

The report, as the Forest and Bird Secretary said, is so big and asks for so many details that managing to fill it in correctly should justify receiving the funding!

We are in communication with the DOC office that administers the fund and we do fit all the criteria, but a big part of the process for them is good documentation. Assessments, community involvement, GPS mapping and vine counting etc are important to them.

We also need to organise reports from the various groups that support us:- DOC, TDC, Forest and Bird, QEII trust and finally a botanist as to the importance of helping re-establish the native flora of this area and the property's interconnection with the various DOC reserves and QEII covenants nearby.

OTHER NEWS

One property has employed two members of the weed team to do a complete sweep of their property and deal with any vines they found. Another property owner, who lives abroad, has just started the same process. This is very much appreciated and means that in a year's time the weed team will be able to help with any missed mature vines and the inevitable seedlings. It also boosts the \$ amount of what we can apply for. Project 1 (Rocklands Rd topside) receives its next \$ payment in early Feb and the team will resume work at the northern end. Project 3 (Pohara) will have its first core group meeting in the New Year to establish the boundaries and quantify the numbers of properties needing help.

We want to wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year.

Cheers

Chris Rowse