

Final Meet Report

Meet Report: MCSA Agtertafelberg Hack Weekend, 08 – 09 May 2026

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Area: Adjacent to MCSA Agtertafelberg Hut
hacked ~2.4 hectares; ~84 volunteer hours.

From 08 – 09 May 2026, a group of 14 volunteers worked for over 6 hours, with the main objective of pushing back the pine tree invasion on the ridges above the MCSA hut on Cape Nature land. The target area covered various terrains including steep mountain slopes, a river corridor and a gently sloping fynbos ridge.

The area is/was infested with pine trees, *Pinus pinaster*, varying in size from new growth to tall trees as per the list below.

V small pines	<1 year	< 200mm tall	hand pull	20%
Baby pines	1 – 2 years	200 – 400mm tall	2 hand pull	20%
Small pines	2 – 4 years	0,4 – 1.3 m tall	loppers	36%
Medium pines	4 – 8 years	1.3 – 2m tall	hand saws	20%
Big pines	8 – 30 years	2 – 15m tall	chainsaw	3%
Small hakea	1 – 4 years	0.2 – 1.5m tall	loppers	1%

The hack team met at the Fisanterkraal parking at 17:00 on Friday afternoon. 5 people walked to the hut while the rest drove up to the parking near to the hut with all the gear. By 18:30 we were all safely in the hut with a communal supper kindly prepared by Fiona Anderson. A safety and strategy briefing was held before retiring for an early night sleep.

Because of rain and wind, expected to arrive in the early hours of Sunday morning, the hack was cut short by 1 day. We got going at 8:00 on Saturday morning and were working the slopes by 9. We split up into two groups. The chainsaw group of 5 persons worked the large pines on the steep, north facing, slope while the rest tackled the smaller trees on the gentle sloping ridge on the north-western side of the 2.4 hectare block—see map, Figure 1.

The team sorted out over 6000 trees in 6 hours (total of 84 man hours) Most of the large pines were not cut down but were “ringed” – a process similar to girdling / ring-barking. See Figure 4.

The centre of the 2.4 ha hack site is in position:

33 deg 47 min 24.58sec S and 19 deg 08min 49.12sec E

Maps and Images

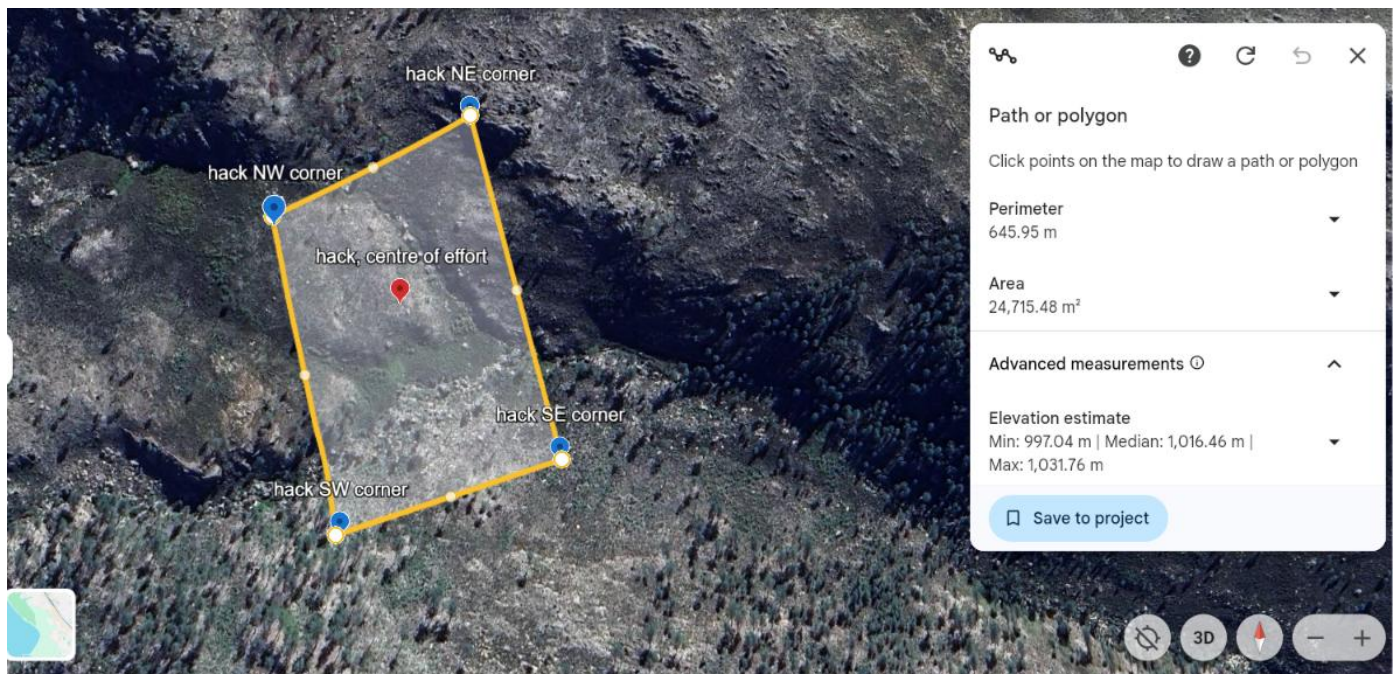


Figure 1: Detail View of Hack site.

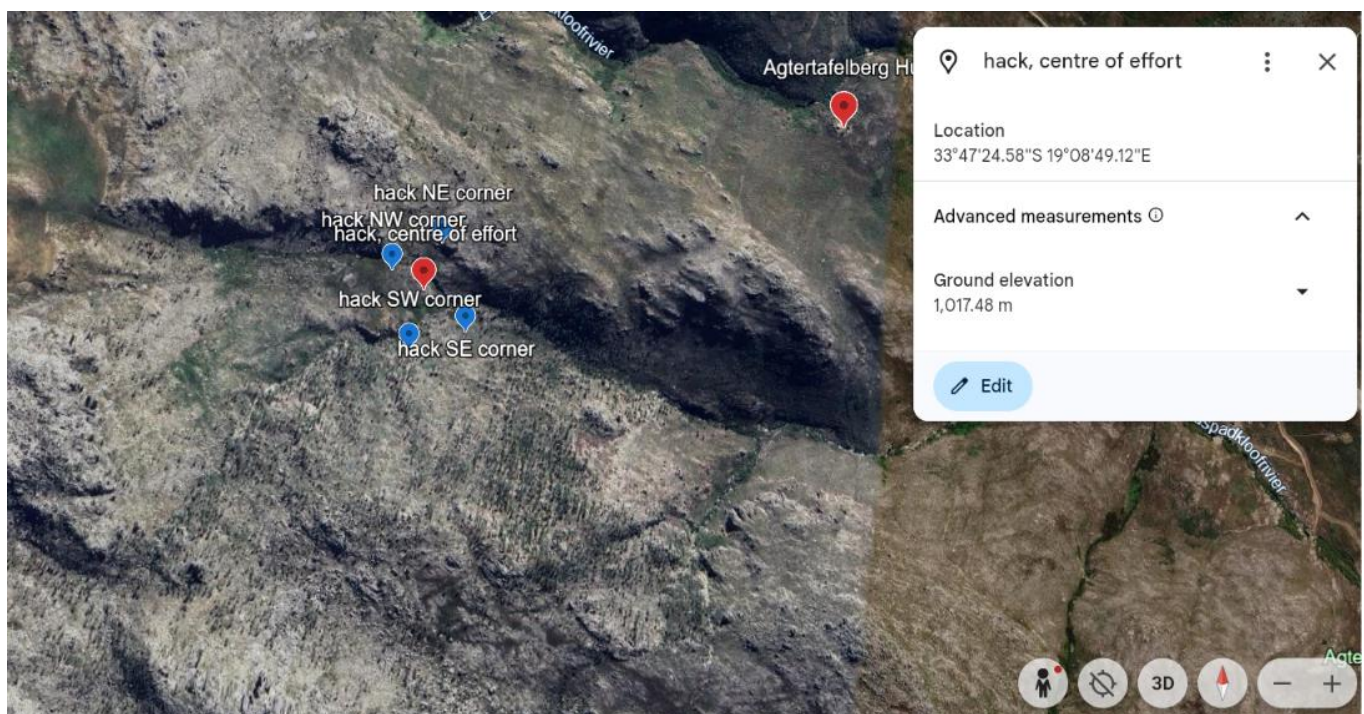


Figure 2 : Hack Site – overview, showing ATB hut



Figure 3: General area overview. (Note the close proximity to the Wemershoek pine plantation above the dam)

Pictures from hack weekend



Figure 4: “Ringing” of pine tree. Alastair and Karl inspecting the annular cut through the Cambium layer and deep into the Xylum.



Figure 5” Group at the ATB hut ready to go on a beautiful Saturday morning.



Figure 6: Main hack area infested with smal pines

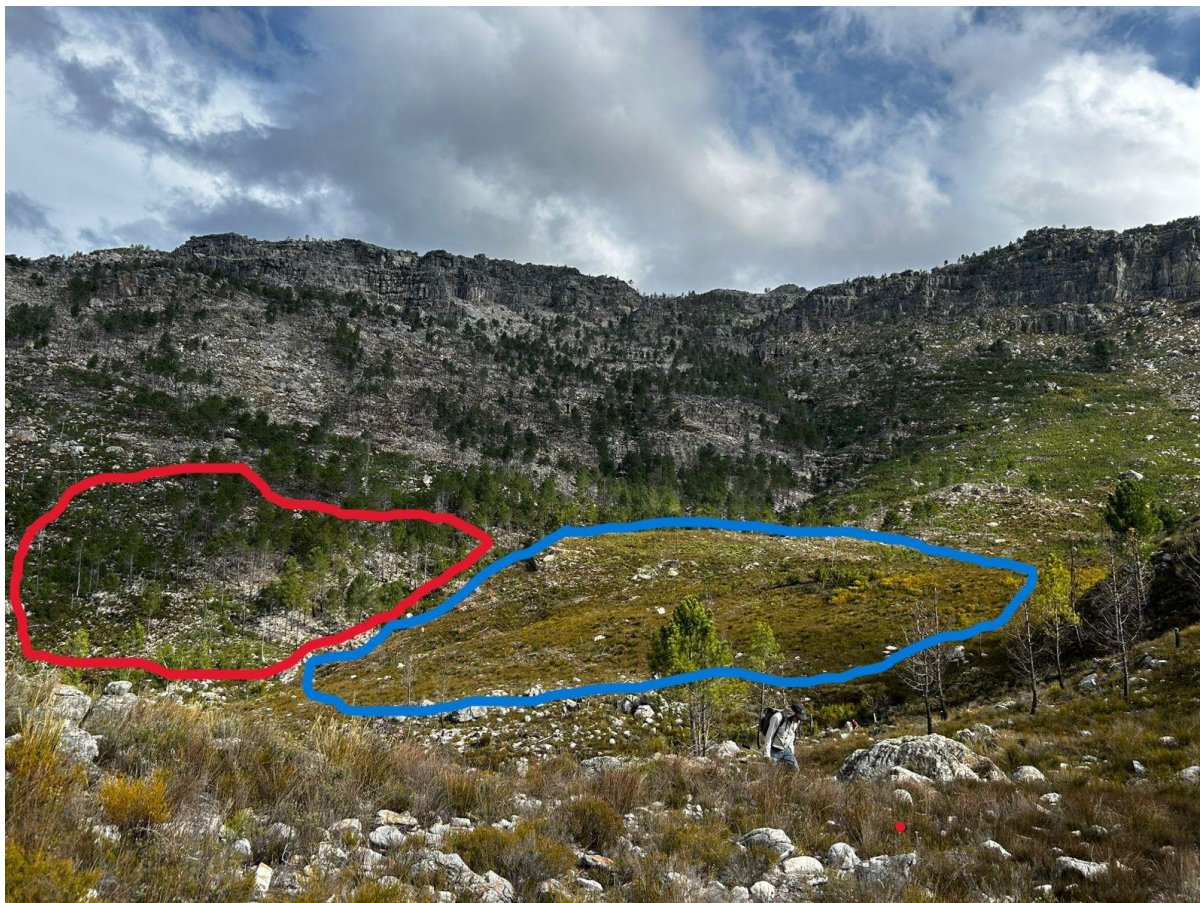


Figure 7: View after clearing small pines (blue area) and area where big pines were “Ringed” (red area)



