

Black Mount Deer Management Plan Action Points

ACTION POINTS: General BMDMG		<u>Timescale</u>
Members	To continue to encourage owners of properties in Appin to collaborate with the group.	Ongoing
	To continue to encourage owners and managers of holdings within the DMG boundary to actively participate in the operation of the BMDMG.	Ongoing
Secretary		
	To ensure on-going local communication through Police attendance of AGM and in particular liaison over A82 and DVC.	Ongoing

ACTION POINTS: Deer Population and Monitoring		<u>Timetable</u>
Members	To carry out co-ordinated foot counting annually, submitting the results to the Secretary.	Ongoing
	To carry out a helicopter count ever 3-4 years (provided assistance on funding is possible)	Ongoing
	To carry out HIAs annually, according to SNH methodology and submitting findings to the group.	Ongoing
	To annually agree population model at group meetings.	Ongoing
	To discuss and agree estimated calf-mortality annually in order to update the population model.	Ongoing
Secretary & Consultant	To gather HIA results, collate and distribute to the group to allow informed deer culls. To set appropriate cull targets to deliver habitat objectives following HIA results.	December 2018
Secretary	To work with the group and SNH to seek funding to facilitate future helicopter counting every 3-4 years.	Ongoing
	To populate and maintain population model for members to agree.	Ongoing

ACTION POINTS: Communications		<u>Timetable</u>
Members	Members will update secretary if there are any changes to contact details.	Ongoing
Secretary	To maintain up to date contact details of members, as advised.	Ongoing
	To maintain group website, with the assistance of ADMG to communicate DMG information to stakeholders and the general public.	Ongoing
	To ensure local Community Councils receive notification of availability of DMP on ADMG website and to ensure Community Councils receive notification that DMG AGM minutes are available on website.	

ACTION POINTS: Natural Environment		Timescale
Members	To discuss and agree actions to bring any unfavourable features, with herbivore pressures, into recovering condition.	Ongoing
	To ensure recovering features continue to improve towards favourable status.	Ongoing
	To have more than 80% of SAC features in favourable or recovering condition.	2021
	To minimise the spread of non-native species	Ongoing
	To monitor and report to the group any spread or new presence of non-native species, particularly sika deer which are known to be present in some areas of the group along with wild boar.	Ongoing
	To cull sika in season according to Best Practice.	Ongoing
NTS, Glen Etive	To follow the Statement of Intent in managing the Glen Coe SSSI and SAC as provided in Appendix 12	Ongoing
Black Mount	To agree management of Crannach Woods to bring Native Pinewood feature into recovering condition.	tbc
Glen Etive	To obtain support from FCS/SNH/SRDP to fence areas of the Ardtrilleachan SSSI for restoration.	Discussions with FC&SNH to finalise fence line design.
Secretary	To consider at DMG meetings what projects may be carried out under this programme.	Ongoing

ACTION POINTS: Woodland Environment		Timescale
Members	To collectively increase native woodland area by potentially up to 500 ha in during the lifetime of the plan (to 2021). Acknowledging that the Black Mount Deer Management Group has established over 8,300 Ha of new woodlands in the past 20 years and acknowledging the limitations of additional planting due to constraints such as designations, deep peat and National Scenic Area. Any plan for areas of new planting/regeneration will carefully consider impacts through displacement and compensatory culling where appropriate. It should be noted that there a number of areas within the Deer Management Group where woodlands are currently being opened up to deer.	2021
	To contribute to ensuring 60% of Scotland's native woodland is in satisfactory condition by 2020.	Now
Secretary	Establish who the relevant parties are in Glencoe where there is high herbivore pressure on native	On-going

	woodlands in order to encourage this to be improved.	
Black Mount Estate	To work with SNH/FCS to enter management agreement for Crannach Woods and Ardtrilleachan SSSI.	Ongoing
Castles	To consider mechanisms that will reduce the areas of high herbivore pressure in woodland on Loch Awe side.	Ongoing

ACTION POINTS: Public Health and Wellbeing		Timetable
Members	To ensure at least 1 deer manager on each holding is DSC 2	February 2020
	To provide a training record for all estates, to be confirmed by annually.	Ongoing
Secretary	Include collaborative training opportunities to DMG meeting agendas to make it easier for members to facilitate training.	Ongoing
	To annually gather wider information from group members, including data on winter mortality, carcass weights and calving rates.	Ongoing
Crunachy, Glenstrae, Glencrearan,	To complete DSC 2 certification	February 2020

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ACTION POINTS: Review economic costs of deer management		Timescale
Members	To review annually any opportunity to minimise any economic costs associated with deer management, and in particular where opportunity through collaborative management presents itself.	Ongoing
	To review annually any opportunity to maximise revenue generating opportunities and to maximise economic benefits associated with deer management.	Ongoing
Secretary	Secretary to ensure all members undertake the above assessments.	Ongoing

1. Introduction

This Deer Management Plan has been prepared on the instruction of members of the Black Mount Deer Management Group (BMDMG), in discussion with members, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and stakeholders. The purpose of the Black Mount Deer Management Group is to manage deer in a collaborative basis and in accordance with Scottish Government strategy (Scotland's Wild Deer: A National Approach, 2008), the Code of Practice on Deer Management (2012), Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance and in a manner that integrates different land use objectives, recognising that compromise may be required where competing land use objectives become conflicting land use objectives.

The BMDMG was assessed, along with all other DMGs in Scotland, during 2014 in line with the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs Climate Change and Environmental (RACCE) Committee review of deer management in Scotland. As part of this review the updated version of 'Scotland's Wild Deer a National Approach' (WDNA) was published, this included priority actions for 2015 to 2020. As part of the BMDMG's commitment to work towards the priorities of this document this Deer Management Plan has been formed and will continue to evolve along with the group.

Prior to the 2014 publication of WDNA the initial document was published in 2008. These documents accompany the SNH *Code of Practice on Deer Management* which came as a consequence of the *Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) 2011 Act*. Along with the *Best Practice Guidance*, these three publications have been some of the key documents implementing guidance on deer management in Scotland to date.

The key legislation affecting deer management in Scotland are as follows:

- Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 (as amended)
- Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011

2. About Black Mount DMG

The Black Mount Deer Management Group (BMDMG) area covers North Argyll, crossing into the Highlands, between Dalmally and the village of Glencoe. The area includes Rannoch Moor and Black Mount and extends down Loch Etive to Taynuilt and to the North West to Kentallen.



The BMDMG group area extends to an existing area of approximately 91,000 hectares (225,000 acres). Management and ownership of the area is carried out by a mixture of public and private interests along with NGOs. The land cover is predominantly heather moor, much of which is at considerable height, the lower areas provide a more diverse range of habitat types. BMDMG liaises with neighboring groups, however, with much of the boundary of the group being a physical boundary the majority of the deer population does not cross into adjoining areas.

The deer population within this group is almost entirely red with the occasional sighting of roe and reports of some sika in the south west of the group area. The deer management in this plan predominantly relates to red deer.

Figure 1: DMGs in Scotland

2.1. Membership, area and boundaries

2.1.1. The extent of the group can be seen in Appendix 1 which shows property boundaries.

Much of the peripheral areas include forestry blocks, the majority of which are owned by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), their policy is generally to fence the areas of forestry to exclude deer in order to ensure low deer density to allow woodland establishment. The upland areas are largely privately owned along with a significant area owned by the National Trust for Scotland. These upland areas have a free ranging deer population with some small exclusions where there are plantations.

2.1.2. With sea lochs forming the western boundaries, and large hill lochs forming some of the north eastern boundaries, most of the deer population is contained. To the east there is some movement between Black Mount and Breadalbane DMGs, however, the railway line provides another physical boundary to the south east of the group. To the south is the Inverary and Tyndrum DMG and the Mid-West Association DMG runs along the northern boundary of the BMDMG.

2.1.3. There are 15 subscribed members of the BMDMG, as a group BMDMG is subscribed to the Association of Deer Management Groups (ADMG). The details of group members are as follows:

Table 1 BMDMG Ownership

Landholding	Area (km²)	Ownership
Ardchattan	76.92	Sarah Troughton
Auch Estate	34.87	Auch 2014 Ltd
Black Corries	80	Black Corries Estate Management Ltd
Black Mount	245	Philip Fleming
Castles	32.1	Bebe Corbett
Crunachy	2	Mr R D Schuster
Dalness	50	Sannox Glen Etive Ltd
Forestry Commission	205	Forestry Commission Scotland
Glen Etive	57.5	Philip Fleming
Glen Noe	41.7	Glen Noe Estate Partnership
Glencoe & Dalness	56.8	National Trust for Scotland
Glencreran	45.8	Glen Crearan Estate LLP
Glenkinglass	39.24	Glenkinglass Estate Ltd
Glenstrae	20.25	Mr R D Schuster
Inverliever	28	Dorothy Fleming

2.2. Non-members and expansion

2.2.1. There are some areas in the north west area of the group, around Appin, which are out-with the current operating DMG boundary, but do not fall into any other DMG. The DMG continues to seek to encourage owners and managers of these areas to participate in the management of deer at group level. Most of these holdings' primary focus is agriculture, however they have an interest in deer and some carry out deer management activities.

2.3. Members' Management Objectives

2.3.1. Within the membership of the BMDMG there are ranging primary objectives but all in line with the statement from WDNA, 2014. Whilst some details of members' objectives are varied, all members look to carry out their activities in balance with the natural habitat whilst ensuring the wellbeing of the deer herd.

2.3.2. Through a range of activities, deer account for significant economic activity within the DMG boundary and ensuring employment and economic activity within in the group area is another prominent objective.

"We manage wild deer to achieve the best combination of benefits for the economy, environment, people and communities for now and for future generations".

WDNA, 2014 (p11)

Table 2: Members' Objectives

Landholding	Management Objectives
Ardchattan	Objective to have sporting shooting maintaining a viable population of red deer on the open hill, but avoiding overgrazing. Reduce pressure on in-bye fields which farm sheep & cattle
Auch Estate	To manage the estate in a manner which maximises commercial sustainability with regard to Scottish Government Objectives. To maintain a viable farming enterprise to sustain local employment. To expand the existing woodland resource in line with Scottish Government objectives. To enhance and expand the existing native woodlands through a combination of approaches, combining both short-term and long-term measures. To retain a sporting enterprise to sustain local employment. To protect designated sites and heritage sites.
Black Corries	To manage for sporting, whilst maintaining and enhancing environmental and conservation interests.
Black Mount	Black Mount seeks to: - Maintain employment - Stimulate economic activity - Sustain deer numbers in balance with habitat
Castles	To control the red deer in accordance with agreed DMG cull figures.
Crunachy	The deer population is culled with aims of sustainability and habitat maintenance.
Dalness	To manage the land with consideration to the natural habitats, whilst stimulating some economic activity where viable.

Forestry Commission	<p>Our aim is to manage deer density safely, cost-effectively and humanely at a level which is consistent with acceptable impacts on forests, other habitats and land uses. In doing this we will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - carry out deer culling in an safe, exemplary and humane way in line with best practice - work closely with relevant organisations (such as Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and neighbours to make sure that there are integrated deer management plans which seek to recognise the objectives of all parties and take account of internal and external strategies for each country - take opportunities to optimise income from venison and from recreational stalking, where this does not conflict with our primary objective of maintaining deer impacts at an acceptable level - take all practicable steps to slow the expansion of non-native deer species into areas where they are not present - not allow the release of deer onto the National Forest Estate other than as part of a licensed research project; - comply with certification and quality assurance schemes to add value to both the forest estate and the venison products that come from it - FC deer management policy will reflect the devolved administrations' deer management strategies and relevant legislation
Glen Etive	<p>Glen Etive seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain employment - Stimulate economic activity - sustain deer numbers in balance with habitat
Glen Noe	<p>To manage the natural environment and maintain a healthy deer herd through a managed cull along with providing a small amount of family sport.</p>
Glencoe & Dalness	<p>We manage the Estate for access and nature conservation. 2502 hectares of the estate is SSSI 2312 hectares is SAC. We manipulate the numbers of deer to try to bring more of the qualifying habitats into favourable condition. Seven to thirteen are currently unfavourable. We are hoping for woodland and heathland expansion across the whole estate. We manage 60km of mountain paths.</p>
Glencreran	<p>To cull up to: 30 stags 45 hinds and calves</p>
Glenkinglass	<p>Maintaining healthy herd through managed cull and providing an opportunity for the culling of sporting stags. Providing family sport in conjunction with facilitating the sporting tenant to operate a sporting letting business. Maintain the built property. Manage the natural environment</p>
Glenstrae	<p>We have a 60 strong herd of Highland cows and a flock of around 250 ewes, both Black faced and Cheviots. The young of all are sold for meat production. The deer population is culled with aims of sustainability and habitat maintenance.</p>

Inverliever

To maintain a healthy deer herd: for the benefit of the wellbeing of the deer and to produce income which in turn supports maintaining the land which then also supports other wildlife species.

2.4. Constitution

2.4.1. The members of the BMDMG commit to operate as per the group constitution as follows:

Name

The Group name shall be the Black Mount Deer Management Group (BMDMG).

Objectives

The Group's objective is to promote the sustainable management of deer in the BMDMG area in accordance with the BMDMG Deer Management Plan.

Group Area

The geographic area covered by the BMDMG is as depicted on the attached map. The boundary may be open to amendment should the Group so decide.

Membership

The Members of BMDMG will be the owners of land within the Group area or their authorised representatives. For the avoidance of doubt private, public sector, voluntary body or corporate land owners are entitled to be Members of the Group. Members may be represented at Group meetings in their absence by an individual nominee on notification to the Secretary in writing.

Representatives from relevant public bodies, NGOs and local bodies may be invited to attend meetings of the Group.

Members' obligations

Members agree to support the effective running of the Group by:

- Attending or being represented at all DMG meetings.
- Supplying information required for the administration of the Group
- Supplying information required for the writing and review of the Group Deer Management Plan and for the other purposes of the Group.
- Paying an annual subscription to the BMDMG at such rates as may be agreed.
- Collaborating with other Members and other relevant interests as set out in the ADMG Principles of Collaboration (Appendix 1).
- Advising the Group of any relevant changes in terms of ownership or land management in respect of their individual landholdings.
- Carrying out deer management in accordance with all relevant legislation, the SNH Code of Practice for Deer Management and Wild Deer Best Practice.

Office Bearers

Office bearers will comprise a Chair and, if required, Vice Chair, who shall be elected annually at the Group AGM. Re-election on a rolling basis is permitted with no restriction on the period of time that an office bearer may serve.

The administrative positions of Secretary and Treasurer (which may be combined) and external Auditor are appointed positions and such appointments and any terms of employment shall be for approval annually at the Group AGM.

Meetings

The Group will meet twice annually or more frequently as may be necessary.

The Secretary will take a Minute of all meetings and circulate copies to all Members.

An Annual General (AGM) meeting shall be held at such a place, date and hour as the Group shall decide. Advance notice will be given to Members not less than 28 days in advance of the AGM.

A voting majority shall be defined as a simple majority of the full Membership of the Group.

Only Members or representatives of Members with a mandate submitted in writing to the Secretary are entitled to cast a vote.

Funding and Financial Arrangements

The Group will be self-financing and the subscription will be set annually at the AGM. The basis of subscription calculation shall be agreed by the Group and approved by members at an AGM. Subscriptions will be set a rate sufficient to cover all the operating expenses of the Group.

Subscriptions will be payable at a date to be determined by the Group. Notwithstanding the above the Group may apply for public grants, subsidies or other funds in order to meet the objectives of the Group.

The Treasurer will operate a Bank Account for the Group and all financial transactions will be made on this account. Joint signatures of the Treasurer and Chair will be required on all cheques or debits drawn on the account in excess of £500.

A financial Statement will be prepared by an Auditor appointed by the Group and presented at the AGM for approval by Members. In the event of funds being left upon the winding up of the Group the disbursement of these funds will be determined by the Members. The Auditor shall be a Chartered Accountant.

Conflict resolution

It shall be the duty of all Members to seek agreement in respect of Group objectives and, where a dispute arises between Members, to resolve such dispute by negotiation and compromise. When agreement cannot be reached it shall be in the option of the Chairman to refer the matter to arbitration by the Chairman of the Association of Deer Management Groups or such other independent expert as the parties may agree.

Membership information, records and data

Storage of membership information will be the responsibility of the Secretary, such information to be used solely for the administration of the Group and stored in accordance with the law.

The Group shall determine such deer management and related data as will be required to fulfil the objectives of BMDMG. Such data will be collected by all Members and submitted to the Secretary for storage and analysis and shall be regarded as the property of the Group.

ACTION POINTS: General BMDMG		<u>Timescale</u>
Members	To continue to encourage owners of properties in Appin to collaborate with the group.	Ongoing
	To continue to encourage owners and managers of holdings within the DMG boundary to actively participate in the operation of the BMDMG.	Ongoing
Secretary	To ensure on going local communication through Police attendance of AGM and in particular liaison over A82 and DVCs.	Ongoing

3. Deer Population and Monitoring

3.1. Counting

3.1.1.Foot counts are carried out by members annually in the spring. Helicopter counts have been carried out every three to four years with the assistance of SNH. Helicopter counts have given more accuracy to counting and allow plotting of populations on the DMG map. The latest helicopter count was carried out from 19th – 21st January 2015, with a small section carried out on 10th March 2015 as the population there is in closer proximity to the neighbouring Breadalbane DMG. A further foot count was carried out over much of the group in the spring of 2018.

3.1.2.The January 2015 count was carried out when there was snow cover throughout the group, although below 100m it was patchy. The snow cover allowed for easier counting, although it resulted in the deer being concentrated on the lower areas of the group, whereas throughout the majority of the year they cover the whole area. Count Maps can be seen in Appendix 2.

3.1.3.Representatives of all group members are given the opportunity to partake in the count and witness the counting with SNH from the helicopter. Having member representatives present in the helicopter during counting also allows for local knowledge to be shared with those less familiar with the ground.

3.1.4.The count records held by the group are provided below. It should be emphasised that group boundaries and count areas have changed over the years and prior to 2005 there were a number of holdings not included within the data, these figures have therefore been omitted. These figures do not include deer within FCS areas. For the 2018 count where count figures were unavailable from some members the 2015 count figures have been used for the population model and graphs below. These will be updated as soon as 2019 count figures can be obtained.

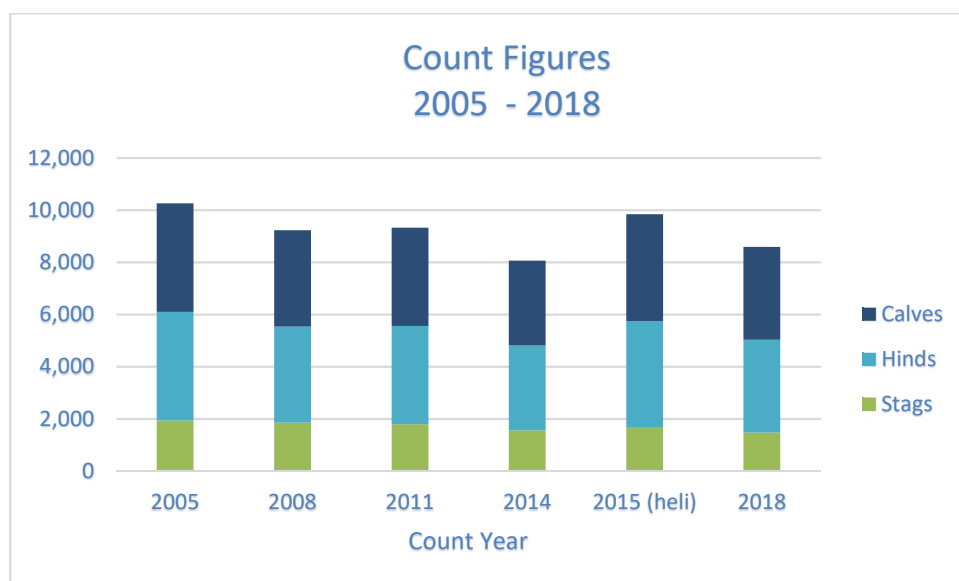


Figure 2 Count Figures 2005-2018

3.1.5. The spring 2018 count was carried out across

3.1.6. The winter 2015 count was carried out across 101,264ha as it included some areas beyond the boundary of the BMDMG. A total of 8284 deer were counted giving a group density of 8.18 deer/km².

3.1.7. The table below shows the count figures for 2018, those highlighted grey are where 2015 figures have been used.

Table 3 BMDMG Count Figures 2018

Landholding	Area (ha)	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density (deer/km ²)
Ardchattan	7089	116	253	85	454	6.40
Auch Estate	3524	2	27	6	35	0.99
Black Corries	9273	133	399	112	644	6.94
Black Mount	25168	375	743	203	1,321	5.25
Castles	3482	11	26	11	48	1.38
Crunachy	863	30	21	6	57	6.60
Dalness	5095	75	205	62	342	6.71
Forestry Commission	4008	19	47	17	83	2.07
Glen Etive	5970	149	294	52	495	8.29
Glen Noe	2251	3	27	12	42	1.87
Glencoe & Dalness	5614	271	353	138	762	13.57
Glencreran	4593	60	421	158	639	13.91
Glenkinglass	8449	191	376	120	687	8.13
Glenstrae	3995	47	337	90	474	11.86
Inverliever	1445	9	78	16	103	7.13
Totals	90819	1491	3607	1088	6,186	6.81

3.1.8. The above table shows density across the whole of each landholding, it should be emphasised that some of these figures are not representative of the year round position and there are higher densities than normal on lower ground. The table below gives an indication of the desired densities on each holding and this is what the deer culls are based around:

Table 4 BMDMG Member Desired Densities

Landholding	Desired Densities (deer/km ²)
Ardchattan	4-8
Auch Estate	
Black Corries	4-8 in east, 9-13 in west
Black Mount	4-8, with 9-13 in the Inverveigh area
Castles	4-8
Crunachy	9-13
Dalness	9-13
Forestry Commission	0-3

Glen Etive	4-8
Glen Noe	0-3
Glencoe & Dalness	9-13 across majority, with 0-3 in lower Glencoe
Glencreran	
Glenkinglass	0-3
Glenstrae	14+, with 4-8 on lower ground
Inverliever	0-3

3.1.9. The desired deer densities for each holding are generally achieved in the population model below which shows the position for the group. As the count only provides a snapshot in time there are obviously considerations to be made as to the mobility of the population and there are some holdings with significant numbers and others with no deer at the time of counting. Due to these reasons the population modelling is more effectively viewed at group level.

3.1.10. Where HIA results indicate higher impact in especially sensitive habitats or in designated sites targeted culling takes place. An example of this is on Rannoch Moor where hind culls have been increased in years 2017, 2018 and 2019 resulting in reduced population in this area and reduced pressure here land around Water of Tulla.

3.2. Culls

3.2.1. Cull figures are agreed and discussed annually at DMG meetings. These are established in consideration with management objectives, Habitat Impact Assessment results and from looking at deer densities and their impact on the habitats present along with consideration to neighbours' objectives.

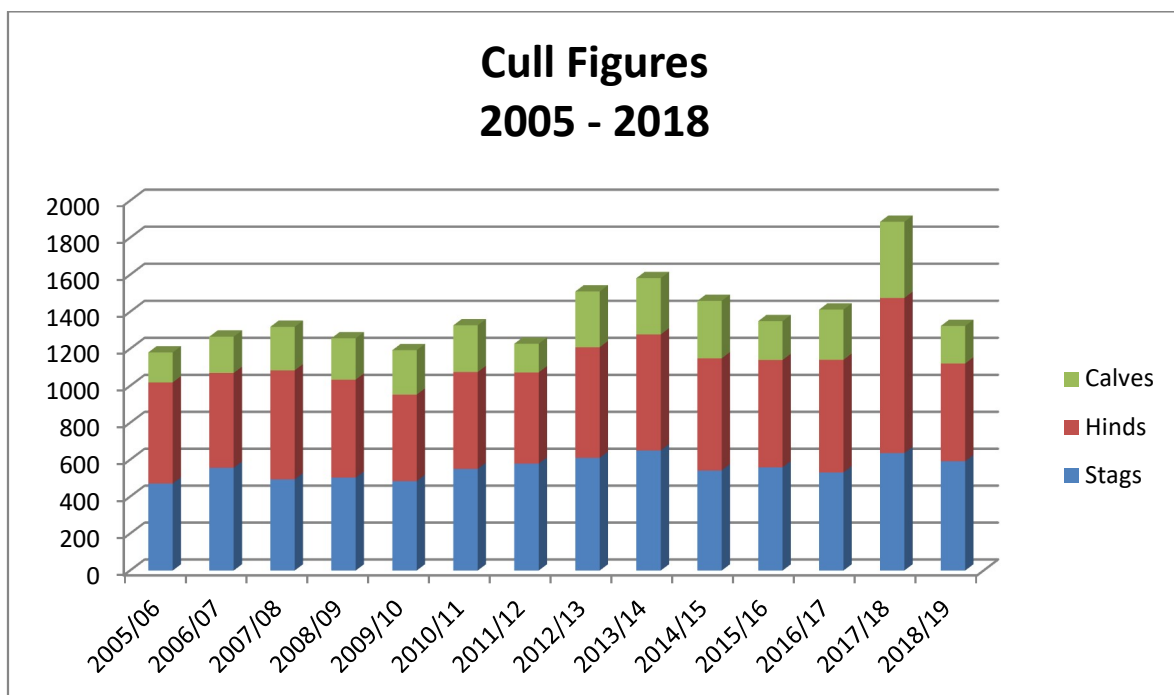


Figure 3 Cull Figures 2005 - 2018 BMDMG

3.2.2. The above figures show a trend similar to that of the count figures, as the count figures increase deer culls are adjusted to allow for this in order to maintain sustainable deer numbers in balance with the habitats.

3.2.3. Natural mortality is also taken into consideration when culls are being set, although these have not been formally recorded, historically the group now makes note of winter conditions from year to year and how this impacts the deer population.

3.3. Population Modelling

3.3.1. Deer counts are carried out across the group every year. Where possible these are co-ordinated to ensure members are counting at approximately the same time. Every 3-4 years a helicopter count has been carried out with the assistance of SNH, this allows for more accurate counting. Group count figures are collated annually along with cull figures, this allows population modelling to be carried out looking at how culls will affect the deer population over the next 5 years. The most up to date population model can be viewed in Appendix 3.

3.3.2. Population Modelling Methodology

3.3.2.1. The group's population model can be seen below and in Appendix 3, this is created from the compilation of each landholding's details in order to provide an overview for the group.

3.3.2.2. The following information is required from each holding as a base for population modelling:

- Area in square kilometres
- Most recent count figures
- Proposed culls for next 5 seasons
- Estimate on winter calf mortality, this is normally updated annually following a discussion at meeting, for the purpose of the model below this has been assumed to be 6% but can be very varied from year to year depending on conditions.

3.3.2.3. The model uses a standard calving rate of 30% which is based on observation over time and has proven to be a good representation.

3.3.2.4. The recruitment rate of calves is assumed to be 50% stags and 50% hinds.

3.3.2.5. A mortality rate for stags and hinds is assumed to be 2% of the summer population.

3.3.2.6. For the purposes of the model it is assumed there is no immigration or emigration.

Population Model for Black Mount WHOLE GROUP using Bidwells Model

updated at March 2019 (nearly all 2018 foot count, almost all culls to 2019)

					Area	845.75	sq km
<u>Year</u>		<u>Stags</u>	<u>Hind</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Density</u>	
2018 to 2019	Spring 2018 Count	1472	3557	1071	6100	7.2	
	Recruitment	536	536				
	Summer (post calving)	2008	4093	1067	7167	8.5	
	Cull	264	365	123	752	0.9	
	Winter mortality	40	82	72	194		
	Spring 2016 estimate	1703	3646	872	6221	7.4	
2019/20	Spring 2016 estimate	1703	3646	872	6221	7.4	
	Recruitment	436	436				
	Summer (post calving)	2139	4082	1094	7315	8.6	
	Cull	282	413	148	843	1.0	
	Winter mortality	43	82	79	203		
	Spring 2017 estimate	1815	3587	867	6268	7.4	
2020/21	Spring 2017 estimate	1815	3587	867	6268	7.4	
	Recruitment	433	433				
	Summer (post calving)	2248	4020	1076	7344	8.7	
	Cull	283	409	167	859	1.0	
	Winter mortality	45	80	79	204		
	Spring 2018 estimate	1920	3531	830	6281	7.4	
2021/22	Spring 2018 estimate	1920	3531	830	6281	7.4	
	Recruitment	415	415				
	Summer (post calving)	2335	3946	1059	7340	8.7	
	Cull	312	385	160	857	1.0	
	Winter mortality	47	79	79	205		
	Spring 2019 estimate	1976	3482	820	6279	7.4	
2022/23	Spring estimate	1976	3482	820	6279	7.4	
	Recruitment	410	410				
	Summer (post calving)	2387	3892	1045	7323	8.7	
	Cull	309	390	161	860	1.0	
	Winter mortality	48	78	80	206		
	Spring 2020 estimate	2030	3424	804	6258	7.4	
2023/24	Spring 2019 estimate	2030	3424	804	6258	7.4	
	Recruitment	402	402				
	Summer (post calving)	2432	3826	1027	7285	8.6	
	Cull	308	391	161	860	1.0	
	Winter mortality	49	77	80	205		
	Spring 2021 estimate	2075	3359	786	6220	7.4	

3.4. Habitat Monitoring

- 3.4.1.** Members of the Black Mount DMG have historically been carrying out Habitat Monitoring using various methods and degrees. In order to ensure consistent and comparable assessment results the group facilitated a training day with SNH to provide deer managers within the group with the necessary skills to carry out Habitat Impact Assessments (HIAs) using a standard methodology.
- 3.4.2.** This initial training day was carried out in 2014 and was very well received by members. Many members started their assessment in 2015 and soon the results will begin to be available. As this information is now starting to inform a picture at group level it will therefore inform the future management of deer and other herbivores within the group.
- 3.4.3.** Some members continue to use their own methodology in order to meet their own management objectives, for example, the Forestry Commission have a different methodology to that outlined by SNH and the National Trust for Scotland have a more comprehensive method looking at specific species.
- 3.4.4.** The following table highlights who is currently carrying out HIA monitoring, most of those carrying out commenced in 2015 so do not yet have results to provide:

Table 5 Members carrying out HIAs

Landholding	Carrying out HIAs
Ardchattan	Yes
Auch Estate	Yes
Black Corries	Yes
Black Mount	Yes
Castles	Yes
Crunachy	Yes
Dalness	Yes
Forestry Commission	Yes
Glen Etive	Yes
Glen Noe	No
Glencoe & Dalness	Yes
Glencreran	Yes
Glenkinglass	Yes
Glenstrae	Yes
Inverliever	Yes

- 3.4.5.** Habitat Impact Assessment results have been collated by a consultant where possible and considered at group level and used to inform decisions in setting annual culls. Where impacts are considered to be too high for a sustainably balanced habitat the deer manager will seek to reduce the deer density in this area through targeted culls.
- 3.4.6.** Habitat impact results for the first round of surveying are found in Appendix 14, these cover Heath and Bog which are the two most relevant habitat types in the group area. Once subsequent survey information is available the group will be able to track changes in the habitat condition and this information will therefore further inform the cull figures and where targeted culls should focus.

ACTION POINTS: Deer Population and Monitoring		<u>Timetable</u>
Members	To carry out co-ordinated foot counting annually, submitting the results to the Secretary.	Ongoing
	To carry out a helicopter count ever 3-4 years (provided assistance on funding is possible)	Ongoing
	To carry out HIAs annually, according to SNH methodology and submitting findings to the group.	Ongoing
	To annually agree population model at group meetings.	Ongoing
	To discuss and agree estimated calf-mortality annually in order to update the population model.	Ongoing
	To use HIA results to identify areas where grazing levels may be too high for a sustainably balanced habitat and to seek to reduce deer density where deer are causing an impact.	Ongoing
Secretary	To gather HIA results, collate and distribute to the group to allow informed deer culls. To set appropriate cull targets to deliver habitat objectives following HIA results.	Ongoing
	To work with the group and SNH to seek funding to facilitate future helicopter counting every 3-4 years.	Ongoing
	To populate and maintain population model for members to agree on an annual basis.	Ongoing

4. Communications

4.1. Communication Policy

The Black Mount DMG will promote and encourage effective communication on deer management issues, both within the DMG and throughout the wider community. In order to promote better awareness and education of deer and deer management the group aims to carry out the following:

- Communication to the general public through the DMG website
- DMG Secretary contact details will be displayed on the group website for the benefit of members and the public, this provides an initial point of contact for anyone looking to raise queries or concern.
- Open and inclusive deer management planning with the deer management plan included on the website
- Community issues with deer and deer management are identified and worked upon to resolve. For example, local Glencoe residents' gardens are adversely affected by the presence of deer and therefore this area has a 0 - 3 deer/km² policy.
- DMG members will actively promote deer management and raise awareness. This is actively carried out by the NTS in Glencoe via:
 - Visitor Centre exhibition
 - ranger led walks and Land Rover Safaris
 - School visits
 - Regular kids' clubs for the local community

4.2. Data Protection Policy

DMGs are subject to "The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) which regulates the use of "personal data". "Personal data" covers any data that can be used to identify a living individual including their name and address, telephone number or e-mail address.

The Secretary of the DMG will only hold and use those details of its members as required in order to contact them, i.e. name, address, phone number and email address, in as far as each member is willing to supply those details. These details should normally only be available to those in the DMG who need to have them, e.g. Chair, Secretary or Treasurer, as appropriate.

Personal details of individual members will not be published on the DMG website without that members' consent.

4.3. Internal communication

- 4.3.1.** The DMG currently communicates most of its information to members via email. The secretary holds the mailing list and, in liaison with the Chairman, any necessary communications are sent to this group including cull return requests and ADMG

communications. If members request postal copies of these documents they can be provided. Where communication is notification of meetings or distribution of Minutes or Agendas relevant stakeholders are also included in the distribution including SNH and the Highland Council Access Officer.

4.3.2.Where any payments are due to cover group costs, invoices are provided to members by post, with electronic copies available upon request.

4.3.3.Where necessary the Chair and Secretary are prepared to co-ordinate any discussions that are required to deal with matters that may arise from meetings or between annual general meetings and as and when required.

4.4. External communication

4.4.1.It is proposed that the stakeholders who have been identified as part of this DMP are invited to view the DMP. This will be done through provision of electronic copies to such parties in order for them to review and discuss the plan. On approval of the DMP by members, a copy of the DMP will be made available on the DMG website. Additionally, a boundary map of the group will also be made available on the website.

4.4.2.Where comments are made at consultation a summary of such comments will be compiled and circulated to members for consideration. Such points will then be discussed at the next group meeting so that they can be incorporated into the revised plan.

4.5. DMP Stakeholders

- Consultation on this Deer Management Plan will involve the following stakeholders which have been identified in consultation with the membership of the DMG
Graeme Taylor - SNH
- Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council
- Dalmally Community Council
- Taynuilt Community Council
- Dalmally Common Grazings
- Glencoe Common Grazings

4.5.1. A copy of the Deer Management Plan will be sent to relevant MP's and MSP's

4.6. Deer Management Plan Implementation

4.6.1.This Draft DMP will be circulated to all members for comment. Following amendments the Plan will be redistributed to formally approve and confirm an action plan. It is recommended that the DMP is reviewed annually and that the Action Plan is updated every year. The DMP and Action plan should be an agenda item for discussion at DMG meetings. Should it be required a conference call may be held to formally approve.

4.7. DMG Website

4.7.1.The BMDMG has a web page in association with the ADMG, the web address for this page is: www.blackmoundmg.deer-management.co.uk, it is also accessible through the ADMG website. This DMP will be made available on this website along with the contact

details of the group secretary who will act as an initial point of contact in any enquiries from the public.

4.7.2. Contact information for stalking operations will also be made available on the website at the consent of the relevant parties.

<u>ACTION POINTS: Communications</u>		<u>Timetable</u>
Members	Members will update secretary if there are any changes to contact details.	Ongoing
Secretary	To maintain group website, with the assistance of ADMG to communicate DMG information to stakeholders and the general public.	Ongoing
	To ensure local Community Councils receive notification of availability of DMP on ADMG website and to ensure Community Councils receive notification that DMG AGM minutes are available on the website.	

5. Natural Environment

5.1. Species

5.1.1. Deer

- 5.1.1.1. The dominant deer species within the group is red deer and they are present across the full 91,000 hectare area of the group. At group level the density is approximately 7 deer/km².
- 5.1.1.2. There are some small roe deer populations, particularly in the lower woodland areas of the group, however, we do not have count figures for roe. Sika sightings are limited to the south west of the group and where they are seen there is a policy to cull when in season to avoid the spread of this invasive species. Many members also have a principle of culling roe when seen in woodland in season.

5.1.2. Livestock

Table 6 BMDMG Approximate Livestock Numbers

Landholding	Sheep (No breeding Ewes)	Cattle (no breedcows)
Ardchattan	1500	97
Auch Estate	3400	120
Black Corries	15	6
Black Mount	350	35
Castles	2500	50
Crunachy		
Dalness		5
Forestry Commission	700	
Glen Etive		
Glen Noe	1200	
Glencoe & Dalness	250	
Glencreran		
Glenkinglass		
Glenstrae	250	60
Inverliever		
Totals	9265	373

- 5.1.2.1. Across the group there are approximately 9000 sheep with around 3400 of these farmed at Auch and over 2500 farmed in the south of the group around Dalmally. There are also approximately 375 cattle within the group, 120 of which live on Auch and approximately 97 on Ardchattan. Whilst some graze hill ground in the summer when it is beneficial to the habitat, most are in fenced enclosures on lower ground. In contrast to management practices over 15 years ago there are now far fewer sheep on hill ground in BMDMG. In this time the deer population has increased steadily as the grazing pressure from sheep is no longer there in many cases, leaving additional grazing for deer.

5.1.3. Invasive Non-Native Species

- 5.1.3.1. In line with the Code of Practice policy on non-native species, the BMDMG currently takes action to prevent the release and subsequent establishment of non-native species.
- 5.1.3.2. There is recognised presence of sika deer in the south west of the BMDMG. All members have a policy of shooting sika when sighted in season in order to prevent their spread and mix with the red population. There are no known other non-native deer species known to be in the group.
- 5.1.3.3. In addition to deer there are some wild goats seen on occasion within the BMDMG. They have been noted on Glencrearan, Black Corries and NTS Glencoe & Dalness. This goat population will be monitored along with their impact, if they are considered to be a significant impact they will be culled.
- 5.1.3.4. Although Wild Boar are considered to be Dangerous Wild Animals under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1979 and require a licence where kept, there have been numerous occurrences across Scotland of Wild Boar escaping into the wild and breeding. Wild boar can spread rapidly and may cause significant disturbance and damage. To date this is not something that has been observed in the BMDMG area, however, members recognise the issue and will endeavour to monitor this along with reporting any wild boar sightings. If boar become present in the area members commit to cull in order to prevent their spread.
- 5.1.3.5. *Rhododendron ponticum* is present in parts of the Deer Management Group area. As this species spreads rapidly, creating thick ground cover thus preventing establishment of any other species, it is recognised that a significant effort must be made to restrict its spread and reduce its presence wherever possible. Glen Etive has carried out an extensive treatment programme, particularly in areas close to the Ard Trillieachan SSSI, this has been successful and continues. The FCS have been carrying out a similar treatment program across a total area of 130 ha in their ground in Appin, Barcaldine and Glen Creran.
- 5.1.3.6. There are areas of *rhododendron ponticum* in isolation across the group, some of these areas cross more than one holding. It is recognised that the treatment and eradication of this species is difficult and costly, however, all members within the group undertake to prevent its spread and, where possible, eradicate. Where it makes sense to do so neighbours are encouraged to undertake joint eradication programmes, applying for funding in collaboration where possible.

5.2. Habitats

5.2.1. Land Cover Scotland

5.2.1.1. The area of the BMDMG is predominantly upland habitat of heather moor, blanket bog and peatlands, and coarse grassland. Some parts of these habitats are considered to have exceptional environmental value and as a result have designations protecting them, more detail on this can be seen in Section 5.4. A breakdown of the land use cover is provided below, this is based on data held by SNH and compiled by the former Macaulay Institute and it is mapped in Appendix 4.

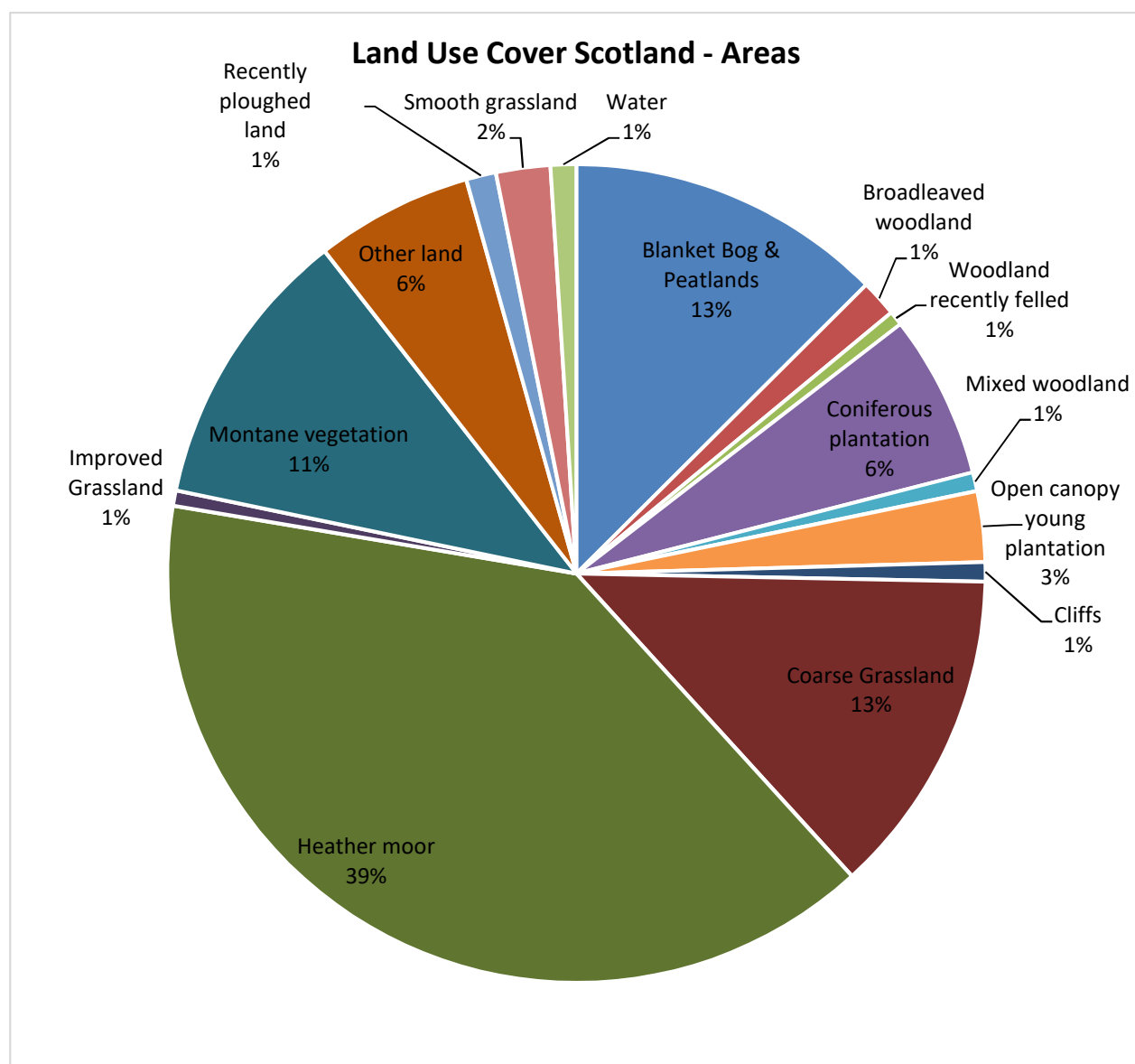


Figure 4 Land Use Cover - BMDMG

The most extensive land use types are summarised below as defined by the Macaulay Institute at the time of data gathering:

Table 7 BMDMG Habitats

Heather moor	Heather moorland incorporates a range of heathland dwarf shrubs, principally common heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), bell heathers (<i>Erica spp.</i>) and, in certain localities, blaeberry (<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>). Both dry and wet heather moor have been included, the latter being most common in western and northern hill areas where soil conditions tend to be wetter than those characteristic of the former grouping.
Blanket Bog & Peatlands	This feature includes a range of vegetation on blanket peat in the hills and uplands and raised bogs of the lowlands. Blanket bog and bog heather moor are the principal plant communities, with heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), cotton-grasses (<i>Eriophorum spp.</i>), deer-grass (<i>Trichophorum cespitosum</i>), purple moor grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) and bog mosses (<i>Sphagnum spp.</i>) the predominant species. The eroded peat sub-category is extensive where high winds, frost and high rainfall are prevalent. Areas with dubh lochans (many small pools of open water) are widespread in Northern Scotland.
Course Grassland	<p>Purple moor grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) or mat grass (<i>Nardus stricta</i>) predominate and plant communities include these plant species with some bog myrtle (<i>Myrica gale</i>) present in western areas.</p> <p>A feature of hill terrain, coarse grasslands have not undergone agricultural improvement by way of the application of fertilizers, pesticides, drainage or reseeded so as to alter significantly the sward composition. <i>Molinia caerulea</i> is predominant on peaty soils and hill peat of the wetter western areas of Scotland and <i>Nardus stricta</i> is more evident on the 'drier' soils in the east, often in slightly flushed situations. Coarse grasslands have a low grazing value being utilised primarily for rough grazing - in western situations the grasslands are burnt regularly, the first flush of green growth supplying better quality grazing.</p> <p>The main intergradational forms are with heather moors and blanket bog and this feature is, due to short-range variation with related communities, often found within mosaic units.</p>
Montane Vegetation	This land cover category covers all land where subalpine and alpine soils would be mapped - equivalent, in general terms, to land above the 'treeline'. A range of plant communities characterise this unit, from wind-clipped heather moorland at the low levels to true alpine communities on exposed summits. Areas with sparse vegetation are also present along with rock-strewn areas and patterned ground, associated with frost-heave processes, is often conspicuous.

5.3. Soil Types

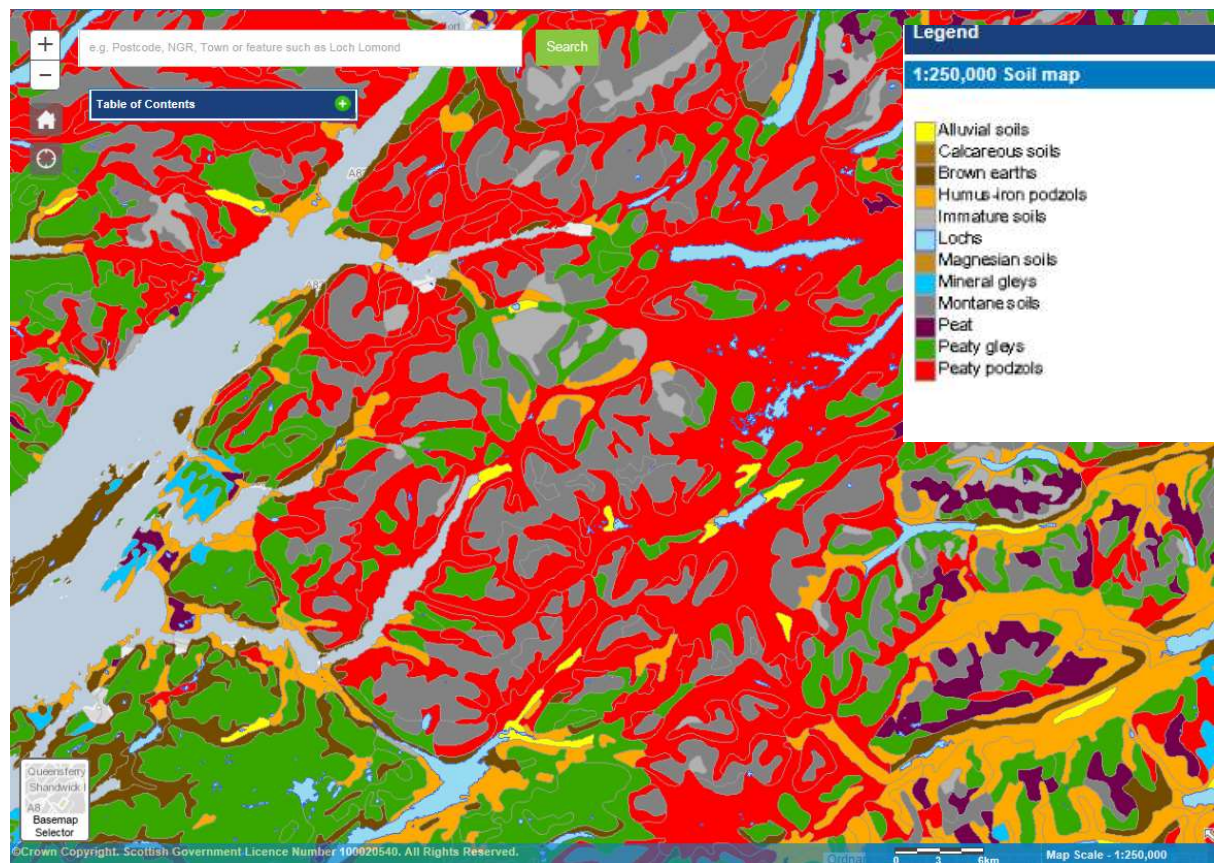


Figure 5 Soil Type Map

5.3.1.1. The above image shows the soil types across the BMDMG region. It demonstrates that the majority of the area is made up of peaty podzols (red) and peaty gleys (green) with montane soils (grey) across the higher areas.

5.4. Environmental Designations

5.4.1. Designation Background

5.4.1.1. Within the area of the BMDMG there are various designations, some with features more directly associated with deer than others. A summary of designation areas is given below. The various designations are mapped and can be found in Appendix 5, plans giving basic information on such Designation's condition can also be seen in Appendix 6.

Designated Sites	Area (ha)
SSSI	13,925
SAC	12,881
SPA	59,487
NSA	About 50%
NNR	5794.06

- 5.4.1.2. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are governed by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and are a UK designation covering flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features. Many SSSIs are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which relates to the European 1992 Habitats Directive and covers any habitats or species listed within the Annexes of this Directive. Similarly, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are consequence of the European 1979 Birds Directive. National Scenic Areas (NSAs) are designated under the Town and Country Planning (National Scenic Areas) (Scotland) Designations Directions 2010, while National Nature Reserves (NNRs) come under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 5.4.1.3. The majority of the group is covered by the Glen Etive and Glen Fyne SPA. This designation has no direct impact on deer management as its qualifying interest is for golden eagles.
- 5.4.1.4. Approximately two thirds of the group is covered by the Ben Nevis and Glen Coe NSA. This designation covers the northern portion of the group but has no direct impact on deer management but is considered more specifically in relation to any development or fencing and in line with the Joint Agency Guidance on fencing as found in Appendix 13.
- 5.4.1.5. 5625.06 ha of Glen Coe is an NNR and 169 ha of Glen Creran is designated as Glasdrum Wood NNR. These NNRs are on properties which have a range of other designations and are therefore managed in accordance with these.
- 5.4.1.6. Those SSSI and SAC designations with features noted to have grazing pressures are marked below listed in the following pages along with the two Special Protection Areas.
- 5.4.1.7. The SSSI and SAC designations with most relevance to deer management are Glen Coe, Rannoch Moor and Ard Trilleachan. These designations have both over-grazing and under-grazing pressures on their designated features. There are other designations which do not have any deer related impacts, they are simply listed at the end for reference.

Special Protected Areas:

Name	Area	Feature & Category	Condition
Glen Etive and Glen Fyne		Golden eagle breeding	Favourable
Rannoch Lochs		Black-throated diver breeding	Favourable

Sites of Special Scientific Interest & Special Areas of Conservation

Key

Features affected by grazing	Feature condition
*Over-grazing pressure or over-trampling	Favourable
**Over-grazing pressure, recorded at 'appropriate level'	Recovering
***Under-grazing pressure	Unfavourable

Table 8 SSSI & SACs

		SSSI			SAC		
Name	Area	Feature Category	Feature	Condition	Feature Category	Feature	Condition
Ard Trilleachan	SSSI: 579.97 + part of 'Loch Etive Woods' SAC	Non-vascular plants	Bryophyte assemblage	Favourable declining	Mammals	Otter	Favourable
		Woodland	Upland oak woodland	Unfavourable recovering	Woodland	Alder woodland on floodplains*	Unfavourable Recovering
						Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes*	Unfavourable Recovering
						Western acidic oak woodland*	Unfavourable Recovering
Barran Dubh	83.19 (also part of 'Loch Etive Woods SAC')	Non-vascular plants	Bryophyte assemblage***	Favourable Maintained	See above	See above	See above
		Woodland	Upland oak woodland	Unfavourable Declining/ Unfavourable Recovering due to management			
Bonawe to Cadderlie	890.83	Earth Sciences	Caledonian Igneous	Favourable Maintained			
		Woodland	Upland oak woodland*	Unfavourable No change			
Carnach Wood	83.85	Invertebrates	Flies	Favourable Maintained	n/a		
		Woodland	Wet woodland*	Unfavourable Declining			
Coille Leitire	97.54	Woodland	Upland oak woodland*	Favourable Maintained			

Crannach Wood	283.11	Invertebrates	Invertebrate assemblage**	Favourable Declining	n/a		
			Northern emerald dragonfly	Favourable maintained			
		Woodland	Native pinewood*	Unfavourable declining			
Doire Darach	119.81	Woodland	Native pinewood*	Favourable Maintained	No SAC		
Glen Coe	SSSI: 3182.28 SAC: 2966.07	Earth sciences	Caledonian igneous	Favourable Maintained	Upland habitat	Acidic scree*	Unfavourable No Change
			Fluvial geomorphology of Scotland	Favourable Maintained		Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands***	Unfavourable No change
			Mass movement	Favourable Maintained		Alpine and subalpine heaths**	Unfavourable Recovering
		Non-vascular plants	Bryophyte assemblage***	Favourable Maintained		Base-rich fens	Favourable Maintained
						Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels	Favourable Maintained
		Upland habitat	Upland assemblage*	Unfavourable, no change		Dry heaths*	Unfavourable Declining
		Vascular Plants	Vascular plant assemblage*	Favourable Maintained		High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage*	Unfavourable, no change
						Montane acid grasslands	Unfavourable Recovering
		Woodland	Wet woodland	Favourable Recovered		Mountain willow scrub	Unfavourable Recovering
						Plants in crevices on acid rocks	Favourable Maintained
						Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks	Favourable Maintained
						Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas***	Unfavourable No change
						Tall herb communities	Favourable Maintained
Glen Creran Woods	705.91 SAC area: 703.88	Invertebrates	Chequered skipper***	Unfavourable Recovering	Mammals (except marine)	Otter	Favourable Maintained
			Pearl-bordered fritillary***	Unfavourable Recovering	Woodland	Mixed woodland on	Favourable Maintained

						base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes*	
			Bryophyte assemblage	Favourable Maintained		Western acidic oak woodland***	Favourable Declining
		Non-vascular plants	Lichen assemblage***	Unfavourable No Change,(unfavourable recovering due to Management)			
		Woodland	Upland oak woodland***	Unfavourable Recovering			
Kennacraig and Esragan Burn	172.74	Woodland	Upland oak woodland*	Unfavourable No change, (unfavourable recovering due to management)	(Part of Loch Etive Woods SAC) – see above		
Rannoch Moor	10,102.96 (area within group boundary tbc)	Birds	Breeding bird assemblage	Favourable Maintained	Freshwater habitats	Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds	Favourable Maintained
						Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels	Favourable Maintained
		Freshwater habitats	Oligotrophic loch	Favourable Maintained	Invertebrates	Freshwater pearl mussel	Unfavourable No change
			Dystrophic loch	Favourable Maintained	Upland Habitat	Blanket Bog*	Favourable Maintained
		Invertebrates	Beetles	Favourable Maintained		Depressions on peat substrates*	Favourable Maintained
			Flies	Favourable Maintained		Dry heaths*	Unfavourable No change
			Moths	Favourable Maintained		Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface	Favourable Maintained
		Upland habitat	Blanket bog*	Favourable Maintained		Wet heathland with cross-levelled heath	Unfavourable No change
		Vascular plant	Vascular plants assemblage*	Favourable Maintained	Mammals (except Marine)	Otter*	Favourable Maintained

5.4.1.8. There are additional SSSIs and SACs within BMDMG boundary as listed below, however, these do not have any features that have any impact from deer or other herbivores.

5.4.1.9. Other SSSIs:

- Kingshouse (Geological)
- Rannoch Lochs (same as SPA)
- Allt Broighleachan – native pinewood – favourable recovered – no negative pressures
- Allt Coire Chalein – geological
- Kentallen (Geological)
- Eas na Broige – NTS Dalness

Other SACs:

- Ben Heasgarnich
- River Tay

5.4.2.Designation Management

5.4.2.1. There are some designations requiring targeted management in order to bring into or maintain the features in 'favourable condition'. Where this is the case members of the BMDMG have Management Agreements or SRDP Contracts in place, these are a commitment to manage these areas for the benefit of the designated features.

Table 9 BMDMG Designation Management

Designation Site	Management
Rannoch Moor SSSI & SAC	The Rannoch Moor SSSI and SAC is one of the most expansive designations partially under Management Agreement between Black Mount Estate and SNH. Here Black Mount Estate is restricting ATV access to certain routes and deer culls are targeted at this area to maintain a low density in order to prevent trampling damage. The northern portion of this designation falls within Black Corries Estate, they also seek to avoid ATV access and, outwith the designation, to the north, diversionary feeding is used to ensure deer are drawn from grazing on Rannoch Moor during sensitive periods.
Glen Coe SSSI & SAC	As displayed in the table above there are a number of features in unfavourable condition and it is the intention of the BMDMG to move these into recovering and favourable condition. As well as more numerous designated features it also has a wider range of grazing pressures, sheep are present on this ground as well as deer, there are also small populations of hares and goats which also contribute to grazing impacts, particularly on higher areas. There are currently Management Agreements for grazing at Gleann Leac no Muidhe and an SRDP scheme covering both Gleann Leac na Muidhe and Meall Mor. Those within the group who manage ground within this designation are working with SNH to collaborate and improve those at-risk features. The Statement of Intent relating to this agreement can be seen below

<p>Ardtrilleachan SSSI</p>	<p>FCS manage the majority of the ground in this SSSI. This area is fenced and it is understood that the site condition is improving.</p> <p>Glen Etive is currently in advanced discussions with SNH and the Forestry Commission in order to establish an approach that brings the northerly end of this SSSI into favourable condition, the terrain at this end of the designation makes fencing difficult. This is also being addressed as part of the Glen Etive Long Term Forest Plan.</p>
<p>Crannach Wood SSSI</p>	<p>In order to improve the unfavourable condition of the Native Pinewood feature in Crannach Woods the land managers of this area are working with SNH and the Forestry Commission to agree future management.</p>

Management of Glencoe SAC

Introduction

The SAC at Glen Coe sits within the Glen Coe SSSI, but covers a slightly smaller area. It is designated for a different set of features, which are:

High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage

Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas

Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation

Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands

Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks

Plants in crevices on acid rocks

Dry heath

Acidic scree

Base-rich fens

Mountain willow scrub

Montane acid grasslands

Alpine and subalpine heath

Site Condition

Site Condition Monitoring surveys carried out in 2009 revealed that nine of the designated habitats were assessed to be in unfavourable or unfavourable recovering condition. It is worth noting that the general synopsis for a number of the habitats was wholly encouraging when compared to previous results and SCM failures were by narrow margins.

Feature	Habitat Type	Latest Assessed Condition	Summary Condition	Date of survey
Acidic scree	Upland habitat	Favourable Maintained	Favourable	08/09/2003
Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands	Upland habitat	Unfavourable No change	Unfavourable	25/10/2009
Alpine and subalpine heaths	Upland habitat	Unfavourable No change	Unfavourable	25/10/2009

Base-rich fens	Upland habitat	Unfavourable Recovering	Favourable	25/10/2009
Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels	Freshwater habitats	Favourable Maintained	Favourable	06/09/2009
Dry heaths	Upland habitat	Unfavourable No change	Recovering	31/10/2003
High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage	Upland habitat	Unfavourable No change	Unfavourable	25/10/2009
Montane acid grasslands	Upland habitat	Unfavourable Recovering	Favourable	31/10/2003
Mountain willow scrub	Upland habitat	Unfavourable No change	Unfavourable	25/10/2009
Plants in crevices on acid rocks	Upland habitat	Favourable Maintained	Favourable	25/10/2009
Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks	Upland habitat	Favourable Maintained	Favourable	25/10/2009
Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas	Upland habitat	Unfavourable No change	Unfavourable	03/08/2012
Tall herb communities	Upland habitat	Favourable Maintained	Favourable	19/09/2014

2014 Baseline Survey

In response to the site condition monitoring results Scottish Natural Heritage commissioned a habitat impact assessment survey in order to gain further information on the site. The purpose of this more detailed survey was to assess the impacts from herbivores on three selected habitats (Alpine and subalpine heaths, Dry heath and Species-rich grassland with mat-grass) in the upland areas of the Glen Coe SSSI/SAC

The results of the survey showed that:

- Current levels of grazing and trampling are mostly 'Low', but there are variations between features and different parts of the Glen Coe SSSI/SAC.
- Overall herbivore impacts are highest on the Dry heath feature and lowest on the Alpine and subalpine heaths feature.
- Where the Dry heath is accessible to large herbivores the levels of grazing/browsing are 'High' and it appears that most of this is happening outside the growing season of the dwarf-shrubs.
- The grazing impacts on Dry heath are highest in Fionn Ghleanne.
- The Dry heath feature is almost completely absent from Gleann Fhaolain, but it is common on cliff ledges and very steep slopes around the Three Sisters and on the southern slopes of Aonach Eagach.
- Trampling impacts are highest on the Alpine and subalpine heaths feature, especially on Sgorr nam Fiannaidh.
- The trend indicators suggest that, for the majority of the site, the impacts are mostly stable and have been consistently high for some time in 38% of the sample plots that could be assigned to a trend category.
- Sheep and deer are the main contributors to herbivore impacts. Fenced-off areas in Glen Coe that keep them out show that the Dry heath feature will readily establish when these are excluded.
- There is little evidence that hill walkers contribute to the trampling impacts on the Alpine and subalpine heaths feature.

Ownership and Current Management

Herbivore management within the Glencoe SAC is currently delivered by three separate landholdings:

- NTS Glencoe - primarily run for conservation and habitat improvement purposes, seeking to manage habitats holistically.
- Glen Leach na Muidhe run as part of a larger farming enterprise, with minimal deer management interests.
- Glenetive - run as a sporting estate with an understanding of the requirement to deliver public interests including conservation of designated sites.

Glen Leach na Muidhe Management Agreement

This property is currently covered by an SRDP Contract and a S15 Management Agreement with SNH which is in the process of being extended by 1 year. Both of these will come to an end in summer 2016. These agreements are aimed at delivery of management suitable for the favourable condition of calcareous grasslands, these measures include reduced sheep flock over the SAC, extra shepherding to support this lighter stock rate, strategic feeding and proposals for habitat monitoring.

The HIA survey of the property has indicated that in some areas this regime may be resulting in higher impacts than are desirable for other habitats, specifically dry heath. The long term prognosis for the dry heaths present in this area, subject to current levels of impact, is unclear. However what is clear is the difference between what could be seen as “ideal” impacts for each habitat. Due to the relative proximity of the habitat types and their occurrence as a mosaic, it is unlikely that a management regime can be created which is prescriptive enough to effectively manage different impacts over such localized areas. Therefore it is unlikely that both habitats can be in favourable condition at the same time or under the same management prescription.

At the point of completion of the current management agreements a decision will need to be made on the relative priority of this habitat versus that of dry heath in the areas covered by the agreement.

Herbivore Information

Deer Census

The most recent deer census information dates from January 2015 and indicates that deer numbers on the three properties were-

Property	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Hectarage	Density
Glenleachnamuide	1	21	10	32	1182	2.71
Glenetive	106	160	53	319	5970	5.34
Glencoe & Dalness	271	353	138	762	5614	13.57
Glencoe SAC Estates	378	534	201	1113	12766	8.72

Further analysis is required on deer population information as this information is gained from a winter count and collated data is for whole properties; deer movement and usage of the site may differ dependent on season. It is thought that a number of deer will move into the site

from other properties during colder weather associated with winter. It is likely therefore that when discussing deer management for the site collaboration will be required with other properties, specifically Blackcorries to the North and East of NTS Glencoe.

Gleann Fhaolain (Glen Etive) had 65 sheep counted in 2014, and nearly no deer at that time.

Additional count information for this area-

Property	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Hectarage	Density
Blackcorries	116	475	202	793	9273	8.55

Over the extended area this gives a population of 494 Stags, 1010 hinds and 403 calves. Over 22039ha this gives a total of 1907 deer or a density of 8.6

Sheep Numbers

Property	Ewes	Lambs (Summer)	Hogs	Total (Summer & Winter)
Glenleachnamuide	726	500	180	1406 S
Strone				906 W
Meal Mor & Achnacon	240	180	50	470 S
				290 W
Achtriocan	30	30	0	60 S
				30 W
Total	996	710	230	1936 S
				1226 W

Future Management

The main findings of the report are that current levels of grazing and trampling are mostly classed as low; however in certain localised areas and on certain habitats there is evidence of grazing/browsing and trampling impacts which are higher than ideal for the habitats concerned. The survey indicates that the majority of herbivore impacts are derived from the presence of sheep and deer. In the long term, if the current localised levels were to continue

there would be little chance of the site returning to favourable condition. Future management will be required to address areas where herbivore impacts are higher than required without prejudicing areas where herbivore impacts may be at or near required levels.

It is recognized that in terms of habitat condition the impacts from and the management of both domestic stock and deer are equally relevant.

There may be changes required to domestic stock management in tandem with deer management to allow improvements in the site. If any changes in management are required these will be taken forward by graziers.

In response to the requirement to improve the condition of the site the following deer management and livestock management actions are favoured by owners and SNH alike. Inclusion of these management actions as well as the Black Mount DMG member's acceptance of the DMP will contribute towards assured management status to the site.

The implementation of these management actions will be overseen by the Black Mount Deer Management Group (BDMP).

Objectives and Methods

The primary objective of this section of the Black Mount Deer Management Plan is to set out the deer management and habitat monitoring measures that will be implemented, by the properties involved, to maintain 'favourable' or achieve an 'unfavourable-recovering' status in the short term, leading to the achievement of 'favourable' status in the longer term. However, it must be acknowledged that in some areas of the SAC there is far more pressure from sheep who have strayed onto this ground, than from deer. Livestock management therefore must be considered in tandem with deer management.

Habitat Management

It is acknowledged that the combined effects of the complex interaction between various influences, past and present, have a direct bearing on the current condition of habitats in the Glencoe SAC. Influences impacting on habitats include deer, domestic herbivores, climate, soil and topography.

These management actions are aimed at addressing the most significant current factors influencing the condition of habitats in the SAC that can be influenced by management. Grazing and trampling by red deer and domestic stock are considered by SNH to be one of the

principle current factors and habitat management measures will be aimed at reducing these impacts to improve habitat condition.

SNH advisory targets for overall herbivore impacts are taken from standard national targets and will be maintained for the duration of the DMP. They are-

Habitat	Advisory impact target
Alpine and subalpine heath	90% of sample locations should have impacts in the range from Low to Moderate to Low.
Blanket bog	
Dry heath	
Tall herbs	
Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath	
Montane acid grassland	
Plants in crevices on acid rocks	No impact assessment methodology
Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks	
Acidic scree	
Alpine and subalpine calcareous grassland	90% of sample locations should have impacts in the range from Low to Moderate to Moderate to High. However, not all impacts should be either Low to Moderate or Moderate to High.
Mountain willow scrub	90% of sample locations should have impacts in the Low range.

Flushes, including High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage	75% of sample locations should have impacts in the range from Low to Moderate to low. Up to 25% of samples may have impacts in the Moderate range.
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Deer Management Measures

Deer Management Area

The area over which deer will be managed in connection with delivering the aims extends beyond the boundary of the SAC. The map at Appendix 13 shows the boundary of the Glen Coe Deer Management Area. The Deer Management Area has been selected on the basis that it is believed to be a practical area over which to manage deer in connection with the Glen Coe SAC.

Indicative Target Deer Population

It is recognised that it is difficult to set a definitive population target for the properties involved in the management of the Glencoe SAC. A number of factors including frequency of collaborative counting, seasonal movement and winter mortality make it difficult to understand how many deer use the site and at what times of the year.

Winter count in 2015 suggested that 494 stags, 1010 hinds and 403 calves were present on the day of the count. This gives a total of 1907 deer and a density of 8.6 deer/sq km over 22039ha.

The initial aim is to achieve 'unfavourable – recovering' condition and the ultimate aim is to achieve 'favourable' condition, which will be assessed at future SNH Site Condition Monitoring. While providing a useful indicator in assessing progress toward this, deer numbers and density can only provide a crude indication.

When a relevant set of winter population or usage data has been obtained (this is likely to be at least 3 relevant deer counts) the Group will identify a suitable winter population taking into account the most recent habitat surveys, an economic sporting deer population and other relevant information.

The indicative target deer population for the Glencoe Management Area will be set by SNH and the associated estates by winter 2017.

Deer culls in the Deer Management Area will be carried out by NTS Glencoe, Glen Leach na Muidhe, Glenetive and Black Mount Estates.

A population model, based on the most recent deer count figures, may be used to indicate target culls. Indicative cull targets on an annual basis will be agreed at the BDMG.

Achieving cull targets may require cooperation within and between estates in response to changes in deer behaviour and distribution.

Administrative Arrangements

The BDMG will discuss monitoring information such as the condition of designated habitats, deer count information, cull achievement, management issues and any deer management proposals relevant to the management of designated habitats to reach consensus on the work programme necessary to achieve 'favourable' or 'recovering' status for those habitats.

Monitoring and Review

Estate staff will monitor progress towards deer management objectives by, for example, obtaining and collating information on overall cull achievement and sharing information on deer numbers, distribution and movements and by habitat monitoring.

Subject to the availability of resources, SNH will carry out a helicopter deer count across the Deer Management Area over the period of the BDMP.

Subject to the availability of resources, SNH will carry out a repeat assessment of herbivore impacts in the SAC area, over the period of the BDMP. Information obtained during any assessment of herbivore impacts will be interpreted by SNH in the context of SNH advisory herbivore impact targets.

Feature condition is assessed periodically by SNH (usually every six years) during Site Condition Monitoring (SCM) by SNH. Habitat Impact Assessments (HIA) provides a means of assessing current impacts and may indicate potential changes in condition.

Deer population and habitat monitoring information will be considered by BDMG members and appropriate management responses will be explored, agreed and subsequently implemented.

All monitoring carried out by SNH or the estates will be carried out in the spirit of partnership and the management group may have input into the survey methodology and interpretation of the survey data for surveys carried out by SNH. All survey data and survey reports commissioned by SNH will be made available for comment by the group.

Communication

Delivery of the actions associated with this designated sites as well as information on habitat condition and survey results will be included in the minutes of the BDMG and circulated as per the DMP.

Duration

These actions will be delivered under the timescales associated with the BDMP.

5.4.3. Healthy Ecosystems

- 5.4.3.1. In order to meet the targets set out in the WDNA, 2014 document, the BMDMG commits to continuing to promote management of designated areas in order to improve the condition of designated features. Of the above listed features the group currently has 81% of SSSI designated features in favourable or recovering condition, with 79% of the above SAC features with the same status. With the management commitments in place to address unfavourable conditions the group aims to increase these percentages beyond the national targets.

5.5. Carbon Storage

5.5.1. Carbon Sensitive Habitats

- 5.5.1.1. Peatlands are known to store large amounts of carbon and a greater emphasis is being placed on ensuring peatlands are improved or at least maintained. Almost one fifth of Scotland's land is covered with peat. Blanket bogs are found over much of the north-west Highlands islands in in most of our upland areas.
- 5.5.1.2. Much of the peatland in this DMG is designated, for example, Rannoch Moor SSSI covers 10,103ha of nationally and internationally important blanket bog. As such, this habitat is being managed as a SSSI through this DMP whilst preserving peatland.
- 5.5.1.3. SNH has produced Scotland's first National Peatland Plan and have set up Peatland ACTION to deliver projects to restore peatlands. In recognition of the high potential environmental and social value of peatlands, the Government has made £15 million available for restoration projects. £5 million of this is available immediately, with the remaining £10 million to be delivered through the Scottish Rural Development Programme 2015-2020.
 - 5.5.1.3.1. The group is seeking guidance from Peatland ACTION to establish where there is the potential for restoration projects.
- 5.5.1.4. Members of the BMDMG have not made any application to this program as yet, however, the group will promote the options available for peatland restoration.

5.5.2. Blanket Bog HIAs

- 5.5.2.1. Whilst members' main focus of habitat impact assessments will be on open hill habitats, consideration will be given to carrying out some surveys on blanket bog within woodland to establish if deer impacts are contributing to the condition of these habitats. Although deer may not be the primary cause of damage to blanket bog, the HIAs will seek to establish whether they may be worsening the damage.

5.6. River Basin Management Planning

5.6.1. River basin management planning is in place to protect Scotland's water environment. Scotland's River Basin Management Plan is written by SEPA in compliance with the European Water Framework Directive which came into force in Europe in December 2000. The directive applies to all rivers which drain a catchment area greater than 10km², all lochs bigger than 0.5km², all coastal waters up to 3 nautical miles to sea, estuaries, groundwater and wetlands.

5.6.2. The Directive became law in Scotland through the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 and sets out arrangements to prevent deterioration of the water environment and, where possible, restore surface waters and ground water damaged by pollution, water abstraction dams and engineered activities to 'good status' by 2015.

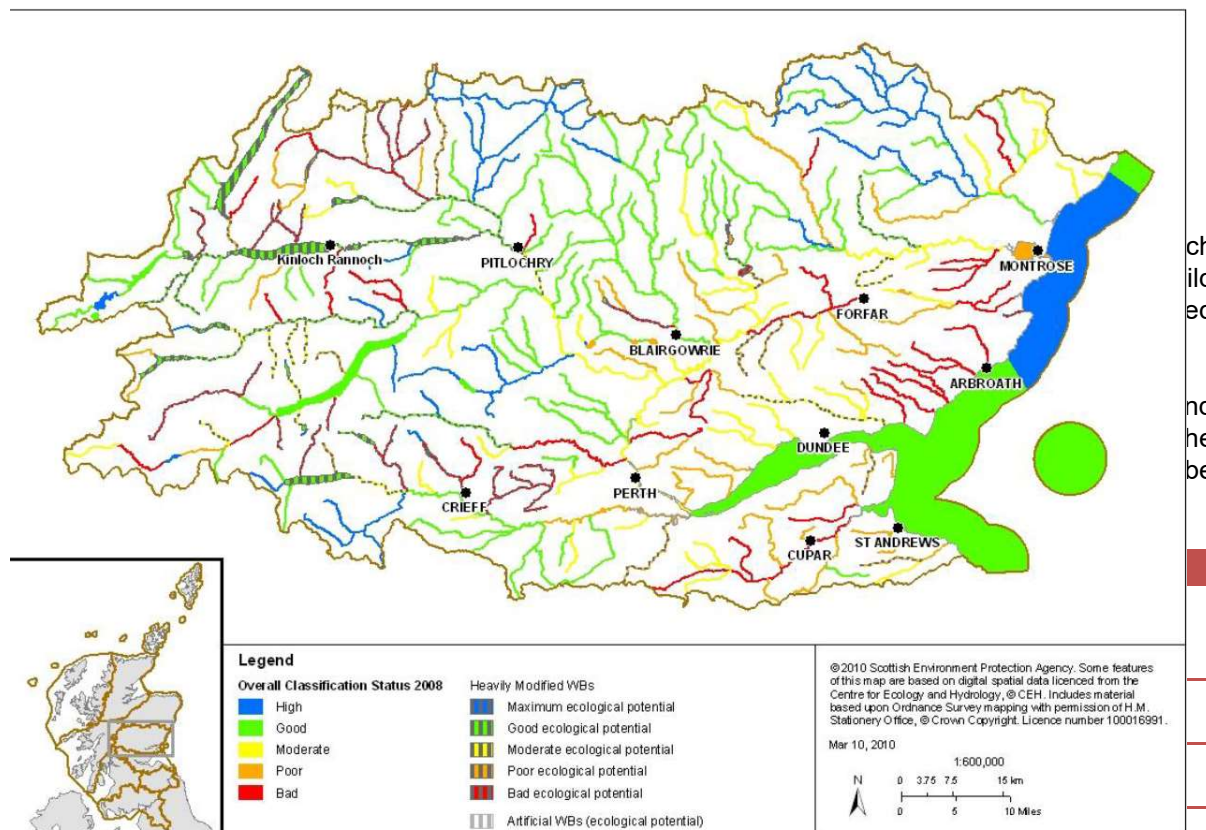
5.6.3. Scotland's water is amongst the best in Europe, with 63% of water bodies already good or better status. Ministers have now approved River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) with a target of 97% of Scotland's water bodies to achieve good or better status by 2027.

5.6.4. The Black Mount DMG falls between the Argyll river basin district and the Tay. The majority of the water on Rannoch moor goes into the Tay with most other areas feeding out to the west.

5.6.5. The area of the BMDMG within the Argyll river basin district is included in the Lochaber and Argyll River Basin Management Plan as seen in the Figure..... This shows the water classification from this plan which highlights the various conditions of water classification. Within the BMDMG boundary the majority of waters are either designated as 'High' or 'Good'. The same is true for the area within the BMDMG that is within the Tay River Basin Management Area, taken from their area plan.

5.6.6. Where there are rivers with classification lower than good the members of the group will work with neighbours and SEPA to improve this classification.





	species	Ongoing
	To monitor the presence and impact of wild goats, and to cull if they become a significant problem to SSSI features.	Ongoing
	To monitor the presence of wild boar, if sighted members will take action to cull in order to prevent spread of the species.	Ongoing
	To monitor and report to the group any spread or new presence of non-native species, particularly sika deer which are known to be present in some areas of the group along with wild boar.	Ongoing
	To cull sika in season according to Best Practice.	Ongoing
	To prevent the spread of rhododendron ponticum and work towards reduction and eradication of this species in the group through collaborative treatment programmes.	Ongoing
	To identify areas of woodland blanket bog that may benefit from HIA assessment being carried out and, where relevant, to carry out HIA surveys on them	February 2017
NTS, Black Corries, Glen Etive	To follow the Statement of Intent in managing the Glen Coe SSSI and SAC as provided in Appendix 12	February 2017
Black Mount	To agree management of Crannach Woods to bring Native Pinewood feature into recovering condition.	February 2017
Glen Etive	To obtain support from FCS/SNH/SRDP to fence areas of the Ardrilleachan SSSI for restoration.	Discussions ongoing with FC & SNH to finalise fence design
Secretary	To circulate information on Peatland ACTION and consider at group level what	

projects may be carried out under this programme.

5.8 Fencing

It is recognised that deer fencing, when properly planned, erected and maintained can allow different land uses to coexist in harmony. However, deer fencing can also cause adverse effects on deer populations and the BMDMG is committed to reducing these impacts. Any new deer fencing in the group will consider the Joint Agency Statement on Deer Fencing (see Appendix 13). This is particularly relevant when fencing will impact deer welfare, biodiversity, road safety and landscape and the historic environment.

6 Woodland Environment

6.1 Woodland Overview

- 6.1.1** The lower ground within the BMDMG includes numerous forestry blocks in a range of forms. Forestry areas are included in the Land Use Cover map in Appendix 4. The National Forest Inventory indicates that there is 18,338 hectares of forestry within the group boundary, this is distributed as indicated in Figure 6. It is clear that the majority forest type is conifer with the National Forest Inventory recording 10,504ha of conifer. Appendix 5 shows these forest types mapped against the BMDMG plan.

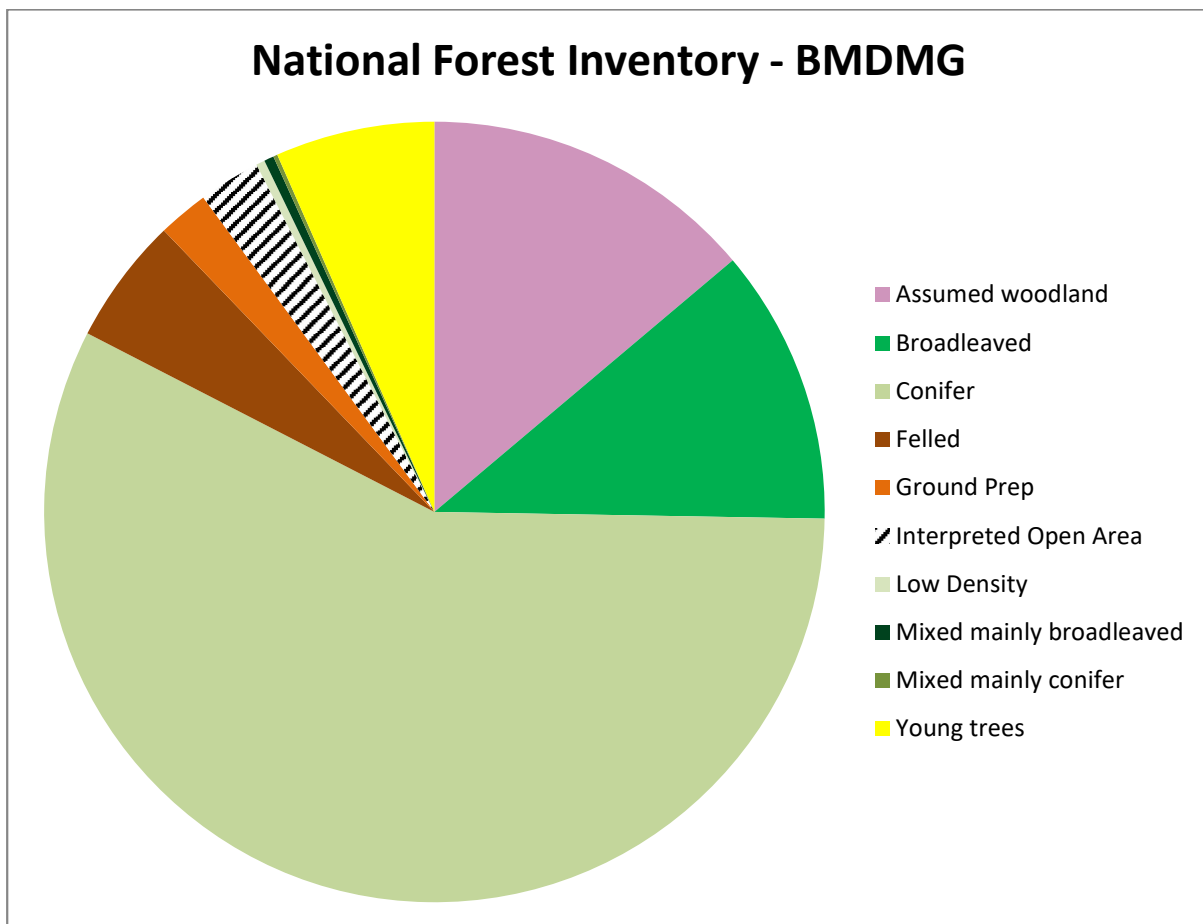


Figure 6 National Forest Inventory

- 6.1.2** Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) own the most significant portion of forestry within the BMDMG. The FCS forest blocks are mainly in the north west around Duror and the south east of the group, in Glen Orchy with another key block at Barcaldine. The majority of the FCS blocks are conifer interspersed with areas of mixed broadleaf, this is displayed in Appendix 7.
- 6.1.3** The largest conifer block outside FCS ownership lies within Glen Etive Estate, this area is approximately 1200ha. This block of forestry has recently undergone initial felling phases and it is being restocked that replanting will be a mix of commercial and native species, the Long Term Forest Plan is has recently been updated to reflect this.

6.2 Woodland Creation Schemes

- 6.2.1** In the last 20 years there has been a series of woodland creation schemes which members have used to carry out woodland establishment. The following table shows the areas these schemes accounted for within the BMDMG. It should be noted that this does not include any planting by the FCS:

Table 10 BMDMG Woodland Creation Schemes

<u>Woodland Creation Schemes</u>	<u>Area (ha)</u>
SFGS Schemes (05-06)	667
WGS 1 (1991 - 1992)	121
WGS 2 (1993 - 1994)	1510
WGS 3 (1995 - 2004)	5691
Native woodland planting	387

- 6.2.2** Appendix 8 shows the extent of these schemes along with mapping of Native Woodland Planting carried out under the SRDP.
- 6.2.3** Between these schemes 8,376 ha have been part of Woodland Creation Contracts.
- 6.2.4** The SFGS has since been superseded by the Scottish Rural Development Programme I (SRDP 1). SRDP II started in 2015.
- 6.2.5** Members of the BMDMG have been consulted on forestry plans. Where some holdings have very few upcoming forestry operations there are no Long Term Forest Plans in place, however, most of those areas with any significant areas of forest have plans in place.
- 6.2.6** Planting is being carried out for various reasons on each holding and there has been reasonable expansion over the last 10 years. Once new plantings are mature enough to open to deer they will provide beneficial shelter to deer. Native woodland planting has been focused around funding schemes and through the SRDP 387 ha has been planted in the last 10 years. This planting has been spread over a number of areas including Glencrearan, Glenkinglass, Glenestrae, Craig Farm, Auch and Black Mount. The Forestry Commission have also carried out significant native woodland planting in Glen Orchy amounting to approximately 115 hectares. The FCS do not plant through the same woodland schemes so their expansion areas are not accounted for in the above table of figures.
- 6.2.7** Where new planting is to be considered compensatory culls are also to be discussed at group level with guidance from SNH. There are some instances, for example at Dalness Estate in 2017/18, where compensatory cull has started in advance of planting but the effect will remain for some years. In the case of Dalness Estate the planting is postponed pending FCS and SNH approval.
- 6.2.8** Group members will provide annual updates on woodland expansion and developments in order to keep the plan up to date.

Table 11 BMDMG Expansion

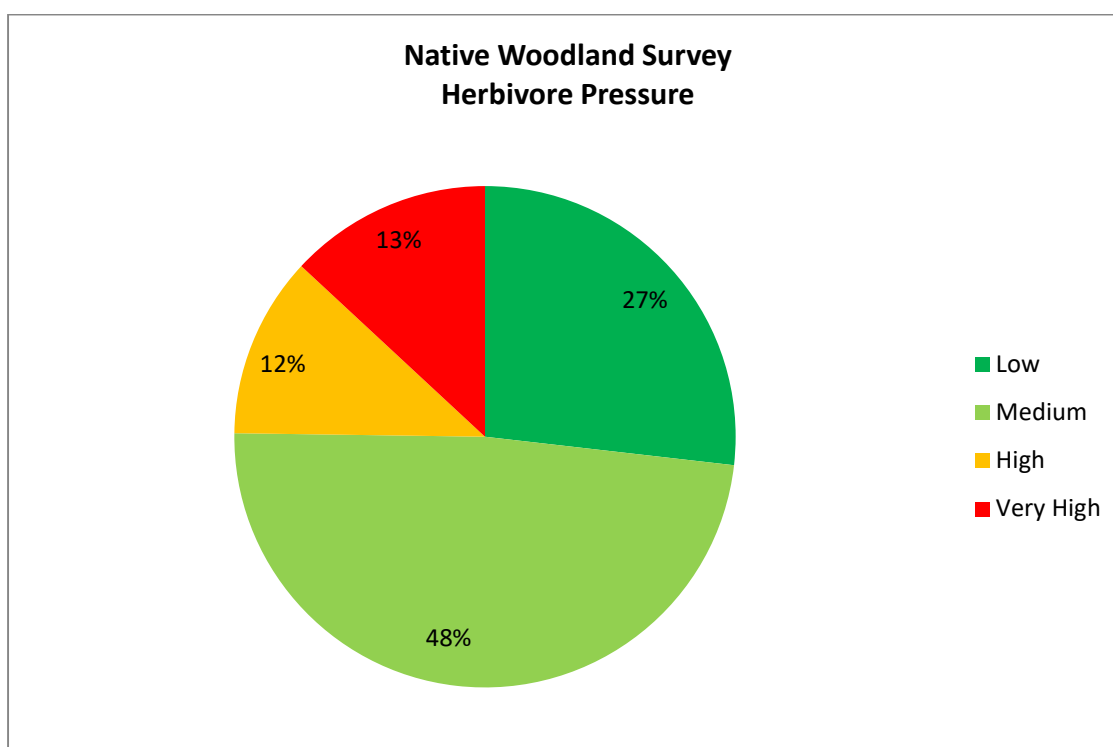
Landholding	Forest Plan in Place	Existing Woodland Schemes	Future Woodland Plans (5-10years)	Area considered for planting in next 5 years (ha)
Ardchattan	no	Large native pinewood scheme of approximately 800 ha. This has been reasonably to very successful.	Monitoring of grazing damage to trees within pinewood	0
Auch Estate	No	SFGS Riparian Native Woodland 112.8ha	500ha mixed woodland. Mainly commercial with any native woodland linked to existing woodland remnants.	500
Black Corries	No		Increase native woodland through self-funded projects for aesthetic reasons and to create small shelterbelts for deer.	1.5
Black Mount	Yes	Crannach Wood is currently under a management agreement There are a number of older schemes which are at a stage of being opened up. 25 ha native woodland planting in 2015.	New woodland planting considered east of Loch Dochard and Loch Tulla.	10
Castles	Not at moment		Considering a woodland scheme over Dam side but not confirmed.	0
Crunachy	No		None	0
Dalness	No		175ha native proposed across various enclosures subject to SNH & FCS aproval	175
Forestry Commission	Yes	Recent expansion includes 115ha native planting in Glen Orchy;	All areas have a long term land management plan which can be available on request	
Glen Etive	Yes	Coileitter Native Woodland, 70ha	Re-stocking of commercial felled areas with mixture of commercial and native species.	

Glen Noe	No	20 ha native woodland planted 2018	
Glencoe & Dalness	No	No	
Glencreran	Yes	Two SRDP native woodland schemes 64ha and 20ha. 100ha planted between 2015-2019	Fencing of additional areas for natural regeneration.
Glenkinglass	Yes		Maintain current plantations
Glenstrae	Yes		None
Inverliever	Yes	2 woodland schemes: 15ha & 100ha Success rate is very good. Objectives to improve habitat for wildlife, one is still secure to deer.	n/a

6.3 Native Woodland Survey – Herbivore Pressure

- 6.3.1** Many native woodlands in Scotland are under pressure from herbivores, including deer. The Scottish Government's document 'Wild Deer A National Approach' was reviewed in 2014 with one of the priority targets outlined within this being to contribute to Scotland's biodiversity by ensuring 60% of native woodland is in satisfactory condition by 2020. Satisfactory condition is considered to be within the 'low' or 'medium' herbivore pressure categories, as outlined by the Native Woodland Survey.
- 6.3.2** Black Mount DMG has a total area of 5,309ha of native woodland, of which 3,994ha is considered to have either low or medium grazing pressure amounting to 75% of the native woodland in the group setting the group above the national target. The diagram below outlines the proportions of categorisation of pressure within the group boundary.
- 6.3.3** The majority of these native woodlands are enclosed by fences in some form, however, many of these are old and no longer deer proof so members are considering ways to repair and replace.

Table 12 BMDMG Herbivore Pressure on Woodland



Appendix 9 shows provides a plan of the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland Herbivore Pressures, this highlights where the native woodland lies and what herbivore pressure it contains. The type of herbivore pressures will vary with deer being more significant in some areas than others. Where the herbivore pressure is considered to be high and very high the group commits to work to improve these areas with the assistance of SNH, carrying out fencing where beneficial and keeping deer densities under 3 deer per square km in these areas.

- 6.3.4** The most significant area of very high herbivore pressure is around the village of Glencoe where the ground is outwith the active membership of the DMG. It is likely that in this area the pressure is higher from livestock than deer. The group aims to establish further information on this area and seeks to find a way of reducing this pressure, thus improving the native woodland.
- 6.3.5** Black Mount Estate is currently in discussions with SNH/FCS in order to achieve a more favourable status on the Crannach Woods woodland in the west of the group. Plans are at an advance stage and expect to be concluded by late 2019. Black Mount is also part way through a programme of opening up woodlands developed approximately 20 years ago for deer shelter. Approximately 20ha has been opened this summer in close proximity to Loch Ba. This will offer winter shelter close to Rannoch Moor. The road side fence adjacent to a82 will be left at full height to help prevent movement across the A82.
- 6.3.6** Where there are some areas of high pressure in the south of Castles a policy of attempting to cull any deer within the site continues with extreme difficulty caused by the location in terms of safety given the railway line, walkers and neighbouring houses along with problems caused by the general terrain. Options for further protecting the site are currently being considered before discussions are reopened with SNH Oban.

ACTION POINTS: Woodland Environment		Timescale
Members	To collectively increase woodland area by 500 ha in the course of the plan (to 2021).	2021

	To contribute to ensuring 60% of Scotland's native woodland is in satisfactory condition by 2020 and to continue to expand and improve native woodland within the group.	Now
Secretary	Establish who the relevant parties are in Glencoe where there is high herbivore pressure on native woodlands in order to encourage this to be improved.	Ongoing
Black Mount Estate	To work with SNH to enter management agreement for Crannach Woods. Currently in draft.	Ongoing
Castles	To continue to consider mechanisms that will reduce the areas of high herbivore pressure in woodland on Loch Awe side.	Ongoing

7 Public Health and Wellbeing

7.1 Deer Vehicle Collisions

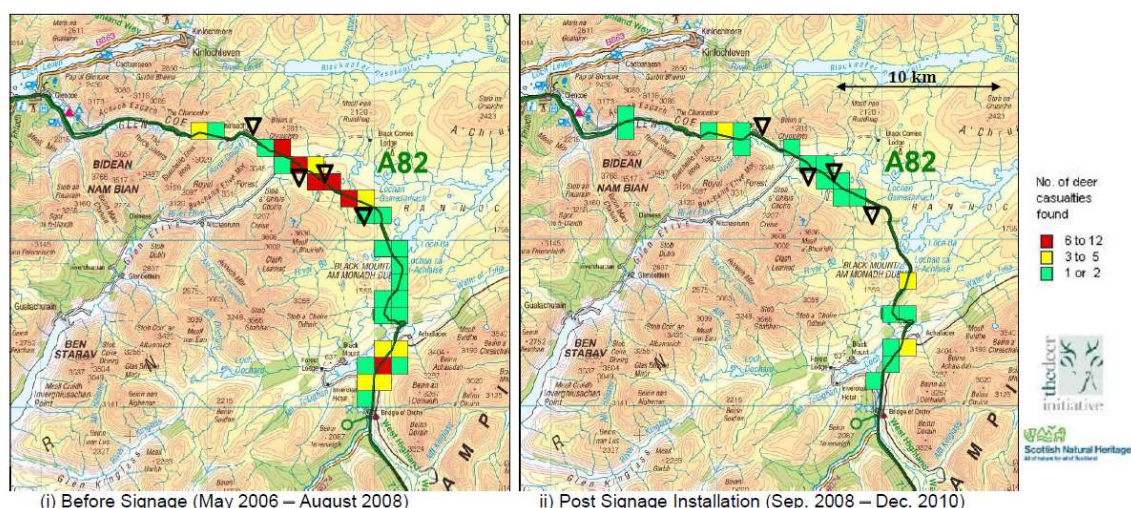
7.1.1 With the A82 running through the middle of the BMDMG it is important that Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs) are monitored and strategies are established to minimise such instances. Deer Managers currently seek to work with authorities and are available to assist with removal of deer carcasses in DVC instances. Black Corries Estate carries out diversionary feeding about 2km away from the A82 to encourage deer off this trunk road in the winter. Targeted culling is also carried out in areas close to Bridge of Orchy where there have been higher DVC occurrences.

7.1.2 A project was carried out on DVCs between 2008 and 2011, the results were presented in 'Deer Vehicle Collisions in Scotland Monitoring Project 2008 – 2011 – Final Report' which is available from www.deercollisions.co.uk. Appendix 10 and 11 presents full plans taken from this report, demonstrating the DVCs noted in the BMDMG area, excerpts of these are shown below. It is evident that the majority of occurrences are close to the villages of Bridge of Orchy and of Glencoe. Discussion with local Police Officers in 2019 confirmed that there are no detailed statistics on DVCs but that the group worked well with Police Scotland, in 2018 there were 5 reported DVs in the area.



Figure 7 DVC Reports 2008-2010

7.1.3 In 2008 speed activated triangle warning signs were installed along the A82, the diagram below shows the significant drop in roadside carcasses noted after the signs were installed suggesting that they also have a significant impact on reducing DVCs. Those members who manage land along the A82 corridor continue to monitor DVCs, minimise their occurrences and report any occurrences to deercollisions.co.uk.



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Figure 8 Warning Signage Impact on DVCs

7.2 Diseases

7.2.1 Lyme

- 7.2.1.1 Lyme disease, also known as Lyme borreliosis, is carried by deer and can be transferred to humans, normally via ticks. It may also be carried by sheep and other wild mammals. Those most susceptible to Lyme disease are those who work in the outdoors and all working in deer management are at risk. Lyme disease can have ranging impacts but some can be very severe. Information leaflets published by Lyme Disease Action are available as supplementary electronic documents to this plan (*Lyme Disease – The Facts & Ticks & Lyme Disease*) they provide information on Lyme disease, the symptoms and signs to be aware of. All working or spending time in the outdoors are encouraged to make themselves familiar with this information.

7.2.2 Notifiable Diseases in Deer

There are four diseases which, if found in deer, must be acted upon. This is a legal responsibility. These diseases are set out in the table below. All deer managers in the group are aware of these diseases, how to identify them and actions to take if they are found. This is in line with the Wild Deer Best Practice Guidelines. Where any of these diseases are identified within the group members will notify the group Chairperson or Secretary in order for them to be recorded in relation to the group.

Indicative signs and symptoms	Action if suspected once shot	Action at larder
Bovine TB: Most common signs are abnormal lymph nodes (enlarged, deformed or rupturing) containing thick creamy yellow-green pus. Initial infection in lymph nodes of the head and lungs may spread to liver, spleen, diaphragm and under the skin. This will cause	Inspect the mesenteric lymph nodes when the gralloch is removed. If observe: abscess in lymph node and / or other swollen lymph nodes and / or lymph node containing cream coloured pus. Where TB is suspected take the gralloch /	Retain with the carcass and pluck outwith the larder in secure storage, separate from other carcasses, for inspection by a veterinary officer who will advise on disposal

Indicative signs and symptoms	Action if suspected once shot	Action at larder
animals to lose condition ultimately leading to emaciation.	viscera back to the larder in an impervious container,	and further required action.
CWD: General change in behaviour (e.g. separation from the herd, teeth grinding, unsteady on feet, repetitive walking, paralysis). Clinically CWD appears as emaciation, salivation, drooping of head and ears, weakness and bulging eyes. Any deer showing abnormal behaviour that cannot be explained in any other way is considered legally notifiable.	Inform the DVM immediately if symptoms of these diseases are suspected. If the animal has been shot do not remove the head so that an undamaged brainstem sample can be taken for investigation.	Do not proceed with dressing. Retain all parts of the carcass in secure storage for collection of samples by the investigating veterinary officer.
Foot & Mouth: Symptoms and signs include limping, blisters on mouth and feet. From experimental infection red and fallow showed least clinical signs, with sika intermediate and roe becoming seriously ill with 50% of animals dying.	Inform the Divisional Veterinary Manager immediately if symptoms of this diseases are suspected. Leave the carcass where it was shot and avoid damaging any blisters to allow samples of these to be taken by the investigating veterinary officer. Avoid any contact with livestock until the report has been investigated.	Do not proceed with dressing. Retain all parts of the carcass in secure storage for collection of samples by the investigating veterinary officer.
Bluetongue & EHD: Possible symptoms in deer include eye and nasal discharges, drooling as a result of ulcerations in the mouth, swelling of the mouth, head and neck.	Inform the DVM immediately if symptoms of this diseases are suspected. The entire carcass can be moved to a convenient point for examination by the investigating veterinary officer.	Do not proceed with dressing. Retain all parts of the carcass in secure storage for collection of samples by the investigating veterinary officer.

7.2.2.1 Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a highly infectious disease which has devastating effects on many deer populations of deer. At present it is restricted to the USA and Canada. It only affects deer but has resulted in the death of every known infected deer. Given the devastating impact it would have if the disease were to arrive in the UK it is vitally important that all working in the deer industry are familiar with the risks and exercise caution, particularly where stalking guests from the USA or Canada are visiting as the disease may be carried on clothing or equipment. SNH have published a leaflet raising awareness on CWD, '*Chronic Wasting Disease – Protecting Scotland's Deer*', this is available in electronic form or hard copies can be provided on request. Members who attract clients from North America are particularly aware of this threat and must have bio security measures in place to reduce the risk of the disease spreading.

7.3 Wild Deer Best Practice

- 7.3.1** Best Practice Guidance was established by the Deer Commission Scotland, now part of SNH, in collaboration with other bodies in Deer Management. All members of the Black Mount DMG are encouraged to subscribe to Best Practice Guidance which sets high standards in the practice of deer management. Areas covered within these guides include public safety; food safety and deer welfare. Guides are available online as well as in hard document form, subscribers are provided with updates as and when they are produced.
- 7.3.2** The members of the BMDMG who are subscribed to Best Practice Guidance are listed below along with their methods of ensuring deer managers can have access to this information:

Table 13 BMDMG Best Practice Subscribers

Landholding	Subscribed	Method of sharing with deer managers
Ardchattan	Yes	The file is circulated
Auch Estate	Yes	
Black Corries	Yes	The guide is kept in communal areas and staff made aware of it
Black Mount	Yes	All deer managers have copies and updates are circulated as necessary
Castles	Yes	via BASC
Crunachy	No	No subscription, but deer manager checks website
Dalness	Yes	Copies provided to staff as necessary
Forestry Commission	Yes	Copies held by all staff
Glen Etive	Yes	All deer managers have copies and updates are circulated as necessary
Glen Noe		tbc
Glencoe & Dalness	Yes	It is posted directly
Glencreran		
Glenkinglass		
Glenstrae	No	No subscription, but deer manager checks website
Inverliever	Yes	Circulated by email

7.4 Competence & Training

7.4.1 Deer Stalking Certificates 1 & 2

- 7.4.1.1** BMDMG encourages all of those carrying out deer management to have Deer Stalking Certificate qualifications. This certificate covers deer management practices along with food hygiene and deer welfare with Level 2 require further practical demonstration of competence over a period of time.
- 7.4.1.2** All members of the BMDMG have a deer manager with Level 1 (DSC L1) and the majority have at least one deer manager with Level 2 (DSC 2).

7.4.2 Trained Hunter Status

- 7.4.2.1** All group members have trained hunters carrying out their deer management, with the exception of one who is in the process of establishing this qualification. Trained Hunter

Status is now part of the DSC1 Certificate, but an additional endorsement is required for those who achieved their DSC1 prior to 2006. Trained Hunter status relates to Food Hygiene Regulations and ensures the hunter is proficient in identifying meat that may be a health risk, this is a requirement where selling game to a game dealer.

7.4.2.2 Details of qualifications held by deer managers on each holding are listed below:

Table 14 BMDMG Deer Management Qualifications

Landholding	DSC 1	DSC 2	Trained Hunter	Other relevant qualifications held by deer managers
Ardchattan	Yes	-	Yes	Meat hygiene course
Auch Estate	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Black Corries	Yes	Working towards	Yes	Diploma in Game and Wildlife, ND in Wildlife and Habitat Management; Meat Hygiene;
Black Mount	Yes	Yes	Yes	Various, including: ATV, First Aid, SPOT & some trained members of Fire Service
Castles	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Crunachy	Yes	Yes		Quad bike certificate, First Aid, 2 year Gamekeeping Course – Thurso
Dalness	yes	yes	Yes	(as per Glen Etive)
Forestry Commission	Yes	Yes	Yes	ATV, carcass presentation
Glen Etive	Yes	Yes	Yes	Various, including: ATV Handling, First Aid, SPOT & some trained members of Fire Service
Glen Noe	Yes	No		Meat Hygiene
Glencoe & Dalness		Yes	Yes	Accredited Witness (DSC)
Glenchreran	Yes		Yes	
Glenkinglass	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Glenstrae	Yes	Yes		Quad bike certificate, First Aid, 2 year Gamekeeping Course – Thurso
Inverliever	Yes	Yes	Yes	ATV, First Aid, Food & Hygiene

7.4.3 Collaborative Training

7.4.3.1 As part of BMDMG's commitment to promoting a high standard of deer management and qualification, the group encourages collaborative delivery of training where members can benefit from this. To date this has not been formally arranged through the structure of the group, however, the group provides a forum for members to make proposals on collaborate training.

7.4.3.2 To date a number of members have joined forces to provide ATV training, particularly for student and trainee stalkers. Going forward the group aims to act as a link between members when delivering the necessary training, collaborating has a cost saving to

participants which is particularly beneficial to smaller landholdings and forms part of the wider promotion of training and education in deer management.

7.5 Deer Welfare

7.5.1 Deer welfare is a very important element to deer management and the Best Practice

- Promote greater consideration between those exercising the rights to responsible access and those undertaking deer management in line with the principles of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
- Increase awareness of the interactions of all species of wild deer with access and recreation in urban, woodland and open land settings.

WDNA, 2014 (p31)

standards provide a strong base to this. All deer managers within the membership of the BMDMG are familiar with Best Practice. In promoting high standards of training and deer welfare it is important that those carrying out deer culls are sufficiently skilled.

7.5.2 As outlined in Section 7.4 all members have stalkers trained in DSC 1 and where DSC 2 is not held work is taking place in order to complete this certification.

7.5.3 Where there are DVC incidents, deer stalkers are called upon to deal with any animal injured and suffering.

7.5.4 The BMDMG has recently started broadening the data collected and held, going forward the group will expand information gathered to include:

- a Winter mortality
- b Carcass weights
- c Calving rates

7.5.4.2 This data will be collected, collated and reviewed regularly to use as a proxy for deer health and welfare. This will give an up-to-date picture which can inform deer and land management.

7.5.4.3 Where there is high winter mortality or consistently low carcass weights and calving rates the group undertakes to consider measures to reduce this, including consideration of opening woodland shelter and increasing woodland cover.

7.6 Access

7.6.1 Access Overview

7.6.1.1 As part of developing economic and community development there must be an appreciation and understanding between access and deer management. Black Mount, Glen Etive, Glen Coe and the landholdings within the DMG area have a long history of welcoming public access to the area.

7.6.1.2 The BMDMG area is popular for recreational access, there are some well-established walking routes, along with many popular Munros and kayaking routes.

- 7.6.1.3 The West Highland Way (WHW), which takes walkers 96 miles from Glasgow to Fort William runs through the core of the BMDMG. This is a well-established route and provides alternative economic activity to deer related enterprises, but there is no doubt that the sight of deer on this route is part of its appeal. It is estimated that 40-50 thousand people walk the WHW annually, with 15-20 thousand making it all the way to Fort William. Members of the group directly affected by the WHW are Auch, Black Mount, the Forestry Commission, and Black Corries. Those taking access on this established route have minimal impact on deer management.
- 7.6.1.4 BMDMG members acknowledge that access should be promoted and access in harmony with deer management is best achieved through communication, often through signage. The table below highlights access considerations for each member.

Table 15 BMDMG Access

Landholding	Summary of Access on Members' Holdings
Ardchattan	Ardchattan gardens are open to public. The road along Loch Etive is managed by the Forestry Commission
Auch Estate	
Black Corries	West Highland Way – managed by The Highland Council Hill walkers Signage is displayed in order to explain how and why the land is being managed.
Black Mount	The area is popular for recreational pursuits, the West Highland Way runs through the estate, the estate also includes Glencoe Mountain Resort, numerous Munros and many take access for kayaking. Access is promoted and managed through onsite signage as well as through information provided on Heading for The Scottish Hills web facility.
Castles	Yes Munro baggers and hill walkers take access, we could have 30 on any Saturday or Sunday.
Crunachy	The hill is a Munro so it sees many hill walkers throughout the year, the main access is through our neighbour's ground and is only foot traffic.
Dalness	Dalness has 5 munros which means there are many walkers taking access across the estate. Kayaking on the River Etive is also a popular pursuit. Information is provided on the Heading to the Scottish Hills facility.
Forestry Commission	All FCS woodlands and land are open to the public at all times for informal access on foot, on horseback and on cycles. There are numerous forest car parks and formal built up paths, tracks and mountain bike trails. There are two Archery Clubs using the forests in the area for field archery at Brecklett and Inverawe.
Glen Etive	The area is popular for recreational pursuits, the estate includes numerous Munros and many take access for kayaking. Access is promoted and managed through onsite signage as well as through information provided on Heading For The Scottish Hills web facility.
Glen Noe	Access takes place, this is managed through increasing and maintaining polite signage to provide access takers with information.
Glencoe & Dalness	Hill walking on the whole estate, Three sisters, Aonach Eagach, Buachaille Etive Mor, Buachaille Etive Beag. Promoted through our own websites, and social media pages. We are also part of nearly every mountaineering book, website, journal there is. Over all we manage 60km of upland path with via a dedicated team. Also Rock climbing, mountain biking, kayaking, and SSDT.
Glencreran	3 munros The number of hikers is increasing, this can cause problems during the stalking season.

Glenkinglass	
Glenstrae	We have many dog walkers, hill walkers, campers and cyclists use the Glen throughout the year and most of them stay on the track that stretches for around 4 miles up the Glen bottom. We have a few schools which use the Glen as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and we've also had hill races and army training taking place in the Glen. We find using a couple of signs to let people know of shooting or stalking taking place in the Glen helps as does stopping and talking to people in the Glen, it's the easiest way to manage the effects of disturbance in the Glen as a two-minute chat can make them feel welcome and it lets you know their intended route so you can plan accordingly. We get a lot of phone calls at stalking time to check if it's ok to go up a certain hill or route. We have a parking and camping area at the entrance into the Glen and there's a plunge pool a mile up the track that is popular with the locals in the summer.
Inverliever	Tracks/pier maintenance. Mountain biking, wild camping, badger watch, Duke of Edinburgh awards. Schools, canoeing.

7.6.2 Heading to the Scottish Hills

7.6.3 Heading for the Scottish Hills website, hosted by SNH, provides information on most mountains, contact numbers for relevant holdings and any further information provided by land managers including stalking seasons. Most members of the BMDMG feed into this and this ensures that information is provided to the public at one point. Black Mount DMG falls into 'Area 6: The Central Highlands' section of this service.

ACTION POINTS: Public Health and Wellbeing		Timetable
Members	To ensure at least 1 deer manager on each holding is DSC 2	February 2020
	To provide a training record for all estates, to be confirmed by annually.	Ongoing
Secretary	Include collaborative training opportunities to DMG meeting agendas to make it easier for members to facilitate training.	Ongoing
	To annually gather wider information from group members, including data on winter mortality, carcass weights and calving rates.	Ongoing
Crunachy, Glenstrae, Glencrean,	To complete DSC 2 certification	February 2020

8 Economic Benefits Associated with Deer

8.1 Venison Marketing

8.1.1 SQWVA Accreditation

- 8.1.1.1** In order to promote and ensure a high standard of venison production members of the BMDMG are encouraged to subscribe to the Scottish Quality Wild Venison Assurance (SQWVA) Scheme. Membership of this scheme demonstrates a high standard of care and consideration in venison production from culling to delivery to the SQWVA assured game dealer, annual inspections are carried out by the SQWVA in order to ensure deer larders and any other relevant facilities are maintained at the required high standards. In return for supply of SQWVA venison to the game dealer, a premium per kilogram is achieved for the meat.
- 8.1.1.2** The majority of the members of the BMDMG are members of this scheme. Due to the limited number of SQWVA game dealers it is not always possible to have collection by an assured dealer, particularly from remote larders.
- 8.1.1.3** Subscription to the SQWVA Scheme in the BMDMG is as follows:

Table 16 BMDMG SQWVA Membership

Landholding	SQWVA	Reason if not SQWVA
Ardchattan		
Auch Estate	Yes	
Black Corries	Yes	
Black Mount	Yes	
Castles		
Crunachy	No	Little sold for consumption, extraction process is damaging and most culls are of old deer.
Dalness	Yes	
Forestry Commission	Yes	
Glen Etive	Yes	
Glen Noe	No	Game dealer will not collect from remote larder
Glencoe & Dalness	No	
Glencreran	No	Working towards SQWVA
Glenkinglass	No	SQWVA game dealer will not collect from remote larder
Glenstrae	No	Little sold for consumption, extraction process is damaging and most culls are of old deer.
Inverliever	No	SQWVA game dealer will not collect from remote larder

8.1.2 Collaborative Venison Production

- 8.1.2.1** The group encourages collaboration in the production of venison where it can be beneficial in allowing a more viable operation. Larder sharing is particularly beneficial to those in the group who shoot lower deer numbers and would not necessarily require larder space throughout the season. Larder sharing has historically taken place in Glen Etive and between NTS and FES.

- 8.1.2.2 Sharing game dealers is another element which can make the sale of venison more viable, particularly in remote areas. If there are enough carcasses for collection it encourages dealers to collect. To date the group does not formally share this information and it is simply a matter of neighbouring members liaising with one another directly. Going forward, the BMDMG can play a more significant role in facilitating this. Currently there are a number of members using the same game dealer, particularly those with SQWVA in the north side of the group.
- 8.1.2.3 Where some are experiencing that their larders are too remote to have carcass collection by the game dealer the group will collaborate with members to seek a solution which may encompass collection from a number of estates making the collection journey more viable for the dealer.

8.2 Economic Benefits Associated with Deer

- 8.2.1 Contributing to sustainable economic development is a key objective within the WDNA, 2014. There are four key elements to this identified within this document as follows:

- a) Increase the economic opportunities associated with wild deer
- b) Minimise economic costs attributable to wild deer
- c) Provide the skills and knowledge required to manage deer as an integral part of Scotland's natural resources
- d) Contribute to the economic development of communities

WDNA, 2014 (p17)

- 8.2.2 Members of the BMDMG were surveyed and it has been established that across the group there is significant economic input in the area in relation to deer. Given that there is little in the way of industry or other employment across the majority of the BMDMG area, it is clear that economic activity associated with deer management is very important in maintaining rural communities.

Total number of jobs directly associated with deer management	24
→ Those jobs which are full time	14
Annual venison sales income	£132,000
Annual guest stalking income	£57,350
Other associated annual income*	£61,000
Annual cost of deer management	£450,000
Capital spend in last 5 years	£1,000,000

* e.g. property lets for stalking guests

8.3 Minimising economic costs attributable to wild deer

- 8.3.1 In the balance wild deer in the BMDMG area are very much an asset to the area, in an area which is sparsely populated, with little other economic activity, their presence and requirement for management creates jobs as well as generating interest from visitors including photographers, tourists and walkers. Through consultation with the wider

community we seek to obtain further information on this in order to obtain wider comment and perspective, this will be reflected in the plan as it is amended going forwards.

- 8.3.2** There are some economic costs attributable to deer including DVCs and potential impact on designated habitats and species. This deer management plan seeks to minimise these impacts and costs in order to promote the strong overall economic asset of red deer.

ACTION POINTS: Economic Benefits Associated With Deer		<u>Timeframe</u>
Group	To promote subscription to the SQWV. Where there are set-backs in achieving this, to support members in overcoming through collaboration. E.g. co-ordinated use of game dealer to encourage collection from remote larders.	Ongoing
	To carry out local community consultation in order to establish a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits of deer to the community and economy and to update the plan accordingly following this consultation.	Ongoing

9 Historic Cultural Features

- 9.1** It is recognised that deer can impact certain historic or cultural features and these must be taken into consideration when addressing deer management as a whole. The members of the Black Mount DMG were asked to highlight any features on their holdings that may be affected by deer. There are no sites that members could identify as having suffered negative impacts caused by deer. The National Trust for Scotland recognised that they have 120 listed historic sites on their property, these are monitored annually for impacts for human or animal interference, however, currently there is no significant impact. The DMG will continue to monitor this position. The DMG will also maintain contact with the local community and relevant stakeholders, addressing concerns where any sites of historical and cultural interest may be adversely affected by herbivore damage.

10 Local Interests Relevant to Deer Management

10.1 DMP Stakeholders

10.1.1 Consultation on this Deer Management Plan will involve the following stakeholders which have been identified in consultation with the membership of the DMG.

- Graeme Taylor - SNH
- Glencoe and Glen Etive Community Council
- Dalmally Community Council
- Taynuilt Community Council
- Dalmally Common Grazings
- Glencoe Common Grazings