

Strathconon Deer Management Group

Part 3: Deer Management Working Plan

2016 -2017



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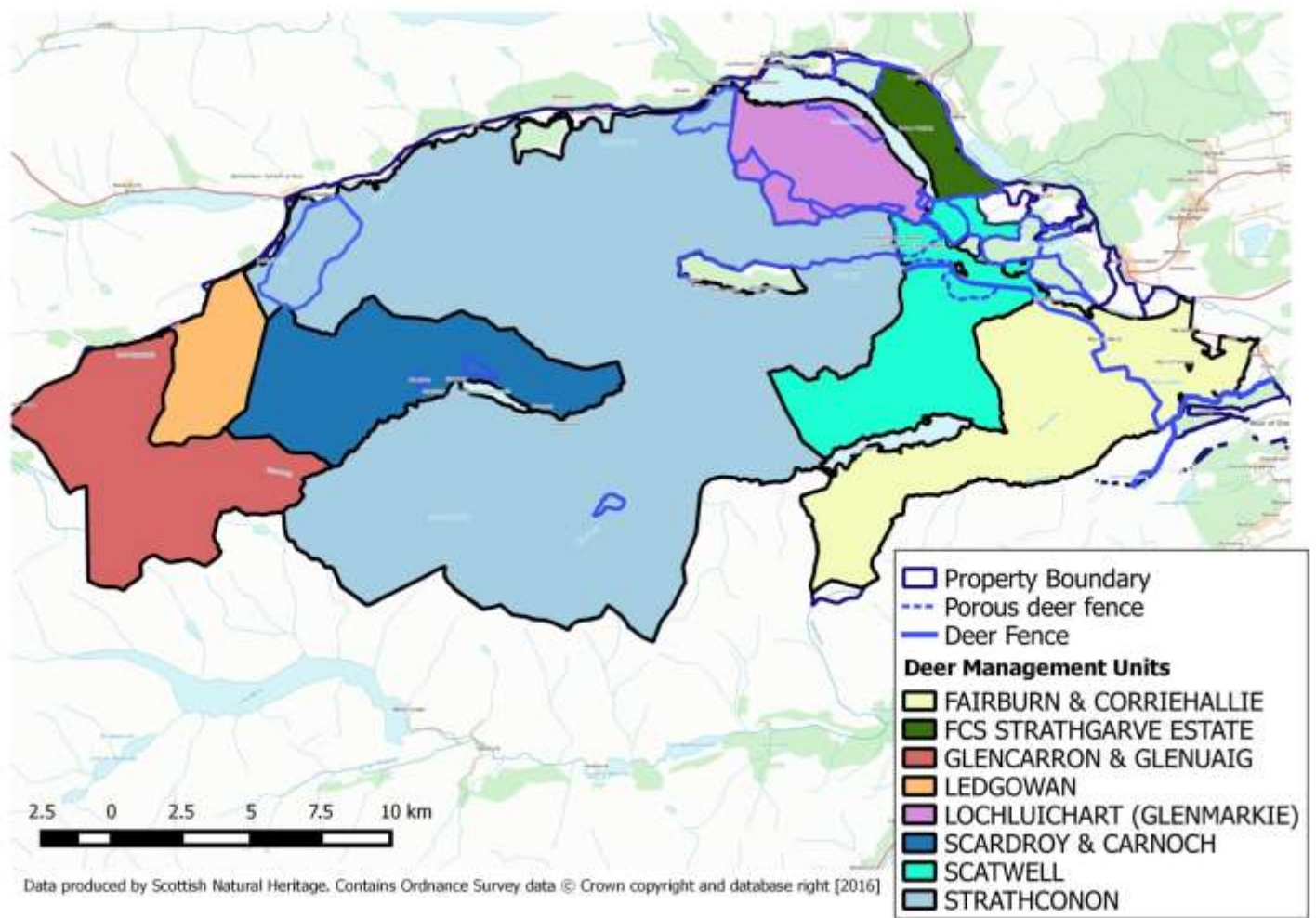
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3.1 Introduction

Note this document is a working document intended for Strathconon DMG Members and will be continually updated following each meeting of the DMG. A complete summary of all the Background Information relevant to this plan and the functioning of the DMG can be found in Parts 2 and 3.

Strathconon DMG covers a total area of approximately **55045 hectares** but the available range open to deer is approximately **46044 ha**. The Group is made up of 9 main management units with Scardroy and Strathconon under the same management (Figure 1). For the purposes of planning, figures for the National Forest Estate properties managed by Forest Enterprise, Olsson and for Lochluichart (Glenmarkie) have not been included in the working plan as these properties are fenced off from the main Red Deer range.

Figure 1: Deer management units



3.2 Group Objectives and Targets

Over the next 5 years, the main deliverables of the Group are as follows:

- To have managed deer numbers sustainably to achieve an approximate 1:1 sex ratio;
- To have implemented DMG wide Habitat Monitoring of Heather Moorland and Blanket Bog to help inform future management;
- To have implemented management to ensure Designated Sites remain in Favourable condition;
- To have conducted a repeat count of the population in spring 2019;
- To have secured additional Funding through ECAF to assist with future delivery of DMG actions including carrying out a review of existing native woodland and exploring opportunities for woodland expansion.

3.3 DMG Counts

The last full foot count of the DMG in 2016 indicated that numbers had decreased to a density of 17.7 deer per km² from 18.9 deer per km² in 2009 which was a full helicopter count of the DMG (Table 1). The 2009 count was unclassified so some assumptions have been made regarding the breakdown of stags, hinds and calves (a hind: calf ratio of 28% was used, and an assumption of 10% of unclassified animals being stags (knobbers).

Table 1: Red Deer Helicopter counts for Strathconon DMG

Count Type	Year	Total DMG				
		S	H	C	T	D
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	2003	1982	3058	913	5953	12.9
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	2009	2646	4644	1396	8686	18.9
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	2016	2589	4294	1264	8147	17.7

Table 2: Red Deer Count by Management Unit

	Fairburn					Glencarron & Glenuaig					Ledgowan					Lochluichart				
	S	H	C	T	D	S	H	C	T	D	S	H	C	T	D	S	H	C	T	D
2003	150	390	151	691	11.2	17	398	104	519	11.4	28	128	37	193	12.3	0	0	0	0	0.0
2009	188	570	207	965	15.7	77	510	125	712	15.6	54	118	35	207	13.2	81	110	33	224	9.8
2016	230	607	172	1009	16.4	109	428	107	644	14.1	45	169	53	267	17.0	179	247	80	506	22.0
	Scardroy					Scatwell					Strathconon									
	S	H	C	T	D	S	H	C	T	D	S	H	C	T	D					
2003	579	316	95	990	23.9	192	343	108	643	17.6	1016	1483	418	2917	11.2					
2009	530	419	125	1074	25.9	186	435	130	751	20.6	1611	2592	774	4977	19.2					
2016	344	390	107	841	20.3	322	333	104	759	20.8	1539	2367	721	4627	17.8					

3.4 DMG Culls

Table 3: Cull Figures for Population Model (excluding Olsson, Lochluichart Glenmarkie)

	Open Range				Woodland				Total for DMG			
	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total
2005/2006	315	409	105	829	20	18	4	42	335	427	109	871
2006/2007	332	466	171	969	27	11	10	48	359	477	181	1017
2007/2008	271	389	165	825	33	13	3	49	304	402	168	874
2008/2009	326	528	184	1038	14	12	2	28	340	540	186	1066
2009/2010	319	388	148	855	72	34	17	123	391	422	165	978
2010/2011	209	454	154	817	35	51	18	104	244	505	172	921
2011/2012	217	250	57	524	16	41	16	73	233	291	73	597
2012/2013	195	257	109	561	21	11	2	34	216	268	111	595
2013/2014	194	373	125	692	15	19	6	40	209	392	131	732
2014/2015	224	378	149	751	7	5	3	15	231	383	152	766
2015/2016	206	256	75	537	6	9	0	15	212	265	75	552

Table 4: Total Cull Figures for all DMG Members

Total Red Deer Cull	2011 - 2012				2012 -2013				2013 -2014				2014 -2015				2015 -2016			
	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T
Fairburn Open Range	54	12	1	67	50	31	6	87	49	50	17	116	62	90	30	182	52	49	10	111
Fairburn Woodland	0	18	5	23	10	3	0	13	6	10	3	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glencarron & Glenuaig	33	71	19	123	31	47	24	102	32	79	15	126	35	10	0	45	31	29	4	64
Ledgowan	40	40	0	80	10	8	3	21	15	15	0	30	15	10	0	25	15	10	0	25
Lochluichart (Glenmarkie)	18	35	10	63	8	21	9	38	10	15	5	30	19	10	5	34	14	0	0	14
Scardroy	25	10	3	38	22	12	4	38	9	28	12	49								
Scatwell	17	25	8	50	16	24	11	51	17	30	11	58	20	35	10	65	18	22	9	49
Scatwell Woodland	7	10	5	22	6	4	2	12	8	8	2	18	7	5	3	15	6	9	0	15
Strathconon (including Scardroy from 2014)	48	92	26	166	66	135	61	262	72	171	70	313	92	233	109	434	90	146	52	288
Olsson	9	13	6	28	5	4	0	9	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Cull	251	326	83	660	224	289	120	633	219	407	136	762	250	393	157	800	226	265	75	566

3.5 Combined Data for Strathconon and Glen Strathfarrar

Following the 2016 count, it was noted that whilst the population had declined in Strathconon since the 2009 count, the population had increased in Glen Strathfarrar (Table 5) to a density more than predicted. Using known culls from both groups 2016 densities were predicted and compared to actual count figures in 2016 (Table 6). When both figures are combined population modelling predicted a hind population within 13% of that actually counted. Possible explanations are that there has been more movement between DMGs than anticipated. The modelling also predicts that Strathconon in particular should have more stags than counted. It may be that there are stags in woodland that haven't been counted or accounted for in culls.

Table 5: Historic Counts for Strathconon, Glen Strathfarrar and Combined

Count Type	Strathconon					Strathfarrar					Strathconon & Strathfarrar Count Data				
	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	1982	3058	913	5953	12.9	2596	3682	1243	7521	17.3	4578	6740	2156	13474	15.1
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	2646	4644	1396	8686	18.9	2528	3256	1148	6932	16.0	5174	7900	2544	15618	17.5
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	2589	4294	1264	8147	17.7	2686	4320	1217	8223	18.9	5275	8614	2481	16370	18.3

Figures 2a & 2b: Historic Stag and Hind Counts for Strathconon and Glen Strathfarrar

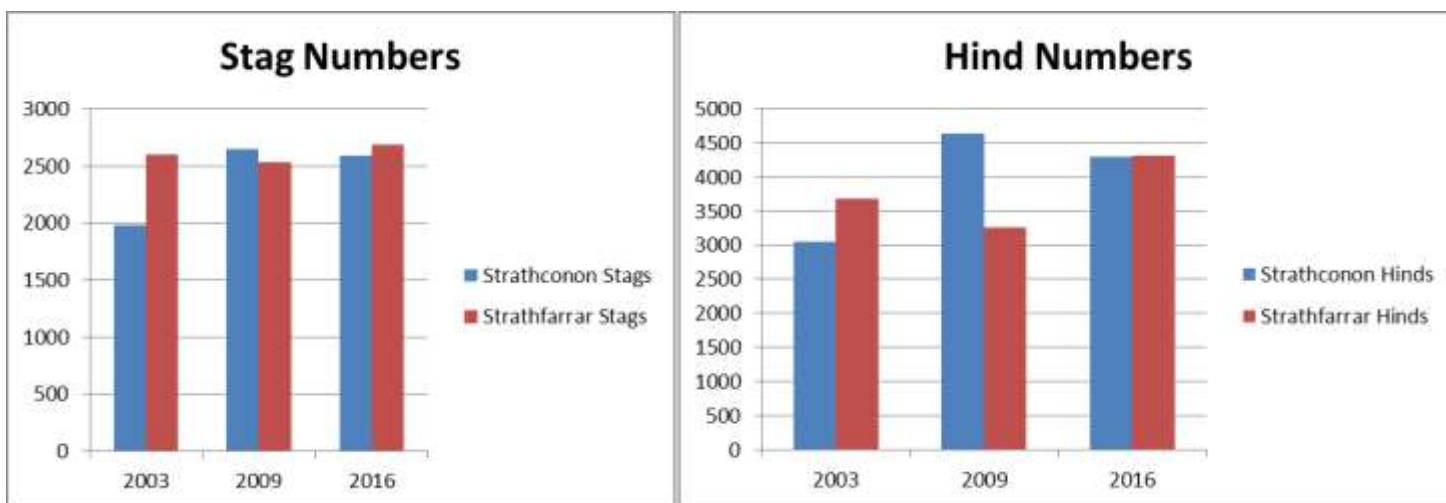


Figure 3a and 3b: Historic Stag and Hind Culls by DMG

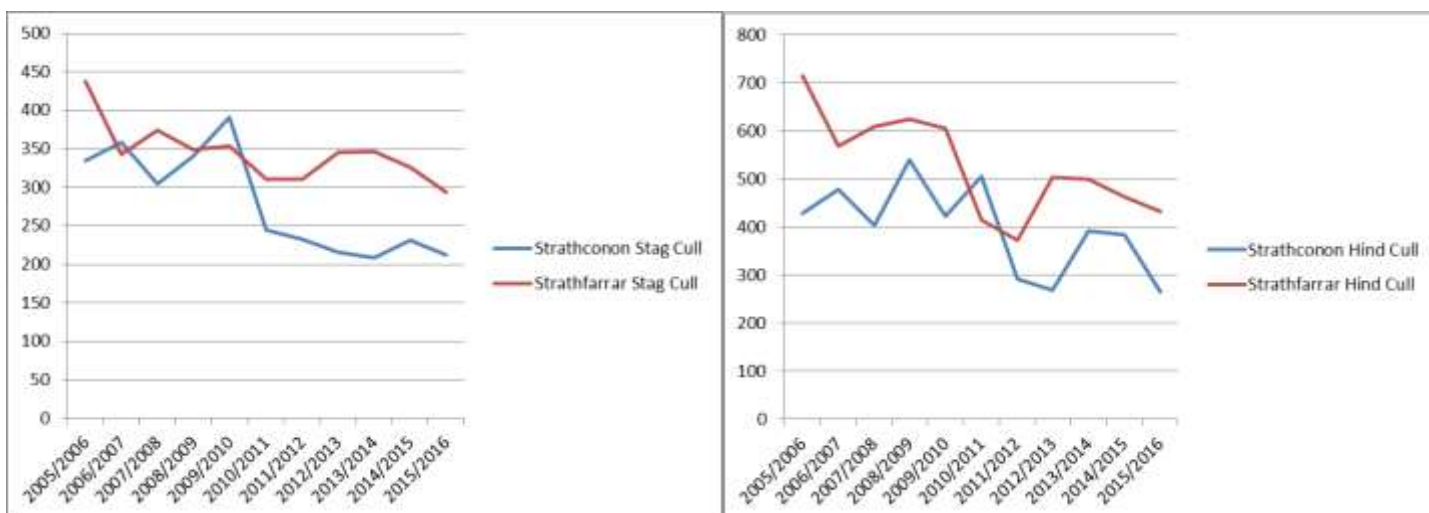


Figure 4: Changes in deer densities across Strathconon DMG and Glen Strathfarrar DMG (part)

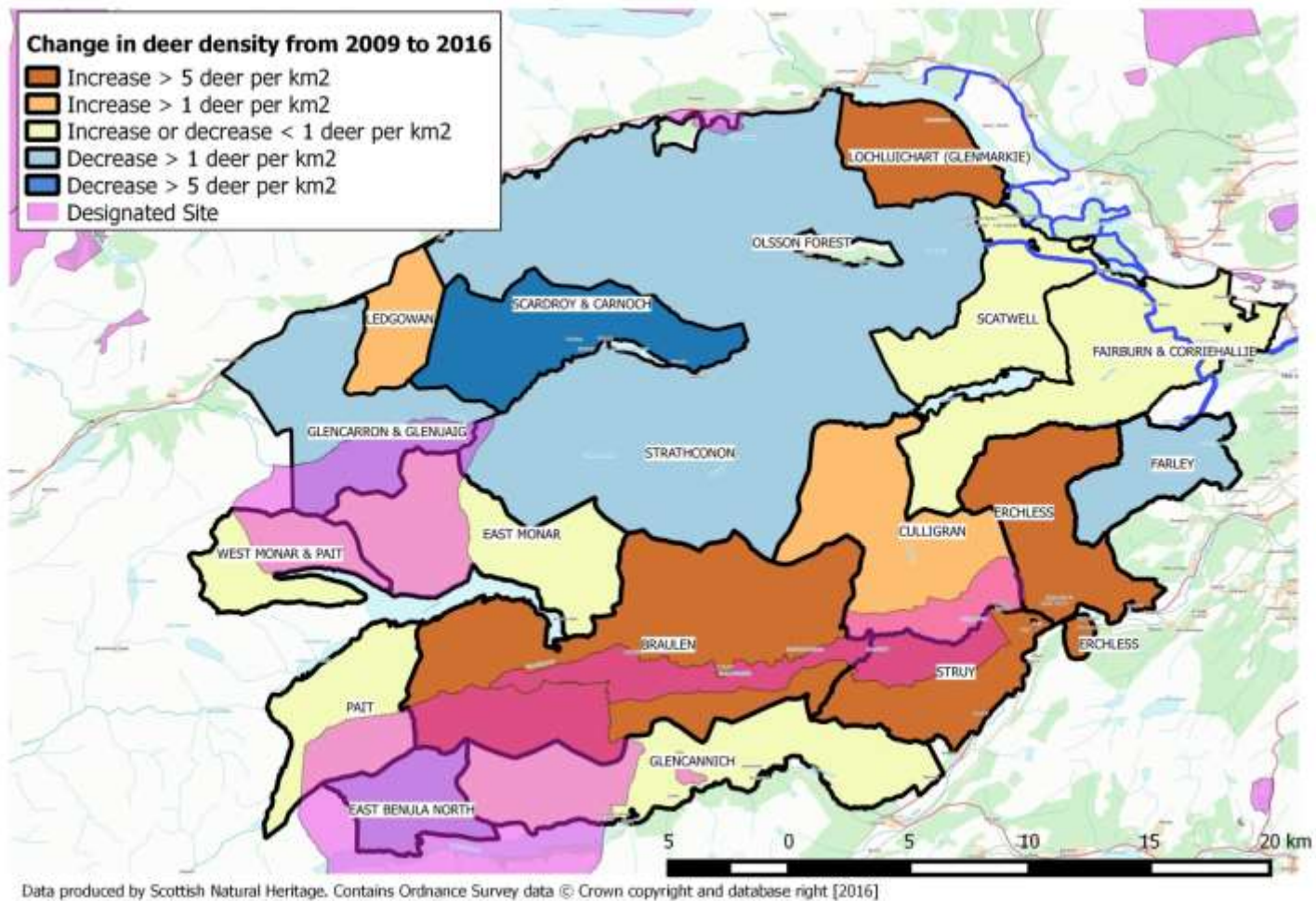


Table 6: Predicted figures using 2009 count and actual cull figures

		Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density (Area 46044ha)
	Actual 2009	2646	4644	1396	8686	18.9
Strathconon Predicted	2010	2886	4813	1241	8940	19.4
Strathconon Predicted	2011	3192	4820	1258	9271	20.1
Strathconon Predicted	2012	3512	5049	1361	9922	21.5
Strathconon Predicted	2013	3893	5347	1397	10637	23.1
Strathconon Predicted	2014	4291	5533	1460	11283	24.5
Strathconon Predicted	2015	4689	5755	1496	11940	25.9
Strathconon Predicted	2016	5117	6108	1637	12861	27.9
	Actual 2016	2589	4294	1264	8147	17.7
		Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density (Area 43395 ha)
	Actual 2009	2528	3256	1148	6932	16.0
Strathfarrar Predicted	2010	2686	3149	888	6723	15.5
Strathfarrar Predicted	2011	2756	3108	889	6753	15.6
Strathfarrar Predicted	2012	2826	3108	914	6848	15.8
Strathfarrar Predicted	2013	2872	2992	867	6731	15.5
Strathfarrar Predicted	2014	2894	2858	811	6563	15.1
Strathfarrar Predicted	2015	2907	2736	766	6410	14.8
Strathfarrar Predicted	2016	2931	2625	763	6318	14.6
	Actual 2016	2686	4320	1217	8223	18.9
		Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density (Area 89439 ha)
	Actual 2009	5275	8614	2481	16370	18.3
Combined Groups Predicted	2010	5640	8631	2237	16508	18.5
Combined Groups Predicted	2011	6068	8636	2270	16974	19.0
Combined Groups Predicted	2012	6515	8911	2411	17837	19.9
Combined Groups Predicted	2013	7005	9144	2414	18563	20.8
Combined Groups Predicted	2014	7493	9253	2438	19185	21.4
Combined Groups Predicted	2015	7981	9418	2450	19849	22.2
Combined Groups Predicted	2016	8516	9733	2609	20859	23.3
	Actual 2016	5275	8614	2481	16370	18.3

3.6 DMG Target Densities and Population Model

Following the count in 2016, Glen Strathfarrar have committed to reducing hind numbers across the Group in order to deliver conservation benefits and to bring the population closer to 1:1 sex ratio. Target densities for hinds have been set for in order to reduce impacts on wider upland habitats and to maintain a sustainable cull. The stag population is not static and therefore must be considered at a landscape level as part of a shared resource (according the Deer Code).

It is proposed that in light of the count information, that Strathconon DMG reduce deer numbers in line with the neighbouring DMG to a target density of 14.7 deer per km² and closer to a 1:1 sex ratio. This density would accommodate a sustainable stag harvest of 215 stags for Strathconon and an overall aspirational sustainable harvest of 585 stags between both DMGs.

Count Type	Strathconon					Strathfarrar					Strathconon & Strathfarrar Count Data				
	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	1982	3058	913	5953	12.9	2596	3682	1243	7521	17.3	4578	6740	2156	13474	15.1
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	2646	4644	1396	8686	18.9	2528	3256	1148	6932	16.0	5174	7900	2544	15618	17.5
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	2589	4294	1264	8147	17.7	2686	4320	1217	8223	18.9	5275	8614	2481	16370	18.3
Aspirational Population Target Spring 2021	2900	2900	968	6768	14.7	2775	2775	832	6382	14.7	5675	5675	1800	13150	14.7

Based on the proposed target densities of 17 deer per km², the following population model for Strathconon DMG is based on a current combined “aspirational” target population of 3481 hinds for Strathconon DMG (Table 4). Given uncertainty about “losses” of stags from the population it is proposed to maintain the stag cull at the desired cull of 215 with an allowance for an additional 85 stags. The Group will use annual foot counts as well as habitat impact assessment monitoring results to help inform this population model **which will be reviewed on an annual basis.**

		Stags	Hinds	Calves	Density
2016	<i>Spring Population</i>	2589	4294	1264	17.7
	<i>Summer Population</i>	3221	4926	1379	20.7
	<i>Cull</i>	300	620	174	
	<i>Mortality</i>	64	99	83	
2017	<i>Spring Population</i>	2857	4207	1123	17.8
	<i>Summer Population</i>	3418	4769	1335	20.7
	<i>Cull</i>	300	620	174	
	<i>Mortality</i>	68	95	80	
2018	<i>Spring Population</i>	3050	4054	1082	17.8
	<i>Summer Population</i>	3590	4594	1286	20.6
	<i>Cull</i>	300	620	174	
	<i>Mortality</i>	72	92	77	
2019	<i>Spring Population</i>	3219	3882	1036	17.7
	<i>Summer Population</i>	3736	4400	1232	20.3
	<i>Cull</i>	300	620	174	
	<i>Mortality</i>	75	88	74	
2020	<i>Spring Population</i>	3362	3692	985	17.5
	<i>Summer Population</i>	3854	4185	1172	20.0
	<i>Cull</i>	300	620	174	
	<i>Mortality</i>	77	84	70	
2021	<i>Spring Population</i>	3477	3481	928	17.1

Proposed Culls for 2016/17

	Area of open range (ha)	Stag Cull 2016/17 (minimum)	Hind Cull 2016/17 (minimum)
Fairburn	6164	50	100
Glencarron	4562	35	40
Ledgowan	1574	15	20
Strathconon & Scardroy	30094	90	400
Scatwell	3650	25	60
Total	46044	215	620

3.7 Group Operation Actions

Actions to develop mechanisms to manage deer	When?	Who?	How?
3.7.1 Final Plan and Minutes of Meetings will be made publically available and published on DMG Website.	By Spring 2016 and ongoing	DMG Secretary	<i>DMG Website.</i>
3.7.2 Repeat DMG Assessment.	By Spring 2016 and ongoing	DMG Chair and Secretary	<i>Use baseline DMG Assessment carried out in 2014.</i>
3.7.3 Working plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Management actions will be adjusted and agreed accordingly. An annual report will be produced.	Annually	DMG Secretary and DMG Members	<i>Provision of data from DMG members in advance of and during meetings. Secretary will update Working Plan and produce an Annual Report to be published on the DMG Website.</i>
3.7.4 Culls of all species of deer will be delivered and reported on accurately. Cull targets will set and agreed based on information relating to habitat condition, population census, deer welfare and any other relevant information (i.e. where deer are impacting negatively on the Public Interest).	Annually	DMG Secretary and DMG Members	<i>Population models will be updated annually and cull targets set, agreed and delivered accordingly.</i>
3.7.5 A helicopter count will be repeated in Spring 2019 to coordinate with other DMGs in the South Ross area.	Spring 2017	DMG Secretary and DMG Members	<i>DMG will ensure adequate resources in place for repeat helicopter count in 2019 and liaise with neighbouring DMGs to coordinate count at the same time if possible. Possible 50% funding contribution from ECAF being explored.</i>
3.7.6 Recruitment counts will be carried out annually.	Ideally first two weeks in April but by May.	DMG Members	<i>Stalkers will undertake sample counts of groups of deer recording locations, stags, hinds and calves. Information will be used to support population modelling.</i>
3.7.7 Group will carry out a review of deer movements within the DMG and contribute to wider discussions on deer movements within and across current DMG Boundaries.	Autumn 2016 and Spring 2019	DMG Members	<i>Deer count data from 2016 and 2019 will be reviewed by the DMG and by wider South Ross DMG members. DMG boundaries will be reviewed and amended if necessary.</i>

3.7.8 Group will encourage representatives from the local community to attend meetings as well as local agricultural/ woodland/ conservation interests such as the RSPB.	Annually	DMG Chair. Stakeholder list to be compiled.	<i>Meeting dates and Agendas will be publically available on DMG website and circulated to community councils and organisations in advance.</i>
3.7.9 Group will ensure adequate resources are available to fund the administration and aspects of delivery of the DMP	Ongoing	DMG Chair and Secretary	<i>DMG will ensure adequate resources for the ongoing delivery of the plan through private funding and through a possible Environmental Cooperation Action Fund (ECAAF) application.</i>

3.8 Designated Sites

Actions for the delivery of designated features into Favourable Condition	When?	Who?	How?
3.8.1 Monar Forest SSSI: To continue to implement deer management to maintain 'Favourable' Status.	Ongoing	Glencarron and Glenuaig Estate	<i>The Estate will work in collaboration with neighbouring Estates in Strathfarrar DMG and SNH to continue to manage deer to maintain favourable status of the site. The Estate will implement monitoring of impacts on the SSSI. Deer numbers on the Estate have been reduced from 15.6 deer per km² in 2009 to 14.1 deer per km² in 2016. Estate will aim to maintain a population of 400 hinds.</i>
3.8.2 Glen Affric to Strathconon SPA: Estates will continue to manage habitats and deer to benefit Golden Eagles	Ongoing	Fairburn, Scatwell, Strathconon and Lochluichart Estates	<i>Estates will seek to work with in collaboration with SNH and other stakeholder organisations such as RSPB/Raptor Study Groups to gather and share information on bird populations (numbers, locations, breeding success) to help inform future habitat management.</i>

3.8 Woodland Management

Actions to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve woodland condition	When?	Who?	How?
3.9.1 For properties with SRDP Natural Regeneration Schemes in place, provide evidence of woodland condition in the form of an appropriate survey report if available.	By 2021	DMG Members	<i>Woodland Survey reports.</i>
3.9.2 Group will undertake a review of native woodland condition in the Group area, consolidating existing survey reports and implementing woodland herbivore impacts assessment monitoring protocols where required. See monitoring Schedule in Working Plan.	Year 3	DMG Members & Consultant	<i>DMG Native Woodland Review Report and recommended actions.</i>
3.9.3 Group will implement management to reduce negative impacts including use of Forestry Grant Schemes where practical and appropriate.	By 2021	DMG Members	<i>Monitoring results used to inform management actions. Entry into SRDP Schemes.</i>
Actions to demonstrate DMG contribution to the Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover.	When?	Who?	How?
3.9.4 To inform the DMG about any future woodland proposals and incorporate in the DMP - taking account of potential implications for deer management.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Members will circulate/present proposals to DMG for discussion.</i>
3.9.5 DMG to carry out a strategic review of potential opportunities for new woodland schemes using the Scottish Government's Forestry Strategy. Review will consider need from a DMG perspective ie shelter provision for deer population at landscape scale.	Year 2	DMG Members & Consultant	<i>DMG Woodland Expansion Report and recommended actions.</i>

3.10 Wider Habitat Impacts and Peatlands

Actions to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside	When?	Who?	How?
Using revised BPG Guidance undergo training, set up plots and carry out a baseline habitat impact assessment (HIA) of the current grazing and trampling impacts on blanket bog & dwarf shrub heath.	By Autumn 2016	DMG Members (Scatwell, Ledgowan, Fairburn, Lochluichart, Glencarron)	<i>DMG to set up random plots and to carry out monitoring with the production of a report.</i>
Members with existing habitat monitoring continue to monitor and share results with DMG where appropriate.	Ongoing	Strathconon & Scardroy Estates	<i>Members will circulate monitoring results to DMG.</i>
Summary of assessment results reported to DMG. Management actions agreed.	Ongoing	DMG Members & Secretary	<i>Secretary will combine HIA data for Group and produce a map. DMG will agree management decisions based on overall Habitat Baseline Reports and Habitat Targets.</i>
Repeat HIA and management actions agreed.	May & June 2019 and Ongoing	DMG Chair and Secretary	<i>Members will collect repeat monitoring data. Secretary will provide assistance with data analysis and the production of a report. Members will use report to inform management.</i>

3.11 Non-native Species Management

Actions to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species	When?	Who?	How?
3.11.1 Muntjac Deer managed as per the Non-native Species Policy (Part 3 of plan).	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Members will contact local SNH Wildlife Management Officer immediately on suspected sighting of Muntjac.</i>
3.11.2 Sika Deer managed to prevent their further establishment within the DMG area and managed as per the Non-Native Species Policy (Part 3 of plan).	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Members will manage existing woodland populations and will shoot Sika on sight on the open range (within current legal restrictions) to prevent their spread.</i>
3.11.3 Feral Pigs and Feral Goats managed according to DMG Policy (Part 2) and future Policy Guidelines currently being agreed by SNH.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Members will report sightings of feral pigs and feral goats and shoot on sight (subject to welfare considerations) within DMG area. Implement Feral Pig and Feral Goat management policy once agreed by SNH.</i>
3.11.4 Encourage control of invasive plants species.	Annually	DMG Members	<i>Members will inform DMG of invasive plant species at annual meetings and will report on control undertaken.</i>

3.12 Historic and Cultural Features

Actions to protect designated historic and cultural features from being damaged by deer e.g. by trampling.	When?	Who?	How?
3.12.1 Identify any features within DMG area that may be impacted on by deer.	By end of 2016	DMG Members	<i>DMG members to report at Autumn DMG meeting on features identified.</i>
3.12.2 If features identified, ensure the appropriate management is implemented and report to DMG.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Verbal report/update to DMG.</i>
3.12.3 All future fencing proposals to follow Joint Agency Guidance	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>DMG area does not fall within National Scenic Area but new fencing proposals will be reported to DMG.</i>

3.13 Competence and Training

Actions to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management.	When?	Who?	How?
3.13.1 DMG will adopt the training policy statement (Part 2 of plan).	Spring 2016	DMG Members	<i>Adopted as part of DMP.</i>
3.13.2 Ascertain training requirements among DMG Members and investigate opportunities for Training/Continuous Professional Development. Report on progress on an annual basis.	Annually	DMG Secretary and Members	<i>Verbal report at Spring meeting.</i>
3.13.3 Develop and implement a training programme to assist in the provision of training for DMG Members who lack the necessary qualification or for individuals who wish to enhance their skills.	Annually	DMG Chair and Secretary	<i>Annual training programme to be agreed at Spring meeting. Secretary to organise courses/events.</i>

3.14 Public Health and Well-being

Actions to Identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing.	When?	Who?	How?
3.14.1 Update and make access leaflet available on-line and to relevant tourism operators - possibly include health information about tick awareness.	By end of 2016 and ongoing	DMG Secretary	<i>Secretary to circulate leaflets at Spring/Autumn meetings for members to distribute. Information made available on DMG website.</i>
3.1.4.2 Complete relevant Access information for the Heading For the Scottish Hills initiative. Strathconon to continue to provide Estate Access Information and ensure it is up to date.	By end 2016	Secretary & Relevant DMG Members	<i>Secretary to liaise with DMG members to coordinate information to SNH and ensure information is kept up to date. Information on Access to be made available on DMG web site.</i>
3.14.3 Raise awareness of threats relating to Chronic Wasting Disease and sign up to CWD Biosecurity Policy (Part 2 of plan).	By end of 2016 and ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Members to raise awareness of CWD with Clients and Visitors from USA and Canada.</i>
3.14.4 Investigate opportunities for awareness raising/educational events for the local community.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Members to discuss opportunities at Spring meeting. Open events to be advertised on DMG website.</i>
3.14.5 Provide opportunities for any concerns from the local community to be addressed.	Ongoing	DMG Chair and Secretary	<i>Meeting dates and Agendas will be publically available on DMG website and circulated to community councils in advance. DMG Chair and Secretary contact details will be available on website.</i>
3.14.6 Explore opportunities for greater liaison/collaboration with access takers including Scottish Mountaineering Club and other Organisations such as Mountaineering Council for Scotland, Ramblers Association etc.	By autumn 2016	DMG Chair and access organisations	<i>DMG to explore opportunities to work together to improve information provision through social media</i>

3.15 Economic Benefits/Costs

Actions to maximise economic benefits associated with deer	When?	Who?	How?
3.15.1 Investigate opportunities for membership of SQWV Quality Assurance Scheme.	By 2021	DMG Members	<i>On-going discussion at DMG meetings.</i>
3.15.2 Investigate opportunities to add-value to deer management in particular for more effective collection of carcasses and possible collaborative pricing of venison/game dealer prices on behalf of the DMG.	Annually	DMG Chairman and Secretary	<i>Discussion at Spring meeting. Chair & Secretary to negotiate on DMG behalf.</i>
3.15.3 DMG Members to seek opportunities to market venison locally.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Individual members undertake.</i>
3.15.4 DMG Members to continue to monitor sustainable harvest of sporting stags (including provision of age-class information).	Ongoing	Secretary & DMG Members	<i>Population model used to monitor sustainable harvest of stags. Members report stag cull according to 4 age-classes (Part 2: 15.3) at Autumn meeting.</i>
Actions to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective	When?	Who?	How?
3.15.5 DMG to consider the future costs of maintaining the strategic fence and financial provision for repairs.	By end of 2016	DMG Members	<i>Those responsible for sections of the fence report on current condition and likely repair timetable.</i>
3.15.6 Ensure local agricultural/ forestry interests are consulted on DMP and invited to/represented at DMG meetings.	Spring 2016	DMG Chairman and Secretary	<i>DMG Chair will correspond with relevant parties.</i>
3.15.7 Set up monitoring and reporting of DVCs through website, DMG meetings and local Police contact.	Spring 2016 and ongoing	DMG Secretary	<i>Members of the public asked to report DVCs to DMG Secretary on website. Members record and report DVCs to meetings.</i>
3.15.8 Implement actions to mitigate against DVC hotspots including localised deer management, use of signage, fencing etc.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Where hot-spots occur, DMG to discuss appropriate actions at meetings.</i>
3.15.9 Report on out of season and night shooting authorisations.	Annually	DMG Members	<i>Members to inform DMG Chair/Secretary in advance of intention to apply for authorisations. Members to report numbers of deer culled under authorisation at meetings.</i>
3.15.10 DMG to carry out an economic survey of deer management in the area, including an assessment of investment, employment, infrastructure etc.	By end 2017	Secretary & Relevant DMG Members	<i>Questionnaire will be developed and completed by members to produce a DMG report of Local Economic Implications of Deer Management.</i>

3.16 Communications

Actions to ensure effective communication on deer management issues	When?	Who?	How?
3.16.1 Stakeholders consulted on draft plan.	Spring 2016	DMG Secretary	Draft DMP made available on public website. Relevant stakeholders identified and invited to consult. Interested parties invited to attend a consultation meeting in Strathconon.
3.16.2 Final Plan and Minutes of Meetings will published on DMG Website.	Spring 2016	DMG Secretary	DMG Website.
3.16.3 DMG Constitution and ADMG Principles of Collaboration adopted (Part 3)	Spring 2016	DMG Members	Adopted as part of DMP.
3.16.4 Agree and adopt a DMG Communications Policy	Spring 2016	DMG Members	Adopted as part of DMP.

3.17 Deer Welfare

Actions to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual animal and population level	When?	Who?	How?
3.17.1 Agree and adopt welfare policy (Part 2 of plan).	Spring 2016	DMG Members	<i>Implemented through every day Best Practice in deer management.</i>
3.17.2 Consider opportunities for CPD/Training in relation to deer welfare.	Autumn 2017	DMG Members	<i>DMG will run at least one event to share Best Practice Management.</i>
3.17.3 Provide information on welfare indicators annually. Baseline information established in year 1 of DMP and welfare indicators reported on annually. Any resulting management actions agreed and implemented by members.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Deer managers to provide information on hind reproduction and average larder weights.</i>
3.17.4 Any new fencing in DMG area will consider welfare implications in design and extent and the appropriate management undertaken.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>New fencing proposals will be consulted with DMG.</i>
3.17.5 Monitoring and reporting of significant levels of winter mortality.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Deer managers will provide information (figures & location) on winter mortality.</i>
3.17.6 Carry out a review of fencing and wintering ground and identify opportunities to open up woodland to deer.	Year 2	DMG Members & Consultant	<i>Carry out as part of the delivery of the DMG Woodland Expansion Report and recommended actions.</i>

3.18 Monitoring and Review Schedule

Actions	Who?	Year 1 2016-17	Year 2 2017-18	Year 3 2018-19	Year 4 2019-20	Year 5 2020-21
Helicopter Deer Count	Members	Count		Count		
Recruitment Count	DMG Members	Spring & Summer	Spring & Summer	Spring & Summer	Spring & Summer	Spring Summer
Habitat Training	DMG Members	Spring/ Summer				
Habitat Monitoring Blanket Bog	DMG Members	Summer			Summer	
Habitat Monitoring Dwarf Shrub Heath	DMG Members	Summer			Summer	
Habitat Monitoring Native Woodland Review	DMG Members			Summer		
Woodland Expansion Review			Summer			
Review Habitat Results	DMG Members	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Set & Agree Culls	DMG Members	Spring & Autumn	Spring & Autumn	Spring & Autumn	Spring & Autumn	Spring & Autumn
Collate DMG Information & Review Working Plan Actions	DMG Secretary	Bi- annually	Bi- annually	Review DMP- Spring	Bi- annually	Review DMP- Spring
Produce Annual Report	DMG Secretary	Spring	Spring	Spring	Spring	Review DMP - Spring