

Newport Forest

November 5 2000

1:30 - 4:30 pm

**Weather:** cool 10C, light NW wind, mixed sun/cloud

**Purpose:** to prepare the fallen ash as a bridge

**Participants:** Kee, Nic

We parked the van by the “old log” and brought our tools and stepladder down the Fleming Creek Bluffs to the ford, where we crossed. We then followed the east bank of the creek to an old snag where the White Ash we intend to make into a bridge was leaning on the dead branches of the snag about 12 feet off the ground.

Nick climbed the snag with the aid of the stepladder, tied off the proximal end of the fallen Ash and proceeded to cut through the upper end of the tree. However, instead of falling directly down, eased by our rope arrangement, the top slipped only a foot or so, then came to rest against the snag, just below the crotch, and directly against the snag. This was not due to being suspended by the rope, as we found out, but to a very large lateral pressure component generated by the roots of the tree on the opposite bank; it “wanted to fall more to the north of the snag and it had been leaning against the south side of the snag. We had wanted it to come to rest on this side in order to resist downstream (northward) pressure from Fleming’s Creek during spring floods.

We proceeded to cut several major branches and managed to get the tree to skid past the crotch where it had been hanging, in order to fall more naturally on the north side of the snag. We secured the top against the base of the snag in order to prevent further northward sliding, then cut the remaining branches to produce a clean log, ready for the next phase of construction. To this end we measured the height (29”) of the centre of the log above the stream bed and half way across, as well as the circumference (32”) at this point.

We are therefore dealing with a log of diameter 10.2” at the middle of the stream, the bottom side of which is  $29 - 5.1 = 23.9$ ” above the stream bed. The Ash sags noticeably, however. To support the log and to prevent further sagging, we plan to dig a support log (or beam) into the stream bed at this point and to brace the mid-point of the bridge with this pier. It should be about 3’ long.