



Strathspey Land Management Plan Brief

50 Year Vision (2070)

All non-native conifers have been felled and extracted from within the Caledonian Pinewood. The pinewood tree species include Scots pine, birch, juniper, rowan, alder, oak, aspen and other native broadleaves. Scots pine plantations are continuing to be thinned to provide timber under low impact silvicultural systems which are regenerating well. The diverse tree species provide a forest that is resilient to climate change and pests and diseases. A wide variety of ground flora are flourishing and peatland areas are actively accumulating sphagnum moss, supporting a wide variety of wetland plants and all restoration operations are complete. Additional areas of forest have colonised above the treeline creating a gradual progression from forest to montane scrub to open hill. The forest has been restructured creating stands of various ages designed to fit with the landscape scale and topography. Riparian woodland is developing along all main water courses which has improved the flora and fauna within and around the water courses. Natural flood plain woodland has established to reduce flood risk on the River Spey.

A diverse population of animals and birds are using the habitats including black grouse, capercaillie, golden eagle, Scottish crossbill, osprey, goshawk, red squirrel and pine marten. Red and roe deer are at a population density that allows trees to regenerate and deer to maintain good, healthy condition and fecundity. Riparian woodland is managed to minimise disturbance to habitats and species, especially ground nesting birds. FLS continues to work in partnership with surrounding land owners to coordinate management and habitat restoration on a landscape scale. The forests and surrounding land provide a world-class visitor experience based on the high quality natural environment, to a wide range of visitors. Positive recreation management ensures that recreation is sustainable. Visitors appreciate and actively care for the natural environment. Nature-based recreation and tourism supports a thriving local economy and provides desirable employment opportunities

200 Year Vision (2220)

The pinewood is in a near natural state with diverse tree species and age class. Gaps in the canopy are created naturally through wind, snow, wildfire and landslides which will regenerate with a mixture of Scots pine and native broadleaves. Forest has extended to its natural altitudinal limit of approximately 600m with montane scrub woodland at the highest elevation. Management interventions are minimal to maintain browsing pressure at a level that allows tree regeneration to occur. The water table in peatlands is at a natural level which now supports the full wetland ecosystem of plants and animals and is actively laying down sphagnum and storing carbon. The forests and surrounding land continue to provide a world-class and sustainable visitor experience based on the high quality natural environment.



Background

The forests of Strathspey are extensive, filling the broad bowl around Loch Morlich between Glenmore, Rothiemurchus, Inshriach, up towards Glenfeshie and on the lower hills next to the Cairngorm massif. Strathspey Land Management Plan (LMP) is an amalgamation of Glenmore, Inshriach and Upper Rothiemurchus forests (see map showing forest blocks). Strathspey forests under FLS ownership stretches from Pityoulish in the north to the "Woods of Glentromie" in the south, and from West of the B970 by Kingussie to the "Stac na h-loaire" hill in the east. This covers an area of approximately 9208 ha, of which 3200ha is open ground and the majority of the forest (81%) is Scots pine.

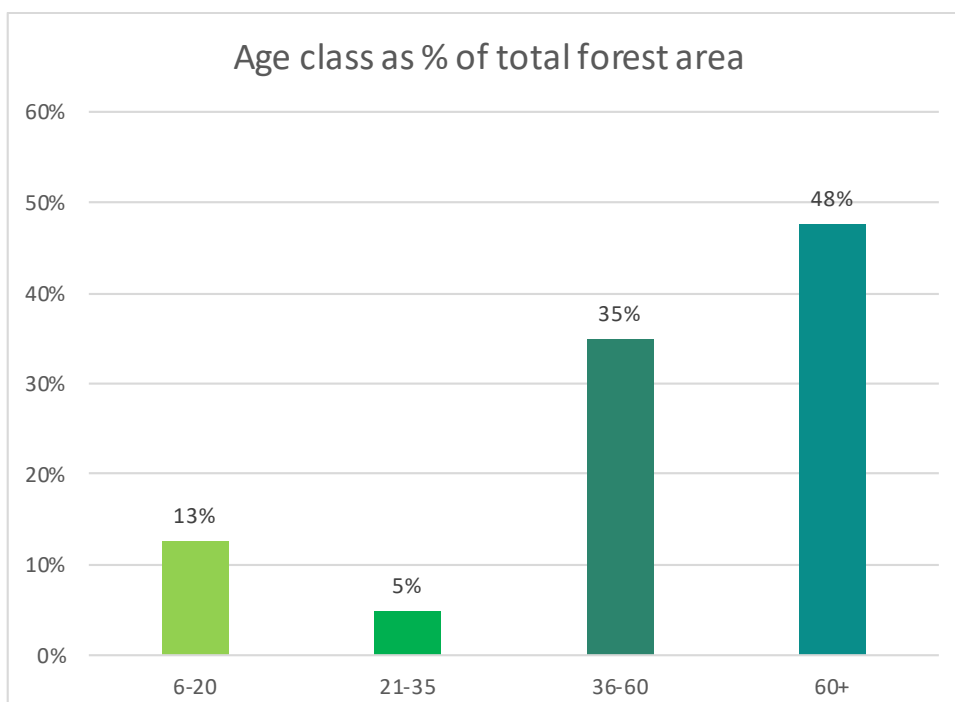
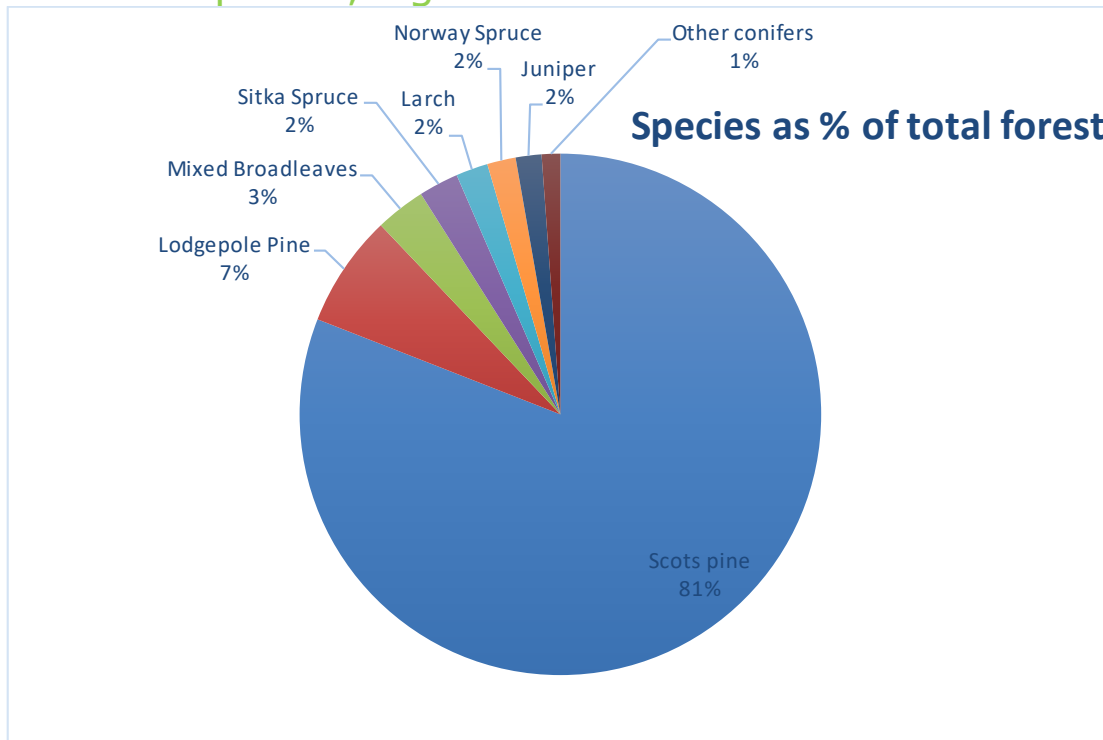
The forest blocks contain a wide variety of habitats which supports some of the most specialised species and habitats in the country. The plan area and its surroundings are socially important forests providing both for the needs and livelihoods of local people and exceptional recreational experiences for visitors to the area. The forest is within the River Spey catchment and as such plays a significant role in water management. The forests form very prominent features in the local landscape; and are highly visible from multiple viewpoints in the surrounding mountain ranges of the Cairngorm National Park, National Scenic Area and Wildland Area; landscape design is therefore very important to the Land Management Plan.

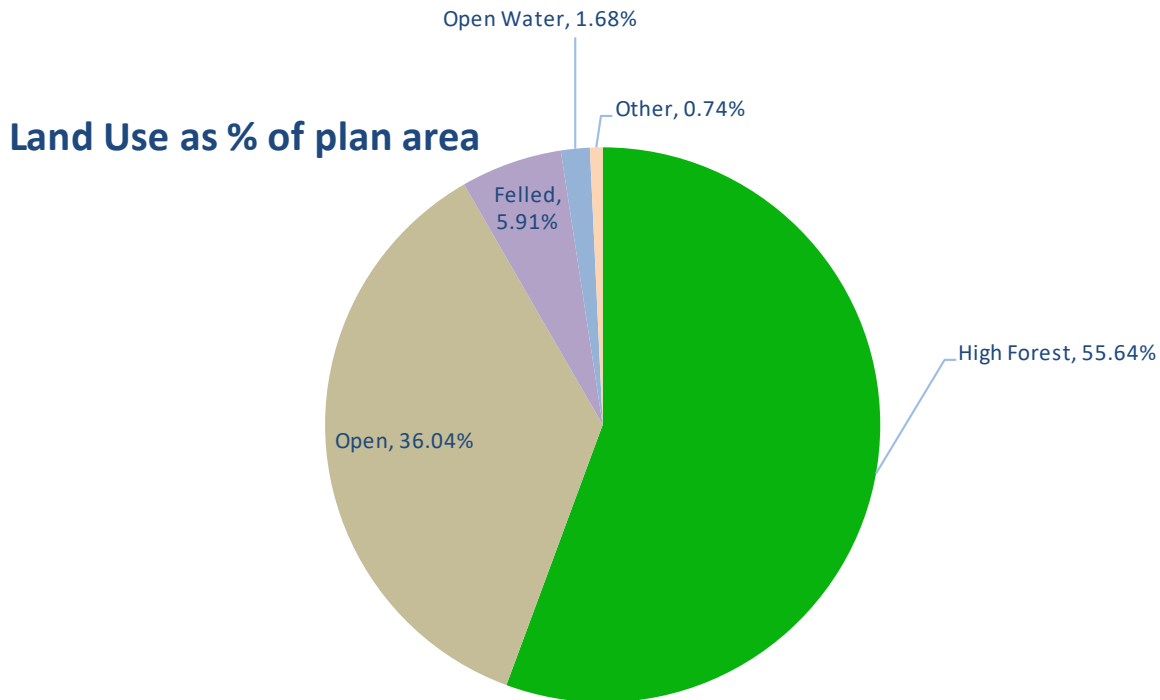
Glenmore (originally approx. 3500 ha in size) was acquired by the Forestry Commission in 1923. In 2013 the MacAlpine plantation (308 ha in size) was acquired by Forest Enterprise Scotland (now FLS) on a 99 year lease. Upper Rothiemurchus was bought from Rothiemurchus estate in 2014, adding a further 2500 ha to the National Forest. At the same time the 99 year lease for MacAlpine plantation was converted to a freehold ownership. Inshriach forest covers an area of 3308 ha. The northern part was purchased by the Forestry Commission in 1937, the southern part in the late 1950s.

Strathspey LMP area is part of "Cairngorms Connect", a partnership of neighbouring land managers, committed to a bold and ambitious 200-year vision to manage and enhance habitats, species and ecological processes across a vast area within the Cairngorms National Park. More details can be found at <http://cairngormsconnect.org.uk/>.



Current Species, Age and Land Use





Strategic context

The [FLS Corporate Plan](#) states how, as part of Scottish Government, FLS will contribute to the [National Performance Framework](#). It also states how FLS will deliver [Scotland's Forestry Strategy](#). The [Cairngorm National Park Authority Forest Strategy](#) states the parks plans for future forest management and woodland restoration.

Plan Objectives

Balance management of designated and other priority biodiversity sites with a high quality visitor experience by:

1. Restoring native habitats and species on a landscape scale
2. Managing visitor access to provide high quality experiences whilst protecting vulnerable species and habitats and maintaining the scenic and wild qualities of the area
3. Working in partnership with stakeholders and neighbours



Key Features

Biodiversity

The LMP area is highly designated with Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) within the forest and open hill (See Designations Map). The details of the qualifying features for each designation and the condition of each are provided in the detail of this LMP. The LMP will include a 10 year designated site plan for each site.

Recreation

The Strathspey woods have a long history of recreational use, shown by the establishment of a Forest Park in 1948 - only the second such designation in Scotland (after Argyll). Glenmore and Inshriach are well used by local residents and have many desire line paths used for walking and mountain biking.

Glenmore:

The forests receive around 350,000 visitors per year who come to enjoy various activities along with many who pass through on their way to Cairngorm Mountain. There are eight car parks and five waymarked trails. There are seasonal public toilets at Loch Morlich and year-round toilet and café facilities within the visitor centre. There is considerable recreational use of other tracks and trails; over 50 km of tracks, trails and forest roads are present within the LMP area. Recreational use includes walking, hillwalking, mountain biking, orienteering, winter sports and water sports on Loch Morlich and many visitors prefer a more relaxed day out; picnics on the beach are very popular. Throughout the year a number of specialist sporting events are held in the area. The presence of other attractions such as Scotland's National Outdoor Training Centre at Glenmore Lodge, The Cairngorm Lodge Youth Hostel, Loch Morlich Watersports, Glenmore campsite and other businesses are also important in attracting and serving visitors' needs.

The Glenmore Forest Park Visitor Centre is the focal point for much of the activity in the area. From here visitors can find out more about the forest and its environment and management, and recreation opportunities in the area. As well as displays in the visitor centre, FLS promotes the recreation opportunities and special qualities of the area via dedicated web pages, a Glenmore Facebook account, a Glenmore Forest Park leaflet and onsite interpretation panels in each car park. FLS and CNPA rangers actively engage with visitors throughout the area.

Inshriach:

Visitor numbers are much lower than Glenmore and facilities are less developed. There are car parks and waymarked trails at Uath Lochans and Feshiebridge. Forest roads and informal paths are used for mountain biking, Munro access and cross-country skiing.

Landscape

The forests of Strathspey are a diverse patchwork of open heath and bog, lochs and lochans, dynamic rivers, open mature pine trees, young dense conifers, delicate light birch woods, mountain hillsides, screes, and extensive plantations and broad cleared



areas. The contrast of colours is notable between the dark venerable pine forests and the light airy birch, the purple heather, turning brown in the winter and the bright greens of the grasses becoming yellow and then bleached as the year progresses. Across the forest area there is a dominance of natural sounds adding to the special qualities of the place. Although large, these forests are diminished in scale by the massive features of the Cairngorm Mountains beyond.

Depending on the where they are viewed from, the forests of the Strathspey LMP are seen as part of grand panoramas or framed views. Because of the undulating nature of the landform and enclosure the forests from within the Glenmore bowl are restricted while the surrounding hills are prominent. The main exceptions to this are the views over Loch Morlich to the forest edge on the south side of the loch and views from elevated sites in the village. There are, however, extensive views of the forest from higher elevations, the car parks at Allt mor and Allt na Ciste, the mountain restaurant on the Ptarmigan, parts of the ski area, the access to the Northern Corries and the popular ridge walk from Meall a'Bhuachaille. Distant views of Inshriach forest are visible from the main trunk road through the Highlands with the western slopes of Creag Dubh and Creag Far-leitre and the area to the south of Drumguish the most prominent. The remaining views are largely internal and particular attention has been paid to the effects around the existing recreation facilities.

Water

There are a number of lochs in the plan area of which Loch Morlich is the largest. In the eastern part of the forest, the watercourses of the Allt Mor and Allt na Ciste cut into the fluvioglacial deposits creating shifting, boulder strewn beds.

Inshriach has a number of water features within its boundaries and is within the catchments for the River Feshie and the Spey. The River Feshie is a SSSI with an agreed Management Plan in place. A number of private water supplies are fed from within the forest.

Aviemore is an area highlighted by SEPA as at risk of flooding and this is downstream from the Strathspey forests. Ways to reduce flood risk will be investigated as part of this plan.

Time frame

Stage	Date
Initial consultation	March 2021
Public and Stakeholder consultation	March- April 2021
Review of commentary & amendments	April- May 2021
Internal review and final draft	June 2021
Submission	July 2021



Forestry and
Land Scotland
Coilltearachd agus
Fearann Alba