

Plan Aims and Objectives

Issues

- Windblow has forced significant changes to the shape and sequencing of felling coupes in Fonab.
- Larch represents a major component of the forests (currently 8% of total area). There have been confirmed cases of *P. ramorum* within 2 km of the forest and there are stands of larch that are isolated from the forest road network.
- Newly established crops are vulnerable to browsing by deer.
- The forests contain a number of important scheduled monuments which require protection.
- A number of water courses emanate from within the blocks which feed directly into the River Tay and Tummel SAC.
- The road network in Fonab is currently not suitable to allow access to haulage traffic within the block.
- Areas of Fonab form a backdrop to the town of Pitlochry. A significant proportion of the plan area is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value.
- Recreation routes in both blocks require specific attention.

Key Challenges

- Maintaining productive potential of the forest blocks.
- Selecting the most appropriate management systems for each coupe in order to maximize the potential of the forest as a whole.
- Developing a forest structure that will be resilient to future wind damage.
- Prioritising the phased removal of larch ensuring all larch crops are accessible in the event of *P. ramorum* infection.
- Protecting newly established crops from deer browsing.
- Protecting water sources and maintaining water quality entering the SAC.
- Continuing to protect heritage features and, where possible, making improvements to their situation through targeted forest operations.
- Improving the road network to facilitate future management operations.
- Minimising the impact of forest operations in visually sensitive areas to preserve the appearance of the forest within the wider landscape from key viewpoints.
- Managing recreational facilities that are accessible to a wide variety of users.

Management Aims

Aim 1

Produce high quality timber crops and support specialist timber markets and local sawmills. The fertile and sheltered lower slopes are prime sites for commercial broadleaf crops and alternative conifer species, utilizing thinning and continuous cover forestry to develop stands of large, high value timber. The upper reaches of both forests are highly suited to growth of short rotation timber crops, providing consistent volume to the regional programme.

Aim 2

Maintain high water quality of salmon rivers as well as wider riparian habitats. A number of water courses emanate from both forests. Increasing planting of suitable species in riparian zones will help improve water quality entering the Special Area of Conservation (SAC), improve opportunities for wildlife and habitat links within the forests and also have benefits for flood risk management in the Tay catchment.

Aim 3

Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and visitors through recreational use of the site. The route of the Rob Roy Way as it descends through Fonab to the finish in Pitlochry follows an ancient right of way that is popular with walkers and mountain bikers alike. Spectacular views over Strathtay are also afforded from the viewpoint at the Castle Dow Scheduled Monument.

Plan Objectives

- Ensure adequate access is in place in time for forest operations.
- Plan operational access for larch coupes to be in place in case of *P. ramorum* infection.
- Plan felling and restocking operations for the benefit of flood risk management in downstream Operational Target Areas (OTA's).
- Plan appropriate deer management strategy to ensure successful establishment of planting.
- Ensure heritage features are properly protected during operations.
- Plan coupes and restock areas to minimise the risk of future windblow incidents.
- Devise management strategy for forest operations in visually sensitive locations.
- Ensure neighbouring SSSI's are maintained or improved as a result of FLS activities.
- Improve habitat for Northern Damselfly in the vicinity of Logierait Mires SSSI.
- Preserve populations of Juniper at the northern end of Grandtully.
- Expand native woodland cover around the summit of Creag Craggan.

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
<p>Produce high quality timber crops and support specialist timber markets and local sawmills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fertile and sheltered lower slopes are prime sites for growing alternative conifer species over longer rotations. • Potential for use of CCF management • Both blocks have good access onto the A9 for markets to the north and south. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher elevations are exposed to prevailing winds which has led to progressive windblow in the past. • Areas of wet ground also present issues for stability. • Access onto the public road network from Fonab requires improvement to allow haulage traffic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify suitable sheltered sites with fertile soils for CCF management. • In upland areas that are not visible from key viewpoints plan for clearfell management over shorter rotations. • Thin suitable crops to maximize potential of final crop trees with an awareness of stability risks. • Manage broadleaved stands for niche hardwood markets. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>
<p>Maintain high water quality of salmon rivers as well as wider riparian habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many watercourses emanating from within the blocks. • The forest catchments feed directly into the rivers Tay and Tummel SAC's. • Wetland areas along the Fonab plateau have the potential to support populations of Northern damselfly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New broadleaf planting in riparian areas will require protection from deer browsing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant suitable native broadleaved species in small groups along currently open riparian corridors, protected with tubes or exclosures. • Buffer water courses in restock coupes with similar native broadleaf mixtures. • Blocking strategic drains will slow the passage of water into rivers at times of peak flow. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
<p>Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and visitors through recreational use of the site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Roy way passes through Fonab en route to its final destination in Pitlochry. • Superb views across Strathtay from vantage point at Castle Dow. • Forests are easily accessible for locals and visitors from Pitlochry and Grandtully for walking and cycling. • Opportunity to link path from Grandtully into neighbouring Griffin forest to create a circular walk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Roy Way path descending from Fonab is in poor state of repair due to drainage issues and natural regen. • Way marked path to Castle Dow follows uninspiring route up forest road. • Final ascent of waymarked path to Castle Dow is not suitable for wheeled access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the potential to reroute the waymarked trail in Grandtully through the native oak woodland, away from the forest road. • Investigate potential to improve links between Grandtully and neighbouring Griffin forest to create a circular walk on the core path network. • Carry out repairs to the core path as it descends Fonab towards Pitlochry. 	<p>Zones 2 & 3</p>
<p>Ensure Adequate access is in place in time for forest operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current road network serves majority of coupes in both blocks. • Duntallich mine road provides excellent access to much of Fonab. • Good quarry resource in Grandtully will keep repair and construction costs down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared access onto public road from Fonab requires upgrading. • No agreement to haul timber along Duntallich mine road outwith FLS boundary. • Some thinning coupes at the south end of Grandtully isolated from road network by watercourses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan road upgrades in advance of any proposed fellings. • Aim to stagger coupes to allow roads network time to settle between operations. • Investigate the need for a new road segment to access thinning coupes in Grandtully currently isolated by watercourses. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
<p>Plan operational access for larch coupes to be in place in case of <i>P. ramorum</i> infection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of larch is easily accessible from current road network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant health notifications (PHN's) have been served for <i>P. ramorum</i> less than 2km from Grandtully. Larch is a key component in high visibility area overlooking Pitlochry. Some small areas of larch with no direct road frontage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively bring forward mature larch coupes in the felling programme. Plan for access to isolated larch coupes in the event of a PHN being served. Restock felled larch coupes with a suitable alternative species. Consider Underplanting larch in highly visible locations before felling of mature crops. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>
<p>Plan felling and restocking operations for the benefit of flood risk management in downstream Operational Target Areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forests only make up a small percentage of catchment for the closest downstream OTA at Dunkeld. Management for flood mitigation also provides benefits for expanding and linking habitats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felling large scale coupes will affect the speed of water entering river systems during times of peak flow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant suitable native broadleaved species in small groups along currently open riparian corridors, protected with tubes or exclosures. Buffer water courses in restock coupes with similar native broadleaf mixtures. Block existing drains to slow progress of rainfall into rivers. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
<p>Plan appropriate deer management strategy to ensure successful establishment of planting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fonab has a reasonably good perimeter fence. • Cull targets in both blocks set to increase. • Local deer management group helps to co-ordinate control of deer population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grandtully has no fence. Deer move across the hill from Griffin Forest to the open ground on Kinnaird Estate through the block. • New planting scheme to the east of Grandtully will be fenced, this may disrupt deer movements and cause bottlenecks. • Cattle grids at entry points for the Duntallich Mine road will create access points for deer if not cleared out regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with deer cull as primary method of population control. • Design open space for shooting and suitable ranger access at the point of restocking. • Stagger planting or groups in riparian areas to create sightlines and cover for stalking. • Monitor condition of cattle grids and ensure regular maintenance is carried out. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>
<p>Ensure Heritage features are properly protected during forest operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several Scheduled Monuments identified in both blocks. • Castle Dow is a popular destination for local walkers, accessible by waymarked path. • The condition of the Clachan an Diridh stone circle was upgraded by Historic Environment Scotland at the last inspection in 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hut circles at southern end of Grandtully are inaccessible, surrounded by dense commercial crops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain appropriate buffers around heritage features. • Consider redesigning coupes at the point of restock to improve the setting of Scheduled Monuments at the south end of Grandtully. 	<p>Zones 2 & 3</p>

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
<p>Plan coupes and restock areas to minimise the risk of future windblow incidents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grandtully is largely protected from prevailing winds by neighbouring Griffin forest. • Low visibility from key viewpoints allows greater freedom for scale and shape of felling coupes in areas of high windblow risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper reaches of Fonab are exposed to prevailing winds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan coupe rotations based on terminal crop height. • Only thin crops where site conditions are suitable. • Avoid late thinnings in marginal sites. • Fell all coupes to a stable green edge to avoid exposure of adjacent crops. • Design in network of rides and crop breaks to provide options for future felling coupes. • Restock western edge of forest with permanent buffer of broadleaves. 	<p>Whole Forest</p>
<p>Devise management strategy for forest operations in visually sensitive locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North face of Fonab suitable site for CCF management. • Lower slopes of Grandtully well established native broadleaf woodland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North face of Fonab forms part of key backdrop to town of Pitlochry. • Larch is a major component of north face of Fonab. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate, employ CCF management techniques to maintain canopy cover in visually sensitive locations. • Restock felled larch with a suitable alternative species. 	<p>Zone 3</p>

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
<p>Ensure neighbouring SSSI's are maintained or improved as a result of FLS activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Populations of juniper scrub already well established in Grandtully in the vicinity of Balnaguard burn SSSI. • Currently programmed felling coupe in Fonab will present an opportunity for improvements in the vicinity of Logierait Mires. • Potential to expand existing wetland features in Fonab to create habitat for Northern damselfly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juniper populations in Grandtully at risk from deer browsing and <i>P. austrocedrii</i> infection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate buffers of open space and suitable native planting around Logierait Mires SSSI at the point of restock. • Dam the minor watercourse to the south of Clachan an Diridh to expand the wetland area to the north of the mine road. • Create shooting opportunity for deer management around juniper populations in Grandtully. 	<p>Zone 3</p>
<p>Improve habitat for Northern Damselfly in the vicinity of Logierait Mires SSSI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently programmed felling coupe in Fonab will present an opportunity for improvements in the vicinity of Logierait Mires. • Potential to expand existing wetland features in Fonab to create habitat for Northern damselfly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large buffer on SSSI site will impact on area available for commercial crops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dam the minor watercourse to the south of Clachan an Diridh to expand the wetland area to the north of the mine road. • Link ponds and wetland areas at the top of Fonab with corridors of suitable native species. 	<p>Zones 1 & 3</p>

Objective	Opportunity	Constraint	Concept	Zone
Preserve populations of juniper at northern end of Grandtully.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Populations of veteran juniper located in two secluded areas of woodland below Castle Dow. • Neighbouring Balnaguard Glen designated SSSI for juniper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer browsing is damaging existing population and hindering seedling development. • <i>Phytophthora austrocedrae</i> presents infection risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thin canopy trees around juniper populations to create more favourable light conditions. • Design in access and shooting opportunities for deer management around juniper sites. 	Zone 3
Expand native woodland cover around the summit of Creag Craggan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for new woodland creation in an otherwise established block. • Upland birch or willow scrub would provide habitat for black grouse and other priority species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access will be required for establishment and initial maintenance. • Creag Craggan is currently unfenced and vulnerable to deer browsing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the opportunity to expand planting on currently open ground to the south end of Grandtully. Factor in cost of providing access and likely deer management requirements. 	Zone 2