Forestry and Land Scotland | Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba

West Region

Taynuilt Land Management Plan

M9a: Opportunities & Constraints Fearnoch North

Legend

- Existing Forest Roads
- Taynuilt Plan Area

Primary Current Species

- NBL: Native Broadleaves
- DF: Douglas Fir
- L: Larch
- GF: Grand Fir
- LC: Lawson Cypress
- LP: Lodgepole Pine
- MC: Mixed Conifer
- MOP: Mountain Pine
- NF:Noble Fir
- NS: Norway Spruce
- RC: Western Red Cedar
- SP: Scots Pine
- SS: Sitka Spruce
- WH: Western Hemlock

N

Scale: 1:15,000 @ A3

17/09/2019

The northern part of the forest is bounded by the Clais Dheag SSSI on its west side and the Airds Park & Coille Nathais SSSI to the east. Both areas form part of the wider Loch Etive Woods SAC. PAWS and established broadleaves run through the northern part of the forest which offers the opportunity to link the two designated sites with newly established native broadleaved woodland.
The restoration of PAWS areas leads to a loss of productive SS and in the case of NS, SP, L & DF there can be a loss of overall biodiversity as these non invasive species support a range of additional species.

Deer control is essential for successful PAWS restoration. A strategic deer fence enclosing the whole of the northern section offers advantages over numerous small deer fenced enclosures. Impacts on the designated sites would need to be considered, but given the deer cover currently provided by North Fearnoch, then the overall impact is likely to be positive on the adjacent sites.

There are very diverse soil types across the sites ranging from ideal for a wide range of productive forestry to challenging with a restricted species range in consequence. There is scope for targeting productive broadleaves on the better soils, with a matrix of non intervention areas between on the poor soils.

Many of the PAWS areas lie on very productive sites with good road access and easy access for wheeled harvesting. Conversion to non intervention broadleaves meets FES & Scottish Government objectives with regard to PAWS restoration but conflicts with creating multipurpose forests delivering economic benefits. The proximity of designated sites increases the ecological value of PAWS restoration and potentially increases the resilience of the designated sites.

Restoration of PAWS areas by natural regeneration can facilitate colonisation by undesirable species that supress NBL regeneration, these might include rhododendron, bracken, bramble and SS regen. Bracken and bramble form part of the natural succession to woodland but can tend to greatly prolong the establishment period.

In landscape and amenity terms a mixed multipurpose forest offers many advantages over pure conifers or pure broadleaves. During consultation regular users of the path network considered the working nature of the forest was a very positive feature creating added interest across the year.

The wood has an extensive road nework and using the forest productively helps spread the cost of this significant investment. Where productive forestry ceases, the roads can be left to vegetate over and become pleasant paths and access routes for monitoring and deer control.