

Lochalsh Woodlands Land Management Plan Summary

Lochalsh Woodlands LMP was approved on the 7th July 2016 and runs for 10 years

What's important in Lochalsh Woodlands?

- Sustainable timber production
- Native woodland, Collie Mhor Oakwood Special Area of Conservation & Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Geological interest at Ard hill (SSSI)
- Notable archaeological features present include the Kirkton Dun & Sean Chreag fort (Scheduled Ancient Monument)
- Extensive areas of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites
- Scenic landscape, visible from key tourist routes for example A87 to Skye
- Steep and potentially unstable slopes above key public infrastructure routes
- Loch Achaidh na h-Inich – This is the public water supply for Kyle and is fed by burns running through Balmacara forest.
- Public access, core path network with several routes through Balmacara and South Strome
- Communities, management concordat with Fernaig Trust

Vision

Accessible and inviting forests integrated with the surrounding landscape and the main tourist route to Skye. To see a restored Atlantic oakwood and birchwood linking Coille Mhor to Carn Greannach and the shores of Loch Carron through Strath Ascaig, with a sustainable core of timber production focused in South Strome and Balmacara that promotes environmental resilience and compliments the Wester Ross landscape.

Lochalsh Woodlands Land Management Plan objectives:

- Timber production: rationalise to an economically and environmentally sustainable level
- Biodiversity: expand and enhance the native woodland habitat
- Resilience: diversify the range of productive tree species and restructure even aged blocks
- Natural hazards: manage the forest to mitigate against landslides and rock fall adjacent to the A890 & west coast railway
- People: maintain and where possible enhance the visitor experience. Work with the community to achieve multiple benefits from forest management & explore opportunities for community renewable energy schemes
- Landscape: manage the forest to compliment the scenic landscape

Total Plan Area	2,777 ha
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Summary of Land Management Plan Proposals

Species Breakdown	2016 (current)	2026 (end of plan period)
Sitka spruce	25%	17%
Lodgepole pine	12%	3%
Larch	3%	2%
Birch	3%	6%
Broadleaves	3%	6%
Other Conifers	2%	8%
Scots pine	1 %	<1%
Open	51%	58%

Planned Operations	2016 – 2026 plan period
Felling	452 ha
Thinning	13 ha
Restocking	388 ha
Natural regeneration	157 ha
New planting	40 ha
Road construction	2,690 m
Road upgrades	4,000 m

Significant Environment/Conservation Features	
Designated sites	SAC 93 ha SSSI 18 ha
Minimum Intervention	4% of area
Natural Reserve	2% of area

Critical Success Factors:

- Implementation of the LMP felling & restocking proposals, designed in liaison with the FCS landscape architect.
- Manage the deer population at a level allowing successful establishment of restock crops.
- Bring the designated Coille Mhor (in FES ownership) into a favourable condition and continue the restoration of PAWS.
- Expand the planted area of alternative conifer species in the next rotation.
- Improve the overall age structure of the forest to a more balanced distribution.
- Begin conversion of steep productive conifer plantation on the unstable slopes from Stromeferry to Ardnarff, to variable density, mixed native woodland through clearfell and restocking.
- Deliver the Visitor Experience and Interpretation Plan for Balmacara and South Strome and maintain the level of access to both forests for the public.

Consultation and Further Information:

The small communities of Achmore, Balmacara, Kirkton and Stromeferry are the main settlements in this area and they fall within the Aird and Loch Ness Ward 13 of Highland Council Region. This area is represented by Dornie and District, Lochalsh, Plockton and Stromeferry Community Councils. There are two Community Trusts; Kyle & Lochalsh and Fernaig.

IRS Forest District held two drop in sessions in February 2016 and offered neighbours and the Community Councils and Trusts an opportunity to participate in the consultation process.

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

