

Achnashellach Land Management Plan Summary

Achnashellach LMP was approved on 16th November 2015 and runs for 10 years.

What's important in Achnashellach?

- Fragmented native woodland in a largely deforested landscape (*western pinewood, wet woodland etc.*)
- Access to mountains & wild land (*popular area with Munro walkers & climbers*)
- Opportunities for sustainable rural development (*potential for community owned hydro schemes, fragile rural economy with limited employment opportunities*)
- Slope and soil management (*Steep potentially unstable slopes above, houses, trunk road & railway*)
- Landscape & scenery (*Iconic west coast rail route, mountain scenery*)
- River Carron catchment (*Salmon fishing & conservation interest*)

Vision

To restore Achnashellach to a sustainable native woodland ecosystem that compliments the scenic beauty of the Wester Ross landscape, whilst supporting and providing opportunities for rural development.

The primary objectives for the plan area are

- Restoration of Caledonian pinewood, broadleaf woodland and open habitat within the Carron valley over the next 50 years.
- Provide opportunities for sustainable rural development through small scale community renewables projects and wood fuel production.
- Manage the forest sympathetically to the landscape and improve the visitor experience.
- Timber production, optimise the productive potential of the existing forest and develop native timber production over the long term.
- Reduce risk to people and the environment through sustainable forest management, whilst building resilience for a changing climate.

Total Plan Area	1,535 hectares (ha)
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Summary of Land Management Plan Proposals

Species Breakdown	2015 (current)	2025 (end of plan period)
Sitka spruce	14.0%	9.0%
Birch and other broadleaves	9.0%	16.0%
Scots pine	7.0%	10.0%
Lodgepole pine	5.0%	1.0%
Larch and other conifers	4.0%	2.0%
Open space	61.0%	62.0%

Planned Operations	2015 – 2025 plan period
Felling	246 ha
Thinning	0
Restocking	356 ha
New planting	57 ha
Road construction	1700 m
Road upgrades	0
Relocation of Car Park	
Significant Environment/Conservation Features	
Designated sites	None
Minimum Intervention	5% of area
Natural Reserve	2% of area
Caledonian Pine Wood	53 ha
Fresh water pearl mussel	All present within the plan area
Pine marten	
Water vole	

Critical Success Factors:

- Secure long term viability of core pinewood remnants through clearfelling of all adjacent Lodge pole pine stands within the 10 year period and control of invading non-native regeneration.
- Establishment of riparian woodland along the River Carron flood plain and its main tributaries; whilst restoring a natural mosaic of upland oakwood, birchwood and pinewood through the wider forest.
- Maintain deer numbers within the forest that are conducive to establishing natural regeneration & restocking of Scots pine and native broadleaves.
- Eradicate rhododendron from the wider forest and control spread adjacent to seed sources. Look for opportunities to work with neighbouring land owners to achieve a holistic solution.
- Implementation of the LMP felling & restocking proposals, designed in liaison with the FCS landscape architect
- Undertake cost effective remedial works on well stocked second rotation stands with productive potential.
- Gradually restore the steep unstable slopes of the northern forest to low density native woodland to stabilise the slopes long term.

Consultation and Further Information:

The small hamlets of Craig and Lair lie along the valley floor and fall within the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh ward of the Highland Council Region. This area is represented by Lochcarron Community Council.

IRSF included the local neighbours and the community council in the consultation process. Along with an open drop in session at Lochcarron Community Hall on the 5th of March 2015 a field visit with local residents was undertaken on the 12th of May 2015.

For further information on the Plan, please contact Inverness, Ross and Skye Forest District on 0300 0676100 or invernessrossskye@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Location Map

