



Sustainable Land Nelson is a programme of work aimed at encouraging sustainable land use in Nelson, with a focus on how we care for our soils. As well as soil health monitoring, the programme involves working in partnership and collaboration with landowners involved in forestry and farming, and with small block owners who want to manage their land better, particularly in the rural area.

Approximately 30% of Nelson's land area is in native forest, 30% is in productive forestry, and 30% under pasture. Less than 10% of our land is in urban/residential land use – but here too, it is important to sustainably manage the land we have. Limited resources like water and soil are critical for the future health of our land and our communities.



Jobs for Nature starting the mahi in the Mahitahi

Project Mahitahi is well underway, with Jobs for Nature funding being used to employ staff to support habitat restoration in the Mahitahi/Maitai Valley.

A recent field trip for Department of Conservation staff showcased how Jobs for Nature is helping the COVID-19 recovery in Nelson, as well as contributing to biodiversity restoration in the catchment through planting trees and controlling pest plants and animals.

Currently roles are placed with six different employers in the region, with work going well.

Land Environment Plan workshop

In April our Sustainable Land Programme will host a workshop to help landowners develop land environment plans and improve the environmental outcomes stemming from small-scale forestry projects.

A land environment plan helps landowners identify problems such as soil erosion, weed and pest issues, and lays out a path towards addressing these issues by, for example, restoring degraded wetlands or planting more suitable species for their property in the long term.

If you're the owner of a small rural property and are interested in attending a workshop on developing a land environment plan for your property, please register your interest by sending an email with your contact details to asita.langi@ncc.govt.nz. Numbers for the workshop will be limited.

Pines to pittosporums

Establishing native forest on land that has previously been used for pine plantations is not as simple as it sounds.

There are numerous strategic and practical considerations for landowners undertaking native re-vegetation projects, including eligibility for the Emissions Trading Scheme, approaches to weed and pest control, nurse-species selection during the establishment phase, and planting plans for specific site location and conditions.

To support landowners undertaking such projects across the top of the South, Nelson City Council (on behalf of Nelson, Tasman District and Marlborough District Councils) has successfully applied for an Envirolink grant which will be used to develop regional guidelines for reverting clear-cut pine plantation land into native forest.

Forest ecologist Adam Forbes has been contracted to look at six case study sites across the region

where landowners are undertaking forestry reversion projects, to determine the most effective way of establishing native forest on clear-cut plantation forestry sites.

The two Nelson case study sites are a small private forestry owner looking to revert all plantation forestry on the property to natives, and a large forestry landowner looking at opportunities to improve the environmental outcomes of forestry operations.

The study will produce regionally specific guidelines and examples of successful forestry reversion projects that can be shared with landowners looking to undertake similar projects in future.

