

Project Update: September 2005

The project has seen many noteworthy accomplishments over these past two months, and we are well underway in our exploration and documentation of this pilot rehabilitation activity in the Blue Mountain Peak area. Significantly, forty-six fruiting *Pittosporum* trees have been injected with the control treatment and begun to demonstrate senescent characteristics only 2 weeks after the treatment was administered.

The eradication of these adult trees has become a focal point of this rehabilitation process, as these trees have the capacity to fruit and produce millions of seeds for dispersal and increased invasion of the forests. Adjacent to each of these invasive trees that are eradicated, 2 native fast-growing forest trees (*Alchornea latifolia*) have been planted. A point to note is that in using this method of control, where the adult *Pittosporum* trees are allowed to die back over a period time, the sudden creation of large forest gaps will be avoided, as the time will allow for the establishment and growth of the replanted natives to replace the invasive removed.

In dealing with the regenerative phase of *Pittosporum*, the saplings (dbh < 3cm) have been cut down and their stems lightly painted with Roundup. Seedlings have been uprooted and disposed of at the City dump where the altitude is too low for the plant to establish itself.

Additionally, with help from the local Forestry Department, the density of *Pittosporum* in the area has been estimated at 71 stems per acre, before control treatments were administered.



Native forest tree seedling (*Alchornea latifolia*) planted to replace invasive *Pittosporum* tree that will die back after a few months