

North Highland Area Management Plan Catchment Summaries

There is a catchment summary for each catchment in the North Highland advisory group area. These give information on the current situation (classification and pressures) and action . A guide to these catchment summaries and a glossary of terms is available. Further information on individual water bodies within each catchment can be found on the river basin management planning interactive map – www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning.aspx

The North Highland catchment summaries are contained with 5 documents:

- Caithness and Sutherland
- Moray Firth – Dornoch to Inverness
- Ness
- Moray Firth – Nairn to Lossiemouth
- Ground Water Bodies

This document includes catchment summaries for **Moray Firth – Nairn to Lossiemouth**:-

	Page
River Nairn	2
River Findhorn	3
Muckle Burn	4
River Lossie	5
Moray Coastal	7

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>River Nairn</p>	<p>Of the twelve water bodies in the Nairn catchment, ten are natural and two are heavily modified.</p> <p>Natural water bodies One of the ten natural water bodies, the Cawdor Burn, is at high ecological status.</p> <p>Six are at good ecological status; River Nairn – Moray Firth to River Farnack confluence to source, Dalriach Burn, Allt na Fuar-ghlaic, River Farnack, Feith Ghlas, Allt na Beinne</p> <p>However, three burns are at moderate ecological status due to a range of pressures. The River Nairn - River Farnack confluence to source - is impacted by abstraction for water supply for Inverness water treatment works. The Auldearn Burn is affected by diffuse pollution from farming and sewage, plus channel straightening. The Geddes Burn is also affected by diffuse pollution and channel straightening from farming activities, plus the presence of North American Signal Crayfish, an invasive non native species.</p> <p>Heavily modified water bodies Both Loch Duntelchaig and Allt a Chlachain are heavily modified as they are used to supply water to Inverness. Both are at good ecological potential as appropriate flow is provided and the pattern of abstraction is controlled.</p> <p>Protected Areas The River Nairn catchment includes the following protected areas, which are all meeting their required standards with respect to the Water Framework Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loch Duntelchaig, Nairn Valley Sand and Gravel, Nairn bedrock and localised sand and gravel aquifers drinking water Protection Zones • River Nairn Freshwater Fish designated area • Nairn Central and Nairn East Bathing waters 	<p>Improvements to diffuse pollution and morphology issues are scheduled to take place in cycle 2 (2016-2021) addressing issues on the Auldearn and the Geddes Burns by 2021.</p> <p>Controls on abstraction on the River Nairn - River Farnack confluence to source will bring this water body to good status by 2020.</p> <p>Although the diffuse pollution and morphology issues on the Geddes Burn are expected to be addressed by 2027, the overall ecological status of the Geddes Burn is still not expected to be good by then. A lower (less stringent) objective has been set because it is currently infeasible to remove established populations of North American signal crayfish, or sufficiently mitigate their impacts, in order to achieve good status.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>River Findhorn</p>	<p>There are 22 natural water bodies in the Findhorn catchment, seventeen of which are at good status; Loch Moy, Lochindorb, Dorback Burn – upstream Lochindorb, River Findhorn – Tomatin to Dorback Burn, Tomlachlan Burn, Leonach Burn, Rhlean Burn Funtack Burn, Moy Burn, Allt Bruachaig, Allt na Feithe Sheilich, Kyllachy Burn, Glenmazeran Burn, Allt a Mhuilinn, Allt Calder, Elrick Burn, River Eskin.</p> <p>Three stretches of the River Findhorn are moderate; from the Dorback Burn to the sea due to abstraction for farming, Tomatin to Garbole due to abstraction for the Altchosach hydrostation, and Garbole to Coignafearn Lodge due to abstraction for the hydropower station on the Coignafearn estate. However, the latter two water bodies need data verification to confirm that this classification is correct before investigating potential measures for improvement.</p> <p>The Dorback Burn – downstream of the Divie confluence is at poor status. However, there are no recorded pressures and the classification of this water body needs to be checked.</p> <p>Dorback Burn/River Divie is at bad status. However, there are no recorded pressures and the classification of this water body needs to be checked.</p> <p>Protected Areas The River Findhorn catchment includes the following protected areas, which are all meeting their required standards with respect to the Water Framework Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carn nan Tri-tighearnan Special Area of Conservation (for blanket bog) and Moidach Mor (for blanket bog) Special Area of Conservation, • Findhorn bathing waters • Upper Findhorn Sand and Gravel, Findhorn bedrock and localised sand and gravel aquifers, Dorback Valley sand and gravel Drinking Water Protection Zones • River Findhorn Freshwater Fish designated area 	<p>The hydro power scheme on Tomatin to Garbole and Garbole to Coignafearn Lodge are very small. It is suspected that the hydrology classification of moderate is incorrect so measures are unlikely to be required.</p> <p>Improvements to the controls on abstraction on the River Findhorn - Dorback Burn to sea mean that this water body is predicted to reach good ecological status by 2027.</p> <p>The Dorback Burn – downstream of the Divie confluence is predicted to be good status by 2015. However the classification of this water body needs to be checked.</p> <p>Dorback Burn/River Divie is predicted to be good status by 2015. However, the classification of this water body needs to be checked.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>Muckle Burn</p>	<p>All the six water bodies in the Muckle Burn catchment are natural, with three of these at good ecological status; Black Burn (Clunas), Muckle Burn (Speedie confluence to source) and Red Burn.</p> <p>Three burns are moderate ecological status; the Muckle Burn (downstream of the Speedie Burn) due to embankments, the Muckle Burn (Lethen to Speedie Burn) due to diffuse pollution from an undertermined source and the Speedie Burn which is impacted by coniferous planting down to the bankside.</p> <p>Protected Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Muckle Burn catchment includes the following protected areas, which are all meeting their required standards with respect to the Water Framework Directive: Clunas Reservoir, Newlands of Fleenas Sand and Gravel and Forres bedrock and localised sand and gravel aquifers Drinking Waters • Muckle Burn Freshwater Fish designated area • Muckle Burn Urban waste water treatment directive sensitive area. 	<p>Improvements to morphology, diffuse pollution and the felling of coniferous planting to the bankside and replanting with native trees mean that the Muckle Burn – downstream of Speedie Burn, the Muckle Burn - Lethen to Speedie Burn, the Speedie Burn will be at good status by 2027.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>River Lossie</p>	<p>The River Lossie catchment includes ten water bodies, eight of which are natural and 2 heavily modified.</p> <p>Natural water bodies None of the eight natural water bodies are at good ecological status due to a range of impacts.</p> <p>Five water bodies are at poor ecological status; River Lossie – Waukmill to Arthurs Bridge, River Lossie – Mosstowie Canal to Waukmill, Linkwood Burn, Black Burn, Gedloch Burn.</p> <p>Three water bodies are at bad status; Mosstowie Canal and River Lossie – Leanoch Burn to Mosstowie Canal. River Lossie – upper catchment.</p> <p>The River Lossie – Waukmill to Arthurs Bridge and Linkwood Burn are both affected by diffuse agricultural pollution.</p> <p>The bad ecological status of the River Lossie – upper catchment has initially been attributed to diffuse pollution but further investigation is required to confirm both the fish classification and cause of any downgrade in ecological status.</p> <p>Four rivers are impacted by agricultural straightening and embankment; River Lossie – Waukmill to Arthurs Bridge, Mosstowie Canal - , River Lossie – Leanoch Burn to Mosstowie Canal.</p> <p>The Gedloch Burn is affected by intensive coniferous planting to the bank.</p>	<p>Natural water bodies Improvements to diffuse pollution and morphology issues are scheduled to take place in cycle 2 (2016-2021) for the following water bodies in the Lossie catchment ; The River Lossie – Waukmill to Arthurs Bridge and Linkwood Burn, Mosstowie Canal - , River Lossie – Leanoch Burn to Mosstowie Canal.</p> <p>Felling of coniferous tress to the bankside and replanting with native trees on the Gedloch Burn by 2026 by Forestry Commission Scotland.</p> <p>A number of measures will be put in place by distilleries which will improve the status of the following water bodies;</p> <p>The River Lossie – Waukmill to Arthurs Bridge and the River Lossie – Mosstowie Canal to Waukmill are predicted to be good ecological status by 2026 through improvements in water efficiency in 2014 and the use alternative source/relocate abstraction by Glen Moray distillery by 2026.</p> <p>The Linkwood Burn is predicted to be good ecological status by 2026 through a combination of controlled abstraction and improved regulated flows by a number of distilleries.</p> <p>Black Burn is predicted to be good ecological status by 2026 through controlled abstraction by Miltonduff distillery.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>River Lossie continued</p>	<p>Abstraction of water and impacts on flows from the use of water in for distilleries affects six rivers; River Lossie – Waukmill to Arthurs Bridge, River Lossie – Mosstowie Canal to Waukmill, Linkwood Burn, Black Burn River Lossie – Leanoch Burn to Mosstowie Canal and the Gedloch Burn.</p> <p>In addition, Linkwood Burn is also impacted by the weir at Longmorn Distillery preventing migratory fish accessing the catchment upstream.</p> <p>Heavily modified Both the upper and lower catchments of the Leanoch Burn are heavily modified because Glenlatterach Reservoir is used as a public drinking water supply. They are both at good ecological potential.</p> <p>Ground water bodies One ground water body, the Elgin bedrock and localised sand and gravel aquifers, is at poor status in terms of quantity (amount of water) due the impact of ground water abstraction on river levels.</p> <p>Protected Areas The River Lossie catchment includes the following protected areas, which are all meeting their required standards with respect to the Water Framework Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Black Burn Sand and Gravel, Upper Lossie Valley Sand and Gravel Leanoch Burn - upper catchment drinking water protection zones • River Lossie Freshwater Fish • River Lossie UWWTD area • NVZ – Moray/Aberdeenshire/Banff/Buchan Nutrient Vulnerable Zone. 	<p>The River Lossie – Leanoch Burn to Mosstowie Canal is predicted to be good ecological status by 2026 by improved water efficiency in 2014 and the use of alternative source/relocate abstraction by Glen Moray distillery by 2026.</p> <p>Control to the pattern/timing of flow will be made on the Gedloch Burn in 2026 by Glenlossie distillery.</p> <p>Discussions are required with the Moray Council on the Linkwood Burn to confirm responsibility for the weir and to explore options to make improvements to make provisions for fish passage.</p> <p>Ground water bodies In terms of quantity, all 45 groundwater bodies in North Highland are anticipated to be at good ecological status by 2027 with controlled abstraction of water from both Elgin bedrock and localised sand and gravel aquifers and Conon Valley sand and gravels.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>Moray Coastal</p>	<p>The Moray Coastal catchment includes ten water bodies, six of which are natural, three are heavily modified and one is an artificial water body.</p> <p>Natural water bodies None of the six natural water bodies are at good ecological status.</p> <p>Two water bodies are moderate ecological status; the Mosset Burn - Altyre to Forres due to channelization / flood embankments for agriculture and the Mosset burn – source to Altyre due to coniferous planting close to the banks.</p> <p>Three water bodies are poor ecological status; Innes Canal /Lhanbryde Burn due to abstraction for mixed and arable farming, multiple morphological alterations and diffuse pollution from mixed farming; Lhanbryde Burn/Burn of Blackhills due to channel straightening and abstraction for arable farming and Terchick Burn due to diffuse pollution, morphological alterations and abstraction from arable farming.</p> <p>Kinloss Burn is bad ecological status due to abstraction and flow regulation for the production of whisky at Glenburgie Distillery, multiple morphological alterations from arable farming and point source pollution from the Kinloss sewage treatment works. None of the three heavily modified water bodies are at good ecological potential yet</p>	<p>Improvements to diffuse pollution and morphology issues are scheduled to take place in cycle 3 (2022 – 2027) bringing many of the water bodies in the Moray coastal catchment to good ecological status by 2021.</p> <p>Options to restore some of these water courses need to be explored, balancing the needs of land managers and the water environment. In most cases, a longer term objective of 2027 has been set for them to reach good ecological status.</p> <p>Innes Canal /Lhanbryde Burn is to be predicted to be good ecological status by 2027 with sources of diffuse pollution reduced by 2012 and abstraction controlled and improvements to the morphology made by 2026.</p> <p>Lhanbryde Burn/Burn of Blackhills is predicted to be at good ecological status by 2026 with controlled abstraction and modified habitat. Improvements made to Terchick Burn mean that it is predicted to reach good ecological status by 2026.</p> <p>Kinloss Burn is predicted to reach good ecological status by 2026 with increased treatment at Kinloss sewage treatment works in 2010, controlled abstraction and improved flows by 2026 and improvement to morphology by 2026.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>Moray Coastal continued</p>	<p>Heavily modified water bodies The Millie Burn is heavily modified because of channel straightening for agricultural drainage and is at poor ecological potential because appropriate mitigation measures have still to be determined. It is also affected by abstractions for whisky production and farming and diffuse pollution from farming.</p> <p>The Mosset Burn (Forres to the sea) is heavily modified because of channel straightening for farming and the presence of flood embankments. It is at poor ecological potential because appropriate mitigation measures have still to be determined. It is also affected by diffuse pollution from agriculture and point source pollution from sewage.</p> <p>The Belmack Burn is heavily modified because of channel straightening for farming. It is at bad ecological potential because appropriate mitigation measures have still to be determined.</p> <p>Artificial waterbodies The Spynie canal, an artificial water body, is moderate ecological potential because of the presence of flood embankments. It is also affected by diffuse pollution from agriculture.</p>	<p>Heavily modified water bodies The Millie Burn is predicted to reach good ecological potential by 2026 with improvements to morphology by 2024, control of abstractions for whisky and farming and reduction in diffuse pollution by 2026.</p> <p>The Mosset Burn (Forres to the sea) is predicted to be good ecological potential by 2026 with improvements made to morphology by 2024 and reductions in inputs of both diffuse and sewage pollution by 2026.</p> <p>The Belmack Burn is predicted to be at good ecological potential by 2026 with improvements made to channel morphology.</p> <p>Diffuse pollution issues will be addressed in the Spynie Canal in the third cycle of priority catchments by 2027. This water body needs to be assessed to ascertain whether it should be classified as a heavily modified or artificial water body. If an artificial water body then no measure would be required. If a heavily modified water body, an assessment would be needed to ascertain appropriate mitigation.</p>

Catchment	Current situation	Actions for improvement
<p>Moray Coastal continued</p>	<p>Protected areas The Moray Coastal catchment includes the following protected areas, which are all meeting their required standards with respect to the Water Framework Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culbin Bar (coastal vegetation and shifting dunes) Special Area of Conservation • Moray and Nairn Coast Special Area of Conservation (for non breeding waterbirds and breeding Osprey) • Moray and Nairn Coast Special Protection Area (for non breeding bar-tailed godwit, Common scoter, Dunlin, Greylag goose, Long-tailed duck, Oystercatcher, Pink-footed goose, Red-breasyed merganser, Redshankbreeding Osprey, Velvet scoter, waterfowl assemblage and Wigeon and breeding Osprey.) • Loch Spynie Special Protection Area (for over-wintering greylag geese) • Elgin bedrock and localised sand and gravel aquifers drinking water protection Zones. 	