

FOREST ENTERPRISE SCOTLAND

Westfield Forest

Designated Sites Management Plan

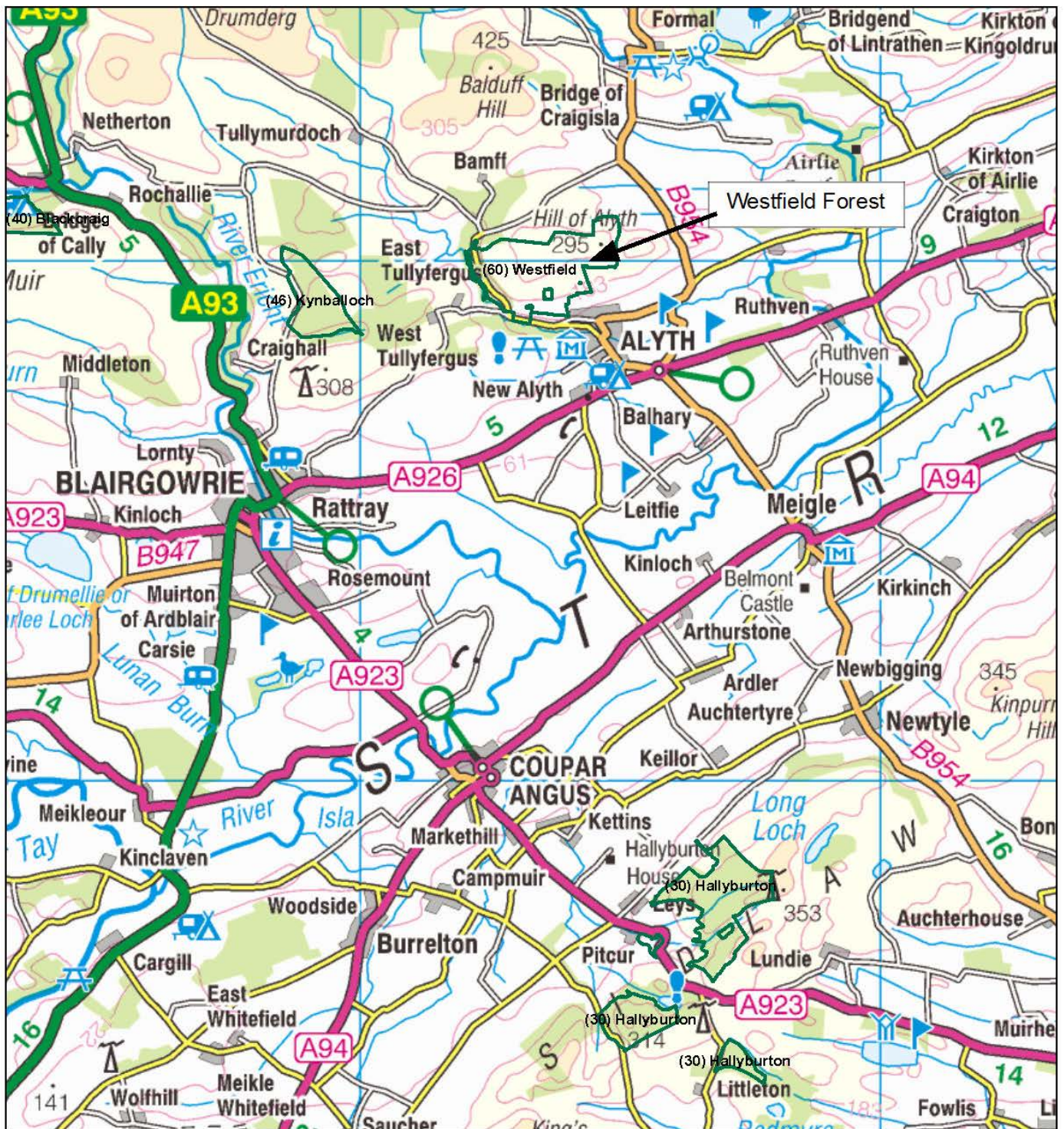
**River Tay SAC
Den of Alyth SSSI**

Start date of plan:

Review date:

Prepared by:

Address:
Forest Enterprise Scotland
Inverpark
Dunkeld
PH8 OJR



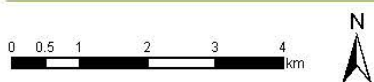
Westfield Forest Location Map Legend

Scale @A4: 1:100,000

Date: 13/02/2018

Author: Graeme Findlay

 Blocks



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Scotland's National
Forest Estate is
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UK Woodland
Assurance Standard.



1. Management Aims & Objectives

The Forest Design Plan (FDP) for the Westfield Block was approved in 2008 and it is due to expire in 2018 at which point a new Land Management Plan (LMP) will replace it.

The aim of this Designated Site Plan is to fully take into account any management and mitigation required for the designated land on and around the National Forest Estate (NFE) at Westfield. The designated areas are: the River Tay SAC and Den of Alyth SSSI.

This plan aims to set out targeted management for the notified features within each designated area, to maintain those features in favourable condition, and to recognise other operations which may affect them through general use and management of land on the National Forest Estate (NFE).

2. Description of Designated Sites covered by this plan

A summary of the designated sites included within this plan is given in Table 1. The table also shows the area and proportion of designated land under the direct management of Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES).

Table 1: Summary of designations relating to this plan				
Designated Site Name	PA Site code	Site Type	Total Area of designated site (ha)	Area on the NFE and considered within this plan (ha/%)
River Tay SAC	8366	SAC	9497.72ha	0ha/ 0%
Den of Alyth SSSI	501	SSSI	32.95ha	6.8ha / 20.6%

Figure 1 on the next page shows the designated sites in context

For further detail on the designations listed in Table 1, refer to the SNH documentation online (from the SiteLink page at <https://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink/>)

The remainder of this plan will refer in detail only to the elements of the above designated sites on the NFE.

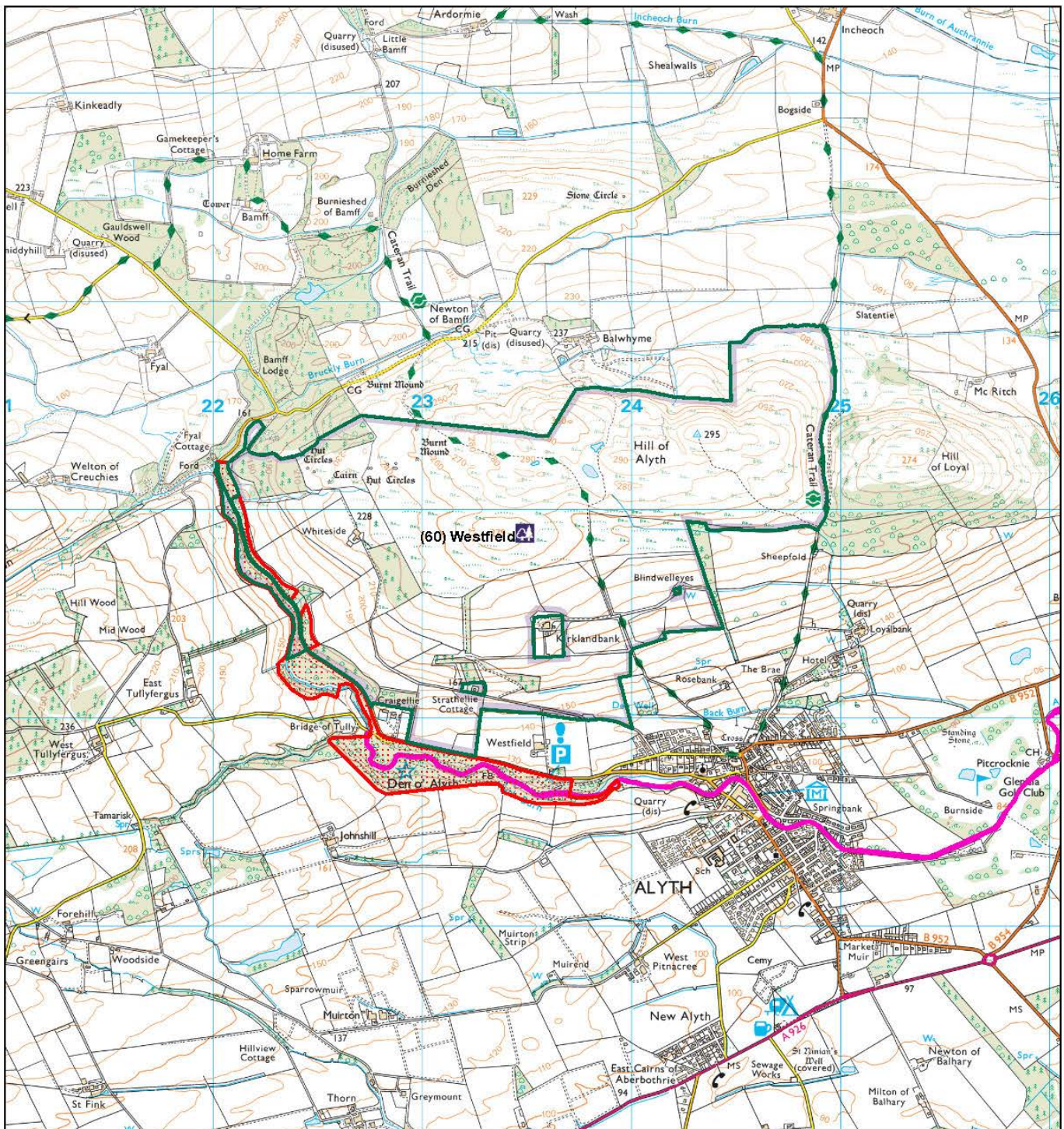


Figure 1 Westfield Forest


Legend


Scale @A4: 1:25,000

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 Blocks

 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Scot.)

 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) (Scot.)

0 0.1250.25 0.5 0.75 1 km

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3. Features on the National Forest Estate and their condition

3.1 Feature and pressure summary

A summary of the designated features on the NFE and their most recent site condition monitoring status and year of monitoring (from SNH SiteLink) is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of designated features and current status			
Designations	SAC	SSSI	Pressures potentially affecting condition
Location	River Tay	Den of Alyth	
Notified Feature			
Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	FM (2011)		
Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)	FM (2007)		
Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)	FM (2007)		
River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)	FM (2007)		
Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	FM (2004)		
Clear-water lochs with aquatic vegetation & poor to moderate nutrient levels	FM (2004)		
Upland Mixed Ash Woodland		UFNC (2006)	Presence of beech and sycamore. Herbivore impact (not listed as a pressure in sitelink, but agreed on site that it is a pressure)
Key:			
Favourable Maintained	<i>FM</i>		
Favourable Recovered	<i>FR</i>		
Unfavourable No Change	<i>UFNC</i>		
Unfavourable Recovering	<i>UFR</i>		
Unfavourable Declining	<i>UFD</i>		
Not Assessed	<i>NA</i>		

It should be noted that not all the designated land under the SACs and SSSI's listed in Table 2 and shown in Figure 1 is on FES land. Most of Den of Alyth SSSI is not under FES control, as is almost all of the River Tay SAC (although none of it is within this plan). This plan only takes into account land, edge effects and downstream impacts that are under the direct management of FES in relation to Westfield Forest.

3.2 Pressures and proposed actions specifically related to achieving Favourable Condition.

3.2.2 River Tay SAC

As none of the SAC is within FES landholding here, see Sections 4 and 5 for generic and specific operations that could impact on the off-site interest.

3.2.2 Den of Alyth SSSI

Removal of beech within the FES owned section of the designated site. This includes everything from seedling stage to mature trees in the canopy.

Additional deer control within FES owned section of the designated site.

Also see Figure 2 Management Aims overleaf

3.3 Summary table of pressures and proposed actions

Table 3: Pressures and Proposed Actions				
Site name and type	Feature name	Pressures	Proposed action	Timescale
Dean of Alyth SSSI	Upland mixed ash wood	Presence of beech	Removal of mature trees, control of seedlings and saplings and follow up treatment	Winter 2017/18, carrying on through plan period.
		Presence of sycamore	No control planned, watching brief on sycamore as a response to Chalara on ash. Sycamore may be beneficial as a replacement within the canopy, at least temporarily, if we lose the ash.	Assess when next plan is being drawn up, along with SNH area officer and woodland advisor, unless advised on before.
		Herbivore impact	Increased control of deer within area, including on designated site	Ongoing through plan period

4. Operations within the LMP that could impact on the designated features on the NFE

The tables below list operations within the Westfield Land Management Plan area which may have the potential to affect designated features on the NFE, along with proposed mitigation. Further discussion will take place with SNH prior to any operations taking place if required.

4.1 –Den of Alyth SSSI

Table 4: Operations that could impact on Den of Alyth SSSI			
ORC No.	ORC Description	Proposed Operations	Mitigating Measures
6	Application of herbicides (weed killers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemical control of beech saplings and seedlings, along with chemically treating stumps from older trees to avoid regrowth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most appropriate chemical application kit will be used for this; either weed wipes or targeted heads so as to only spray target vegetation. There will be no wide spray nozzles that could cause significant impact. COSHH, risk assessments and site maps will highlight suitable mixing and filling locations to minimise the chances of adverse impact, although these will both ideally be off site. Where possible, an insertion will be made with a drill or chainsaw into stumps to form a targeted area where chemical can be applied, reducing the risk of spill. Glyphosate based chemical (e.g. roundup pro-bio, plus any adjuvant required, e.g. mixture B) will be the only one to be used on site unless agreed in writing with SNH.
7	Dumping, spreading or discharge of any materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felling beech and any dangerous trees as identified in our safety surveys – leaving material on site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care will be taken when felling and brash will be piled where appropriate to minimise impact on ground flora. Work will largely be imitating natural processes, e.g. windblow, and additional deadwood on site will be beneficial for ecosystem function

11	The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb, hedge, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungus, leaf-mould and turf.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felling beech and any dangerous trees as identified in our safety surveys • Maintenance of path through site, and public road edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance will be kept to a minimum to reduce impact on the site. • Works will largely add additional deadwood which will be beneficial to the function of the site. • Surveys prior to work being carried out will identify any obvious high value features, e.g. lichen covered hazel, with expert advice taken, from either from SNH or a relevant independent specialist if a significant impact is possible.
12	The introduction and changes in tree and/or woodland management (including planting, selective felling, thinning, coppicing, modification of the stand or underwood, changes in species composition).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felling beech trees as part of targeted work to improve site condition • Control of beech seedlings • Felling dangerous trees as per annual tree safety surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only beech will be targeted and felled in a way to minimise damage to other trees (although some may come down or have to come down to allow felling to be undertaken safely). • Only trees which have been identified under a tree safety survey will be felled, and pruning will be utilised wherever possible. • Work will be undertaken in the winter wherever possible to minimise disturbance to the site, and minimise the chances of any negative impacts on protected and priority species.
21	Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, or the laying of pipelines and cables, above or below ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor maintenance to paths that go through SSSI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only minor works will be undertaken, e.g. maintenance or repairs by hand, short diversions, etc. • Any major works above and beyond this will be discussed on an issue by issue basis with SNH to agree working methods, etc.

26	Use of vehicles likely to damage or disturb woodland habitat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATV, tractor, skidder or forwarder access to facilitate safe take down of mature trees • Vehicle access should it be required to remove dumped waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid use of vehicles wherever possible. • Choose existing access tracks and minimise the number of passes by vehicles. • Choose the lowest ground pressure machine suitable for the job. • If a vehicle is required on site, undertake all work that will be required in one operation to avoid the need to come back.
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As a public body, FES recognises that the list of ORC's do not strictly apply to it, rather that consent is required for all operations. Nonetheless, the list of ORC's does provide a useful starting point against which to assess forest operational requirements. In this instance the list covers what is currently perceived to be the range of work likely to take place over the next 5 – 10 years. The annual work programme will be reviewed between FES and Scottish Natural Heritage as required, particularly to gauge success against achieving favourable condition.

All standard guidance will be followed, including the following for pre-operations checks, site planning and management of operations:

- FC Guidance Note 5: Management of Fresh Water Pearl Mussels during harvesting
- FC Guidance Note 31 on Forest Operations and wildlife protection
- FC Guidance Note 32 on Forest Operations and Birds in Scottish Forests
- FC Guidance Note 34 Forest Operations and European Protected Species
- FC Guidance Note 35a Forest Operations and Bats in Scotland
- FC Guidance Note 35b Forest Operations and Great Crested Newts in Scotland
- FC Guidance Note 35c Forest Operations and Otters in Scotland
- FC Guidance Note 35d Forest Operations and Wildcats in Scotland
- FC Practice Note 9 Forest Operations and badger sett's
- FC Practice Note 101 Managing forests for White-Tailed Eagles
- Forest and Water Guidelines Version 4

5. Operations within the LMP, or aspects of the National Forest Estate within the LMP, that could impact on designated sites adjacent to the National Forest Estate

The clearance of dying ash and restocking within the new planting area that is adjacent to the designated site. This may involve ground preparation and herbicide use, both of which could impact on the Tay SAC. Species choice directly adjacent to the SSSI will take the sensitivities of the site into account, with the likes of beech or other tree species that could become invasive in the future avoided.

Any additional clearfell operations to those in the LMP will first be approved through an amendment to the LMP and consultation with SNH. Also see the Table in Section 4 above.

There will be some general road maintenance within the forests. This planned work will include the scraping of the existing surface, maintenance of roadside ditches and water crossings and the laying of a new surface using locally quarried stone (all outside the designated sites),

The designated sites will be fully considered during the planning and management of all operations and compliance with guidance listed in section 4 of this document will ensure no disturbance or damage to any of the notified features within the area covered by this plan.

Table 5 below summarises operations within the Westfield LMP area which may have the potential to affect the River Tay SAC and Den of Alyth SSSI, along with proposed mitigation. Further discussion will take place with SNH prior to any additional operations taking place.

Table 5: Work Proposals that might affect adjacent designated sites.		
Location (Forest Block)	Detailed description of issue or operation	Proposed action &/or mitigation
Westfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground preparation, restock, civil engineering works and minor forest operations within approved LMP • Additional Clearfell coupes due to disease, subject to approval. • Clearfell and Operational Thinning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with best practice and relevant FC guidance notes, especially notes 31, 32 Compliance with Forest and Water Guidelines Version 4. • Gain approval for any amendments to LMP • A Pollution Plan, including a Sediment Management Plan will be prepared prior to works on paths and roads where required. • Opportunities to buffer watercourses against conifers will be taken as they arise. • All works will be under approved LMP with approval from SNH and SEPA prior to any operations where needed.

6. Appropriate Assessment's undertaken on work contained within the LMP

No Appropriate Assessments have been undertaken, and none are proposed at present as it is not thought that there will be any significant impact on the designated features based on the operations proposed within this plan and the LMP.

7. Approvals, agreements & signatures

I can confirm that the above management plan which covers the FES landholdings within and adjacent to the River Tay SAC and Den of Alyth SSSI, contains the necessary detail, content and mitigation measures to comply with the statutory requirements contained within the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and in particular in relation to part 2, Chapter 1, Section 14 (e), which covers consents via an agreed management plan.

SNH Signature **Date**

SNH Name

SNH Job Title

Address.....

Email

Contact telephone number

FCS has a corporate requirement under UKWAS (4th edition) and under the FCS Framework Document for FES (2010) to manage all designated sites in accordance with plans approved by the statutory authority, I therefore sign below to approve the contents of this plan in relation to the designated site River Tay SAC, where its feeder watercourses fall within the boundary of the National Forest Estate at Westfield, and Den of Alyth SSSI.

SNH Signature **Date**

SNH Name