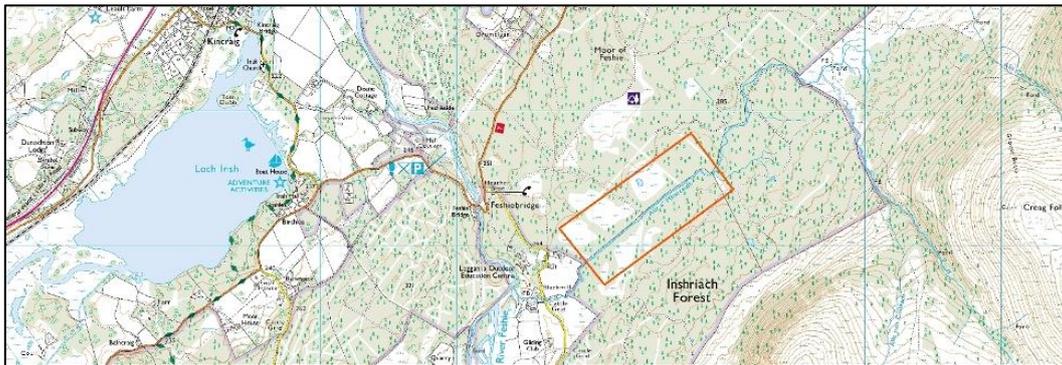


The Allt a'Mharcaidh, a tributary of the River Feshie, flows through the Invereshie and Inshraich National Nature Reserve (NNR), close to the village of Kincaig in central Highlands of Scotland. 1.2km of its lower reaches were artificially canalised in the early 1800s in order to float timber downstream and to power water driven saw mills. Over time this section has incised, undercut its banks and been scoured of much of its sediment. The project aimed to address these morphological pressures and restore the burn to a more naturally functioning watercourse and improve its in stream habitat.



Allt A'Mharcaidh Site Location map

Using low impact, low cost mechanisms, an environment conducive to initiating natural processes has been created that will, over time, improve the morphology of this section of burn. This approach has been successfully implemented on other projects in the Spey Catchment in recent years.



Allt a'Mharcaidh before restoration works commenced

Suitably located apex and cross bar woody debris features were introduced along the length of the reach, sediment sources were exposed and embankments lowered at key locations. Together these measures should instigate natural processes such as erosion and deposition and encourage the creation of in stream features such as pools and riffles. In time this will lead to improved “in river conditions” that should have a positive impact on salmonid species, aquatic features and biodiversity.



Allt a' Mharcaidh two months after restoration works undertaken

The river morphology improvement works formed part of a larger NNR site wide project building on work previously undertaken in the area through the Wet Woodland Project in 1999. Drains in the surrounding habitat have been blocked to encourage water storage which will enhance the wet woodland environment, and areas of bare peat have been stabilised which should lead to a reduction in carbon loss and increased carbon sequestration. It is intended to undertake some broadleaf riparian planting on the site in the coming months.

This project has been delivered as a joint initiative between the Spey Catchment Initiative and the Cairngorms Peatland Restoration Officer, with the generous support of Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Spey Fishery Board, the Water Environment Fund and the Green Stimulus Peatland Restoration Fund.

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