THE FALLS OF CLYDE WILDLIFE RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2009 – 2019

Part of the Clyde Valley Woodlands National Nature Reserve

Stephen Blow

January 2010

Protecting Scotland's wildlife for the future

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Registered at Edinburgh under No 40247 Charity Registration No SC005792

Produced with financial assistance and support from Scottish Natural Heritage

The Falls of Clyde

The Reserve Story.

This story is a brief summary of the history of the land that is now known as The Falls of Clyde Wildlife Reserve, the wildlife that can be found there and the management that the Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) plans to carry out there over the next 10 years.

After the Ice Age, as the huge quantities of glacial meltwater cut down through the sandstone and shale, spectacular cliffs, rapids and waterfalls were carved out. As the climate warmed, the banks and slopes were colonised by mosses, lichens, plants, trees and the wildlife that depends on them to survive and they have remained, hanging on to the gorge walls, for almost 10,000 years.

As people settled and agriculture expanded, much of the wildwood that covered the land was cleared for crops and livestock, but the steep sides of the cleughs, glens and gorges couldn't be farmed and so kept their trees. That's not to say that they were left alone as historical records going back 1000 years tell us that people were managing the woods in the Clyde Valley for timber, fuel, bark and fencing materials.

The importance of the site for wildlife was recognised in the 1960's through the creation of the Corehouse Nature Reserve by Col. Cranstoun of Corehouse, followed by the designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1971. The Scottish Wildlife Trust has now increased the size of the reserve to over 60ha through agreements with Corehouse Estate and Scottish Power and land purchase.

The Bonnington and Corehouse Estates on either side of the river both managed the woodlands to create 'Designed Landscapes' and both were popular stops for visitors on the Grand Tour of Scotland through the 18th and 19th Centuries. Artists and poets, including JMW Turner, William Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott visited to witness the spectacular Corra Linn. Many of the Estate's trees were felled during World War 2 and were replaced by fast growing, non-native conifers, which were commercially profitable, but not so good for the native wildlife.

The power of the Clyde had been harnessed by small corn mills for many years before the David Dale built New Lanark, diverting the water from Dundaff Linn to operate the mill machinery. But it was the construction of Scotland's first major hydroelectric power station, Bonnington Power Station, in 1927 that had the biggest impact on the waterfalls and tourism. Visit after heavy rain though and you can still see Corra Linn at its best.

Despite the human activity in and around the gorge, it is the fact that this ground has been woodland since the last Ice Age that makes it so special and so rich in wildlife. This part of the Clyde is both nationally and internationally important for both the woodland and the rare insects, often associated with dead wood. In 2007, the reserve also became part of the Clyde Valley Woodlands National Nature Reserve – a network of 6 woodlands stretching from Chatelherault to the Falls of Clyde.

Since being involved in managing the woodland, the SWT has undertaken footpath work to improve access and safety, woodland management, which has largely comprised of the felling of spruce, fir, beech and sycamore trees, all of which are introduced to

Scotland and can shade out some of the native plants that we aim to conserve. We have also put up bird and bat boxes, planted trees to replace felled conifers, developed Operation Peregrine to look after the nesting falcons and developed a range of environmental walks and talks for the public, groups and schools.

The major work planned over the next ten years includes;

- thinning out the remaining dense stands of conifer trees to start natural regeneration of native broadleaved woodland
- continuing to fell beech and sycamore to create gaps in the tree canopy, which will allow native species such as ash, oak, birch and hazel to grow
- maintaining a good quantity of dead wood, both as standing dead trees and fallen logs for the insects.
- maintaining the footpaths with regular strimming 3 times through the summer;
- repairing and extending surfaced paths, including a surfaced link across the meadow to the Bonnington Pavilion (Hall of Mirrors)
- replacing the boardwalk beside the Clyde which is coming to the end of it's natural life
- continuing to run Operation Peregrine and our range of guided walks and talks
- increasing the environmental education visits provided by the Ranger Service
- Maintaining and interpreting the historical and cultural features of the site.

If you have any comments, suggestions or questions about the management of the reserve, please contact the Reserve Manager on 01555 665262 or email sblow@swt.org.uk

1: POLICY STATEMENT

Wildlife Reserves Development Policy

Policy Headline

1. The Scottish Wildlife Trust defines the purpose of its reserve network as follows:

   "The Scottish Wildlife Trust will acquire and maintain a network of wildlife reserves to safeguard a broad representation of wildlife found throughout Scotland, and to act as examples to others and for the public benefit including enjoyment, information and education."

2. Collectively the Trust reserves will meet this definition, although not all of the functions stated above will be found on every reserve. The overriding function of the reserves should be for the protection and enhancement of Scottish wildlife.

3. Management of the Trust reserves reflect the wider local, regional and national habitats and species requirements, contributing to land management and policy initiatives which support the conservation of Scottish wildlife.

Rationale

4. Wildlife needs a place to live. The system of wildlife reserves, maintained by the Trust, other non government organisations and individuals, supplements and compliments the statutory site network (SSSI, SAC, SPA, RAMSAR) and land managed for wildlife in the wider countryside (includes Wildlife Sites, areas on farms, private land etc.). Where possible, working with neighbouring landowners and other organisations, the Trust will consider how its reserves can benefit habitat range and species populations at the national, regional and ecosystem level.

5. The Trust considers that the acquisition of reserves gives such areas of land security, continuity of management, a high standard of care and control of land uses in favour of wildlife whilst providing it with hands-on experience of management which establishes the Trust's credibility in practical wildlife conservation. This knowledge can then be used by the Trust to encourage others to adopt similar practices, either directly or indirectly by influencing government policy.

6. In order for the Trust to fulfil the purpose of the network as defined above it is required to acquire and dispose of reserves from time to time. The Trust currently manages 123 reserves covering 20,080ha.

7. The Trust's reserves provide places where people can see, learn about and enjoy wildlife in a controlled environment. They also provide a focus for Trust members and activities and an opportunity for the Trust to encourage more people to understand and engage with the values of the organisation.

8. In order for the Trust to maintain a network of reserves, to the required standard, that fulfils the defined purpose it has to consider the acquisition and disposal of reserves within a clearly defined policy and procedure. This procedure should be based on an objective assessment of the potential reserve, its intended purpose and its impact on the organisation and the existing reserve network.

2: PLAN SUMMARY

The summary provides a brief overview of the reserve, the Long Term Objectives and the resources required to achieve them.

Name of reserve: Falls of Clyde

A. Selection and acquisition of the reserve

The Trust acquired the reserve as part of a strategy to acquire and manage woodlands within the Clyde valley for nature conservation (NCC, 1978). The Trust currently owns and manages three additional sites in the Clyde Valley; Upper Nethan (part of Upper Nethan Valley Wood SSSI), Lower Nethan (part of the Nethan Gorge SSSI) and Garrion Gill (part of Garrion Gill SSSI).

B. Summary description

The Falls of Clyde Wildlife Reserve lies in South Lanarkshire approximately 1 mile south of Lanark immediately upstream of the historic village of New Lanark. It occupies both sides of the River Clyde and encompasses some 67.4ha.

The Clyde Gorge is of interest geologically being a fluvio glacial meltwater channel cut by melting ice at the end of the last glaciation. The present course of the Clyde is therefore relatively young having previously occupied a channel farther to the north. The area to the east of the reserve has very fine exposures of old red sandstone with ripple marks and dolerite dykes.

The principal interest in the reserve lies adjacent to the Clyde in the remnants of what is generally regarded as primary woodland. This has a rich ground flora including plants such as cow wheat (Melampyrum pratense), wood vetch (Vicia sylvatica) and common wintergreen (Pyrola minor). Associated with the woodland is a rich avifauna and several interesting invertebrates such as the spider, Centromerus aqualis, and the beetles, Molontha hippocastani, Atomaria procerula and Aegialia sabuleti. The otter (Lutra lutra), badger (Meles meles), and roe deer (Capreolus capreolus) are all present. Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus), daubenton's (Myotis daubentoni) and natterer's bats (Vespertilio nattereri) have all been recorded from the reserve. Peregrine falcons nest in the gorge and so SWT Operation Peregrine is run annually to protect the birds whilst breeding and provide members of the public with some of the closest views of peregrines in the UK.

A major feature of the reserve is the extensive plantations of conifers most of which were planted in the late 1950's after major fellings during the last war at Bonnington and the mid 1950's at Corehouse. Within much of the reserve area these plantation conifers are being harvested and replaced, principally with broadleaved trees.

Historically, the reserve is very significant and was managed by the two Estates as part of the Grand Tour of Scotland through the 18th and 19th Centuries. There are a number of interesting structures including the ancient Corra Castle, Bonnington Pavilion (also called the Hall of Mirrors) overlooking the Falls, and the iron bridge at Bonnington Linn; these date from the 15th, 18th and 19th centuries respectively. The Falls also feature in the work of well known painters including Jacob Moore, Turner and Naismith as well as poetry and prose by William and Dorothy Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott.

There is a hydro electric power station operated by Scottish Power on the reserve that extracts water from above Bonnington Linn and returns it below Corra Linn, thus reducing the volume of water flowing over the two big falls on the reserve. The power station was built in 1927 and was amongst the first public hydro schemes in Scotland. The ingenious tilting weir at Bonnington is still in its original form.

The reserve is part of a spectacular landscape that includes the River Clyde tumbling through a rocky gorge, the famous waterfall Corra Linn, ancient woodland and planted woodland, the latter including many fine specimen trees. The reserve is a major visitor attraction and is provided with a visitor centre within the old Dyeworks in New Lanark. Over 70,000 people visit the reserve and the reserve rangers run a very successful and comprehensive educational programme.

C. Past history of management plans and management

Previous management plans have been written for the period 1996-2001 by John Darbyshire (SWT) and 2002-2007 by Ian Cornforth (SWT).

D. Long term management objectives.

1. To restore and maintain a predominantly native broadleaved woodland, including maintaining the SSSI in Favourable Conservation Status, which allows all important elements, including important associated woodland species, to be sustained over time with minimal intervention.

2. To maintain or enhance other habitats or populations of other notable species where this does not conflict with objective 1.

3. To encourage recreational and educational access to the reserve, where this does not conflict with objective 1.

4. To manage the significant historical and archaeological features on the reserve.

5. To comply with all obligations and maintain high standards of reserve management.

E. Management infrastructure

The practical management of the reserve will be overseen by the Reserves Manager for the South of Scotland and carried out by the Clyde Valley Conservation Team based in Motherwell, volunteers and contractors as required.

F. Resource Summary

The following pages summarise the projects for the life of the plan and their priorities (1 being essential, 2 important, 3 desirable and 4 contingency).

Projects planned to occur during the life of the plan

Falls of Clyde		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
RA02/01	Collect data, mammals, survey CARRY OUT RED SQUIRREL SURVEY	X	2	X	2	X	2	X	2	X	2
RA02/02	Collect data, mammals, survey MAP BADGER SETTS AND EXCLUSION AREAS ON GIS	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
RA03/01	Collect data, mammals, monitor MONITOR PIPISTRELLE POPULATIONS	X	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
RA03/02	Collect data, mammals, monitor MONITOR DAUBENTON POPULATIONS	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
RA03/03	Collect data, mammals, monitor MONITOR OTTER POPULATIONS	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
RA32/01	Collect data, fish, survey SURVEY FOR BROOK LAMPREY POPULATIONS	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
RA43/01	Collect data, Lepidoptera, monitor BUTTERFLY TRANSECT	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
RA82/03	Collect data, other invertebrates, survey CARRY OUT INVERTEBRATE SURVEY	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	3
RF00/01	Collect data, vegetation, general COLLECT INFORMATION ON NOTABLE PLANT SPECIES	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
RF02/03	Collect data, vegetation, survey COLLECT DATA ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE OF NON-	X	2	X	X	2	X	X	2	X	X
RF02/04	Collect data, vegetation, survey COMMISSION NVC SURVEY	X	X	X	X	X	X	2	X	X	X
RF03/01	Collect data, vegetation, monitor MONITOR NOTABLE PLANT POPULATIONS	X	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
RH34/02	Collect data, public use, count visitors INSTALL AND MONITOR PEOPLE COUNTERS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
RP11/01	Collect data, hydrological, natural event RECORD NATURAL EVENTS, E.G. ROCKFALLS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
RV10/01	List / collate photographs, general COLLECT PHOTOGRAPHS, BOTH GENERAL AND FIXED POINT	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MA3+/01	Manage formal gardens ENHANCE POWER STATION GROUNDS	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MD10/01	Develop / maintain silvicultural activities, general HIGH PRUNE AND BRASH CONIFERS AND BROADLEAVES	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
MD16/01	Develop plant nursery facilities MAINTAIN COREHOUSE TREE NURSERY	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MD16/02	Develop plant nursery facilities MAINTAIN BONNINGTON TREE NUSERY	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ME00/02	Site infrastructure, general GENERAL RESERVE MAINTENANCE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ME00/03	Site infrastructure, general CCTV SYSTEMS - INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Falls of Clyde

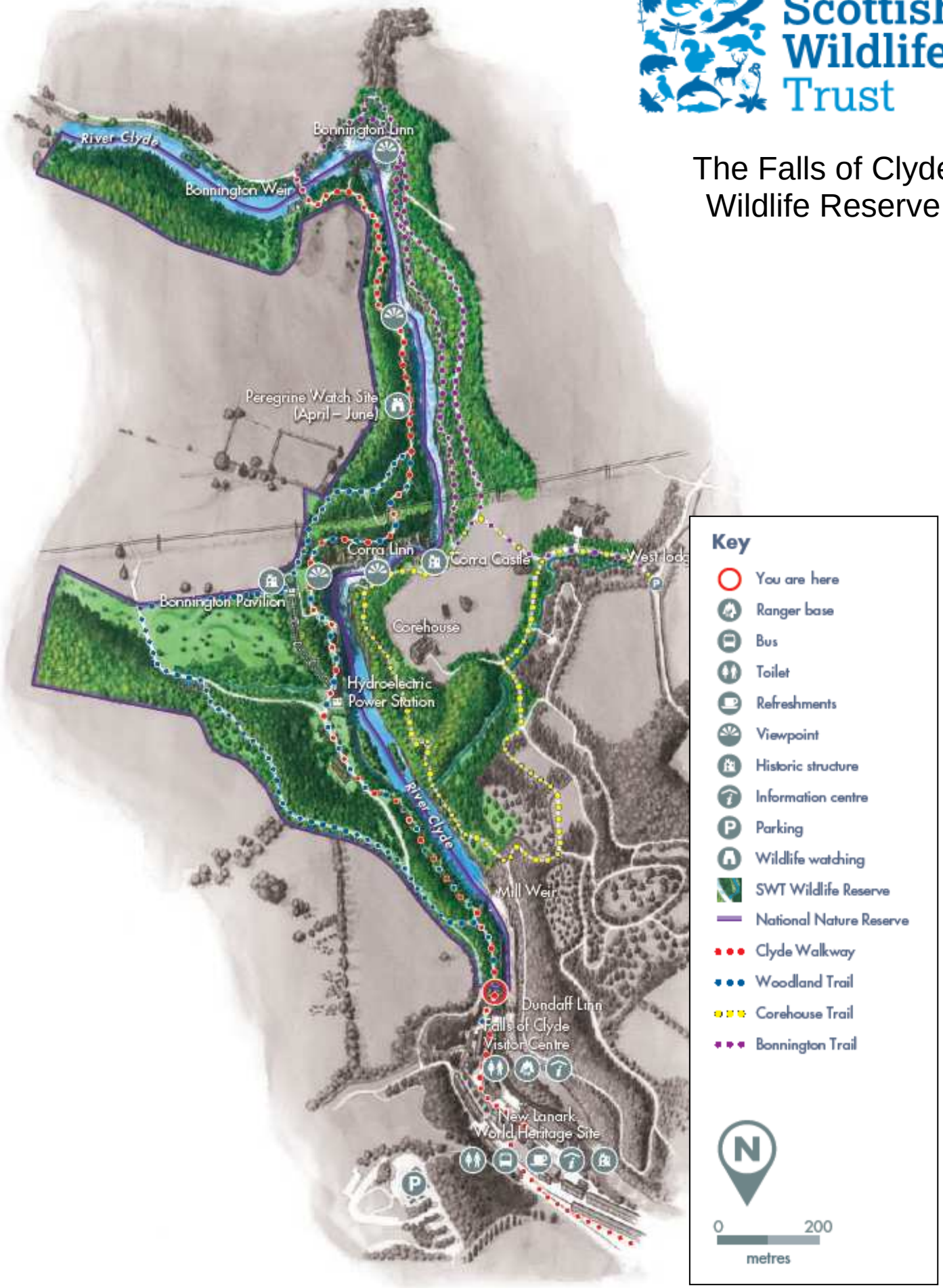
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
ME01/01	Boundary structures MAINTAIN AND REPLACE FENCES - ORIGINALLY FUNDED BY HLF,	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
ME01/02	Boundary structures MAINTAIN GORGE EDGE SAFETY FENCING	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ME12/04	Site buildings, maintain / improve UNDERTAKE RESTORATION/MAINTENANCE OF HISTORICAL	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
ME20/01	Comply with legal obligations COMPLY WITH OCCUPIERS LIABILITY & HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ME40/02	Provide / maintain paths / rides / roads / car parks MAINTAIN TRACKS IN GOOD CONDITION	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ME40/06	Provide / maintain paths / rides / roads / car parks SCOTTISH POWER WAYLEAVE	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ME40/07	Provide / maintain paths / rides / roads / car parks REPLACE THE BOARDWALK	1	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ME40/08	Provide / maintain paths / rides / roads / car parks PATH CONSTRUCTION/UPGRADE	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ME8+/01	Provide / maintain recreational facilities LITTER PICKING	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MH0+/01	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, general MANAGE WOODLAND STRUCTURE FOR FAVOURABLE	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MH00/01	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by coppicing CARRY OUT COPPICING ACCORDING TO COPPICE MANAGEMENT	X	3	X	3	X	3	X	3	X	3
MH02/01	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by thinning / group felling REMOVE CONIFERS FROM RIPARIAN HABITATS	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MH02/04	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by thinning / group felling MARK NON-NATIVE TREES TO BE RETAINED	2	2	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MH02/05	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by thinning / group felling FELL NON-NATIVE TREE SPECIES WHERE THEY ARE PREVENTING	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MH02/06	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by thinning / group felling FELL/THIN CONIFER PLANTATIONS VIA CONTRACTORS	X	2	X	2	X	2	X	2	X	X
MH02/07	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by thinning / group felling FELL TREES TO CREATE SCALLOPED EDGE	3	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MH04/01	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, maintaining ride/path/glade ASSESS AND DEAL WITH DANGEROUS TREES	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
MH07/01	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by scrub control CONTROL INVASIVE SHRUBS, ESPECIALLY SNOWBERRY AND	2	2	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MH09/04	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by other activities CONTROL AND PREVENT REGENERATION OF NON-NATIVE TREE	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MH09/05	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by other activities CONSIDER CHIPPING BRASH WHEN IN HIGH VOLUMES	X	4	X	X	X	4	X	X	X	X
MH09/06	Manage habitat, forest / woodland / scrub, by other activities CHARCOAL BURNING	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MH10/01	Manage habitat, grassland, by controlled grazing GRAZE THE MEADOW	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Falls of Clyde

		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
MH12/02	Manage habitat, grassland, by mowing CUT AND COLLECT GRASSLAND	4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MH42/01	Manage habitat, bog / mire / flush, by tree / scrub control CONTROL SCRUB ENCROACHMENT	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MI10/02	Inform visitors, onsite information COMMISSION INTERPRETATION STRATEGY	X	X	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MI41/01	Guided Walks - public/members BADGER WATCHES	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MI50/08	Provide interpretation MAINTAIN RESERVE SIGNS ORIGINALLY FUNDED BY HLF MAINTAIN	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ML20/01	Liaise stakeholders, right-holders LIAISE FULLY WITH ALL RESERVE STAKEHOLDERS	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
ML40/01	Liaise stakeholders, local / national authorities OBTAIN NECESSARY CONSENTS AND PERMISSIONS PRIOR TO	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ML40/02	Liaise stakeholders, local / national authorities LIAISE WITH SEPA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ML50/01	Liaise stakeholders, local community / groups LIAISE WITH EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
MS10/01	Manage species, other vascular plant ASSESS BEECH REMOVAL IN VIEW OF LESSER HAIRY BROME	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MS30/02	Manage species, mammal FORMULATE RED SQUIRREL STRATEGY	X	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
MS40/01	Manage species, bird RUN OPERATION PEREGRINE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
MS40/02	Manage species, bird MAINTAIN BIRD AND BAT BOXES	X	3	X	3	X	3	X	3	X	3
AE00/02	Employ staff, general PROVIDE RANGER SERVICE	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
AF02/00	Fund raising and donations ACKNOWLEDGE DONORS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AI30/01	Implement inspection, site safety CARRY OUT ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AI30/02	Implement inspection, site safety UNDERTAKE QUARTERLY SAFETY INSPECTIONS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AL++/01	Legal matters and payments, general PAYMENT OF RENT FOR C10 AND C11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AL00/01	Maintain holding, legal, by e.g. renewing lease / agreement / tenancy RENEW MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	1
AL20/01	Maintain holding, legal, by making / receiving payments PAY COREHOUSE TREE NURSERY RENT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AP10/01	Prepare / revise work programme REVIEW MANAGEMENT ON A YEARLY BASIS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AP20/01	Prepare / revise plan, management plans REVISE THE MANAGEMENT PLAN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1

Scottish Wildlife Trust

The Falls of Clyde Wildlife Reserve



Falls of Clyde Wildlife Reserve Consultation Response form	
Please continue on another sheet if needed, and show your answers on the reserve map if this is possible.	
What do you **like** about the reserve?	
What do you **not like** about the reserve?	
What do you think could **improve** the reserve?	
Do you have any comments on the **draft management objectives** and the potential **activities** needed to achieve these objectives?	
Do you have any other ideas or comments you wish to make about the reserve? Please continue on another sheet if needed.	
Please provide your **contact details** if you are happy to be contacted by us in relation to your response to this consultation.	Name: Address: Phone: Email:

Please tick if you are happy to contacted in future about the Falls of Clyde Wildlife Reserve	
Please tick if you are happy to receive information on other aspects of our work.	

Please send to Stephen Blow
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