

INFORMATION FOR WOODLAND OWNERS – *Phytophthora ramorum* INFECTED LARCH WOODLANDS IN SCOTLAND

Introduction

The following note gives information about the grant support that is available to assist all private woodland owners in Scotland where they have been served with a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) for larch trees infected with *Phytophthora Ramorum* (*P. ramorum*).

Please also see details of the “Management Zone” below where we will not issue SPHNs.

Background

P. ramorum is a fungus-like pathogen first detected in the UK in 2002 but not seen in Scotland outside the nursery trade until 2007.

Its global host range is wide (>130 plant species) and until 2009 was mostly found to be infecting shrub species such as Rhododendrons (particularly *R. ponticum*), Viburnum, Pieris etc.

As it has caused significant damage to oak trees in parts of the USA, it is also referred to as Sudden Oak Death, but this is a misnomer in the UK, where it has only very rarely affected our native oak. Several other tree species, including some conifers, are susceptible.

In the UK, the trees on which the pathogen is known to sporulate (reproduce) are sweet chestnut, ash, holm oak and Japanese larch. The latter is particularly vulnerable and experience to-date has shown that they will die quickly when infected.

P. ramorum was first detected on Japanese larch in south west England in 2009 and was found in Japanese larch in West Scotland in 2010.

The latest information on *P. ramorum* can be found on our Forestry Commission [website](#) and on our Scottish Forestry [website](#).

Serving a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN)

The Management Zone

The Plant Health (Forestry) (*Phytophthora ramorum* Management Zone) Order 2014 became law on 5th June 2014. This Order applies only to an area designated as the “Management Zone” in the South West of Scotland. You can see the boundary of this zone on our website.

Scottish Forestry Plant Health Inspectors will no longer issue SPHNs for infected trees discovered **within** the Management Zone. Movement of any larch material from within the management zone to any site external to it is controlled through this order.

If you wish to move timber from inside the management zone to a site outside the Management Zone then this must only be to an authorised processor.

When woodland outside the Management Zone has been identified as infected, Scottish Forestry will serve notice using powers under the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005. We will serve this Notice on the woodland owner.

The woodland owner is then legally bound to carry out the actions defined in the SPHN.

Scottish Forestry Conservancy staff will liaise with you to discuss the requirements of the SPHN and the timetable to be followed.

Time is of the essence in responding to the requirements of SPHNs. Felling infected Larch trees and those around them and applying the specified biosecurity measures will be the minimum requirement under the Notice.

Once you have completed this minimum requirement you will have the choice of:

- leaving the felled trees on site; or
- converting those trees into roundwood products and selling them to processing facilities licensed to handle *Phytophthora*-affected wood. This may allow you to recover some income from sale to offset the costs of meeting the requirements of the SPHN. It is also a valid way of removing the felled trees from the site even if it would not make a profit.

All the road movement of timber from site and its subsequent processing has to be operated under the *Phytophthora* Licence System.

Grant Support

Grant support is available for sites that have been served a SPHN. The Restocking – Delivering Diversity and Resilience in Woodlands capital item is also available on land within the designated Management Zone for *P. ramorum*.

Information on grant support is detailed in the [Tree Health](#) option of the Forestry Grant Scheme.

You can only claim for work that is undertaken once you have an approved contract, work completed before your contract is approved will not be eligible for support.

Approved Agents

A list of approved agents for woodland owners in Scotland will be maintained on the Tree Health option page. If you would like to register or need more information please look under the [Other eligibility criteria](#) section of the Tree Health option.

To become an approved agent please complete the pre-qualification questionnaire also available on this web page.

A woodland owner can decide to engage the assistance of an agent to help manage the process depending on the owners' situation and wishes. The agent must be one chosen from the approved list provided by Scottish Forestry.

This list contains the names of those agents who have been successful with their pre-qualification questionnaire and are therefore suitably qualified and experienced to give advice and organise the work required.

The landowner will be paid by Scottish Forestry upon successful completion of the specified services. You will be responsible for paying for the work organised by the agent. It is also your responsibility to ensure the biosecurity measures prescribed in the SPHN are adhered to by all parties.

Scottish Forestry will not get involved in discussions or disputes between responsible persons, agents and contractors except in so far as to ensure compliance with the SPHN.

It is recommended that you arrange an appropriate contract with your nominated agent for the services and the clearance work to be provided.

Details on the agent services can be found in the Tree Health grant option capital items.