

5.1 Aims and Objectives (Land Management Plan Brief)

The table below details the aims and objectives agreed for the West Sutherland LMP area by North Region staff and external consultees during the scoping phase of the LMP revision and is the foundation upon which the management proposals are built:

| Regional (North Area) Aim | Land Management Plan Objective | Monitoring |
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| <p>To restore valuable peatland areas and create network of riparian and native woodland.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify afforested deep peat sites with the greatest conservation potential; secure their long term viability by woodland removal, drain and furrow blocking, and creating a protective broadleaf woodland buffer (riparian and/or native woodland) between open peatland and productive woodland that is restricted to mineral soils on suitable topography. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the felling proposals will be reviewed annually through the delivery of harvesting programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. Implementation of the future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish riparian woodland along major watercourses and native woodland at the forest blocks' boundaries and where it is likely to secure environmental benefit and/or improve the overall management of the forest. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services and our neighbours to develop a sustainable, landscape scale approach to deer management and promote the National Forest Estate (NFE) as an exemplar of best practice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deer management will be monitored and reported on using existing FES deer management protocols. |
| <p>To reduce flood risk in lower River Oykel catchment.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish riparian woodland along River Oykel and its tributaries, to increase water transpiration and slow water run-off. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. |
| <p>To restore and protect valuable ancient woodland sites.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor all planted ancient woodland sites and Semi Natural Woodland sites and where appropriate restore or enhance productive woodland comprising largely of native trees. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the felling proposals will be reviewed annually through the delivery of harvesting programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. Implementation of the future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs.. Core ancient woodland sites will be managed by the |

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| | | Environment team using the FES National Geodatabase and the LMP PAWS & SNW Appraisal Tables. |
| To manage the forests in a manner that positively contributes to water quality, with a special emphasis on watercourses supporting populations of fresh water pearl mussels and migratory fish. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase area of riparian woodland along River Oykel and its tributaries, and other watercourses feeding River Oykel catchment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the integrity of all watercourses during management operations and into long term by applying measures outlined in UKFS Forest and Water guidance and FCS FWPM Guidelines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special measures will be identified through work plan process and will be monitored through good site management and 75% site visits. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue developing catchment scale habitat management and monitoring to benefit species and positively influence hydrology, in close consultation with partners such as Forest Research, Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust and SEPA. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going process lead by the Planning & Environment team. Progress will be reviewed formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision. |
| To manage the forests in sympathy with the landscape in order to improve their appearance and overall visitor experience. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement LMP felling and restocking proposals designed in liaison with the FCS landscape architect and in sympathy with the principles of surrounding 'Wild Land' area Nos 29 and 34, the North West Highland Geopark and the Geological Conservation Review Sites. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the felling and future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove wind damaged and/or diseased crops, prioritising highly used tourist routes and areas of ecological importance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery will be monitored through annual work programmes and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision. |
| To maintain access to the forests under Scottish Outdoor Access Code, 2005. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the level of public access to the forests within the LMP area by providing alternative access routes during forest operations and ensuring forest entrances are SOAC compliant. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining level of public access during forest operations will be monitored through the work plan process, good site management and 75% site visits. Entrances will be managed by the CVS Forester using the CVS GIS database. |
| To optimise the productive potential of the forests by matching restock species to site conditions and by creating resilient forest structure and minimising wind damage in the next rotation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use best practice in silviculture to identify productive soils and suitable species and manage these areas accordingly, thinning where climate and soils allow. Create wind-firm coupes using riparian woodland, changes in landform, forest roads and areas of open ground as boundaries; allowing for development of wind resistant edge trees and improving crop resilience. Apply best silvicultural practice to improve quality and yields of our | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the felling and general future habitat proposals will be monitored annually through the restock programme and formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. Detailed restock proposals will be developed post-felling, during the work plan process and 75% site visit and will be monitored annually through the restock programme. |

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| | <p>commercial conifer timber.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a felling plan that will allow for timely removal of diseased trees to, maximise recovery of marketable timber. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas affected by <i>Dothistroma needle blight</i> (DNB) will be monitored annually by the Planning team and, if necessary, felled early to maximise timber recovery. • Windblow will be monitored annually following high wind and felling programmes reprioritised if necessary to maximise timber recovery. |
| <p>To be open to any new approaches by local communities who wish to be involved in management of their local forests; to be open to working in partnership.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact local Community Councils and local interest groups within the LMP area in order to develop management approaches that reflect their aspirations and secure benefits to the local residents and forest users. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with Community Councils and local interest groups will be recorded by LMP Forester and monitored formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision in the consultation record. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support local the economy by protecting and improving water quality, in order to maintain a healthy salmon population within the River Oykel catchment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going process lead by the Planning & Environment team. Progress will be reviewed formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision. |
| <p>To contribute to climate change mitigation measures maintaining sustainable timber production, creating areas of new woodland and facilitating woodfuel and renewable energy production.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify the age structure and species composition of our forests making use of silvicultural mixtures and disease resistant species to increase resilience to pathogens and climate change. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the general future habitat proposals will be monitored formally at LMP's 5 years review and 10 years revision using the Monitoring and Change Logs. Detailed restock proposals will be developed post-felling, during the workplan process and 75%* site visit and will be monitored annually through the restock programme. • Areas affected by <i>Dothistroma needle blight</i> (DNB) will be monitored annually by the Planning team and, where necessary, felled early to maximise timber recovery. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the development of local timber and woodfuel businesses and seek out new outlets for small roundwood to help reduce timber miles. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The production forecast will be produced by the Planning team; volumes might fluctuate as forest health felling and windblow clearance will need to be accommodated. The forecast will be monitored by the Programme Manager and Planning Manager. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to make the land within the National Forest Estate available to windfarm and hydro scheme development and to work with developers to deliver projects of maximal environmental and economic benefit. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possible change in land use will be monitored by the Planning team in liaison with the Estates team and the Renewables Forest Liaison Officer. |