

RBU/FEM

FROM: Conservator North (Scotland)

TO: District Officers: Area Engineers: Area Land Agents:
Recreation Planning Officer: Acquisition Officer

cc: Mr Macbeath: Mr Mackay: Mr Christie: Mr Flynn: Mr Malcolmson:
Mr Harrison

Mrs Swanson, Drawing Office

REF: AD 3/3

57th ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1.4.76 to 31.3.77

The Annual Report for the above period will follow the usual pattern as laid down by HQ. The standard headings are listed below and you should prepare a text for the headings appropriate to you using a separate sheet for each activity.

- (a) Administration, staff, labour and training.
- (b) Acquisitions: and disposal of surplus assets.
- (c) Nurseries and seed collection.
- (d) Forest Management.
- (e) Harvesting and Marketing.
- (f) Civil Engineering.
- (g) Mechanical Engineering.
- (h) Estate Management.
- (i) Conservation and Recreation.
- (j) Private forestry and control of felling.
- (k) Public relations.
- (l) Items of local interest which have arisen during the year.

Please endeavour to let me have your reports by 15 April at the latest.

R B Urquhart
for Conservator
18 March 1977

GAD/CEM

TO: FORESTERS IN CHARGE

FROM: DISTRICT OFFICE
DINGWALL

AD 3/3

57th ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report covering 1.4.76 to 31.3.77 is just about due, my submission being by 15 April.

Please let me have any relevant information well in advance of that date. As a reminder the headings covered are listed herewith:-

- (a) Administration, staff, labour and training.
- (b) Acquisitions: and disposal of surplus assets.
- (c) Nurseries and seed collection.
- (d) Forest Management.
- (e) Harvesting and Marketing.
- (f) Civil Engineering.
- (g) Mechanical Engineering.
- (h) Estate Management.
- (i) Conservation and Recreation.
- (j) Private forestry and control of felling.
- (k) Public relations.
- (l) Items of local interest which have arisen during the year.

G A Dey
District Officer
29 March 1977



District :- Dingwall (West)
Annual Report : F.Y. 76 - 77

(a) Administration, Staff, Labour & Training.

There were no territorial changes to the District.

A ^{staff} change took place at District Office level consequent on the death after a long period of illness of J. P. Varel on May 5th 1976. F.M. MacRae looked after the District until a new appointment was made - G.A. Dey taking up post on 12th October 1976.

At Forest level the following changes took place

i. Achnashellach. R.K. Murdoch, ^{Head Forester} replaced D. Grant in mid October, the latter taking up an RTO post on promotion.

The complement thus remains at one Head plus two Foresters.

ii. Skye. Forester J. Pargeter ~~replaced~~ succeeded D.G. MacIntosh in September as Forester i/c production in Glen Eynort.

The complement here remains 1 chief Forester i/c 1 Head and 3 Foresters assisting.

iii. South Strone. ^{2nd Forester (?)} ~~A Forsyth, Head Forester, replaced W. Hunter, transferred on promotion to Chief Forester.~~

Thus South Strone remains in the care of one Head Forester plus one Forester assisting.

iv. Torrachilly. For the ^{bulk} ~~most~~ part of the Forest Year, the complement was one Head Forester short, consequent on the transfer out of

? Dampney the previous F.Y. Head Forest C.R. Frewin was transferred out in Mid September ¹⁹⁷⁶ (from Lall) and Head Forester J.B. Colling was transferred in (to Cairn) the same month.

The vacancy at Lall has been temporarily filled by Forester F.G. Thom but only as recently as March '77.

The Labour situation remained fairly static, the two forests being just under complement being Achnashellach & South Strone. The ~~former~~ plight of the former is aggravated by lack of housing and "suction" of local available labour by ~~the~~ Oil related industries especially in the Loch Carron area.

In Skye, ganger Ian MacLean retired in August, whilst an FC craftsman became a contractor. Two further contractors were recruited at Eynort to assist with felling operations.

~~For~~ Lack of housing at Torrachilty is also a problem ~~is~~ bearing on further labour recruitment. The turn over over the year was two.

Staff training ~~was given as follows~~ A list of Foresters and the courses they attended is given ^{below}.
Achnashellach.

H. For. R. Murdoch :- ~~attended~~ ^{attended} Pa Larraon Management Practice
I & II (at HQ)

For. W. Grant :- ~~attended~~ HTSS fencing

For. K. Mills :- (1) Job Planning & Costing, FM. (Ae)
(2) Thinning Control & Tariffing.

Skye

Ch. For. D. Robertson :- Skyline Winch (Glengarry)

H. For. D. MacDougall :- Management of Formation (Ae)

For. H. Reid :- (1) Job Costing (Ae)
(2) Fencing (Glengarry)
(3) Weeding (")

South Strone.

H. For. A. Forsyth :- Production Programming, Thinning Control and Tariffing.

Torrachilty.

For. W. Beattie :- Clearing Saw

Ch. For. J. Taylor :- Skyline Winch.

Industrial Training was given as follows - Achnashellach :- 3 men on chain saw ; one man on Winch Extraction.

Torrachilty :- $\frac{4}{1}$ men on Power Saws.



(b) Acquisitions + Disposals.

The following acquisitions ~~was~~ ^{was} made :-

Shye. 807 ha. at Ose (Glenvacastill) are all but legally completed.

There were no disposals.

(New page)

(c) Nurseries & Seed Collection.

The District is not involved in Nursery work but a certain amount of seed was collected - viz.

Achma shellack	28 hecta litres	SS	(Slattadak)
South Strone	33 " "	"	"

climatically,

(d) Forest Management.

The year was characterised by three features. The Summer of 1976 was warm with an exceptionally long dry spell, the autumn dull & wet and the winter long and extended with persistent falls of snow. The effect of this was to facilitate ploughing & draining up to the late autumn period, encourage weed growth, and delay planting.

The totals planted during the Forest Year came to 544 ha new + 10 ha restocking. These fall to be compared with programmes of 570 + 18 resp. ~~SL was in short supply~~ The great bulk of the ~~the~~ afforestation programme was in Skye. (367 ha.) with Torrachilty accounting for 118 ha -- largely on the slopes of Ben Myvis.

SL was in short supply, LP having to be taken in lieu; again a goodly proportion of tubed seedlings were used ~~between May + July~~ ~~eg. over 260 thousand~~ LP tubes were planted in Skye between May & July 1976 and ^{the} take has been pretty good.

Ploughing for above and 77/78 programmes aggregated 590 ha. of which 186 were by mounted tine and the remainder ~~to~~ ~~possible~~ ~~plant~~ ~~tubes~~ on peat. ~~the~~ Double Mouldboard ploughs were introduced to Skye in February 1977 and one hopes that much more use will be made of these in the future as an attempt to mitigate windblow. Further work will have to be done in the incorporation of a mechanical step cutter so that the ~~for~~ economies inherent in the use of such ploughs can be increased even further.

Out of a District total of 648 ha. of Gafsa application on new planting areas, 449 were applied by helicopter, 106 by ground vehicle & 193 by hand.

344 ha. were weeded - by hand - against a programme of 253 ha, and in addition some 90 ha. were chemically weeded mostly in Skye. Programmes of new ^{deer} fencing were completed at Skye (9019 metres) & Torrachilty (4962 metres).

Heather hill was only undertaken over 3 ha (Skye). ~~but the~~ ~~function will increase~~

Fertilising with P~~K~~ ^(plus some PK) as a means of crop improvement was carried out over 841 ha.



(d) (Forest Management) contd.

Wildlife As usual ~~a~~ a large part of the protection programme was absorbed by the Ranger complement, ^(strong) ~~the~~ Although rabbits were clearly on the increase, the greatest threat to the well-being of plantations came from deer - especially Red Deer. The ~~problem~~ ^{worst} problem areas appear to have been at Torrachilby (Strath canon) and Achnashehallach (Golden Valley area).

No significant damage was sustained through fire but Skye reported a busy season occasioned by somewhat ~~whole~~ sale minimum on the part of ~~the~~ crofting neighbours. (According to the Fire Rating Log, in Skye, the rating only rose once to High during ~~the~~ ^{the} 3 months January to March 1977. However there were two ~~the~~ ^{two} spells when the High rating persisted - one of 4 days towards the end of April 1976 and the other of 6 days in August '76).

new page

(e) Harvesting & Marketing.

All the District ~~programme~~ ^{production} (20,113 m³ ~~of~~ of programmed 18,780 m³) was handled by F.C. personnel and contractors. There were no Sales Standing.

The Thinning element totalled 9,282 m³ from 166 ha whilst the Clear Felling totalled 10,831 m³ from 31 ha.

Despite difficult spells of weather and illness & injury problems, the programmes were well nigh completed - the produce being ~~all~~ sold either as Scottish Pulp to Fort William, or as Sawlogs forming a series of contracts - the principle recipients being Messrs. Riddoch & Jones.

Forms V8 show dispatches of pulp as 11,297 m³ ~~against~~ (i.e. 10,075 tons of programmed 10,690 tons) and Sawlogs as 5,767 m³ against commitments of 6,500 ^{tons}. Roadside stocks at the end of the F.Y. totalled (pulp) 1216 m³ & (Sawlogs) 418 m³.

The Skye programme was ~~for~~ felled by Contractor and extracted partly by Contractor & partly by FC - both using Skyline or High lead. At Achnashehallach the ^{possible} short fall due to lack of labour was made good.

by assistance for a short period by a squad from South Strone. Whereas extraction at Achnashellach was largely by Skyline that at South Strone was by Faldstane skidder.

At Torrachilty, reliance was placed heavily on Skyline winch although a certain amount is still undertaken by a pair of horses at Lael.

The average tree handled throughout the District was 0.195 m^3 .

(f) (New page)

Civil Engineering.

New roads are in process of formation at Torrachilty (Glensgiach, Achmore & Clack Wood)

and a forward track in Skye (Glenbittle) & Torrachilty (Achmore). Apart from this, some maintenance was carried out at Achnashellach (Slattadale & Strone Carronach) and Skye (Glenbittle).

Some work on Car parks was also undertaken.

mat. At Glensgiach, the work also included a new bridge.

new page.

(g) Mechanical Engineering.

The good service given by the mobile mechanics continued ^{as did} and the

~~programme~~ the programme of replacement of vehicles. The transport position remained substantially as it was at the start of the year.



(h) Estate Management.

The work of normal maintenance continued without any major injections being made. The office & Admin buildings at South Strone were given a face lift and the water supply switched from private to Regional W.B. There is still a Head Forester's house to be built at Portree.

(new page)

(i) Conservation & Recreation

Most of the year's effort was concentrated in consolidating

existing facilities although a start was made towards the end of the F.Y. on a new caravan site at Balmacara.

On Skye, the Conservation Corps assisted in improving the Glenvarragil walk.

On South Strone, a small car park, picnic site with Forest Walk was opened at Strone wood.

At Lael, a new shelter was added to the walk there while improvements to the Rogie walks were undertaken.

(j) Private Forestry

(j) The pace of planting continued at a very restrained level, although there were several applications to thin & fell ~~g~~ plantations - all of which were passed. Gifts of plants were again made available to crofters on the Western Isles.

(k) Public Relations

Visits to South Strone were paid by the West Ross Festival of the Country side and to Torrachilty by students from Inverness Technical College and by the local Region of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society.

On Skye a stand was erected at the Portree Agricultural Show on the theme 'Home Grown Timber' and FC staff were in attendance at a Schools Careers convention again in Portree.

Visits by HQ staff were made to Forests within the District. The DG and 2A^r. (Dr. JA Dickson visited ~~Strome~~ Carronach on 25-6-76 as did Mr. G.D Holmes on 8-7-76 Skye, South Strone & Achna-shellach Forests on 23rd & 25th June 1976, while Mr. G.D Holmes, then Commissioner Harvesting & Marketing, visited the same Forests on 7th/8th July.

(2) Items of Local Interest. Very few of any significance have been reported.



ACHNASHELLACH

ANNUAL REPORT '76/77.

1. STAFF

1. D. GRANT, on promotion, moved to INVERNESS to take up R.T.O. job. Replaced by R.K. MURDOCH mid-October.
2. K. MILLER attended two courses: - Job Planning & Costing, F.M. THINNING CONTROL & TARIFFING.
W. GRANT attended H.T.S.S. FENCING COURSE.
R.K. MURDOCH attended MANAGEMENT PRACTICE I + II at H.Q.
No industrialists attended any courses this year.
3. Labour in Loch Lomond area still unobtainable due to oil related work. One young boy lost to Kishorn after only a few months with us. Only possible recruitment area is at Gairloch, where two men are due to start next year.

2. Acquisitions

1. Ardoch under consideration - no disposals.

3. SEED

1. 22 hectolitres of S.S. seed collected all from C17 Skeltondale.

4. FOREST MANAGEMENT

1. Ploughing of '76/77 area was delayed until October/November. No Spring planting took place. Due to frosty & snowy weather no planting took place until early March. Total planted 28ha.
2. Generally a safe year for fire. Spring cold & wet except for one week at end of April when

fire danger was high. Although summer very warm and dry - grass growth was very fast and heavy. A short spell at the end of February, when hill burning got off to a good start, soon gave way to colder wet weather with snow showers.

- 3 Wild life protection would appear to have a low ^{high} priority in the past. e.g. Golden Valley L.P. Park. PLOTS. Such a scattered area surely requires more than one RANGER! There is also a growing commitment to fencing for rewilding. Obviously a more aggressive policy is required towards deer control.

3. IMPROVEMENT

1 DRAWS. Hand draining continued in thinning a free-canopy closure areas. This should be extended in pre-canopy closure areas by mechanical means.

2 FERTILIZERS. Programme completed in main Achnashellach block. Most areas appear satisfactory, there are however some small areas which can only be tackled by hand. One or two larger areas of L.P. require inspection & improvement.

3 U.L.V.A. None done. This appears to result from a) lack of labour b) short working season & c) very hot summer. The area for 76/77 will be treated in 77/78.

4 H + M.

1. Programmes: -

PULP	1900 m ³	LOGS	1500 m ³
SOLD	1432 m ³	SOLD	1538 m ³
END STOCK	+408 m ³	END STOCK	+258 m ³
START STOCK	-175 m ³	START STOCK	-1 m ³
UNDERPRODUCED	235 m ³	OVERPRODUCED	295 m ³

2. Labour still presents a problem. Production squad is elderly and although willing quite a few are really past this heavy work. Thinning being more labour intensive, chad felling is relied on for attaining targets.

Skidders (FALSTOCK) borrowed from S. Strone along with three fellers. This was needed to complete Poy contract.

It would be helpful to have 1000 m³ of long term contract to work on at this time while tender sales are negotiated. It is essential that good weather early in the year must be used to maximise results.

The new light weight Fomerc & Husqvarna saws were introduced at the end of December & appear to be performing well. They were well reviewed by the squad, but it is too early to draw firm conclusions.

Standing sale of 3246 m³ marked & put forward for standing sale F.Y. 77/78

5 CIVIL ENGINEERING

1. Tidying up at Skattadale cat path. Minor repairs at Strone Corrmach. New cat path surveyed at Victoria Falls.

6. CONS. & RECREATION

1 The cat park at Loch Maree is very popular over a long tourist season. Leaflets accounted for receipts of £88 this being the return from sales of almost 1800 leaflets - 300 of these were taken by the National Trust.

7. OFFICIAL VISITS.

1 Visit to Stone Corranach by ex D.C. DR J.A. DICKSON on 25.6.76

2 Visit Stone Corranach by present D.C. MR. G.D. HOLMES on 8.7.76

Both these visits were generally concerned with production working. A wish was expressed to return some of the large S.S. as a demo. plot - if possible! It was suggested that a TIMBERJACK might be a more suitable machine than a FALSTAFF.

8. ESTATE MANAGEMENT.

1 Minor maintenance on properties.

2 New office turned down by H.Q. although present one is quite unfit, by present standards, & results in inefficient working by office staff.

R. K. Murdoch.

7.4.77.

Beechwood
Parson
Isle of Skye.
5-4-77.

MR. G.A. Day.
DINGWALL OFFICE

Annual Report.

Yours letter of 29-3-77.
Hope attached will help
you with above.

W. Robertson.



SKYE FOREST

Annual Report Notes 76/77

(A) ADMINISTRATION Non-Industrial change - John Pargiter replaced Grant MacIntosh in September as Forester i/c production at Cynon. Industrial strength - one ganger Ian Maclean at Healdaval section retired in August. One F.C. craftsman left to become a direct contractor to F.C. Two F.C. contractors in addition were recruited for H.M. work, one as a tenant of a F.C. house at Cynon, the other a local man from Braes. Training - S/Fot D. ROBERTSON attended a skyline winch updating course at Glangarry. H/Fot. D. MacDONALD had Management of Formation course at A.C. Centre. Fot. H. REID attended a tob hosting course at A.C. Centre. He also had a 3 day fencing course + 2 day weeding course, both at Glangarry. No industrial training in Skye during the Forest Year.

(B) ACQUISITIONS + DISPOSALS The Uze, Glenivacaskill area was acquired in the F.Y. except for the final documentation which is still to be tied up. This acquisition has an area of 807 ha (bare) plantable land.

(C.) SEED COLLECTION No seed collection carried out.

(d) FOREST MANAGEMENT A major change took place in ploughing methods. After a tradition in Skye of S/F mouldboard ploughing, D/F ploughs have been operating for the last quarter of the Forest Year. The only ~~extra~~ construction being that for the tube seeding part of the planting programme, we will have to return to a S/F plough, at least making steps by hand. It is hoped that a mechanical step cutter will be developed soon for D/F mouldboards. The TOTE (Staffin) area ploughing was completed leaving Kinloch, Watnish + Uze as the areas for ploughing in Forest Year 77/78. The quality of plants



received from Nurseries was mainly good. Only the T.H. was very small & is in very short supply, we received L.P.(SK) from other Conservancies to make up the shortages. A large area of tube planting was carried out at Tote, the operation commenced at the beginning of May & was completed in July.

The Conservator A/C Conservator & District Officers visited planting areas in Skye to discuss selection of species especially the planting of SS on the marginal vegetation.

Ploughing demonstrations by Work Study & Research Dept. took place in the Kinloch ploughing area in the early spring of 1977.

We were very impressed with the performance of a Fiat 100 with a new type of track plate.

A programme of 320 ha of Helicopters fertilising was carried out, 100 ha in Kinloch, 100 ha in Watnish, & 120 ha in Tote. B.E.A.S. did the work & tests made showed a good spread on the areas. 50 ha of hand fertilising was carried out in Lewis.

The cross-draining programme was done with a Humphy deep drainer & was greatly assisted by the long dry spell of weather during the time the operation took place. All cross-draining in Lewis is done by hand. Hand followup draining has been brought up to date after the mechanical work. Weeding - this was very much under-budgeted, there was a tremendous growth of weeds in the brown soils of Kinloch (no doubt the abnormal amount of sunshine contributed) the hand weeding A/C was overspent by 66%. Chemical weeding was done in Watnish between Oct. & Dec. with Stanex results are not yet apparent but it is hoped the operation was successful. The new High Tensile deep fence enclosing the Kinloch acquisition was completed during the Forest Year. It was done on piecemeal with



Beaumont F.C. Labours, Wildlife Protection - little trouble encountered with deer or rabbits. Ranger at North Skye uses large quantities of cynag, also big numbers of snares. Both rangers well on top of their work. Fire Protection - Skye - Lewis did not suffer the same summer drought as the rest of Great Britain, the dry spell was much shorter so the hazard was much less. A spell in March of cold drying high winds with dead vegetation however a good deal of dangerous, indiscriminate m.i.s.-burning endangered some plantations. There was a good deal of lightning m.i.s.-burn at 6 - 8 P.M. in the evening, this is against the law of course. The general impression being, if the fire threatens F.C. woods, the Commission will extinguish it. Forest Management Radio has been delivered to Skye but the Radio net has not yet been completed. As regards Fertiliser Topdressing 220 ha was flown by helicopter in the Skeabost area using 'P', the same area has had some 240 knapsack spraying to kill heather. 40 ha was topdressed by hand using phosphate in Lewis. The Clearing & Brashing part of our budget was mainly done on Raasay to provide work for the labour force of 2 on the island. Some brashing was also done in the Glenwarrigill block during hard weather.

(c) HARVESTING & MARKETING The sawlog programme was uplifted by D. MURRAY of Portree Sawmill as to schedule. Pulp programme also completed after being well behind at the half-year stage. Some 400 tonnes of pulp would also have been extracted from the lower half of the main Glenwarrigill block if a forwarder had been available as budgeted. The Cynon Forester has a very good chain saw squad built up.



The only question mark is against which extraction, we would like a further pair of Forester Workers which trained but we have not been able to solve how to arrange the training. If anything happens to upset this which team we could be in dire trouble with extraction. D.O. & foresters producing wall maps to show production programme also trying to tie up P.F. forms with Production Plan. A start has also been made on Terrain Classification.

(8) CIVIL ENGINEERING Roads mobile squad have been working in Dynon during the last quarter of the F.Y. improving the top road in Dynon for pulp traffic. They are also diverting the forward track which was bulldozed during the summer. This track is to be used for production during forest year 77/78.

(9) MECHANICAL ENGINEERING - Good service has been received from this section during the F.Y. Two Escort vans have been replaced by new ones. The garage maintenance plan carried out locally at Portree seems to be working very well. The Argo cross-country vehicle has had a complete overhaul, & is now in good condition.

(10) ESTATE MANAGEMENT - House for H/Forester in Portree still a long time in the future, a site has been secured, & there may be a chance of a start being made in two years time. Request for heating adequate to keep damp out of houses exposed to West Coast weather has been made by Forester staff.

(11) CONSERVATION & RECREATION - Some good work done by the National Conservation Corps when they worked with us for the month of August.

Board walks & steps erected on the Glenborogill walk also surfacing with $1\frac{1}{2}$ " stone which had to be hand carried in most cases. Our own



F.C. labours were able to copy some of the Conservation Works Techniques, & extend the board walks & steps on the Urragill walk. It was decided to budget for Conservation Works work in F.Y. 77/78 to see if we could improve the underfoot conditions on the stone walks.

(J) PRIVATE FORESTRY & CONTROL OF FELLING Very little of this work in the past year. Still no start on the standing sale offered by MacLeod Estates. D.O. visited Portree to inspect thinning of mature S.P. at MEALL NA H-ACAIRSEID. He also called on Maj. Hill at Ardrossan. BORVE P.W., 3 ha burned on 25-3-75.

(K) PUBLIC RELATIONS We have very good relations both with other public bodies, & the public. We were present at a Careers Convention in March held in Portree High School. A fair number of enquiries, some formal or prospects in forestry. We had a Forestry Commission stand at the Portree Agricultural Show in July which had as this year's theme "HOME GROWN TIMBER".

(L) LOCAL INTEREST ITEMS Quite a number of Portree people have enquired regarding seeing the trimmings from Glenvaragill lying at the roadside, i.e. asking when the wood will be used for, the age of trees etc. Good number of crofters taking up the offer of 200 free trees from F.C. to plant round crofts. We have to be careful to tell them to protect against stock. One man even returned to ask for some to replace last year's trees which he had burned while burning grass around his garden.

Organised by the College of Agriculture meetings were held in North Skye & a fox club was formed for the THORNTONISH part of SKYE. This means the whole of Skye is now covered except for SLEAT. C/FOK attended the meetings & gave numbers of foxes killed by F.C.

MONTHLY RAINFALL (INCHES)

MONTH	74 75	75 76	76 77			
APRIL	0.09 *	5.61	3.91			
MAY	3.21	1.49 *	5.11			
JUNE	3.41	3.35	6.62			
JULY	6.44	4.90	4.16			
AUGUST	6.20	3.16	0.49 *	}		
SEPTEMBER	8.90	9.64	3.80			
OCTOBER	5.44	4.54	7.42			
NOVEMBER	9.41	8.73	7.79			
DECEMBER	14.57	7.22	4.25			
JANUARY	13.37	10.67	7.56			
FEBRUARY	2.60	6.05	3.27			
MARCH	3.18	6.06	7.95			

Weather Pattern * Looking at the last 3 years each year seems to have a dry month.

o Dry spell Aug - Sept. 76. only $\frac{1}{3}$ of rainfall compared with 75.

MONTHLY REPORT OF KEY QUANTITIES - FOREST MANAGEMENT

Forest/District

Month ending

A/c No.	T.T. No.	Operation and Treatment Type	Unit	Quantity			
				Previous	Current	Total	Programme
01110	01	Ploughing - Deep Peat	ha				
	02	" - Shallow Peat/ Mineral	ha				
	03	" - Mounted Tine	ha				
	04	" - Complete ploughing	ha				
	05	" - for restocking	ha				
01140	01	Planting - new	ha				
	02	" - restocking	ha				
	03	" - fertilising - air	ha				
	04	" - " - ground spreader	ha				
	05	" - fertilising - hand	ha				
01180	01	Weeding - Under 5 years - hand	ha				
	02	" - Under 5 years - chemical	ha				
	03	" - Over 5 years - hand	ha				
	04	" - Over 5 years - chemical	ha				
01210	01	Fences new - deer	m				
01330	01	Fertilising - P only	ha				
	02	" - PK	ha				
	03	ULV Heather Spraying	ha				

(a) NON INDUSTRIAL STAFF. TORRACHILTY was deficient of one head forester for eleven months of the year covered by the report. A replacement was posted on temporary promotion to Lael, in March of this year.

LABOUR. No additional labour could be recruited to the unit the main problem being housing. No requests for employment were received from labour in non F.C. housing.

One worker at Lael resigned but his craft was immediately taken up by an employee from Loch Broom estate. One single man also resigned at Torrachilty main. A single man (cavan owner) was recruited to make up the strength.

TRAINING. The replacement labour (1) Lael & (1) Torrachilty were given a power saw course & employed on H+M.

To meet Lael's shortfall the two winch men were given an additional course on power saws to make labour more versatile.

(B) ACQUISITIONS: - nil.

DISPOSALS : - nil

(C) Nurseries & Seed Collection Nil

(D) FOREST MANAGEMENT: The main programme laid down was completed. The exceptionally heavy snow fall, frost and general bad weather in January - March caused a reviance in work from drains new to cleaning, brushing & fence maintenance -

(E) HARVESTING & MARKETING. The pulp programme was just achieved but a shortfall on 'JONES' logs occurred. This was mainly due to the prolonged illness of three power saw operators at Lael, and the general effect of no surplus back up NVM labour.

(F) CIVIL ENGINEERING. (i) New extension road & bridge at Glenfisch was completed.

(ii) Formation of road/tracks at Achmore & Blosk Road.

(iii) New extension car park at office.

(G) MECHANICAL ENGINEERING. Repairs & servicing have been excellent. First class back up service. Equipment strength remains the same as in previous years.

(H) ESTATE MANAGEMENT. Necessary repairs & maintenance have been carried out. No major improvements in the area.

(I) CONSERVATION & RECREATION. In addition to the normal maintenance work always carried out, the forest built a new shelter on the Lael walk.

The conservation corps carried out improvements to the Rogie Falls walk and a small extension track was completed.

(J) PRIVATE FORESTRY. Non Industrial staff carried out inspections for planting grants.

(K) PUBLIC RELATIONS. No additional work carried out on this head. Normal contacts with general public with regards to recreation. General help with neighbours problems.

Several tours were arranged for the Inverness Technical College as in the past, so courses could see FM & HM work in progress.

The Forest entertained the Royal Scottish Forestry Society for part of a day in May 1976. The main subjects being.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| (i) Land use & deer control | } Glen Speich |
| (ii) Double throw plough | |
| (iii) Mechanical fertilising | |
| (iv) Tube seedlings | |
| (v) Deer experiment Blackwood. | |

(1) Local Interest Nil.

JWH/s.

8. 4. 77.

South Strome
7/4/77.

Annual Report F.Y. 76/77.

Rainfall. in mm.

April	110	July	93	October	179	January	123
May	140	August	27	November	200	February	69
June	<u>148</u>	September	<u>73</u>	December	<u>90</u>	March	<u>147</u>
	398		193		469		339

Total for F.Y. 1399 mm.

Weather during the year was better than usual with below average rainfall.

A. Administration Staff at the forest: - 1 Head Forester 1 Forester.

Industrial employees Forest Workers = 7

Rangers 1

Clerks 1

Total 9

We started the year with 9 industrial employees and ended the year with 9 having had a change over of 4 people. The prospect of increasing the number is not good as the availability of new men is always dependent on having a house to offer.

A. The competition for labour by the Oil Platform construction work at Strome and the new road works, does not leave the forest much of a chance to improve our labour force meantime.

Training: - 3 men received a chain saw course.

1 man had a winch extraction course.

B. Acquisitions & disposal of surplus assets: - None during the year. Work on the new road from Blackertyre to Strome is currently in progress.

C. 33 Hecto. litres of S.S. cones were collected and despatched to the Seed Store.

D. Forest Management. During the year 40 ha were ploughed by hydraulic tine. 31 ha of new ground planted and 4 ha were restocked.

Wild-life numbers controlled

Fox 10

Roebuck (Bucks) 40	Red Deer (Stags) 1	" (bubs) 24
" (Does) 34	" " (Hinds) 1	Rabbits 13

The forest remained fairly well clear of Red Deer during the F.Y.

E. H & M. Production at the forest is mainly from beech felling the actual figures are:-

beech fell	4743 ^{m³}
Thinnings	<u>119</u>
Total	<u>4862^{m³}</u>

Pulpwood supplied = 1805^{m³}

Saw logs " = 2980^{m³}

Total supplied 4785^{m³}

F. Roads. There were no new roads made, or any road maintenance carried out during the year.

G. Mechanical. The holding of road vehicles at the forest.

2 Transit Vans 1 Laverover.

Extraction Machines 1 tractor for Skidder extraction

1 tractor for Cablecrane extraction.

H. Estate Management. The office and administration buildings

were given a general repair and decoration. The

water supply was changed from our private supply to the Regional Water Board supply.

I. Conservation and Recreation :- The Forest walk, Picnic place and car park in Stronwood was opened to the public towards the end of August. During the last three months of the year work on the caravan Park at Balmacara is proceeding.

K. Public Relations :- West Ross festival of the Country Side paid a visit to the forest on one day in July.

A Forsyth.

TO: CONSERVATOR (N)

FROM: DISTRICT OFFICE
DINGWALL

AD 3/3

57th ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1.3.76 to 31.3.77
DINGWALL WEST DISTRICT

(a) Administration, Staff, Labour and Training:

There were no territorial changes to the District.

A staff change took place at District Officer level consequent on the death after a long period of illness of J P Verel on 5 May 1976. F M MacRae looked after the District until a new appointment was made - G A Dey taking up post on 12 October 1976.

At Forest level the following changes took place.

1. Achnashellach - R K Murdoch, Head Forester replaced D Grant in mid October, the latter taking up an RTO post on promotion.

The complement thus remains at 1 Head Forester plus 2 Foresters.

2. Skye - Forester J Pargeter succeeded D G MacIntosh in September as Forester in Charge production in Glen Eynort.

The complement here remains at 1 Chief Forester in Charge, 1 Head Forester and 3 Foresters assisting.

3. South Strome - remains in the care of 1 Head Forester plus 1 Forester assisting.

4. Torrachilty - For the bulk of the Forest Year, the complement was 1 Head Forester short, consequent on the transfer out of C F Dampney the previous Forest Year. Head Forest C R Fruen was transferred out in mid September 1976 (from Lael) and Head Forester J B Colling was transferred in (to Contin) the same month. The vacancy at Lael has been temporarily filled by Forester F G O Thom, but only as recently as March 1977.

The Labour situation remained fairly static, the 2 forests being just under complement being Achnashellach and South Strome. The plight of the former is aggravated by lack of housing and "suction" of local available labour by Oil related industries especially in the Lochcarron area.

In Skye, ganger Ian MacLean retired in August, whilst an FC craftsman became a contractor. Two further contractors were recruited at Eynort to assist with felling operations.

Lack of housing at Torrachilty is also a problem bearing on further labour recruitment. The turn-over over the year was 2.

Staff Training A list of Foresters and the courses they attended is given herewith.

Achnashellach. Head Forester R K Murdoch:- Courses on Management Practice I & II (at Headquarters)
Forester W Grant:- HTSS Fencing.
Forester K Mills:- (i) Job Planning & Costing, FM (As)
(ii) Thinning Control & Tariffing.

Staff Training Contd

Skye.

Chief Forester D Robertson:- Skyline Winch (Glengarry)
Head Forester D MacDougall:- Management of Formation (Ae)
Forester H R Reid :- (i) Job Costing (Ae)
(ii) Fencing (Glengarry)
(iii) Weeding.

South Strome. Head Forester A Forsyth:- Production Programming, Thinning
Control and Tariffing.

Torrachilty. Chief Forester J W Taylor:- Skyline Winch
Forester W R C Beattie :- Clearing Saw.

Industrial Training was given as follows - Achnashellach:- 3 men on chain-
saw; 1 man on Winch Extraction. Torrachilty:- 4 men on Power saws.

(b) Acquisitions and Disposals:

The following acquisition was made:-

Skye - 807 ha at Ose (Glenvacaskill) are all but legally completed.

There were no disposals.

(4) Nurseries and Seed Collection:

The District is not involved in Nursery work but a certain amount of seed was collected - viz.

Achnashellach 22 hecta litres SS (Slattadale)

South Strome 33 " " SS