



## Hill Country Erosion – Case Study 1

# Horizons Regional Council and the Hill Country Erosion Programme

Horizons region contains 1.5 million hectares of farmed hill country, one of the largest amounts for any region in New Zealand. However, farming is severely limited by erosion on some of this land, with over 270,000 hectares identified as high priority for erosion control that is currently unplanted.

Following the devastating storm event in the region in 2004, the Hill Country Erosion Programme was used to implement the Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI). This has been successful in treating erosion-prone land, and implementing changes at farm-scale across the region. Working with farmers to identify risks and opportunities within their farm businesses has been the key to successful adoption of changes in practices over time.

Historically these changes have been aimed at targeting erosion, but have had much wider benefits to the environment and economy. For example, trees planted by the SLUI contribute carbon sequestration under New Zealand's international climate change accords. They also make better economic use of marginal land within farms.

The SLUI has a large network of farms and strong alignment with the Government's goal of establishing one billion trees.

Forestry is a viable economic and sustainable land use for much of the Horizon region's hill country. Over the past 10 years the SLUI has planted 15.9 million trees, creating around 13,600 hectares of new forests across the region. This includes planting mānuka and a range of alternative forest species, such as redwoods and cypress.

### Through the Sustainable Land Use Initiative, the Horizons region has:

- planted 13,600 hectares of new forests;
- treated a total of 34,000 hectares through new planting reversion, riparian strips, etc;
- planted around 15.9 million trees;
- identified more than 270,000 hectares as high priority for treatment.

### Funding to date:

- **MPI funding to date:** \$18.25 million since 2007.
- **Co-funding (council and landowners):** \$62.5 million since 2007.



Aerial view of the erosion on land north of Whanganui following the 2004 devastating storm event in the region.

[www.mpi.govt.nz/hill-country-erosion-programme](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/hill-country-erosion-programme)