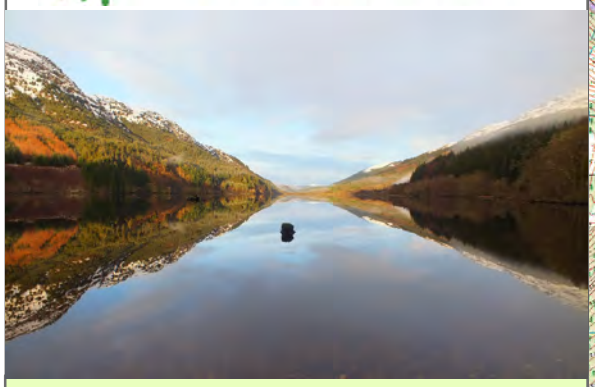
Forestry and Land Scotland | Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba



Loch Eck
Land Management Plan

M9 Opportunities & Constraints

Legend

Loch Eck Land Management Plan Boundary

Production & Roading Opportunities:
In terms of climate & soils, the site is ideally suited to commercial timber production with a range of species. Much of the road network is already in place.

Production & Roading Constraints:
PAWS areas and the SSSI occupy much of the more productive and accessible forest. Access is difficult in many areas which incurs high harvesting costs and makes thinning and CCF problematic. The linear and steep nature of the site leads to high roading costs per Ha. Maintenance costs are high. CCF options are limited by access issues and the likelihood that regeneration would be dominated by SS and WH. Rhododendron management within CCF systems can be very difficult.

Ecology & Designated Site Opportunities:
There is a good matrix of established NBL and restructuring to restore PAWS is already well advanced. Management access to the SSSI is facilitated by the forest road. The diverse conifer mix provides biodiversity, raptor nest sites and Red Squirrel habitat. Hard to access areas can be restored to NBL to provide protection forestry to reduce landslips and enhance water quality.

Ecology & Designated Site Constraints:
Extensive areas of WH regeneration are very difficult to control. Conversion to NBL with higher light levels favours the establishment of WH and Rhododendron. To maintain an element of productive forestry requires large areas of SS in close proximity to the SSSI with a lengthy margin due to the linear nature of the SSSI, and this creates long term management difficulties in terms of regeneration.

Landscape Opportunities:
Established diverse woodland with a high visual impact. Mixed woodland with a strong conifer element is the defining character of the landscape. Upper margin diverse and likely to become more so due to natural regeneration. Restructuring and PAWS restoration can enhance landscape

Landscape Constraints:
Felling coupe design is constrained by steep, rough slopes and past restructuring. Larch plays a key role in landscape quality with many areas planted on areas with problematic access, P.ramorum management suggests proactive felling of Larch ahead of further outbreaks. Larch as a planting option is no longer available, and this will have long term landscape impacts. Some groups of larch have margins that conflict with landform. Growth rates vary with altitude and together with the forest road layout and limited windfirm boundaries tends to lead to a tiering effect when restructuring takes

Recreational Opportunities:
The extensive road network required provides a good recreational facility with varied viewpoints from high elevation and a range of circular route options. Restructuring offers new transient viewpoints and a varied landscape. Opportunity at later restricting to enhance the setting of archaeology and features such as the Paper Caves.

Recreational Constraints:
Route closures may be required to facilitate safe harvesting.

Slope Stability Opportunities:
Wooded slopes are considered to be beneficial in terms of slope stability and can reduce adverse impacts on water quality and infrastructure including public roads, powerlines and forest roads. Windblow and dense WH regeneration can create very effective barriers to landslips and falling boulders.

Slope Stability Constraints:
Areas of WH on the lower slopes may conflict with conservation objectives. Restructuring can lead to a temporary increase in the risk of landslips. CCF options are very limited on site due to the nature of the crop and access issues.

Water Supply Opportunities:
Restructuring presents the opportunity to increase the resilience of riparian buffers and extend protection forestry areas to maintain and protect water quality and yield.

Water Supply Constraints:
Restructuring on steep slopes may create a short term increase in the risk of landslip and diffuse pollution.

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08/04/2018

Scale: 1:20,000 @ A3

Scotland's National Forest Estate is responsibly managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard