

Black Mount Deer Management Group
AGM Meeting – 2015/16 Season
 Thursday 30th March 2017
 10:30am at Black Mount Lodge

Richard Schuster (RS)	Chairman, Glenstrae	Graeme Taylor (GT)	SNH
Susanna Thomson (ST)	Secretary	Andrew Servant (AS)	Glencoe
Philip Fleming (PF)	Black Mount	John Jackson (JJ)	FCS
Finlay Clark (FC)	Black Mount/ADMG	Stephen Sloss (SS)	FCS
Johnny Macdonald (JM)	NTS	Scott McCombie (SM)	NTS
Mark Shone (MS)	Glen Etive	Ali MacDonald (AM)	Black Mount
Calum Proctor	Black Mount	Mark Brown (MB)	Glenstrae &
David Harvey	Black Mount		Crunachy
Davy Thomas	Black Corries	PC Darren Miller	Police, Dalmally
Calum Hogg	Dalness		

1. Apologies

Dominique Collinet	Tom Willis
Bebe Corbett	Adam Fleming
Peter Huddleston	Sarah Troughton
Dorothy Fleming	Sophie Handley
Alastair Ross	

2. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 4th February 2016

Approved

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

It was observed that Auch cull figures are missing from minutes, SNH will seek to clarify if they receive cull figures for this area.

- Auch (Neil Rowentree) has subsequently been in touch to confirm active participation in the group.

4. Review of 2016/17 season

	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Comments
Ardchattan	19	14		Average: Stags 72kg; H 40kg
Black Corries	39	70	35	Average stag weight 14st 3lb. Active rut, late getting started, good weights, slight reduction in stag cull
Blackmount (part)	99	152	50	Average stag weight 14 st; good weather, steady rut, shot a bit later. Increase in shooting on east end.
Castles	3	0	0	Low count of hinds and calves

Crunachy	0	3	0	Very few older stags about. Average hind weight: 42kg
Dalness	8	25	6	
Glen Etive	25	27	14	Stags were high due to warm weather
Glen Noe	6	2	2	Average stage weight 14st7lb; early rut, good weights and condition
Glencreran	25	27		
Glenkinglass	23	30	15	
Glenstrae	14	11	6	Average Stags: 92kg; H 51kg; C 32kg)
Inverliever	4	15	7	Av stag: 16 ½ stone. Roe: 2B; 4D; 4K
NTS	19 + 3	61	17	Early rut, right through to December, Challenging stalking with stags high. Good condition
Auch Estate	19	14	3	
Invergounan	10	4	3	
FC all blocks	79+146	98+61	116	Roe: 25+17 B; 28+2 D; 18 K
Bonawe & Beinn Dhurinnish	9	1	1	+4 Roe bucks

5. Deer Management Plan

a. Group Update and Assessment

GT advised there is now need to action plans, SNH re-audit in next two years will focus on how the group is delivering on actions.

Designated site conditions have not changed since the plan, Rannoch Moor SSSI recently reassessed, no change in status overall.

GT confirmed the plan is fit for purpose and group is moving in right direction.

3 key focus areas are:

- All group members to be monitoring habitat
- Bringing designations into favourable condition
- Woodland expansion

FC highlighted existing woodland cover is good. GT highlighted favourable grants in Highland area to support delivery of woodland and that group could do analysis of available cover.

Comment on recent SNH report from FC, GT confirmed that the current 8 deer per sq km is not considered 'high'.

Rannoch Moor SSSI discussed, FC confirmed Black Mount and Black Corries had both reacted to designation and BM had doubled the cull on designated area, DT confirmed increasing hind cull to 70 (compared to previous 45). FCC will arrange meeting with Cathy Mayne (SNH) to discuss culls on Rannoch Moor SSI.

DT interested to carry out muirburn on the north side of SSSI in tandem with ecologist's advice.

97ha woodland has been opened up on A82 for additional wintering, deer fence on the road side is kept intact.

b. Action required

The Chair requested members bring an assessment of available planting ground to next meeting. GT agreed planting areas go beyond DMG areas and it has to be done in consideration of local circumstances.

GT highlighted the peatland scheme, £8M fund available, very short application process opening on 1 April 2017.

6. Habitat Impact Assessments

The Chair asked group members to bring their habitat impact assessments to the next meeting in order to collate information as a group. Many members are carrying out but information is yet to be collated. GT confirmed SNH may be able to help with mapping to present results.

7. SNH Update

GT advised the Authorisations Panel has made 14 recommendations to SNH for delivery including new staff guidance and focus on targeting controversial applications.

GT encouraged an increase in meetings to ensure delivery of DMP.

8. ADMG Update

FC emphasised that groups must focus on delivering DMPs. The ECCLR committee report is due around Easter. Likely to be communication on potential change by the end of summer.

Emphasis is on plan delivery, environmental delivery, SNH will need to be able to deliver.

ADMG are ready to do all they can to represent DMGs through this process.

a. Subs

ADMG are increasing subscription rates to £4 per stag, £3 per hind and £1.50 per calf, funds raised through this will be used to respond to ECCLR committee.

FC advised regional meetings will be 6th June 2017 in Birnam, 16th August 2017 in Glenfinnan and 23rd November 2017 in Inverness.

There will be a meeting for Chairs and Secretaries on 17 July 2017 in Birnam to focus on the Cabinet Secretary (Scottish Government) conclusions on the Deer Review and delivering Deer Management Plans, including Habitat Impact Assessment.

9. Any Other Business

ST raised the issue of Sporting Rates advising that rateable values are due to be issued by end of the summer, members may wish to appeal to ensure all considerations are taken into account and if we collaborate as a group on this it may help.

ST also advised that the group website which was funded by ADMG in 2016 will need to be covered by the group this year, cost is expected to be £120 and will be added to the usual recover of group costs invoice for 2017.

JJ confirmed he is not aware of any FES issues with neighbours. Funding is focused on key fencing including fence lines running Bracklett to Glencrearan and Black Mount to Bridge of Orchy. There are some areas of new woodland. There are no FES disposals planned at moment.

GT encouraged expansion of group into Appin area, group will try to make contact with individuals there.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is proposed for early August 2017 to review habitat assessment and available planting ground.

Vote of thanks given to Black Mount for hosting, ST and FC for support and those present for their attendance.