



Reducing the willow pressure

Protecting Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere
freshwater wetlands

Living Lake Symposium – 2013
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Exotic grey and crack willow

- Major ecological weeds of freshwater wetland, riparian and lake shore habitats
- Cause major change in species composition and structure of native vegetation
- Between 1983 and 2007 willow increased from 67 ha to 170 ha





Willow control programme

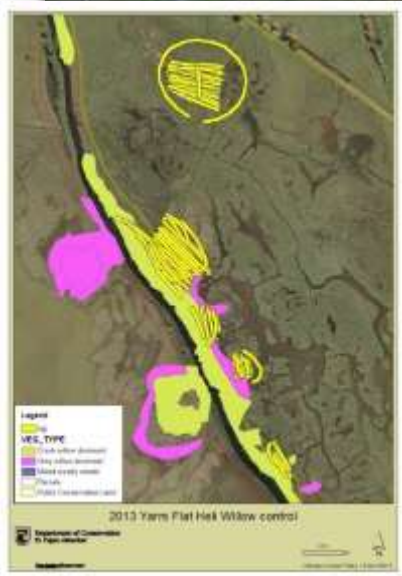


- Funding – ECan Immediate Steps Biodiversity
- Control Strategy - Aim = promote restoration of native plant dominance
- Focus sites – freshwater inflows on western shore on public conservation land
- Outliers and sparse and scattered individuals targeted and sites of highest ecological value



Willow control

- Ground and aerial control – contractors and DOC staff
- Treatments
 - a) helicopter - glyphosate and triclopr (Garlon)
 - b) ground - spray, cut and stump treat, drill and fill and basal treatment
- Treated 30 ha of public conservation land





Willow control – follow-up



- Repeat visits to treated sites
- Follow-up control of regrowth and new seedlings
- Continual refinement of control techniques



Monitoring



- Pre control monitoring January 2012
- Fourteen 5m x 5m vegetation plots established
- Aim =
 - a) assess effectiveness of control
 - b) assess non target damage
 - c) track recovery of native vegetation over time and
 - d) inform future willow operations
- Follow up monitoring planned for December 2013

Summary

- Te Waihora – a wetland ecosystem with significant natural and cultural values
- Willow now present within nearly 1/3rd of lakeshore freshwater wetlands
- Willow control programme is underway
- Through collaboration and partnerships we now have an opportunity to better manage our lakeshore wetlands

