

Land Management Plan Objectives

1. Ensure a sustainable supply of high quality softwood timber, supplying local and national markets, securing timber income and providing secure employment in the forestry industry.
2. Plan and design a resilient and healthy forest, mitigating the risks posed by climate change and a growing number of pests and diseases. Ensure the forest makes a positive contribution to mitigating the broader climate emergency by locking up carbon in trees and soils.
3. Improve the biodiversity value of the forest, caring for priority habitats and species, and enhancing the overall value through expansion of riparian broadleaf areas and developing a better balance and connectivity between forest and open habitat.
4. Maintain good water quality throughout the forest, protecting water supplies.
5. Enhance the forest landscape, in particular the Hell's Hole area where public access is promoted. Focus species and structural diversity in this area through lower impact forest management.

Analysis
Wauchope Forest is a highly productive forest, contributing significantly to South Region's timber production. However, Sitka spruce is by far the most abundant conifer species, with inherent risks associated with single-species dependency.

Concept
Where soils and other site conditions allow, seek opportunities to diversify choice of conifer species without overly compromising productivity. Sitka is likely to remain the dominant species.

Analysis
Formal visitor facilities are centred on Hell's Hole, an older part of the forest with a good mixture of tree species and scope to develop a more interesting visitor experience.

Concept
Where possible continue to thin older stands with a view to developing lower impact silvicultural management and more diverse forest structure. Where clearfelling is necessary restock with alternative conifers where suitable to reduce the dominance of Sitka spruce.

Analysis
Cragbank Wood ASNW and SSSI opposite Hell's Hole, and other ASNW along Wauchope Burn close to the LMP area.

Concept
Opportunity to develop native broadleaf forest habitat network along core riparian corridors, connecting with valuable habitat outside the plan area.

Analysis
Several private water supplies in the plan area

Concept
Ensure long term protection by providing adequate buffer zones around supplies, and enhancing the riparian corridors throughout the plan area.

Analysis
Forest re-structuring, through clearfell and restocking, is well advanced with 15% of older first rotation planting remaining, much of this windblown and increasingly unstable.

Concept
Prioritise felling of most windblown and unstable coupes, and identify stable, older coupes as long term retentions.

Analysis
Important open habitat currently under a conservation grazing regime

Concept
Maintain grazing and monitor habitat condition.

Analysis
High concentration of watercourses feeding into the Tweed catchment to the north or Solway catchment to the south. Communities of Bonchester Bridge and Newcastleton are prone to flooding following extreme rainfall events.

Concept
Ensure a 'smoothed' felling plan that avoids too much felling over any given period. Maintain timely restocking to minimise the area of felled and young crop (<10 years) over any given period.

Analysis
The plan area is home to a variety of wildlife including raptors (including goshawk), badgers and red squirrels.

Concept
Develop felling and restocking plans to ensure there is always sufficient habitat of suitable age and quality to sustain viable wildlife populations. Ensure forest operations are planned to minimise disturbance to wildlife.

Analysis
Several important heritage features in the plan area, notably those associated with the former Borders Union Railway.

Concept
Ensure all heritage features are adequately protected, and pose no danger to the public. No on-site interpretation or other visitor facilities are proposed.

Analysis
Extensive network of burns and other watercourses form the basis of a valuable forest habitat network, vital for the conservation of biodiversity.

Concept
Continue to develop this valuable habitat through expansion of native broadleaves and open space, linking it with natural reserves, long term retentions and other open habitat.

Analysis
There are no significant areas of deep peat where restoration is likely to be a viable option, and no larger priority areas identified.

Concept
Restock area should be reviewed on a site by site basis, and options for restoration considered where restocking with productive trees may be unsuitable.

Analysis
Woodland edge near Leap Hill next to open moorland - some restocking with native broadleaves and Scots pine has already been done

Concept
Continue to develop a more open and diverse woodland edge to provide suitable habitat for black grouse and other wildlife.

Analysis
Larch has been significantly affected by Phytophthora ramorum, and other pests and diseases pose an increasing threat to the health of the forest.

Concept
Using ESC and local site knowledge, diversify conifer restock species where possible, without significant loss in productivity.

Analysis
Open habitat associated with former industrial land use (railway infrastructure) is filling up with naturally regenerating broadleaf scrub woodland.

Concept
Confirm a core area to maintain as open habitat, but otherwise manage as a more open broadleaf woodland.

Analysis
Palmer's Cutting SSSI is under threat from invasive non-native species, notably Japanese knotweed.

Concept
Monitor vegetation and remove knotweed and other invasive vegetation as necessary.

Legend	
	Land Management Plan Area
	Special Areas of Conservation
	Ancient (of semi-natural origin)
	Long-Established (of plantation origin)
	Other (on Roy map)
	Listed Buildings
	Watercourses
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
	Heritage sites
	Scheduled Monuments
	FLS trails
	Public Rights of Way
	Forest Roads
	Currently designated Natural Reserves
	Older first rotation - mostly P1970-1980
	Forest Blocks

Wauchope West Land Management Plan Map 3 - Analysis and Concept - DRAFT

Scale @ A0: 1:15,000
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