REF.	ACTIONS	PARTNERS (lead partners in bold)
23.1	**Quantify the extent and condition of existing riparian and wet woodlands within the Dee catchment and highlight opportunities for expansion.**	**MI / FCS / SNH / SEPA** / ACC
23.2	**Encourage planting/regeneration of locally native tree species as permanent riparian woods on appropriate sites along watercourses and within areas of conifer woodland.**	**FCS** / FTA / Landowners / FWAG / SNW / FES / CLBAP / ACC / SNH
23.2.1	Consider use of small seed broadleaves to discourage the spread of grey squirrels, in conjunction with other controls.	FCS / SNH
23.3	**Use long term forest plans to 1) identify existing riparian and wet woodlands within the Dee catchment, 2) encourage their restoration, maintenance and expansion and 3) encourage the extension of low impact silviculture systems.**	**FCS** / Landowners / DDSFB / DFDP / FTA / DSFIA / FES / AC / ACC / CNPA / SNW / MI / SEPA / SNH
23.4	**Avoid the clearance of wet and riparian woodlands.**	**FCS / SGRPID** / FTA / Landowners / SNH / FES / ACC
23.4.1	Reduce grazing and browsing in order to avoid bank poaching and fragmentation and encourage regeneration.	Landowners / SGRPID
23.4.2	Discourage clearance associated with dredging for drainage.	**SGRPID**
23.5	**Survey and encourage control and removal of invasive non-native plant species (see Action Card 29).**	**SNH** / SEPA / FCS / Landowners / FES / ACC

Acronyms are listed in the centre of this Action Card

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wet & riparian woodlands

HABITATS 23

OBJECTIVE 23. Support the restoration of degraded areas of wet and riparian woodland and encourage their expansion through planting or regeneration on appropriate sites.

BACKGROUND

Wet woodlands (those occurring on floodplains, flushed slopes and peaty hollows) and riparian woodland (those on the banks of burns, rivers and lochs) provide important habitat for a number of plant, invertebrate, bird and mammal species, including a number of Local biodiversity Action Plan priority species.

Factors such as clearance, planting of other tree species, overgrazing, drainage and flood prevention measures, dumping and invasion by non-native plant species have affected the condition and distribution of these woodland types.

Riparian woodlands have an important role as a link between terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems. These woodlands influence the health and productivity of rivers and burns and also provide exceptional value for nature conservation and amenity. Leaves and insects falling from trees provide essential food for aquatic invertebrates and fish. Tree roots stabilise riverbanks, capture and recycle mineral nutrients and promote biodiversity both on the bank and in the watercourse. Riparian woodland can also buffer rivers and burns from the potential for diffuse pollution from adjacent conifer plantations and agriculture. Restoration to improve the connectivity between riparian woods can make a major contribution to the development of forest habitat networks.

ISSUES

- Although there is a large amount of woodland in the catchment, the riparian woodland component of this is of limited extent.
- Some riparian zones have been planted with conifers or are under threat from grazing or invasive non-native plants.
- Riparian woodland is especially deficient along the banks of the upper course and feed burns of the Dee. Former alluvial alderwood of the floodplains were transformed to better quality agricultural land on Deeside and widespread reversion to woodland may be impractical.
- There is a particular need for restoration in the upper deforested catchments of tributary burns.

EXISTING / RECENT INITIATIVES

- Forests and Water Guidelines 4th Edition (Forestry Commission)
- Cairngorms Forest and Woodland Framework
- Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) and Cairngorms Park Plan address related issues.
- Deeside Forest Initiative
- Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City
- Scottish Forestry Strategy 2006
- Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (grants for Riparian Woodland)
- Long term forest plans are prepared by landowners setting out 20 years of future woodland management.
- North East LBAP Riparian and Wet Woodland Habitat Action Plan
- Compliance with Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions
- Rural Development Contracts under the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP)
- UK Forestry Standard
- The Forest Habitat Network model for Grampian will indicate areas where the greatest biodiversity gain would be made from restoring/expanding native woods.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- Identify degraded areas of wet and riparian woodland.
- Support their restoration and encourage their expansion through planting or regeneration on appropriate sites where trees are currently absent.
- Promote the preparation and implementation of long term forest plans. During planning identify riparian zones and woodlands within forests. Protect, restore and extend them

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Aberdeen City Council

Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

District Forestry Development Programme

Dee Salmon Fishery Improvement Association

Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group

Forestry Commission Scotland

Forest Enterprise Scotland

Forestry & Timber Association

Landowners

Macaulay Institute

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Government Rural Payments & Inspections Directorate

Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Native Woodlands

Further copies can be downloaded at www.theriverdee.org. For further information contact the Dee Catchment Officer
c/o The Macaulay Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen AB15 8QH Telephone: 01224 498200 email: info@theriverdee.org

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through regeneration or planting and implementing low impact silvicultural systems.

LEGISLATION

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- Forestry Act 1967
- Regulatory Reform Order 2005
- Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, Forestry (Scotland) 1999
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- Groundwater Regulations 1998
- Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- Scottish Native Woods (2000) Restoring and Managing Riparian Woodlands.
- Forestry Commission (2003) Forests and Water Guidelines 4th edition.
- Forestry Commission (2004) The UK Forestry Standard.
- Wet and Riparian Woodland Local Habitat Action Plan. NE Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Dennis, P. and Robertson, C. (2000).
- Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage (2003) Habitat networks for wildlife and people.
- The Management of semi-natural woodlands: 8. Wet woodlands. 1994. Forest Practise Guide. ISBN 0-85538-265-1.

BENEFITS TO PROTECTED SPECIES

The following specially protected species will benefit from the Actions:

- Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra*
- Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*
- Aspen Hoverfly *Hammerschmidtia ferruginea*
- Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*
- Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*
- Otter *Lutra lutra*
- Pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
- Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris*



RELATED ACTION CARDS

3. Woodland management

29. Invasive non native plant species