



THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND

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20/4/10

Dear Philip

Thanks for the letter dated 19/3/10 asking for comment for you to take into account when planning the management strategies for the Corrou Forest. This is somewhat difficult without any idea of what the estates plans may be, and I would appreciate a view of the strategy when it is at draft stage. In generalities our primary concerns are access and conservation, which can be affected by a wide range of management options. These include, but are not restricted to track construction / "improvement", species mix, coupe size, forest and internal edge management and fencing.

Track construction or conversion from footpath to track capable of taking a vehicle should be avoided as they impact upon the landscape disproportionately to their land take, can interfere with the natural hydrology and biodiversity.

For the benefit of biodiversity and landscape, a mix of species should be retained or introduced with a reasonable proportion of natives, especially in any riparian zones. The latter can reduce any chance of water quality impact.

Larger coupe sizes often have a more adverse impact on biodiversity and landscape than smaller ones, so the latter should be preferred.

Straight forest edges should be avoided for biodiversity and landscape reasons as should uniformly dense forestry with open spaces within forestry being advantageous to biodiversity.

Fencing should be avoided and reliance more on deer culls to permit young tree survival and growth. Fences pose a problem for public access, necessitating gates at regular intervals, also can easily lead to hard edges to forestry blocks and are a problem for bird strikes.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely

Hebe Carus
Access & Conservation Officer