



Reservoir Creek Forest Assessment November 2007

Abstract

This site is approximately 25 hectares and is centred on the Reservoir Creek gully system in Richmond. The study area stretches from the Reservoir up a broadly north facing hillside towards the ridgeline. A site visit was completed on the 29th of October 2007.

This assessment will document the ecological values using two approaches. The first involves determining the Ecological Significance using a process that has been widely used to assess indigenous habitats on private land for classification under the Resource Management Act 1991. This process uses the following criteria to assess an area: Representativeness, Rarity, Diversity and Pattern, Naturalness, Distinctiveness/special features, Size/ Shape and Connectivity.

The second is using Helmut Janssen's Bush Vitality Assessment as a basis for collecting data and displaying the summary results. The summary charts identify the key issues in terms of future management of the area.

The *Pinus radiata* plantation surrounding the native forest is due for harvest in 2008. The assessment highlights various existing vulnerabilities and outlines the possible impacts on the remaining forest by the removal of the Pines.

Key Issues and Recommendations will detail the need for ongoing management in order to retain and enhance the biodiversity values of the area. The approach taken to recommending management actions involves using natural processes where possible and minimising intervention by taking specific, targeted action where necessary. Fragmented pockets of lowland hill forest such as Reservoir Creek are extremely vulnerable. As such, stewards of these areas should be encouraged to realise the need for ongoing management.