

FOREST OF BIRSE COMMONTY

Fires within the Commonty Pinewoods during the last 25 years (1990-2014)

The Commonty Pinewoods cover approximately 530 hectares of the Forest of Birse Commonty. The attached map shows the boundaries of the area covered by BCT's Commonty Pinewoods Forest Plan 2011-2030.

The map also shows the areas of land within the Commonty Pinewoods that have been burnt in the last 25 years. The purpose of the map is to provide a record of these areas, as the fires are likely to have a long term influence on the pattern and age structure of the trees in these areas compared to adjoining areas.

Commonty Pinewoods

During the last 25 years, there have been 10 fires within the Commonty Pinewoods. These fires have burnt around 81 hectares or 15% of the Commonty Pinewoods area.

The great majority of the land burnt (92%) has been in the three wildfires during the 25 year period. These fires in 1998, 2003 and 2012 were each started accidentally by a member of the public on the edge of the public road in the Forest of Birse. The 1998 fire covered an area of scattered pine regeneration, while the 2003 fire destroyed both established woodland and areas of regeneration. The 2012 fire destroyed established woodland. The 2003 and 2012 wildfires were both spring fires, occurring on 10th April and 23rd March respectively. The month of the 1998 fire has not been researched.

The two fires shown on the south side of the Feugh were also unintentional fires. The fire in 1996/97 was muirburn for grouse management by Ballogie Estate that got out of control, swept down from Holland Hill and burnt out the woodland strip along the foot of the Dry Burn. The other area was burnt by mistake by Ballogie Estate in 1999, as there should have been no burning in the whins and scattered tree regeneration there within the Pinewood area.

The other five fires with the Commonty Pinewoods area during the last 25 years have all been intentional, controlled heather burning. The aim of these fires was to create fire-breaks without destroying existing trees. The strips between Corybeg and the Finlets and along the slopes of Lamahip were burnt by Ballogie Estate in ca.1997/98 and c. 2000 respectively. BCT burnt the strip between the public road and Finlets track, as well as the two small areas beside the road east of the Stripe burn, in c. 2000.

Prior to the period 1990-2014, muirburn for grouse continued on parts of the Commonty Pinewood area. There is also still evidence in terms of burnt stems and regeneration, of a fire burning into the mature pinewood stand in the Commonty above Mackie's Howe. It is thought this fire resulted from adjoining muirburn sometime between 1960-1980.

Glen Ferrick and Lamahip Pinewoods

The map also records the fires that have occurred during the last 25 years in the Lamahip and Glen Ferrick native pinewood areas to the north and east of the Commonty Pinewoods. The wildfire in Glen Ferrick in 2012 occurred on 30th March, a week after the wildfire in the Commonty Pinewoods, and was also considered to have been started accidentally by a member of the public.

The two pre-1990 fires shown on the southern slopes of Craig of Woodend and the top of Craighash are both thought to have occurred in the period 1940-70.



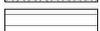
Birse Community Trust

Forest of Birse Community

Fires in the Community Pinewoods 1990 - 2014

Scale 1:15 000

19/01/2015

-  1996 Muirburn
-  1998 Controlled Burn (3ha)
-  1998 Wildfire (4ha)
-  1999 Muirburn
-  2000 Controlled burns (5ha)
-  2003 Wildfire (64ha)
-  2012 Wildfire (5ha)
-  2012 Wildfire on Craighash (19ha)
-  Locations of Fires 1940-1990
-  Community Pinewood Boundary

