

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Please complete this form to find out if you need consent from Scottish Forestry, under the **Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017**, to carry out your proposed forestry project. Please refer to Schedule 2 Selection Criteria for Screening Forestry Projects under <u>Applying for an opinion</u>. If you are not sure about what information to include on this form please contact your <u>local Conservancy office</u>.

Proposed Work							
Please put a cro	ss in the	box to indic	cate the ty	pe of work y	ou are prop	osing to	carry out.
Give the area in	hectare	s and where	appropria	ate the perce	entage of co	nifers ar	nd
broadleaves							
Proposed	select	Area in	%	% Broad-	Proposed	select	Area in
Work	Select	hectares	Conifer	leaves	work	Select	hectares
Afforestation		41.43			Forest		
Allorestation		41.43			roads		
Deforestation					Forest		
Delorestation					quarry		
Location of work	Location of work Loch Arkaig Forest - Coupe 62073 NN 1875 9174					`	

Description of Forestry Project and Location

Provide details of the forestry project (size, design, use of natural resources such as soil, and the cumulative effect if relevant).

Please attach map(s) showing the boundary of the proposed work and other known details.

The afforestation area lies on an open area on an AWI designation. It lies adjacent commercial conifer which lies to the west and south, ancient semi-natural woodland to the north and blanket bog habitat to the east.

The afforestation gross area is 41.43ha. It is expected that it will develop as upland birchwood habitat in a mosaic with elements of pinewood habitat and on the upper slopes montane scrub habitats with the following composition:

80% NMB (33.23ha)

10% Scots pine (4.1ha)

10% open ground (4.1ha)

The riparian areas/gullies will support the most diverse species such as SOK/HAZ/ROW/ASP/HAW/HOLLY, with dark or tea-leaved willow scrub. Elsewhere, species will comprise of PBI with scots pine and some juniper with elements of the species prescribed for the riparian areas where the conditions suit. It is anticipated that birch will regenerate due to the moribund birch already on site, but all other species will be planted. Supplementary planting of birch will occur where it is evident that natural regeneration is failing to establish. Natural regeneration of birch should be achieved in at least 13.1ha.

The establishment of this woodland creation will occur at the same time as the restocking of the phase 1 fell area to the west. The combined area will be protected by deer fencing whilst efforts to reduce the deer population to around 2-5 deer/km2 are taking place over a period of time.





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Provide details on the existing land use and the environmental sensitivity of the area that is likely to be affected by the forestry project.

The existing land use is 95% open and 5% moribund birch.

Around 23ha of the afforestation area is an ancient woodland inventory designation which continues south into the commercail conifer crop eventually linking with the Dark Mile CPI two kilometres to the south.

This location lies within Wild Land Area (WLA) 18 - Kinlochhourn-Knoydart-Morar. It also lies within the Special Land Area (SLA) - Loch Lochy & Loch Oich

The site is impacted by several minor watercourses, some of which have fromed gullies.

The slope is 35 - 50%+ in gradient with a westerly aspect.

Description of Likely Significant Effects

Provide details on any likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment (resulting from the project itself or the use of natural resources) and the extent of the information available to assist you with this assessment.

The afforestation project will reinstate native woodland on a lost ancient woodland site. It will improve ecological connectivity and resilience of native woodland habitat by linking young native woodland and ancient semi-natural woodland to the north with montane scrub to the NE and with PAWS areas to the south and SW. This will also improve the ecological connectivity of the Arkaig pinewoods with the Glengarry pinewoods via the Dark Mile pinewoods and this area of Fhudair.

Planting can introduce non-native species to the ancient woodland designation

The impact on the Wild Land Area designation should also be a positive one as the afforestation forms part of a conversion from commercial conifer to native woodland habitat. This planting will mimic a natural looking transition woodland with stocking density decreasing as elevation increases. It also replaces a lost ancient woodland. It will eventually fit in with the sense of remoteness and naturalness associated with this designation.

The impact on the Special Landscape Area will also be a positive as the afforestation operations will be carried out at the same time as the adjacent restocking to the west where commercial conifer land use will be converted to native woodland. This measure forms part of the SLA potential for landscape enhancement measures.

The gullies/riparian areas will be expected to have some birch natural regeneration with the diverse species previously mentioned planted to provide the necessary species diversity, dappled shade to support water life, and humidity levels to support bryophytes as the area develops. The range of native species which have a combination of plate, heart and tap rooting habits will help to stabilise the soils within the gullies and aid windfirmness, thus further improving climate change resilience.

During forest operations there is a risk from pollution and sedimentation of watercourses.



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Include details of any consultees or stakeholders that you have contacted in order to make this assessment. Please include any relevant correspondence you have received from them.

FLS Native Woodland Ecologist, FLS Open Habitat Ecologist and FLS Landscape Architects...

Local FLS Environment, Planning, Wildlife, Civils, Delivery, Estates and Visitor Services teams.

See the LMP Stakeholder Record for details.

Mitigation of Likely Significant Effects

If you believe there are likely significant effects that the project will have on the environment, provide information on the opportunities you have taken to mitigate these effects.

AWI (and adjacent ancient semi-natural woodland):

Protect moribund birch, areas of woodland flora and minimise ground disturbance.

As a minimum compliance with the UK Forestry Standard:

Section 6.1: Forests and Biodiversity.

Encourage birch regeneration where possible.

For planted stock:

Source native broadleaved seed from seed zone 105.

Scots pine from seed zone 6 – south west.

Watercourses:

Creation of riparian woodland habitat to improve water quality and temperature management.

As a minimum, compliance with UK Forestry Standard:

Section 6.1: Forest and Biodiversity

Section 6.2: Forest and climate change

Section 6.6: Forest and Soil

Section 6.7: Forest and Water

SEPA GBRs

Practice guide for forest managers to assess and protect Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems when preparing woodland creation proposals January 2018 FCPG025-Managing forest operations to protect the water environment.

Soils:

Avoid planting areas of deep peat.

Stabilise soils, particularly within gullies, through the use of native species that have a mix of plate, heart and tap rooting habits to bind soil, improve soil fertility and fauna and improve windfirmness.

As a minimum, compliance with- UK Forestry Standard:

Section 6.1: Forests and Biodiversity

Section 6.6: Forests and Soils.



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General:

Nesting birds are not a known issue in this location, but some impact zones do lie to the north and south of the site. There are no known heritage/cultural features assocaited with this site with the exception of the moribund birch in the AWI designation.

As a minimum, compliance with the UK Forestry Standard:

Section 6.1: Forests and Biodiversity

Section 6.3: Forests and Historic Environment

FLS Practice Guide to Archaeology and the Historic Environment (2022)

FCS Guidance Note 31: Forests and wildlife protection

FCS Guidance Note 32: Forest operations and birds in Scottish forests – bird disturbance NatureScot Guidance – Disturbance distances in selected Scottish bird species

The FLS Environment team will carry out pre-operations to identify environmental constraints and appropriate mitigation measures to be followed. These will be written into the work plans and subsequent pre-commencement meetings.

Sensitive Areas	
Please indicate if any of the proposed forestry project is within a sensitiv	e area. Choose
the sensitive area from the drop down below and give the area of the pro	oposal within it.
Sensitive Area	Area
Select	N/A
Select	
Select	
Select	
Select	

Property Details					
Property Name:	Loch Arkaig Forest				
Business Reference		Main Location			
Number:		Code:			
Grid Reference:	NN 1821 8917	Nearest town	Clunes		
(e.g. NH 234 567)	NIN 1021 0917	or locality:	Cluries		
Local Authority:		Highland			

Owner's Details						
Title:	Mr		Forename:	Andrew		
Surname:	Hunt					
Organisation:	Organisation: Forestry and Land		Position:	Regional	Manager	
	Scotland					
Primary Contact		0131	370 5474	Alternative Contact		0300 067 6650
Number:				Number:		
Email:	andre	ew.hu	nt@forestryan	dland.gov.so	ot	
Address:	Address: FLS West Region, Oban		Outstation, I	Millpark Ro	oad, Oban	
Postcode: PH34 4NH		Country:	Scotland			
Is this the corres	Is this the correspondence address?					



Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request Form

Agent's Details						
Title:	Ms	Forename:	Catriona			
Surname:	MacL	.ennan				
Organisation:	Fores	stry and Land	Position:	Planning	Forester	
	Scotl	and				
Primary Contact		07823537772	Alternative Contact		0300 067 6650	
Number:			Number:			
Email:	catric	na.maclennan@fore	estryandland	d.gov.scot		
Address:	Address: FLS West Region, Torlur		dy Office, F	ort William		
Postcode:	Postcode: PH33 6SW		Country:	Scotland		
Is this the corres	Is this the correspondence address?					

Office Use Only	
GLS Ref number:	



Constraints Checklist

Constraint Type	Name	Special Features	Mitigation Measures
RAMSAR	N/A	N/A	N/A
SPA	N/A	N/A	N/A
SAC	N/A	N/A	N/A
SSSI	N/A	N/A	N/A
NSA	N/A	N/A	N/A
WLA	18 – Kinlochhourn – Knoydart - Morar	 High, remote, rugged and rocky mountains with a strong sense of naturalness and awe-some angular in profile with sweeping peaks, and some massive in form A very remote interior drawing adventurous and experienced hillwalkers Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape. 	 Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape. This key attribute and quality of this WLA is most relevant to the afforestation project. It describes "extensive conifer plantations that extend out of neighbouring glens for example in Glen Garry and along Loch Arkaig and Loch Eil". The afforestation project will take place at the same time as the adjacent native restocking of the previous commercial conifer crop. This

Constraint Type	Name	Special Features	Mitigation Measures
		 A strong influence of the sea around the north and western edges of the WLA, providing open views and contributing to perceived awe, remoteness and naturalness. Secluded and elevated rocky cnocan and plateaux, containing hidden depressions and lochs with a strong sense of sanctuary. 	conversion to native woodland within the WLA designation will be enhance by the afforestation project. The planting will aim to create a natural progression of species type and stocking density as elevation increases adding a sense of naturalness in this locality.
LCA	No. 239 – Interlocking Sweeping Peaks - Lochaber	Key characteristics: Pyramidal mountain summits with a jagged profile, often appearing as overlapping peaks along glen views Sweeping slopes with screes plunging directly into deep glens or lochs with little or no flat shoreline fringe. Sparsely vegetated with few trees. Numerous rocky outcrops punctuate the steep, rugged terrain. Inaccessible and remote with wild character. Long panoramic views.	The afforestation project will not impact on key characteristics 1, 2, 4 and 6. Key Characteristics 3 and 5 do apply to the area. Key Characteristics 3: The site currently comprise of 95% open and 5% moribund birch. However, this area was once ancient woodland – see AWI section below. The afforestation restores the ancient woodland and will improve the resilience of restored native woodland and native woodland expansion in this area improving ecological connectivity between Glengarry Forest and the Arkaig catchment. Key Characteristics 5: The afforestation area is not inaccessible nor remote with wild character. It lies adjacent to non-native commercial conifer woodland to the south and west. The sense of remoteness and wild character will be enhanced by the

Constraint Type	Name	Special Features	Mitigation Measures
			establishment of native woodland on an AWI site
			and linking in with young native woodland and
			ancient semi-natural woodland to the north and
			through time with restored PAWS to the south
			and west.
			As a minimum, compliance with UK Forestry
			Standard:
			Section 6.1: Forest and Biodiversity
			Section 6.4: Forest and Landscape
NNR	N/A	N/A	N/A
AWI	ASNO1860	Ancient woodland features	Protect moribund birch, areas of woodland flora
			and minimise ground disturbance.
			As a minimum compliance with the UK Forestry
			Standard:
			 Section 6.1: Forests and Biodiversity.
			 Source native broadleaved seed from seed
			zone 105.
			 Scots pine from seed zone 6 – south west.
СРІ	Dark Mile	Core pinewood, regeneration zone and	Plant some Scots pine in the site to develop an
		associated genetic buffer.	ecological link with the Loch Arkaig and Glengarry
		Core areas lie about 2km to the south and	pinewoods. Source seed from Seed Zone 6 –
		associated genetic buffer lies 1.4km to the south	south west.
Priority Habitats	N/A	N/A	N/A
Peatland	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other wetlands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Important habitat	N/A	N/A	N/A
Conservation	N/A	N/A	N/A

Constraint Type	Name	Special Features	Mitigation Measures
Heritage	N/A	N/A	N/A
Watercourses	Minor watercourses	Natural watercourses which flow into the	Creation of riparian woodland habitat to improve
		Abhainn Chia-Aig – important to support the	water quality and temperature management.
		Scottish rainforest bryophyte communities,	As a minimum, compliance with UK Forestry
		water supply for the hydro scheme and for	Standard:
		salmonid habitat farther downstream	Section 6.1: Forest and Biodiversity
			Section 6.2: Forest and climate change
			Section 6.6: Forest and Soil
			Section 6.7: Forest and Water
			SEPA GBRs
			Practice guide for forest managers to assess and
			protect Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial
			Ecosystems when preparing woodland creation
			proposals January 2018
			FCPG025-Managing forest operations to protect
			the water environment
Topography	Moderate to steep slopes	Steep ground ranges from 35% to 50%+	Plant a range of site suited native species to
	with a westerly aspect.	gradient.	provide plate, heart and tap rooting habitats,
	Elevation ranges from 300m	Watercourses have carved gullies that indent an	especially within the gullies/riparian areas to help
	ASL to 550m ASL	otherwise west facing homogenous site	stablisie soil and to create areas of continuous
			humidity to support Scottish rainforest features
			(bryophytes).
Public road	N/A	N/A	N/A
Forest road	LK1	Forest road	Compliance with:
			FCPN104-Managing woodland access and forest
			operations in Scotland
ScotWays	Gleann Cia-Aig Drove road	Historic claimed right of way (HL0022 - Drove	This route follows the forest road.
		road)	Compliance with:

Constraint Type	Name	Special Features	Mitigation Measures
			FCPN104-Managing woodland access and forest
			operations in Scotland
Core path	N/A	N/A	N/A
Long Distance Trail	Hill Access	Caig Hill Access.	Follows route of forest road and ATV track north
			of the forest road.
			Compliance with:
			FCPN104-Managing woodland access and forest
			operations in Scotland
Forest trails	N/A	N/A	N/A
Forest car park	N/A	N/A	N/A
Forest quarry	N/A	N/A	N/A



Background Information

Location

Loch Arkaig Forest, coupe 62073. Grid Reference: NN 1875 9174.

The site is accessed from the B8005 public road via forest road LK1 and through coupe 62069.

Site Management

The aim is to create a native transition woodland on an ancient woodland inventory ghost woodland site. This will take place at the same time as the restocking of coupe 62069. Currently the site is 95% open with 5% moribund birch.

Proposal

To establish 41.43ha of native woodland which comprises of a mosaic of upland birch woodland, pinewood and an element of montane scrub. The aim of this woodland will be to bridge the native woodland gap between a young native woodland creation site and a small ancient seminatural woodland immediately to the north, with PAWS sites (including a native natural regeneration site on Achnacarry Estate on the west side of Gleann Chi-Aig) to the west and SW, and montane scrub areas to the NE. This afforestation will also restore native woodland on an AWI ghost woodland site.

This afforestation will enhance the wider landscape scale native restoration in the Arkaig catchment as well as enable the early development of the Clunes and Glengarry Mountain Woodland project.

It is expected that birch regeneration will occur from the moribund birch on the site. Planting of desirable species will take place to introduce scots pine, juniper, sessile oak, aspen, rowan, holly and hazel as well as dark or tea leaved willow and dwarf birch. The desirable broadleaf species will be focused in the gullies and riparian areas and localised suitable areas elsewhere in the site. The regeneration of birch will be given five years to establish. If regeneration is not established a decision will be made to supplementary plant to secure establishment or to allow another two or three years for regeneration if there is a reasonable prospect of establishment being achieved in that timescale.

Native broadleaf species will be sourced from seed zone 105.

Scots pine will be sourced from seed zone 6 – SW.

The adjacent restocking beside the forest road will align with these proposals.

Stocking density will be variable throughout the site, with greatest diversity of species located in the riparian areas. Stocking density will decrease with rising elevation to mimic a natural progression from treeline to transition woodland and the approach to the Krummholz zone.

Constraints

Deer

Multiple watercourses throughout the site Wild Land Area (WLA) – 18 Kinlochhourn – Knoydart - Morar SLA – Loch Lochy and Loch Oich DAMS 17 - 19 SEPA waterbody - Abhainn Chia-Aig and associated catchment **AWI - ASNO1860** Adjacent ASNW which lies immediately north. ScotWays and hill access route along forest road LK1

Mitigation

Deer

The afforestation and adjacent restock sites will be protected by deer fencing during the establishment phase. FLS are aiming to reduce deer numbers to the lower end of 2 – 7 deer/km2 to enable healthy habitats to thrive. This however, will take some time to achieve thus the requirement of deer fencing. FLS are in regular contact with neighbours and will be working together to achieve landscape scale pinewood restoration in the Arkaig catchment which will primarily be achieved through deer management and the removal of non-native species.

Watercourses and water environment

The UK Forestry Standard recommended buffers as a minimum, will be adhered to regarding riparian woodland creation and soil/slope stability management. Establishment of these areas will be particularly important in the long term to enable natural regeneration into the mountain woodland project zone via riparian areas. It is also hoped that the bryophytes and lichens associated with the Scottish rainforest will eventually develop in these areas.

Operations will also comply with:

FCPG25 – Managing forest operations to protect the water environment.

Practice guidance on groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems – Jan 2018.

Wild Land Areas:

18 – Kinlochhourn – Knoydart – Morar

Relevant key attribute:

Spectacular deep glens and lochs cut through the high mountains and hills, strongly influencing visibility, remoteness and access through the landscape.

This key attribute and quality of this WLA is most relevant to the afforestation project. It describes "extensive conifer plantations that extend out of neighbouring glens for example in Glen Garry and along Loch Arkaig and Loch Eil. These are perceived to encroach upon the wild land qualities within the area, especially where they rise out of the apparent confines of the glens up onto elevated slopes".

The afforestation project will take place at the same time as the adjacent native restocking of the previous commercial conifer crop. This conversion to native woodland within the WLA designation will be enhanced by the afforestation project. The planting will aim to create a natural progression of species type and stocking density as elevation increases adding a sense of naturalness in this locality. It also reinstates an ancient woodland that once grew on this site.

SLA – Loch Lochy and Loch Oich

The conversion of the adjacent restock site which will form part of the afforestation project involves the conversion of commercial conifer forest to native woodland habitat. This measure form part of the SLA potential for landscape enhancement measures.

DAMS 17 - 19

The location of the site does experience some exposure, however, the trees planted here are appropriate for the conditions and will be expected to grow according to conditions. This will be a native transition woodland and as such will develop as treeline woodland with elements of Krummholz and montane scrub habitat.

SEPA waterbody - Abhainn Chia-Aig and associated catchment

This catchment is 2205.75ha in size.

Currently FLS forest land use occupies 297ha. This comprises of young and mature commercial conifers and native broadleaves as well as felled areas, bare and unplantable land. This amounts to 13.5% of the catchment.

Achnacarry Estate are proposing native regeneration along the west side of Gleann Chia-Aig estimated to be 79ha (3.6% of the catchment).

This afforestation will add a further c41.43ha gross (1.9% of the catchment) to wooded land use within the catchment.

Total woodland land use proportion in the catchment will be 19%.

ASNO1860

Protect the moribund birch to secure a seed source, senescence and future deadwood habitat. Native woodland restoration will improve resilience of these trees and will improve the woodland habitat species and linkages in this location.

Adjacent ASNW.

There is a small ancient semi-natural woodland which is dominated by birch and lies in a gully close to the northern boundary of the afforestation site. Ensure planted stock complies as follows:

- Section 6.1: Forests and Biodiversity.
- Source native broadleaved seed from seed zone 105.
- Scots pine from seed zone 6 south west.

Potential for birds:

There are no known conservation sites for birds affecting this site, however, the following will be applied:

FCS Guidance Note 31: Forests and wildlife protection

FCS Guidance Note 32: Forest operations and birds in Scottish forests – bird disturbance

NatureScot Guidance - Disturbance distances in selected Scottish bird species

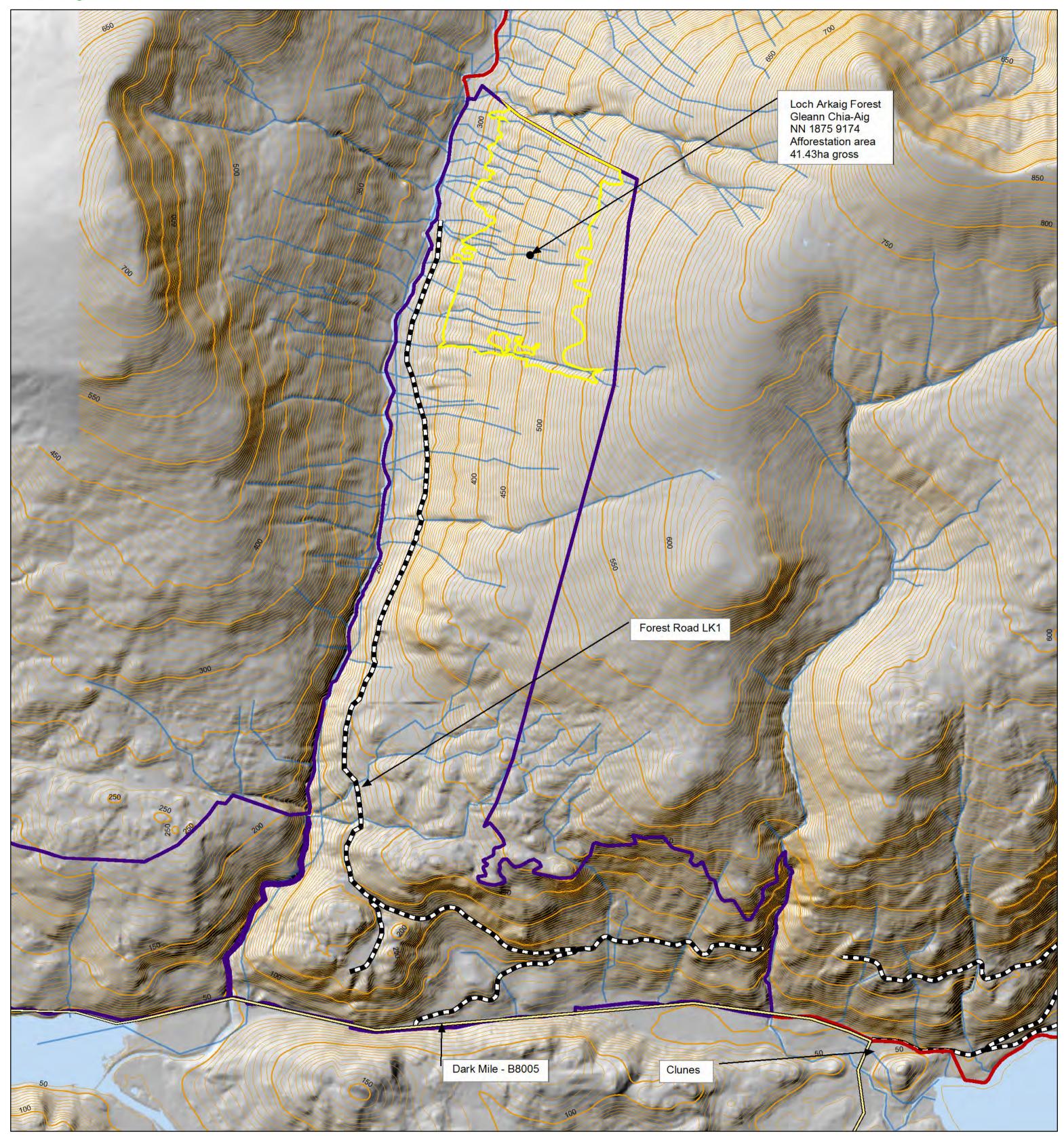
ScotWays and hill access route:

During establishment and deer management operations the following best practice will be followed:

FCPN104 – Managing woodland access and forest operations in Scotland

An ATV track maybe required to gain access to the site from the public road. Mitigation measures include compliance with:

- SEPA GBRs
- UK Forestry Standard in particular
 - o Sections 6.6: Forests and Soils and Section 6.7: Forest and Water
- NatureScot publication: Constructed tracks in the Scottish Uplands
- FLS PN/Restocking tracks description
- FLS ATV track cross-section specification
- FLS Landscape Architect's landscape visual impact mitigation measures



Gleann Chia-Aig Afforestation

Scale @ A2: 1:10,000

Date: 17/05/2024

Author: Catriona Maclennan

Legend

Minor Roads (GB)

Minor Roads (GB)

Secondary Roads (GB)

Secondary Roads (GB)

Secondary Roads (GB)

= Secondary Roads (GB)

Blocks

Clunes

Loch Arkaig

Forest Roads

■ Forest Roads

Watercourses

Next Perspectives 5m Contours (Scot.)

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Index

Intermediate





Gleann Chia-Aig Afforestation

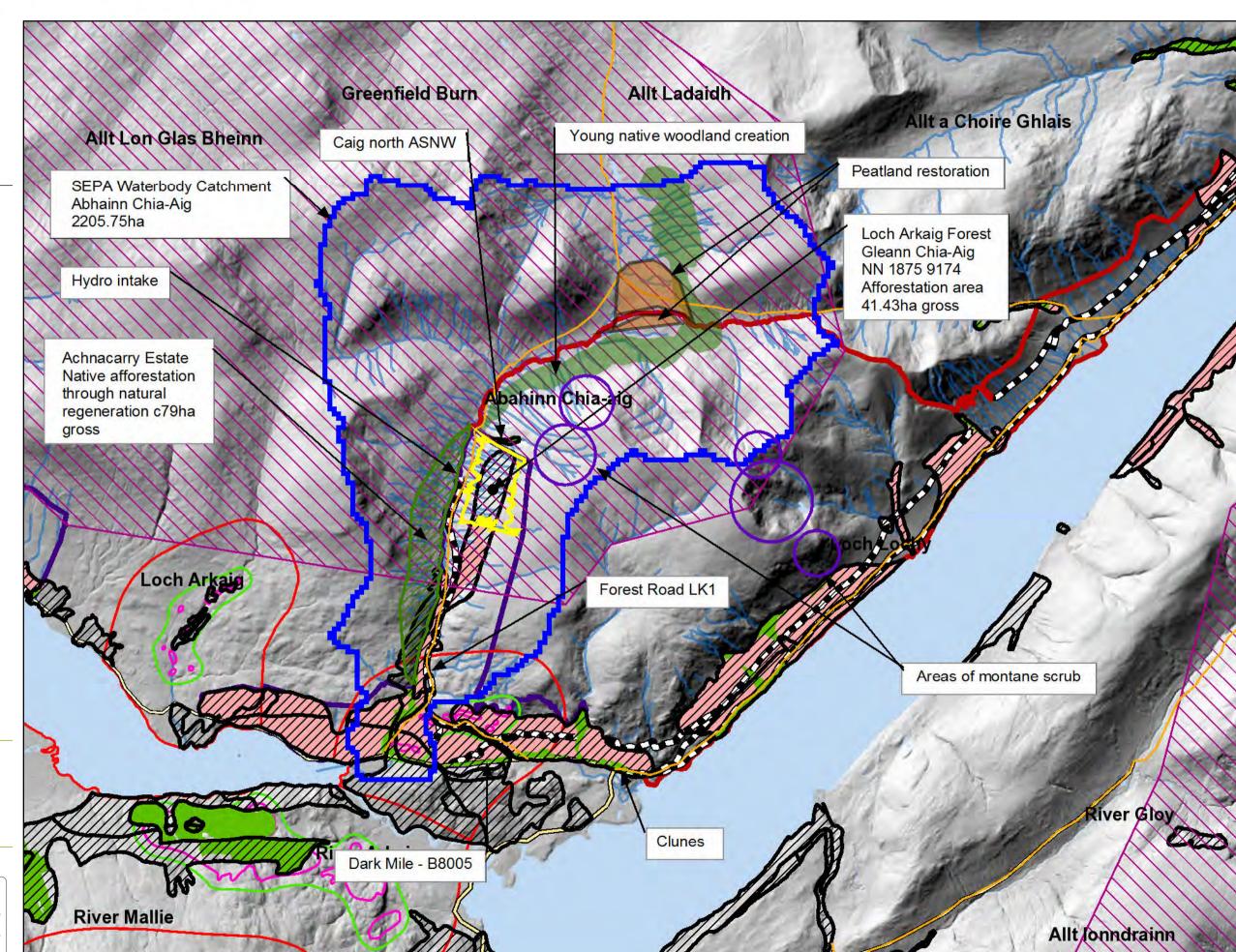
Author: Catriona Maclennan

Scale @ A3: 1:40,000 Date: 17/05/2024 Legend No Species Wild Land Areas (Scot.) Wild Land Areas (Scot.) Moderate status / Poor status / potentia Ancient (of semi-natural origin) ScotWays Rights of Way Forest Roads Minor Roads (GB) Minor Roads (GB) Other Route (Potentia Secondary Roads (GB) Secondary Roads (GB) Secondary Roads (GB) Inventory (Scot.) Cal Pine Buffer Zone Cal Pine Planted Area Native Mixed/Other Cal Pine Regeneration Other/Mixed Caledonian Pinewood Other/Mixed Conifers Douglas Fir Blocks Loch Arkaig

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Gleann Chia-Aig Afforestation

Author: Catriona Maclennan

Scale @ A2: 1:40,000

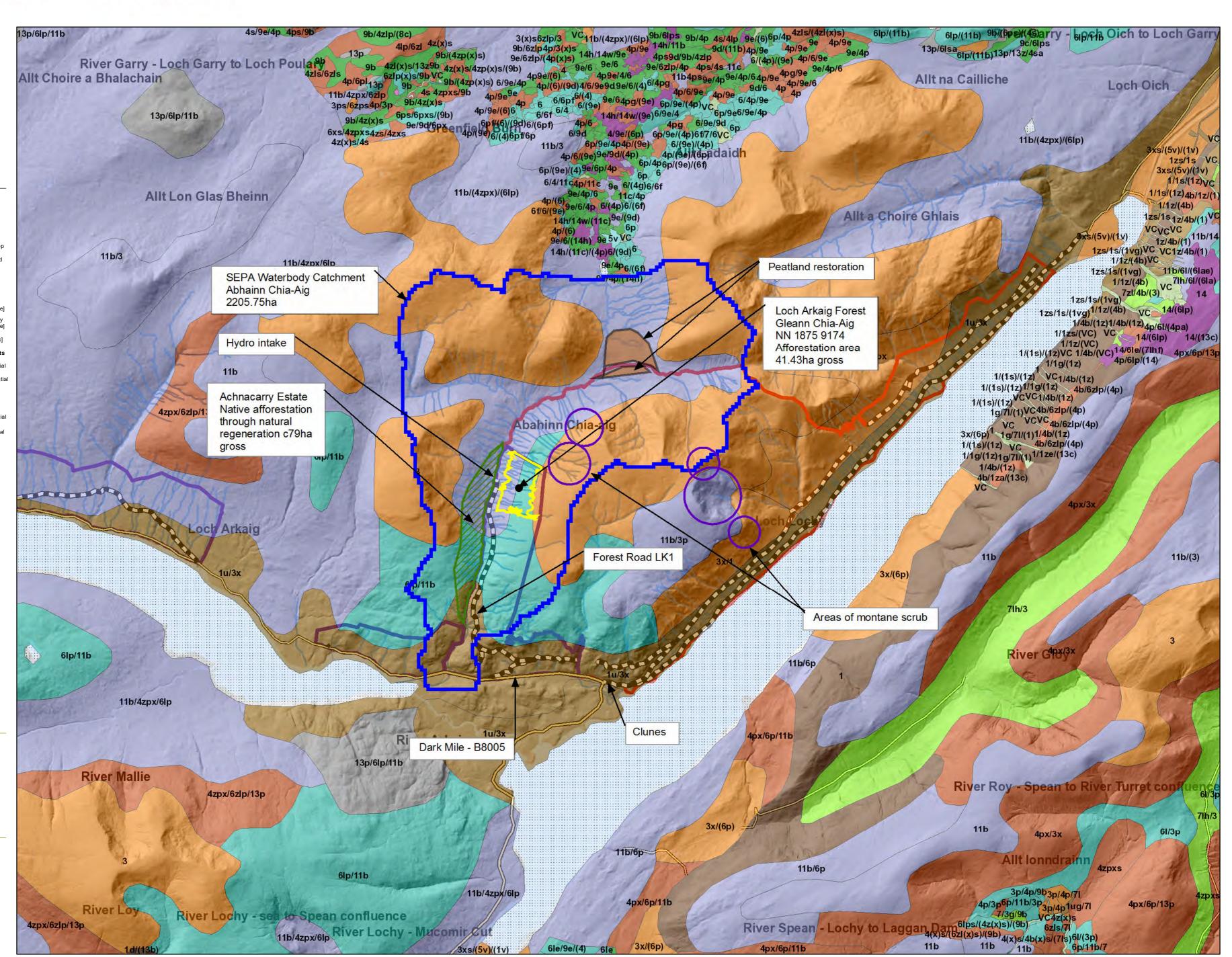


0 0.275 0.55 1.1 1.65

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Gleann Chia-Aig Afforestation

Author: Catriona Maclennan

Scale @ A2: 1:40,000

Date: 17/05/2024

Legend

Contour_450m

Glengarry_Boundary

Clunes_Boundary2

SEPA Waterbody Catchments

High status / potential

Good status / potential

Moderate status /

Poor status / potential

Bad status / potential

Forest Roads

Forest Roads

Minor Roads (GB)

Minor Roads (GB)

Secondary Roads (GB)

Secondary Roads

Secondary Roads (GB)

Secondary Roads

Blocks

Loch Arkaig

Watercourses

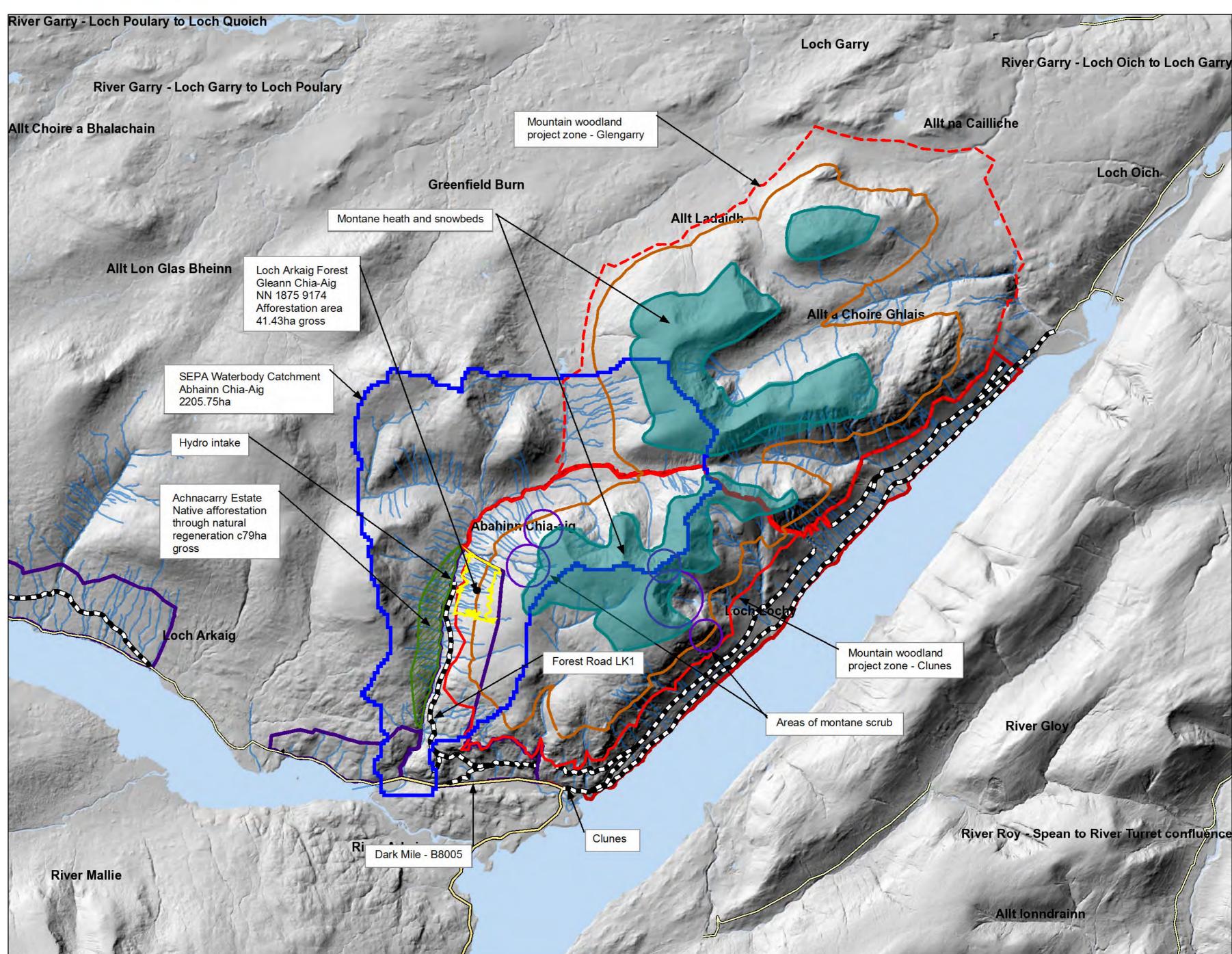




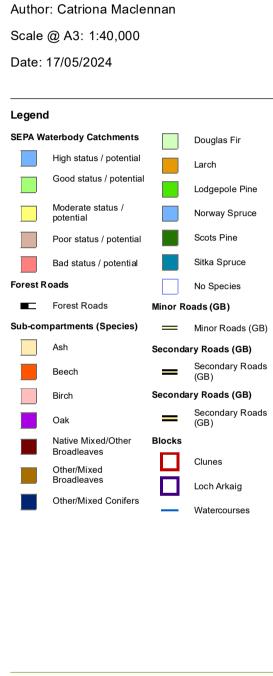
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Gleann Chia-Aig Afforestation

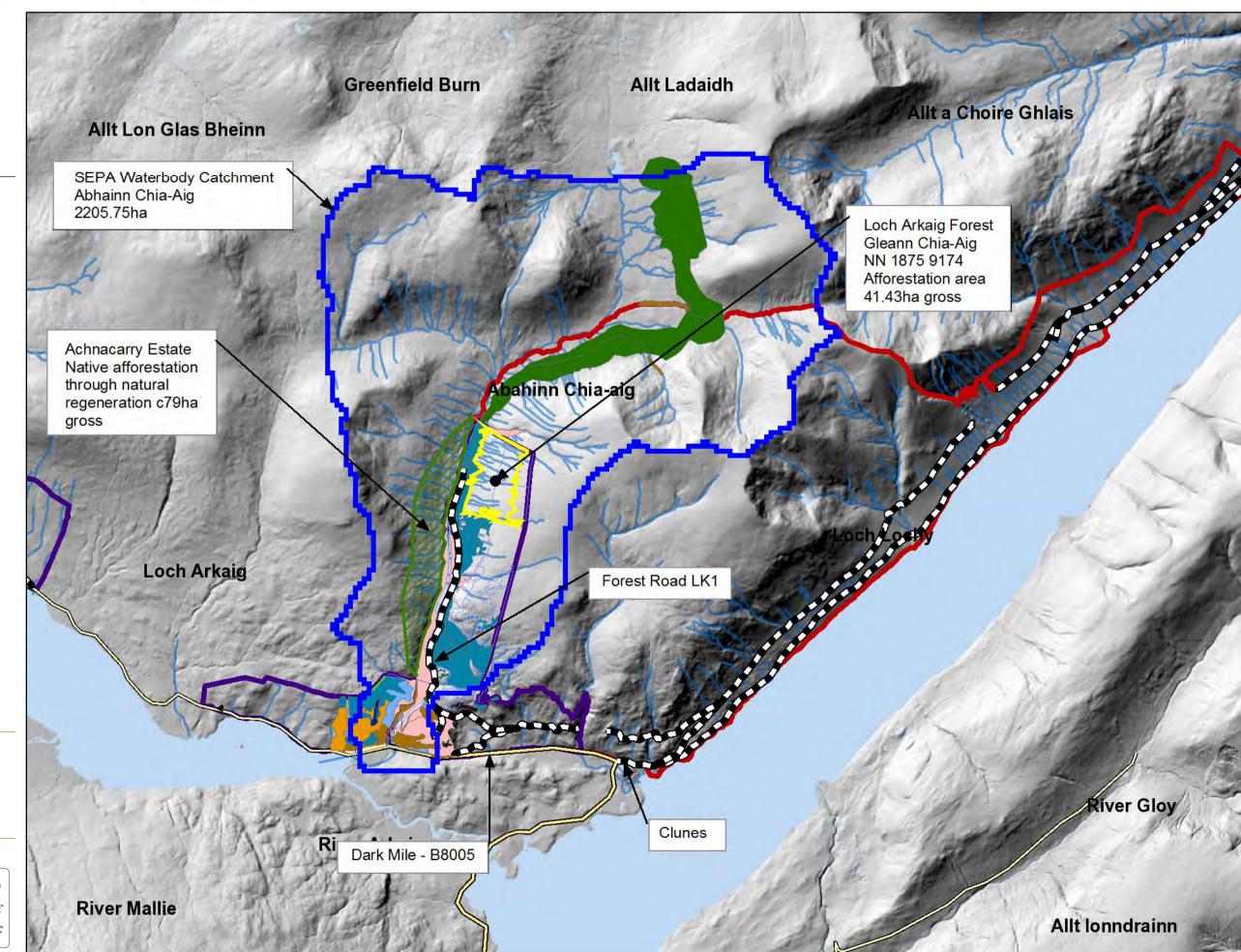




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Gleann Chia-Aig Afforestation

Author: Catriona Maclennan

Scale @ A3: 1:40,000

Date: 17/05/2024

Restock Species Pure and Mixtures

Beech

Birch

Douglas Fir

Larch

Lodgepole Pine

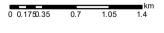
Norway Spruce

Native Mixed/Other Broadleaves Other/Mixed Broadleaves

Other/Mixed Conifers

Scots Pine Sitka Spruce

Species Mixture Main colour = Dominant species Dots = Secondary species Sitka spruce with Birch shown here

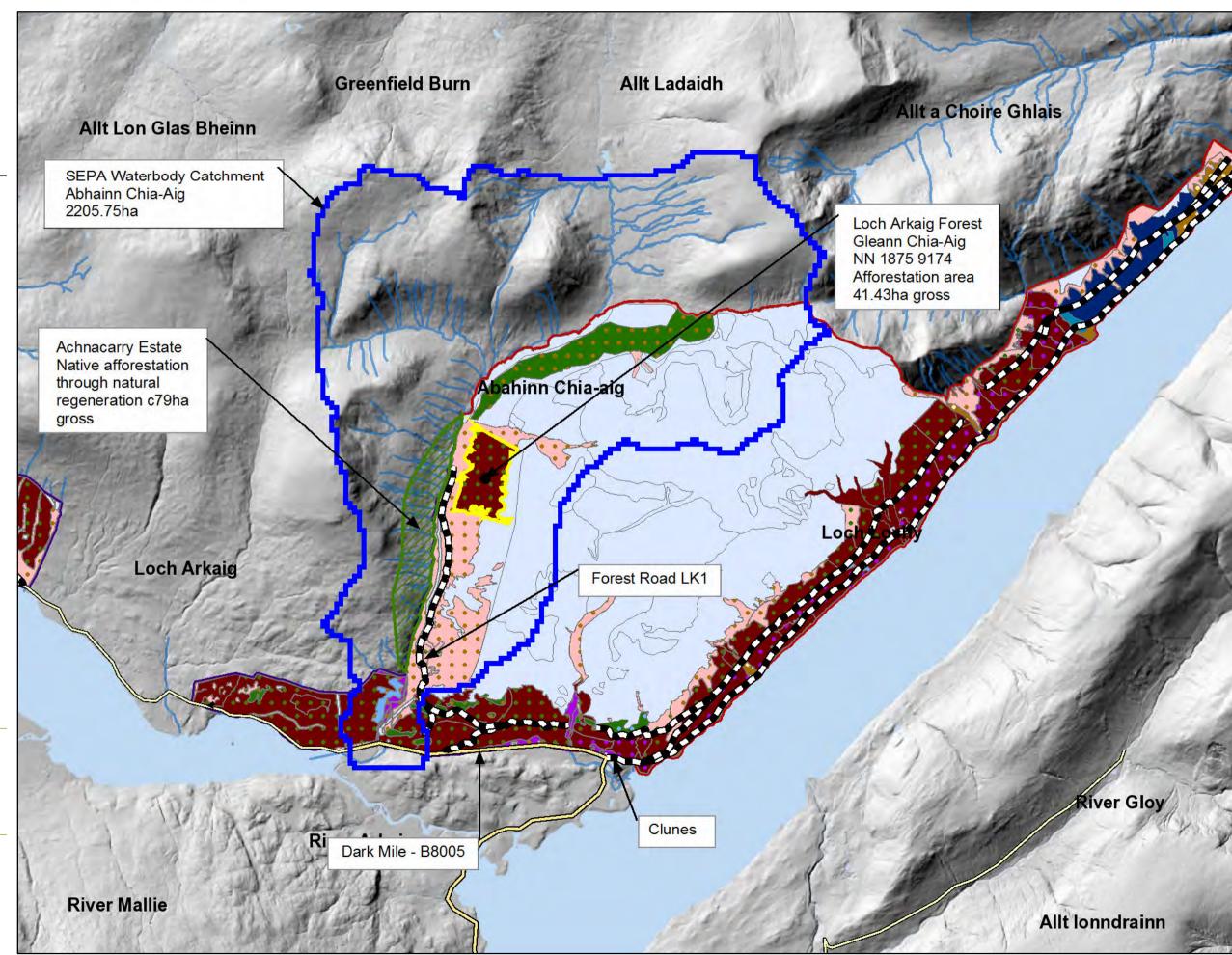




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Afforestation

Author: Catriona Maclennan

Scale @ A3: 1:10,000

Date: 21/05/2024

Legend

Forest Roads

■ Forest Roads

Next Perspectives 5m Contours (Scot.)

Index

Intermediate

Land Management Plan Areas

Land Management Plan Areas

Blocks

Clunes

Loch Arkaig

Watercourses



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