

Appendix 3: Fort Augustus FDP Objectives at Mid Term Review (25/3/21)

1. The restoration of native woodland at a landscape scale over the next 50 years.
2. To minimise risk posed to people and the A82 trunk road through good design and practice.
3. To protect and enhance the water quality of the Ness catchment.
4. To promote resilience of the forest to the future challenges of climate change.
5. To strengthen ties with the local community and enhance the landscape of the Great Glen and Loch Ness.
6. Sustainable timber production within Inchnacardoch and the productive native woodland zones.

The following table describes how Inverness, Ross and Skye Forest District (now FLS North Region) will achieve the objectives listed above, with specific reference to the appropriate Strategic Plan targets. The targets that are considered fundamental to the delivery of the aims of this forest design plan – the critical success factors – are highlighted in red in the table below. The delivery of these elements will be the primary factors by which the plans success is judged at mid-term review and full revision (5 & 10 yrs respectively).

FDP Objective	How this forest will contribute to Strategic Plan actions:	How we will monitor the achievement of this target.	MTR Monitoring Comment
Healthy (FDP:2 & 4)			
We are committed to high quality silviculture and increasingly using alternatives to clearfelling.	<p>We have rationalised the forest area managed under LISS to appropriate sites and stands, where this will achieve most ecological and landscape benefit.</p> <p>Where appropriate we will manage young stands for conversion to a LISS through the FD thinning program.</p>	<p>Thinning & LISS Interventions will be controlled by the Programme Manager and delivered by the Operations team.</p> <p>75% Site visits will be used to assess the delivery of the FDP objectives.</p> <p>Commercial forest will be established to OGB4 standards and subject to Stocking Density Assessment.</p> <p>PAWS sites will be routinely monitored by the Environment team.</p>	<p>New felling regulations (April 2019) prompted approval of a thinning coupes map for the FDP area (Map 4). FLS Programme Manager oversees thinning delivery: 9.6 ha (Phase 1); 301.7 ha (Phase 2).</p> <p>Yes & ongoing.</p> <p>Yes & ongoing.</p> <p>5-yearly cycle PAWS monitoring. Most recent: 2017/18 (PAWS ref no.): Auchterawe (517815), Inverwick (517151) & Torr Dhuin (517186)</p>
We will help the Estate adapt to and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.	<p>We will undertake annual surveys to assess the progression of Dothistroma Needle Blight (DNB) within the FDP area.</p> <p>We will reduce inoculum levels and the potential for DNB to spread within the Plan area by targeting badly infected stands for felling in the next two phases and remove the majority of Lodge Pole Pine stands over the next 20 years.</p>	<p>DNB surveys will be controlled and implemented by the IRS Planning team. This will assess the spread of the infection and when measured against plant health felling, formally at the mid term review, can be used to assess the effectiveness of the LP removal programme.</p>	<p>National , annual programme of FLS aerial surveys for DNB are undertaken (not 2020) and DNB-infected stands are identified, scored and recorded in GIS format for planning analysis.</p> <p>Oct 2014: Lodgepole pine = 1,278 ha of total forest cover. Area of Lodgepole pine felled (Phase 1): 312.2 ha (24%) Area of LP felling planned (Phase 2): 194.3 ha (15%)</p>

	<p>Even aged forest within Inchnacardoch and Moriston will be restructured through phased clearfelling.</p> <p>Species composition will be diversified through restocking and natural regeneration following clearfell.</p> <p>Silvicultural mixtures will be favoured within the productive conifer forest and native woodland restoration will be matched to the site type.</p> <p>We will reduce risk of extreme weather events, to people and property, associated with the forest through the work of the A82 Project. Mature conifer forest will be gradually felled and re-established with Low input native woodland that will promote soil stability and future resilience of the trunk road.</p>	<p>75% felling Site visits will be used to assess site and soil conditions and assign the appropriate restock species in alignment with FDP objectives.</p> <p>Sites managed for natural regeneration will be monitored through a regular programme of site assessment implemented by the environment team. Survey results will be recorded on a GIS database.</p> <p>Achievement of the felling and future habitat and species proposals will be monitored by the Planning Forester at year 5 and 10 reviews.</p>	<p>Yes & ongoing</p> <p>5-yearly cycle of natural regeneration monitoring. Last surveyed: 2016: gross area 110.9 ha (coupes & survey findings listed in MTR form Restock tables). Additional 2.38 ha to be added to next survey cycle (Phase 2 clearfell & nat regn sites)</p> <p>As reviewed and summarised in MTR Form & maps.</p>
<p>We are committed to dealing with invasive plants and animals that threaten habitats and biodiversity.</p>	<p>We will continue a programme of Rhododendron removal within the Inchnacardoch and Creag Nan Eun forests.</p> <p>We will continue a programme of exotic conifer removal, where bio-diversity is threatened, on restoration PAWS sites.</p>	<p>The Environment team will programme all invasive plant removal and monitor the effectiveness through regular site surveys.</p>	<p>No rhododendron control in FDP area carried out to date. Environmental budgets priority has been non-native regeneration removal in post-clearfell PAWS (NBL regenerating) coupes at Coille na Feine (Port Clair)</p>
<p>Productive (FDP: 6)</p>			
<p>We aim to provide at least three million cubic metres (nationally) of softwood timber every year on a sustainable basis.</p>	<p>We will invest in a phased programme of forest road extensions (<i>Inchnacardoch & Bhlaraidh</i>,) and necessary upgrade works in order to facilitate timber harvesting within forest that currently lacks infrastructure.</p> <p>Sustainable softwood timber production from the FDP area will contribute to the annual district production targets.</p>	<p>Civil engineering will deliver construction and upgrading of all roading within the district and monitor progress through work programmes. Completed construction works routinely recorded on GIS database.</p> <p>Timber production managed using work plan system - coordinated by programme manager to ensure programmes match forecast and market commitments.</p> <p>We aim to achieve all clearfell production in line with management coupe plan and volumes detailed in the coupe summary of this plan, explaining variances where they occur. Reviewed at years five and ten by the Planning Forester.</p>	<p>Phase 1 road construction (Inchnacardoch Spur) delayed into Phase 2 due to swapped clearfell priorities deferring new road delivery timing.</p> <p>Civil engineers use GIS-based roads, quarries and planned infrastructure datasets to manage assets and resources.</p> <p>Work Plan system used throughout Plan period for all timber production, environmental and recreation-oriented projects.</p> <p>Harvesting volume data are not yet routinely saved into the coupe summary table but kept separately (Delivery/H&M team) for income, audit, contracts and supply chain compliance requirements.</p>

<p>We intend to manage at least a quarter of our expanding broadleaved woodlands to produce quality hardwoods and wood fuel.</p>	<p>40ha of existing broadleaved woodland will be managed with fuel wood production as a main objective.</p> <p>Over the next 50 years of restructuring we have identified a gross area of 295 ha that will be managed to produce quality native hardwood timber and wood fuel.</p>	<p>Achievement of the felling and future habitat and species proposals will be monitored by the Planning Forester at year 5 and 10 reviews.</p> <p>All commercial restocking will be assessed to OGB4 standard through stocking density assessments. Establishment and stewardship of productive broadleaf stands will be delivered by local Operations team.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Extensive cleaning and formative re-spacing in Auchterawe 'Old Sanitarium' coupe (04922; 27 ha) of p96, p98 & p2008 birch with objective of hardwood fuelwood production.</p> <p>SDAs undertaken routinely and as per OGB4. Establishment and stewardship overseen by local Operations (now 'Delivery') team.</p>
<p>We will use our work programmes to promote the development of the forestry and land management sectors.</p>	<p>Over the next 25 years the FDP area will continue to provide work for specialist steep ground harvesting contractors, contributing to the development of this skills resource through a sustained provision of work.</p>	<p>The Harvesting and Marketing team will manage the delivery of Steep ground harvesting contracts.</p> <p>Achievement of the felling within the first phase of the FDP and suitability of future felling coupe proposals will be assessed by the Planning Forester and the Harvesting and Marketing team at the year 5 and 10 reviews.</p> <p>Development of the contract resource will be measured through future work tendering processes.</p>	<p>FLS are key contributors and actors in the A82 Steep Ground project – initiating some early FDP-approved felling along Loch Ness-side. Preparatory geo-technical survey work was suspended in 2020 (Covid restrictions) and a 12-month delay in project delivery has been incurred.</p>
<p>We aim to realise the Estate's renewable energy potential, whilst achieving a reasonable balance with other objectives.</p>	<p>We will continue to work with E.on, on the Moriston wind farm proposal, and Green Highland Renewables, on the consented Allt Phocaichain and Allt Larairidh run of river hydro schemes, following due process we aim to develop renewable energy generation potential on the National Forest Estate. We will continue to investigate the potential for small scale, community, renewable energy schemes.</p>	<p>Forest Renewables will measure Mega Watts generated on the National Forest Estate and assess progress against Scottish Government targets for a 100% of Scotland's gross annual electricity consumption to be generated from renewable sources by 2020.</p> <p>The Forestry Liaison Officer will ensure that for each scheme on the NFE that the terms of detailed proposals, as agreed between the developers and IRSFD, are implemented in accordance with industry best practice.</p> <p>Progress on renewable energy development will be monitored through quarterly Programme Board Meetings between IRSFD, Forest Renewables and developers.</p>	<p>The E-on windfarm proposal (at formative discussion stage at FDP revision in 2014) was ultimately dropped by the developer prior to a formal planning application submission.</p> <p>Four small-scale third party hydro-electric scheme leases have been negotiated and construction completed in Phase 1 of FDP period.</p> <p>FES/FLS collaborated with SSE in the accommodation (by FDP amendment and subsequent felling operations) the new OHPL for the Skye Trident line and additional resilience felling required for the Beauldy-Denny line into the expanded Fort Augustus sub-station.</p>
<p>Treasured (FDP:5)</p>			

<p>We are committed to creating more uniquely special places across the Estate and delivering benefits to an increasingly diverse range of people.</p>	<p>We will develop detailed management prescriptions to preserve and enhance the special qualities of unique features such as the Torr Dhuin iron age fort and the Allt na Criche Cathedral trees.</p> <p>We will continue the programme of visitor zone work along recreational facilities at Allt na Criche, Torr Dhuin and the Muir.</p>	<p>Site objectives will be agreed prior to operations and detailed using the work plan system. Operations will be delivered in collaboration between the Recreation and Tourism and Operations team and monitored continually through site visits.</p> <p>The Recreation and Tourism Forester will monitor the delivery of the all visitor zone works.</p>	<p>Car park renovation, footpath upgrade, drain clearance and bridge replacement works are planned for Torr Dhuin and the Muir visitor zone. (postponed in 2020: Covid restrictions).</p> <p>In 2019, FLS North Region won the (one-off) Centenary Trophy in the Scottish Finest Woods Awards for the management of Fort Augustus Woodlands.</p>
<p>Accessible (FDP: 5)</p>			
<p>We will continue to invest available resources into high quality facilities that encourage and help visitors experience and enjoy the outdoor environment</p>	<p>We will design management coupes – working closely with the FCS Landscape Architect - to enhance the landscape with particular reference to the areas visible from the main tourist routes along Loch Ness, the back drop to Fort Augustus and the “low road to the isles” A887.</p> <p>We will work with the Tourism Business Improvement District to continually improve the visitor experience.</p> <p>We will complete the Great Glen Way alternative route project in the spring of 2014 and continue working in partnership with the ranger service to deliver a high quality recreation experience on the route.</p>	<p>We will consult with the FCS Landscape Architect and ensure that landscape design follows best practice. Coupe shapes will be audited by the planning forester at years five and ten.</p> <p>IRS representatives will attend TBID meetings and FC relevant outcomes & proposals will be developed within the appropriate district team.</p> <p>The Recreation and Tourism Manager will monitor the progress of the Great Glen Way Alternative Route construction. Together with the Great Glen Way Ranger service we FCS staff will undertake both qualitative and quantitative monitoring of Great Glen Way users.</p>	<p>Site consultation with Landscape Architect undertaken to review MTR amendment proposals (new roading, additional felling areas) likely to impact on landscape. All proposals were deemed to be of a scale, and at a distance or remoteness, that does not pose sufficient potential visual impact that will require formal visualisations and assessment at this stage.</p> <p>Visitor Services staff continue to liaise with GGW Ranger Service over the management and use of the route. FLS undertook access corridor non-native felling and halo thinning of veteran native specimens in 17/18 along GGW in Craig nan Eun forest (Invermoriston-Allt Sigh)</p>
<p>Cared For (FDP: 1&3)</p>			
<p>Across Scotland we are restoring around 85% of areas on ancient woodland sites to largely native species. The remaining areas will be enhanced through our management</p>	<p>We aim to gradually restore the FC Landholding in Glen Moriston to native woodland over the next 50 years.</p> <p>We will work in partnership with neighbours Trees For Life to restore native woodland at a landscape scale within Glen Moriston.</p> <p>We will create a robust native woodland habitat network from Allt na Criche to Achlain and Levishie to Ruskich wood, linking restored PAWS and Core pinewood areas.</p>	<p>Native Woodland Restoration will be delivered in collaboration between the Environment and Forest Management team.</p> <p>Progress will be audited by the Planning Forester against the Future Habitat and Species proposals detailed in the FDP at the year 5 & 10 review.</p> <p>An annual meeting will be held with Trees For Life to agree priorities for working, special projects and assess progress on native woodland restoration proposals of this plan. The Environment Forester will co-ordinate shared working on the NFE.</p> <p>The Environment Manager will monitor the management and restoration of PAWS using a routine programme of site surveying.</p>	<p>Ongoing. All felling and restocking/regeneration within Glen Moriston through Phase 1 supports the principle of incremental restoration to solely native woodland through the glen.</p> <p>Annual (and often more regular) meetings held with Tfl staff. Tfl volunteers frequently undertaking conservation projects within the FDP area (riparian tree planting, non-native removal).</p> <p>PAWS monitoring undertaken on five-year cycle. Last undertaken 2017. Survey results informing prioritisation of future environmental projects and budgets across the Region.</p>

<p>Across Scotland we plan to increase broadleaved tree cover from the current 8% woodland cover to around 20%.</p>	<p>We will increase broadleaf tree cover, on suitable sites through the re-establishment of "Low Input" native woodland, Riparian woodland and commercially managed Productive Native Broadleaves, with appropriate deer management.</p>	<p>Native Woodland Restoration will be delivered in collaboration between the Environment and Forest Management team. Appropriate species choice will be agreed at the harvesting 75% visit and recorded in the workplan. Progress will be audited by the Planning Forester against the Future Habitat and Species proposals detailed in the FDP at the year 5 & 10 review.</p>	<p>Only very minor amendments in FDP's intended Future Habitats made by approved amendment during Phase 1 implementation. Formal analysis of percentage change in broadleaved forest cover to be carried out a year 10 (full Plan revision).</p>
<p>Across Scotland we are committed to maintaining the best woodland & open habitats in good ecological condition.</p>	<p>Improve habitat linkage and preserve water quality through Long term Riparian woodland restoration along tributaries of the River Moriston SAC. Use LISS where appropriate in sensitive locations along the Moriston catchment. Restoration of native woodland linking the Levishe Oakwood SSSI to a wider native habitat network.</p>	<p>The status of water bodies will be monitored at year five and ten reviews by the Planning Forester, using SEPA data.</p>	<p>Allt Phocaichain (ID: 20284) – overall status (2018): Moderate (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). Invervigar Burn (ID: 20293) – overall status (2018): High (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). River Oich (ID: 20253) – overall status (2018): Good (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). Allt na Muic (ID: 20286) – overall status: Good (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). Allt Baile nan Carn (ID: 20285) – overall status: Moderate (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). Allt Larairidh (ID: 20283) – overall status (2018): Good (was High in 2014 & 2015). Allt Bhlaraidh (ID: 20282) – overall status (2018): Bad (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). Allt Saigh (ID: 20278) – overall status (2018): Good (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). River Moriston (ID: 23382 – Bunloyne-Dam) – overall status: Good (unchanged since 2014/FDP approval). River Moriston (ID: 23381 - Dam-Loch Ness) – overall status: Moderate (Good in 2014).</p>
<p>Across Scotland, we will identify particularly vulnerable species for which the NFE is important and take specific conservation action.</p>	<p>Continued monitoring of key species present in the area, black grouse, red squirrel, juniper, goshawk, osprey and wood ant. Undertake field surveys to quantify montane scrub species on the open hill ground and build future management prescriptions. Adapt & apply management techniques following, best practice, to improve habitat for vulnerable and protected species.</p>	<p>Progress will be audited by the Planning Forester against the Future Habitat and Species proposals detailed in the FDP at the year 5 & 10 review. The Environment Manager will co-ordinate and supervise the delivery of all species surveying and monitoring. The results will be incorporated into local systems and used through the work plan process to influence management proposals.</p>	<p>Pre-operational environmental walk-over surveys (and stipulation of habitat/species-specific mitigation measures) undertaken as part of work plan evolution and execution – including 75% completion checks for impacts and opportunity/need for additional remedial work. No new species-specific surveys undertaken within Phase 1.</p>

<p>We safeguard archaeological sites through our planning and management and recognise special places and features with local cultural meaning.</p>	<p>Maintain the recently restored Achlain bridges and promote use of Wade's military road as a long distance walking route.</p> <p>Raise awareness of Torr Dhuin, a key archaeological feature through improved interpretation and signage.</p> <p>Apply best practice to all operations involving archaeological features.</p>	<p>The Environment Manager will ensure that archaeology is monitored using the existing SAM Plan system and ensure that operations do not damage sites through the work plan system.</p> <p>The Recreation and Tourism Team in collaboration with the FCS Archaeologist will deliver the proposed upgrade of interpretation and signage at Torr Dhuin and will be responsible for the promotion of the Wades military road as a long distance walking route.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>No issues with work planning and protective measures taken to conserve all recorded archaeological features through felling, restock and roading operations to date.</p> <p>Plans for upgrade of access and installation of new interpretation at Torr Dhuin was postponed in 2020. Anticipated to complete by 2022 at latest.</p>
Good Value			
<p>We will seek a diverse range of income sources to underpin the cost of managing the estate, and we will continually look for ways to achieve best value in delivery of public benefits.</p>	<p>We will continue to diversify income through standing sales, direct production, firewood & niche marketing of specialist products, sale of venison from deer management activities and where appropriate renewable energy generation on consented developments.</p>	<p>The Area Operations manager will work with the Programme Manager, using the production forecast system to meet future timber supply commitments of long and medium term contracts.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>