

Strathconon Deer Management Group

Part 1: Deer Management Plan Information & Public Interest Actions



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Image 1: View westwards across DMG from Strathconon Estate

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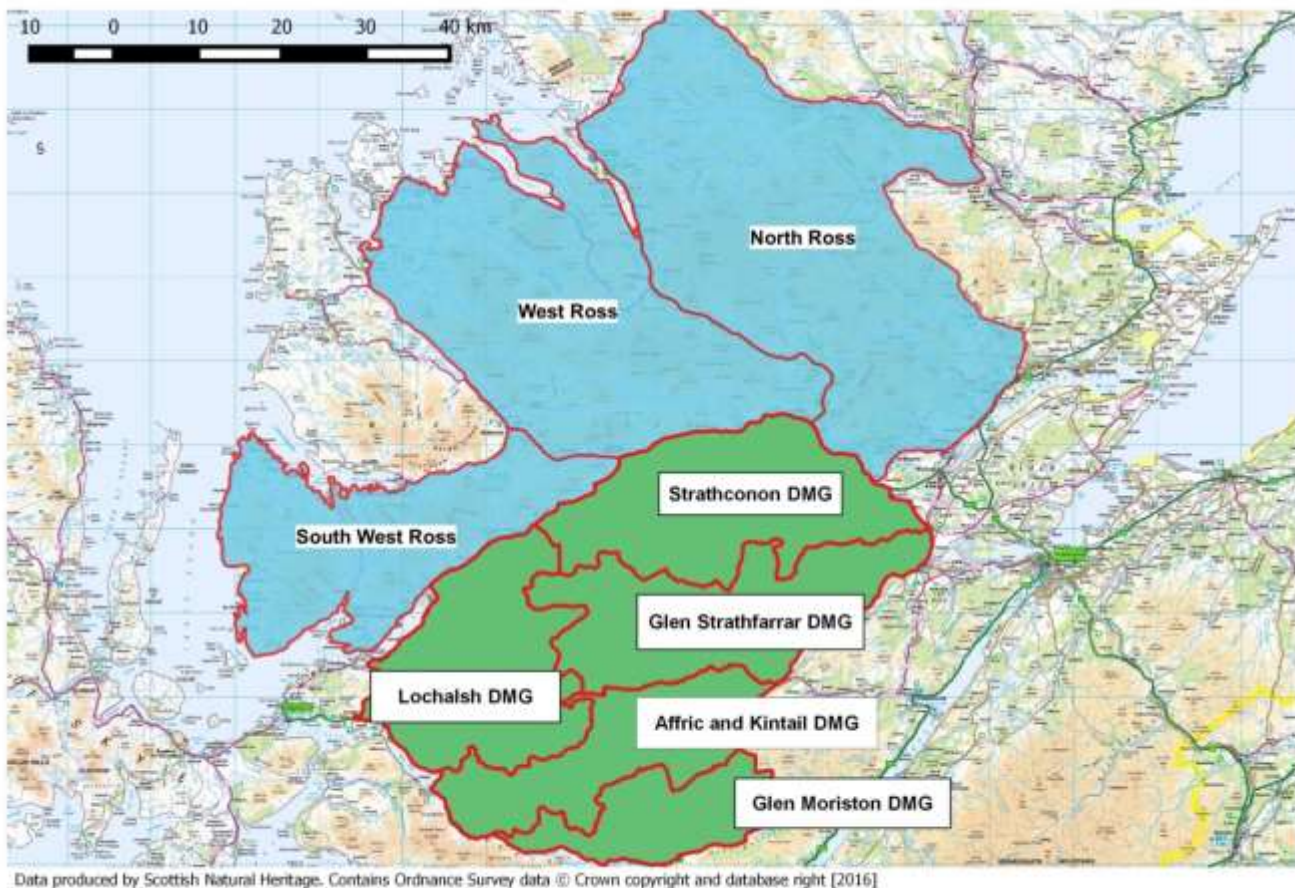
1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Strathconon Deer Management Group Location and Neighbours

Strathconon Deer Management Group (SDMG) is located in the Highlands. Originally part of South Ross DMG which was formed in the 1960's, South Ross DMG was divided into smaller management areas in 2012 including Strathconon, Glen Strathfarrar, Affric & Kintail, Lochalsh and Glen Moriston DMGs (Figure 1).

The Group maintains active communication and engagement with all neighbouring DMGs to ensure a landscape collaborative approach to deer management (Figure 1). In particular, the Group collaborates closely with Glen Strathfarrar to the south, where it is recognised that there may be deer movement between DMGs. A deer fence which runs along the north side of the A832 (not within the DMG boundary) largely prevents deer movements between SDMG and West Ross DMG. The use of deer fencing also largely restricts movement between the Group and North Ross DMG. There is some movement of deer between SDMG and South West Ross but this is mostly within Ledgowan, a property that straddles both DMGs.

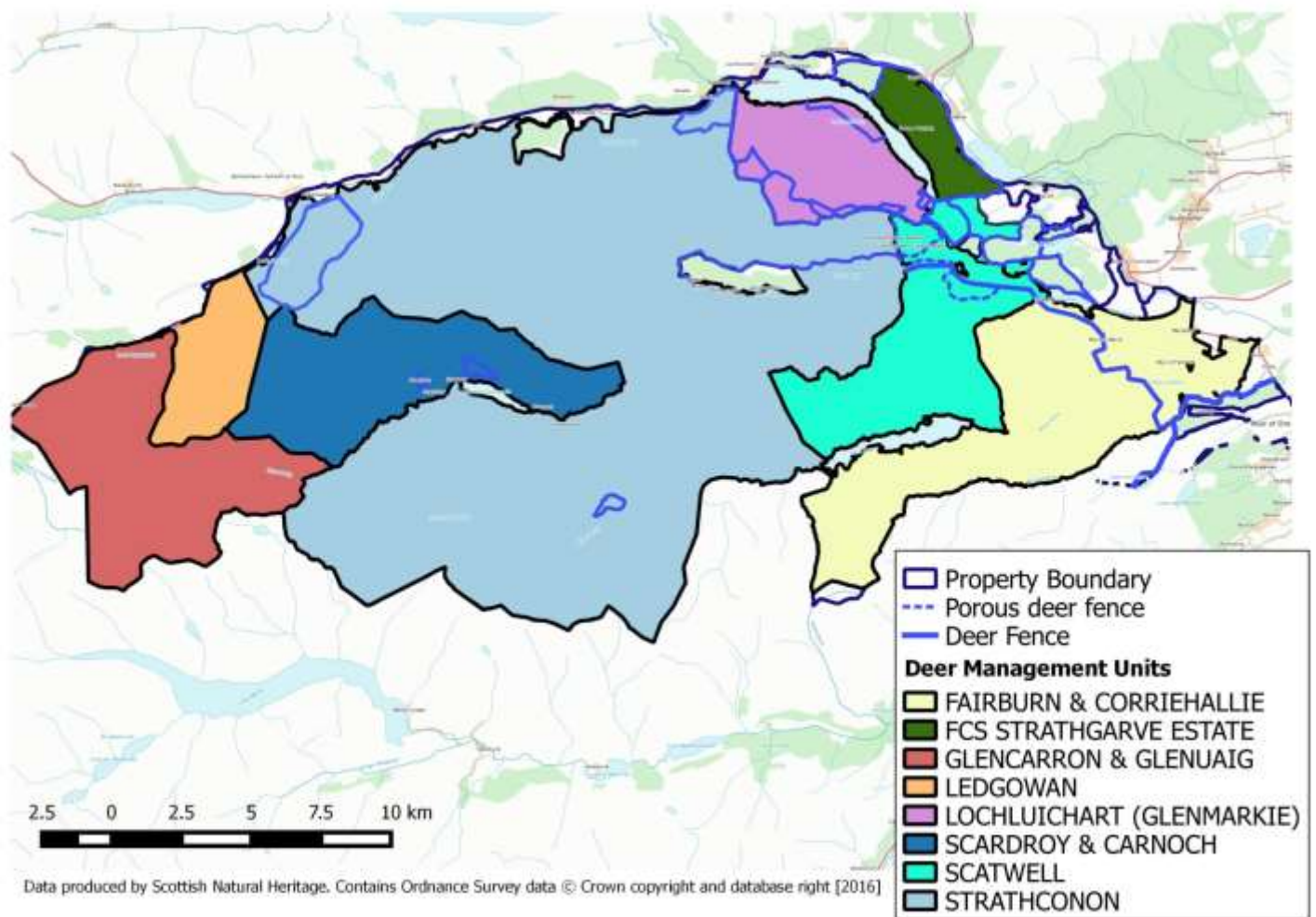
Figure 1: Strathconon DMG and Neighbouring DMGs



1.1.2 Strathconon DMG Area and Boundaries.

The total Group area is approximately **55,045 ha** and is bounded to the north-west by the A890 Lochcarron to Achnasheen Road and to the north by the A832 from Achnasheen to Muir of Ord, which includes part of the A835 (Figure 2). From Muir of Ord, the southern boundary of the Group is slightly more complex following the southern marches of Fairburn Estate (through Gleann Goibhre), Strathconon Estate and Glencarron & Glenuaig Estate.

Figure 2: Strathconon DMG Boundary and Management Units



1.1.3 Strathconon Management Units

The Group is made up of **8 main members** (Figure 2 and Table 1)

Table 1: Main DMG Members

Estate	Area (ha)	Comments
Fairburn and Corriehallie Estate	6164	
Glencarron & Glenuaig Estate	4562	
Ledgowan Estate	1574	Only part of the Estate falls within the DMG area, the other part lies within South West Ross.
Lochluichart Estate	11,905	The Estate is a full member of the DMG. Part of the Estate known as Glenmarkie is completely fenced off from the main Red Deer open range of Strathconon DMG.
National Forest Estate	1285	Corriemollie, Strathgarve and Highfield blocks are fenced from the main Red Deer range.
Olssen Forest	365	Fenced off from the main Red Deer range.
Scatwell Estate	3650	
Strathconnon & Scardroy Estate	33000	Previously separate Estates but now managed as a single unit.

Combinations of land use objectives and priorities vary from property to property throughout the DMG management area but as a whole Conservation is a common and strongly shared focus of all. Further information on individual management units is contained in **Sections 1.18 to 1.36**.

1.1.4 DMG Vision Statement

The vision of Strathconon DMG is to maintain a healthy deer population at a density which recognises habitats in good condition, which maintains jobs and supports the local economy and which provides a range of positive benefits both to those living locally and to those visiting the area.

1.1.4 Sustainable Deer Management and the Public Interest

The management of red deer at a landscape population level as set out in the [Code of Practice on Deer Management](#) (The Deer Code) requires a collaborative approach. Deer are regarded as a natural resource and as such all those who manage them have a 'responsibility' to:

- manage deer as a resource sustainably;
- minimise negative deer impacts on public interest;
- safeguard deer welfare.

The deer management objectives of members of the DMG currently contribute to delivering a wide range of public benefits as set out in The Deer Code. This plan will demonstrate how the DMG is currently contributing to sustainable deer management and will identify further opportunities for the DMG to deliver the Public Interest.

1.1.5 The purpose of the DMP

The overall purpose of this Plan is to provide:

- An agreed framework for the management of wild deer in the area covered by the Group;
- An agreed set of actions;
- An agreed pattern of arrangements to ensure that the actions are implemented and their effectiveness monitored.

1.1.6 Deer Management Plan Structure

- **Part 1: Deer Management Plan Information.** This sets out background information and details the Public Interest relating to Deer Management in the local area. Information on individual management units is also contained here. A systematic review of the whole plan will take place at the end of 5 years.
- **Part 2: Group Operation.** Contains information relating to the Operation and Functioning of the DMG.
- **Part 3: The Working Plan:** The Working Plan will be reviewed at least twice annually. The Working Plan sets out the most up to date information on culls, counts and population targets as well as a summary of the specific actions (detailed in Part 1) that the Deer Management Group will undertake throughout the life of the plan. This document will contain live population models which will be subject to continuous amendment.

1.1.7 Deer Management Plan Implementation

The plan will identify specific actions for the Group and targets to be delivered by 2021. These will be reviewed on an annual basis in the Working Plan. The DMG will use information gathered from habitat monitoring, population census and cull reporting to agree and set culls on an annual basis. Each management unit is committed to implementing the necessary culls to achieve this.

The Group are committed to working collaboratively to deliver the objectives of the plan and will meet regularly to discuss deer management and issues that arise in the local and wider area. This Plan will therefore take account of all land management interests as well as those of other Statutory Organisations and the wider public interest.

1.1.8 Deer Management Adoption, Consultation and Review

This Deer Management Plan has been formally adopted by all the Members of the Group and will run from 2016 to 2021. It has been through a consultation process and a copy of DMP has been given to the local Community Councils. The Plan will be formally reviewed in 2021.

1.2. Deer Populations and Management

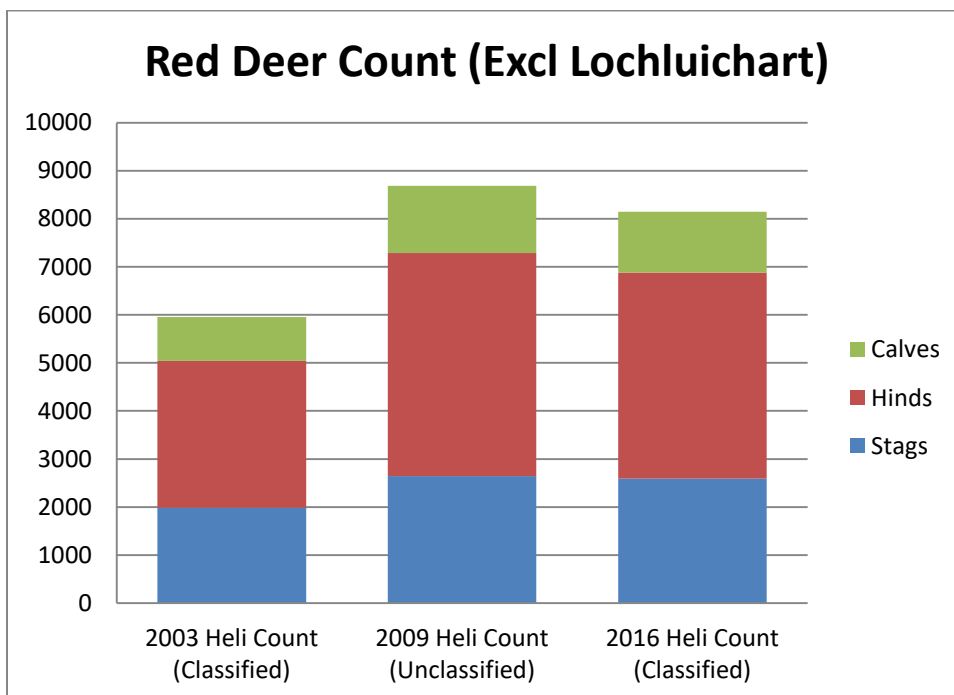
1.2.1 Deer Species

- Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) are the main deer species found throughout the DMG area, and along with sheep provide the main grazing impact over much of the hill ground.
- Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) are found across the DMG area, both on the open hill and in woodland.
- Fallow Deer (*Dama dama*) are not currently established in the Group area.
- Sika deer (*Cervus nippon*) have been regularly reported over recent years. Although not established on the open-hill (Strathconon and Scardroy have occasionally shot sika on the open-hill) they are established within woodlands in the east of the Group (with Sika culled from woodlands on Olsson, Fairburn, Scatwell).

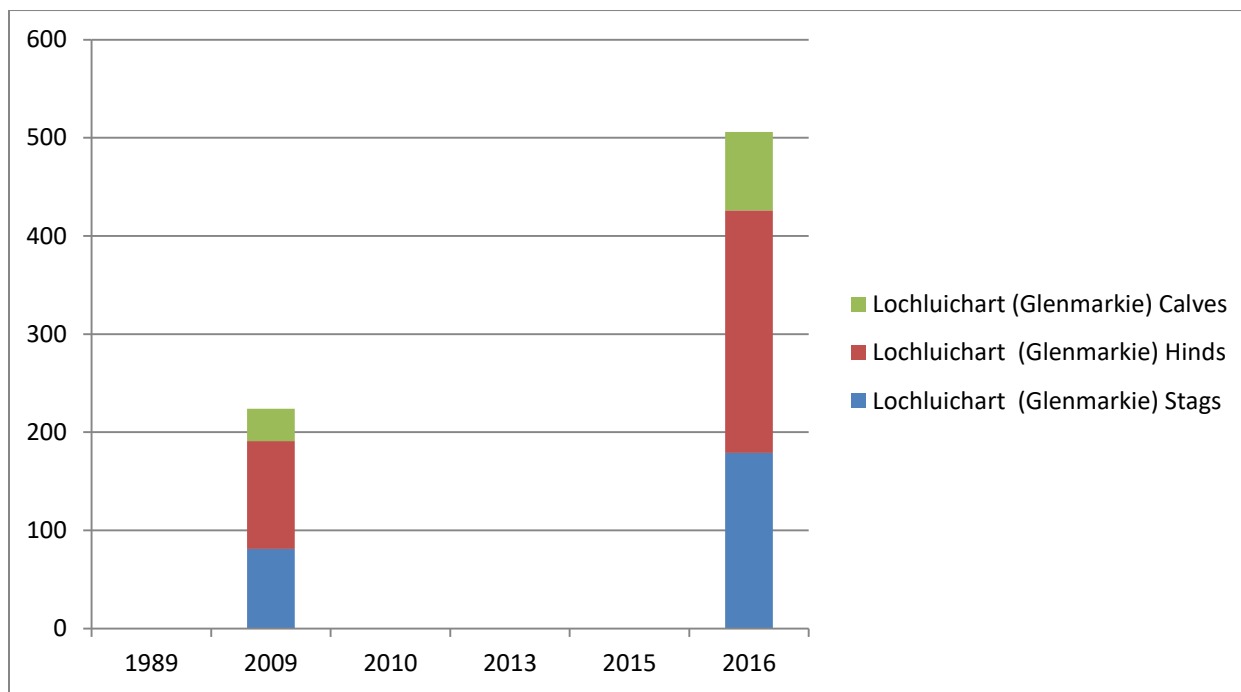
1.2.2 Deer Populations

In order that culls can be set to achieve a target density that enables all objectives of the Group to be met, it is essential to be able to estimate the current deer population on the open range which is approximately **46044 hectares**. The last full helicopter Red Deer count of the whole DMG area was carried out in 2016 and estimated a total population of **8147 deer (17.7 deer per km²)** (Figures 3a and Table 2a). This is a slight decrease from the population count in 2009 which counted 8686 deer in total (18.9 deer per km²). The current spring recruitment rate is approximately 29% with a sex ratio of **1:1.7** stags to hinds. The population counts for Lochluichart are shown in Figures 3b, 3c and Table 2b. For the main Estate (excluding Glenmarkie), the deer population has declined since 2009 to a population of **918 deer** in 2015 (a density of **9.55 deer per km²**).

Figures 3a: Red Deer DMG Population Counts excluding Lochluichart.



Figures 3b: Red Deer DMG Population Counts Lochluichart (Glenmarkie).



Figures 3b: Red Deer DMG Population Counts Lochluichart.

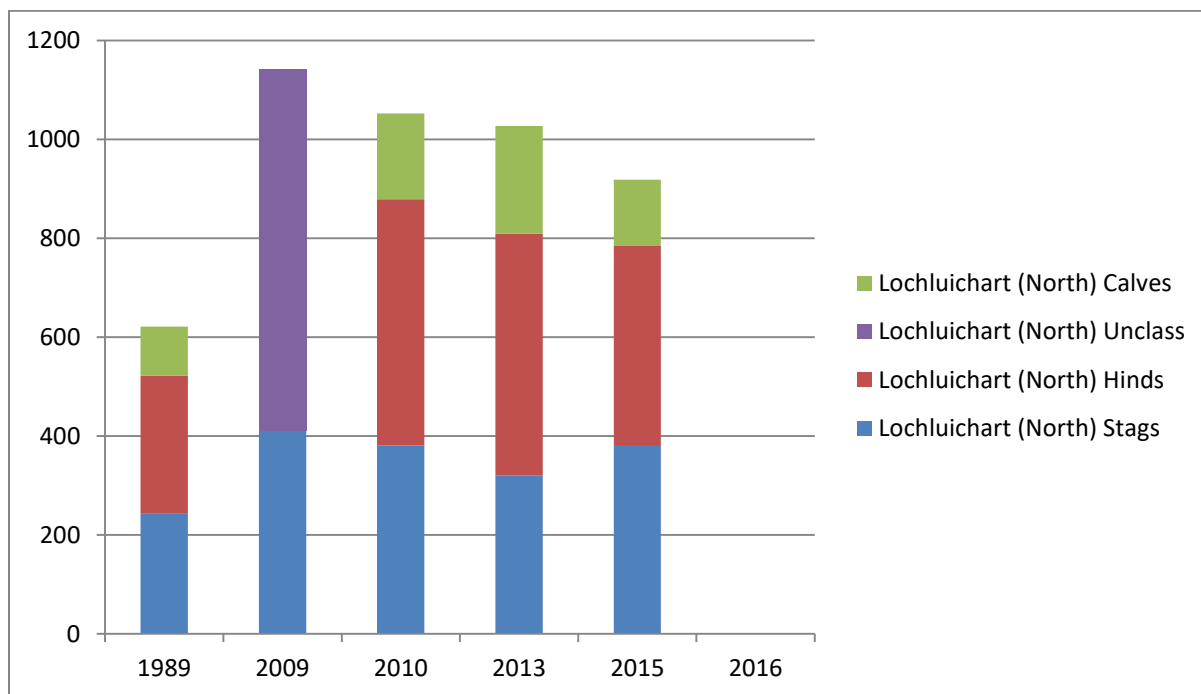


Table 2a: Historic Count Figures

		Total DMG (Excluding Lochluichart)				
Count Type	Year	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 2b: Historic Count Figures for Lochluichart

		Lochluichart (Glenmarkie)					Lochluichart (North)					
Count Type	Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Deer per km2	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Unclass	Total	Deer per km2
	1989	0	0	0	0	0.0	244	278	99	0	621	6.46
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	2009	81	110	33	224	9.8	410	0	0	731	1141	11.87
	2010	0	0	0	0	0.0	381	498	173	0	1052	10.95
	2013	0	0	0	0	0.0	320	489	218	0	1027	10.69
	2015	0	0	0	0	0.0	380	404	134	0	918	9.55
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	2016	179	247	80	506	22.0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

1.2.3 Deer Culls

Cull data on Red, Roe and Sika have been recorded for the last 10 years (Figures 4,5, 6 & 7).

Figure 4a: Historic Group Open Range Red Deer Culls

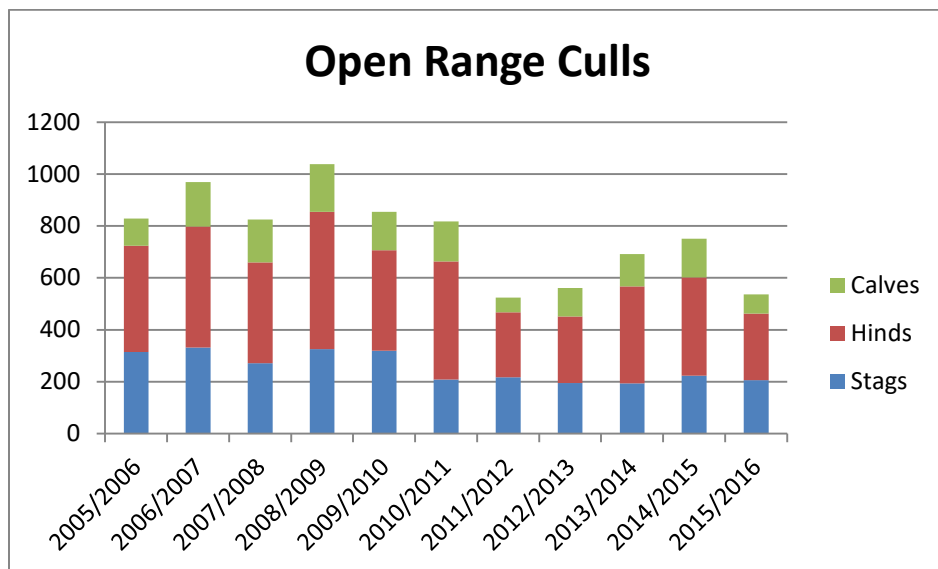


Figure 4b: Historic Group Open Range Red Deer Culls Lochluichart

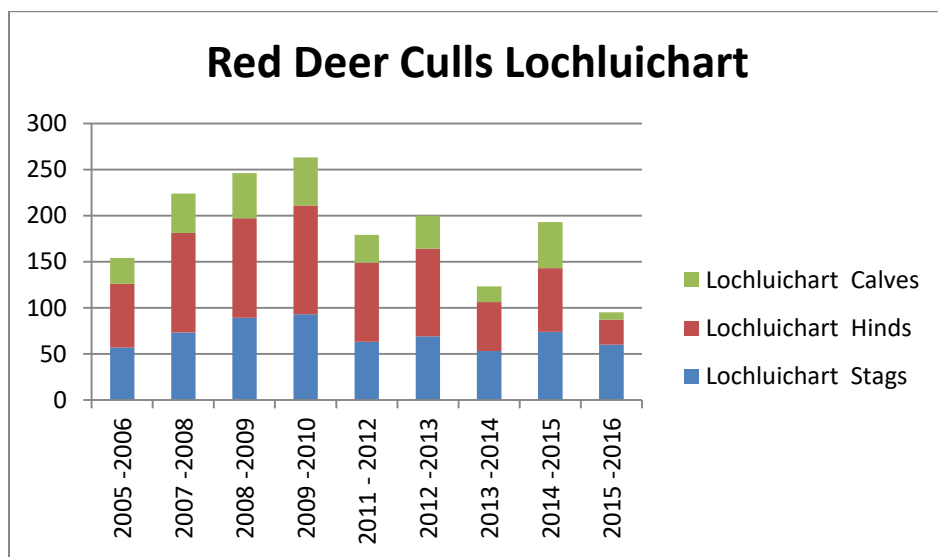
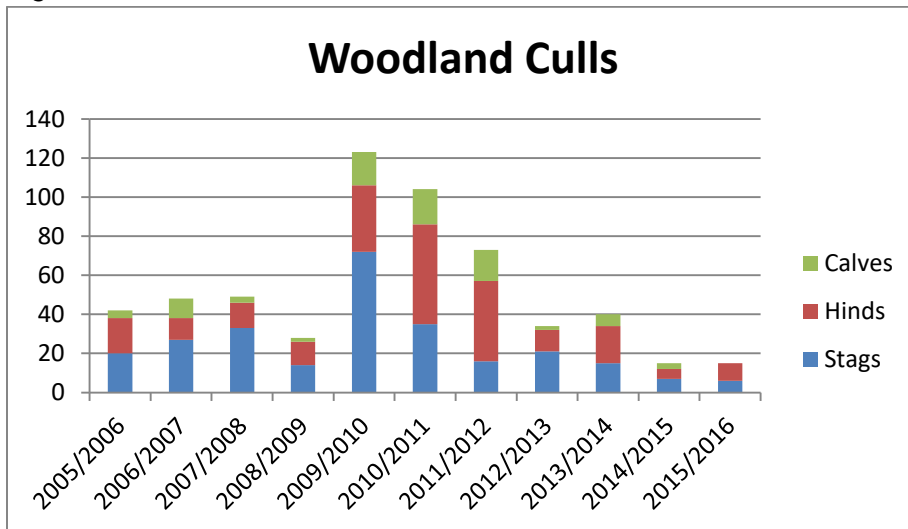
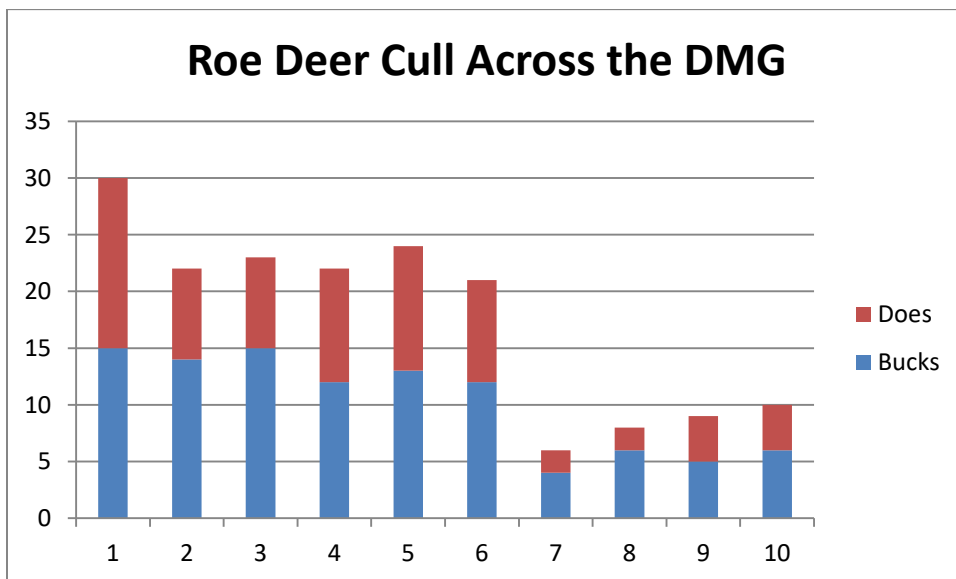


Figure 5: Historic Woodland Red Deer Culls



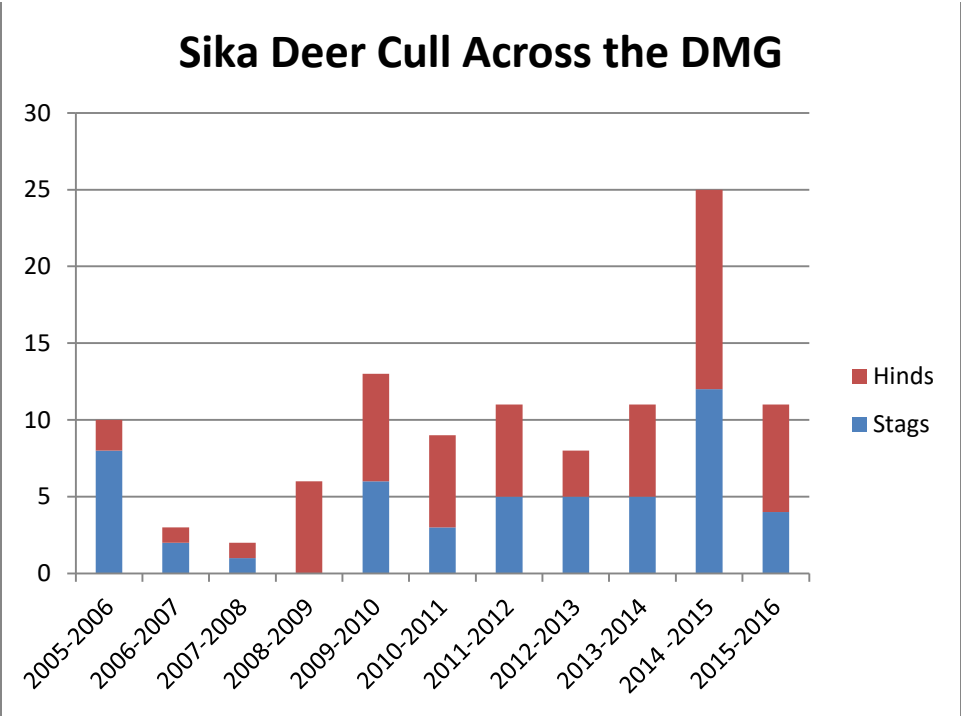
Roe Deer culls have tended to fluctuate (Figure 9), but this is due to inconsistency in reporting to the DMG.

Figure 6: Historic Group Roe Deer Culls



Culls of Sika Deer have also fluctuated over the last 20 years (Figure 10).

Figure 7: Historic Group Sika Deer Culls



1.2.4 Other herbivores

Over the last 20 years, sheep and cattle numbers on the open-hill have been reduced significantly. Previously most properties had sheep, with numbers around 1800. Currently, sheep numbers are closer to 530 with grazing confined to certain times of the year. Cattle in small numbers (20-30) also have limited access to the open hill.

1.3 Natural Heritage

1.3.1 Biodiversity

The flora across the Group area is very varied and reflects the underlying variety of rock types. A detailed account of the geology and habitat types across the DMG can be found in the previous DMP (Putman 2006 - 2011).

There are important populations of Golden Eagles (*Aquila crysaetos*) as well as Peregrines (*Falco peregrinus*), Merlins (*F. columbaius*), Hen Harriers (*Circus cyaneus*), Goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*), Sparrowhawks (*A. nisus*), Red Kites (*Milvus milvus*) and Buzzards (*Buteo buteo*). There are also breeding populations of Black-throated Divers (*Gavia artica*) and Red-Throated Divers (*G. stellate*), Golden Plovers (*Charadrius apricarius*) and Dotterel (*C. morinellus*). Black Grouse (*Tetrao tetrix*) and Red Kites (*Milvus milvus*) are also present within the Group area.

1.4 Actions to develop mechanisms to manage deer

1.4.1 Background

- To manage deer populations at a landscape scale a collaborative approach is required and the need to negotiate and compromise may be necessary. This requires a Deer Management Group to be functioning effectively, to be inclusive and to operate in the spirit of openness and transparency. The Association of Deer Management Groups (ADMG) has provided some guiding principles through the [ADMG Benchmark](#).
- Strathconon Deer Management Group is made up of **8 members who manage deer across the main properties within the DMG area**. On all properties conservation is a common objective but deer are also managed as a resource. Other objectives include farming and livestock production, forestry and tourism.
- Deer have the potential to impact (positively and negatively) on many of these objectives and collaborative deer management at a landscape level is essential in order for the objectives of the whole Group to be met. To achieve an overall target population density that delivers sustainable deer management, it is essential to be able to estimate the current deer population. Since 2003, there have been 3 full helicopter deer counts over the whole DMG area which provide an estimate of the open-range deer population. The population was counted in Spring 2016 and was estimated to be 17.7 deer/Km². A more detailed description of trends in deer numbers and historic annual cull figures can be found in Section 2.
- Whilst recognised as a Group in its own right, there is movement of deer out with the main boundaries. The DMG maintains on-going communication with neighbouring Glen Strathfarrar DMG to the south to ensure a landscape collaborative approach to deer management and a **collaborative approach** to managing deer across DMG boundaries where required is essential.

1.4.2 Plan Objectives

The Deer Management Plan (DMP) will aim to identify specific actions to deliver local public interest and ownership objectives. The DMP should also ensure that representation and Membership of the Deer Management Group enables greater integration of different land-uses at a local level. The planning process should also be consultative, transparent and open.

1.4.3 Current Delivery.

- An agreed Deer Management Plan is in place which was adopted in 2016. A previous plan ran from 2006 to 2015.
- DMG has a [Strathconon DMG Web Site](#). Minutes of meetings, Agendas and a copy of the plan are available on the web site as well as contact details and a summary of DMG information. A link to the web site is also available on the [Association of Deer Management Groups](#) web site.
- The DMG currently works in Partnership with Government Agencies including **Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)**, **Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS)** and the Local Community.
- All the main deer management units in the area are Members of the DMG, and representatives from neighbouring Strathfarrar DMG regularly attend meetings which provides a mechanism for discussing landscape-wide deer management issues, which is reciprocated.
- The DMG is represented at annual meetings of the South Ross Deer Management Liaison Group

which provides an informal overview of deer management across the 5 groups which used to make up the South Ross DMG.

- The Group meets bi-annually and cull targets are set and reported on. Group Membership is encouraged to continue its practice of open discussion of cull levels at all meetings.
- In November 2015 and March 2016, as part of the wider DMG planning process, stalkers from Strathconon, Glen Strathfarrar, Lochalsh and Glen Affric met to discuss the deer count and changes in deer movements.
- Representatives of the DMG attended the Glen Strathfarrar and Affric & Kintail Joint DMG public consultation meeting.
- The DMG held a full public consultation of the draft plan. A public consultation meeting was held on on XXX and the local Community Councils were sent copies of the Draft.

1.4.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to develop mechanisms to manage deer	When?	Who?	How?
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>
Repeat DMG Assessment.	By Spring 2016 and ongoing	DMG Chair and Secretary	<i>Use baseline DMG Assessment carried out in 2014.</i>
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>
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>

A helicopter count will be repeated in Spring 2019 to coordinate with other DMGs in the South Ross area.	Spring 2019	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>
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>
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>
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>
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 (ECAF) application.</i>

1.5. Actions for the delivery of designated features into Favourable Condition.

1.5.1 Background

- Nationally, there are around 356 designated features (15.8% of total) within the current DMG network where herbivores impacts are contributing to the unfavourable condition of the feature. It is expected that the SDMG will contribute to the Scottish Government target of achieving 80% of features in Favourable or Unfavourable Recovering condition by 2016 by facilitating the reduction of herbivore impacts where this is contributing to the unfavourable condition.
- A total of **1741 ha** (3% of the DMG area) is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (see Figure 8). A total of **22,409 ha** (41% of the DMG area) is designated as a Special Protection Area (see Figure 10). There are **10 designated features** within the DMG area (see Table 2). Only one feature is in **Unfavourable Condition** due to invasive non-native plants.
- Achnasheen Terraces SSSI** is designated for geological interest.
- Achanalt Marshes (SSSI and SPA)**. The site is notified for the assemblage of breeding birds (particularly waders and wildfowl) that it supports. Waders breeding on the site include: golden plover, common sandpiper, wood sandpiper, dunlin, curlew, snipe, redshank, oystercatcher and lapwing. Wildfowl that breed on the site are: goosander, red-breasted merganser, mute swan, wigeon, tufted duck, teal and mallard. The site has also been classified as Achanalt Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA) and is of European importance because it regularly supports 50% of the British population of breeding Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*).
- Monar Forest SSSI** lies to the north of Loch Monar in very remote country on the watershed between east and west Ross and Cromarty. The SSSI is focussed on the mountain massifs of Maoile Lunndaidh, Bidein an Eoin Dearg and Sgurr a Chaorachain. The upland habitats of alpine moss heath, snowbeds, alpine heath, subalpine dry heath and tall herb ledges together make up the habitat assemblage feature. The species rich summit heath is the most outstanding feature. As sheep grazing and muirburn are thought to have ceased over the site, grazing by red deer is the principal factor in the management of the site and levels are influenced by management across a wide deer range. Although the site is in **Favourable condition**, reduction in grazing levels would be likely to have a positive effect on some of the vegetation communities which are currently restricted to inaccessible ledges. Deer stalking is the predominant form of management but there is also considerable use of the site by walkers accessing 'Munros' as well as long distance walkers crossing the site. The latter often camp en route. Some path maintenance is undertaken by the local estates. Trampling by animals and people has localised effects throughout the site. Some plant communities, particularly those found at higher altitudes, are sensitive to repeated trampling or damage by all-terrain vehicles. However, currently erosion is very localised and not considered to be a serious problem.
- The Lower River Conon SSSI** (also part of Conon Islands Special Area of Conservation) consists of several semi-natural areas on the floodplain of the River Conon. Approximately 10 ha lies within the DMG boundary. SNH has a current management agreement with one of the owners on this SSSI. The objectives of the agreement are to remove the invasive non-native plants thereby helping to address the currently unfavourable condition of the wet woodland feature.

- Glen Affric to Strathconon SPA. This Special Protection Area has been designated for Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and in 2003, supported 10 active territories, representing 2.2% of the UK population.
- Fannich Hills SAC/SSSI. Fannich Hills SAC/SSSI (Figure 9b) sits outwith the Strathconon DMG area but includes land which is managed by four estates including Lochluichart. The following habitats are qualifying interests of the Fannich Hills SAC: Alpine and Boreal heaths, Blanket bogs, European dry heaths, North Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*, Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea*, Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands, Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation and Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopietalia ladani*). The Fannich Hills SSSI covers just over 10,900 hectares, 1,300 hectares larger than the SAC. The notified features are both geological (Quaternary of Scotland and Moine) and biological (Flies, Beetles and Upland Habitat assemblage).

1.5.2 Plan Objectives

The Deer Management Plan (DMP) will monitor deer impacts and manage deer to continue to deliver favourable condition on designated sites in the area.

1.5.3 Current Delivery.

- Currently 9 features (**90%**) are in 'Favourable' condition. Of the remaining "Unfavourable" sites, the condition of the feature is not related to deer impacts but to invasive non-native plants (Table 2).
- On Monar Forest SSSI (Figure 9a), on the three main Estates over which the site lies, deer number have remained consistent since the 2009 count, with a slight reduction of deer density from 13.6 deer per km² to **13.4 deer per km² overall across all three properties** (Table 3). A relatively small part of the SSSI (approximately 104 ha) lies within Strathconon Estate.
- Deer management activity contributes positively to the Golden Eagle SPA which is in Favourable Condition (Figure 10).
- Lochluichart Estate is currently a member of the Fannich Hills Section 7 management agreement

1.5.4. Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions for the delivery of designated features into Favourable Condition	When?	Who?	How?
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. The 400 hinds are spread over the Estate fairly evenly, so only a third or less would be hefted on the SSSI.</i>
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>

Table 2: Designated features within the DMG area

Name	Designation	Feature	Condition Status	Herbivore Impacts	Property
Achanalt Marshes	SSSI	Flood-plain fen	Favourable	No	Strathconon
Achanalt Marshes	SSSI	Mesotrophic loch	Favourable	No	Strathconon
Achanalt Marshes	SSSI	Breeding bird assemblage	Favourable	No	Strathconon
Achnasheen Terraces	SSSI	Quaternary of Scotland	Favourable	No	Strathconon
Lower River Conon	SSSI	Wet woodland	Unfavourable	No	Unknown
Lower River Conon	SSSI	Open water transition fen	Favourable	No	Unknown
Lower River Conon	SSSI	Saltmarsh	Favourable	No	Unknown
Monar Forest	SSSI	Upland assemblage	Favourable	Yes	Glencarron & Glenuaig
Achanalt Marshes	SPA	Wood sandpiper (<i>Tringa glareola</i>), breeding	Favourable	No	Strathconon
Glen Affric to Strathconon	SPA	Golden eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>), breeding	Favourable	No	Strathconon, Lochluichart, Scatwell, Fairburn

Table 3: Deer densities on Monar Forest SSSI

	2009 Count					2016 Count				
	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
Glencarron & Glenuaig	77	510	125	712	15.6	109	428	107	644	15.6
East Monar	96	157	46	288	12.5	54	177	60	291	12.5
West Monar	212	305	92	609	12.5	240	316	89	645	12.5
Total	385	972	263	1609	13.6	403	921	256	1580	13.4
Strathconon	1611	2592	774	4977	19.2	1539	2367	721	4627	17.8

Figure 8: Sites of Special Scientific Interest

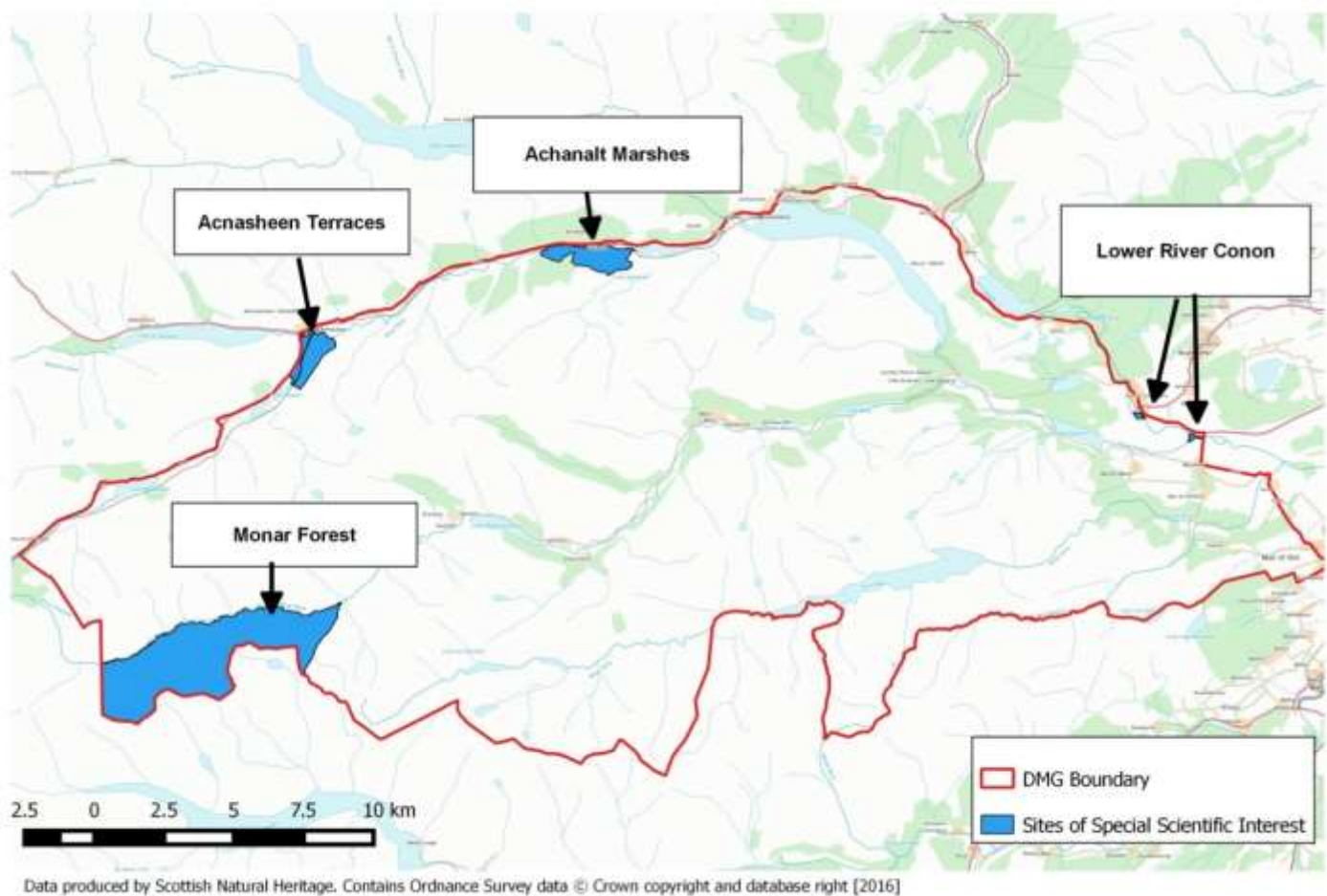


Figure 9a: Monar Forest Sites of Special Scientific Interest

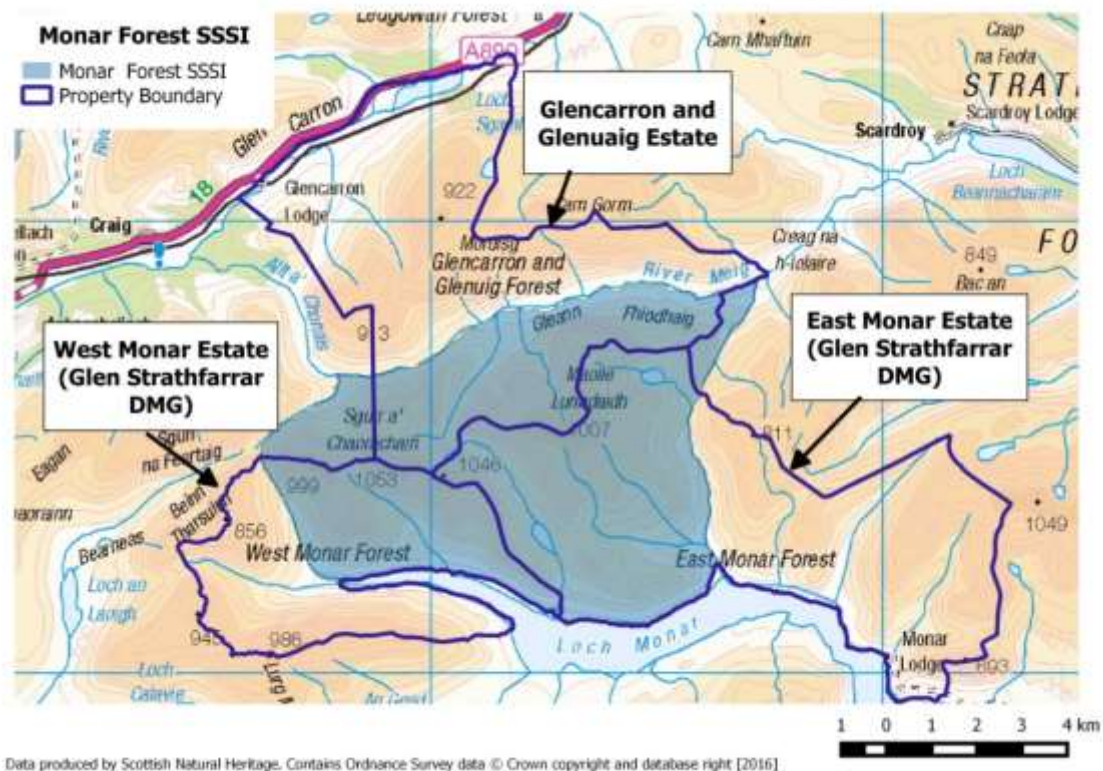


Figure 9b: Fannich Hills Special Area of Conservation & Site of Special Scientific Interest

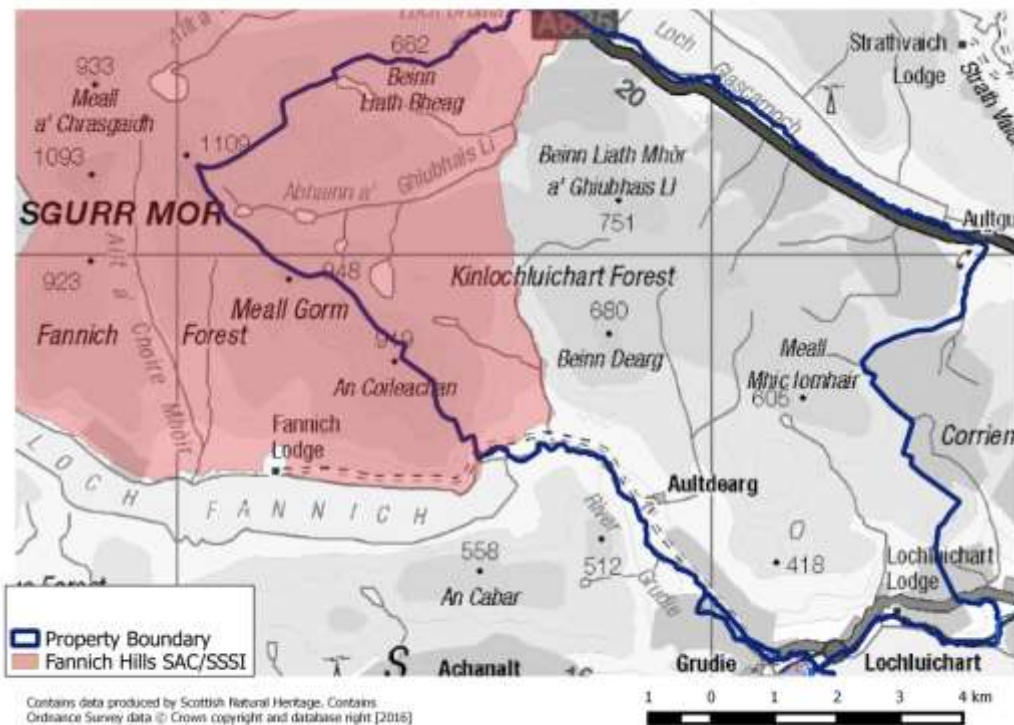
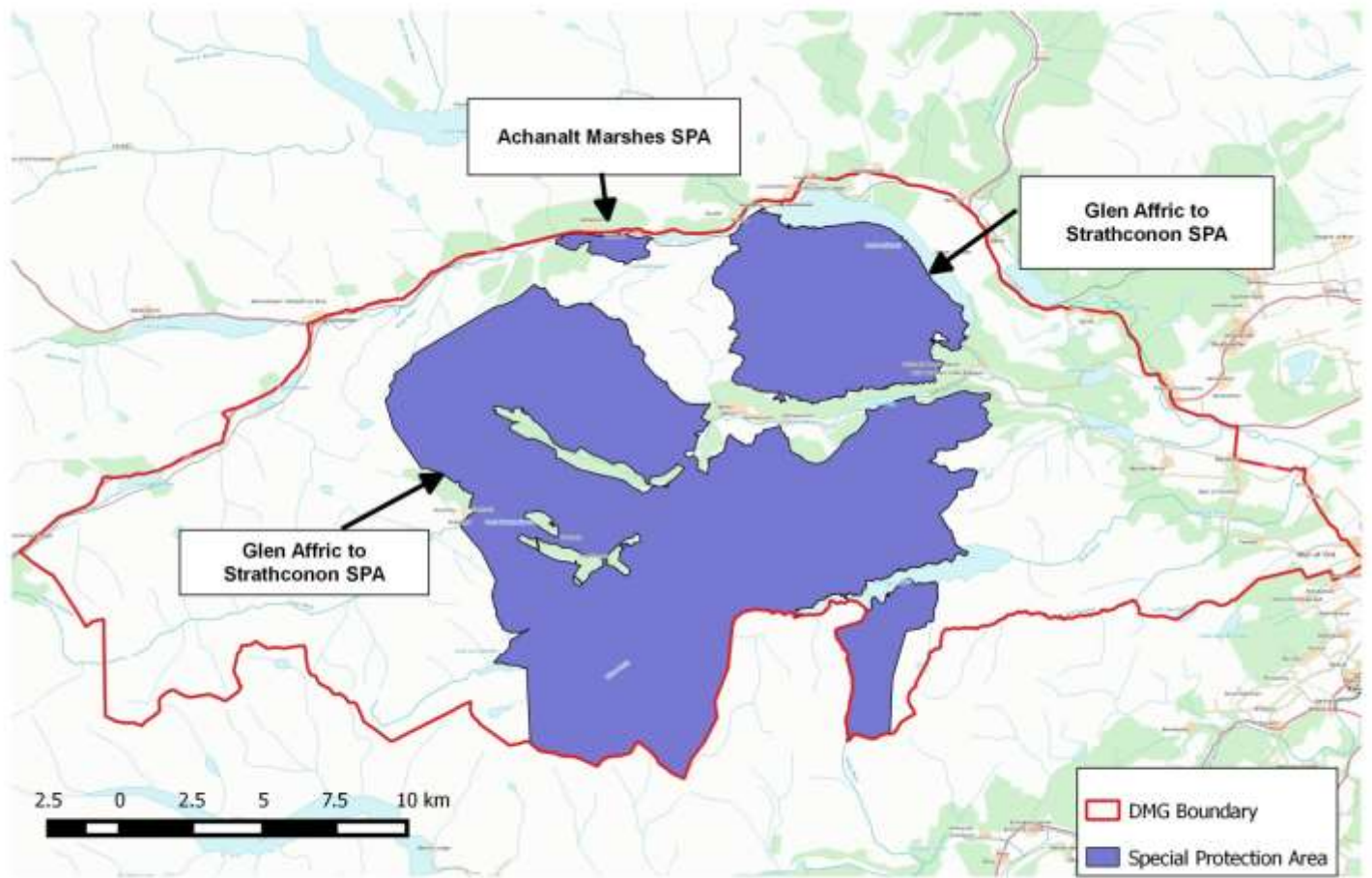


Figure 10: Special Protection Areas



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1.6. Actions to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover

1.6.1 Background

- Total area of native woodland in Scotland is 311,153 ha. The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) was published in 2014. This maps non-designated native woodland cover, reports condition and highlights herbivore impacts which threaten medium to long term condition of these important woodlands.
- [Wild Deer- A National Approach \(WDNA\)](#) and the [2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity](#) has set a national targets that 60% of native woodlands should be considered to be in "satisfactory condition" by 2020 and that approximately 10,000 ha of native woodland should be in satisfactory condition through Deer Management Plans.
- There is approximately **6770 ha** of woodland within the DMG area which is 12% of the total area of the DMG (Figure 11, Table 3).
- Of this woodland, the NWSS has identified approximately **3442 ha (6% of total area)** of native woodland within the DMG area (Table 4, Figure 12). This represents **0.1%** of the total area of native woodland in Scotland.

1.6.2 Plan Objectives

- DMG Members will implement management to reduce the proportion of native woodland area identified within the 'High' and 'Very High' categories of herbivore impact in order to contribute to targets set by Scottish Government Agencies.
- The DMP will identify all existing woodland and its condition and will consider actions for the next 5 years to ensure that the long term woodland objectives can be met.

1.6.3 Current Delivery.

- Currently **2542 ha (74%)** of native woodlands are considered to have **Low/Medium Impacts** (Table 4).
- A further **2%** of native woodland (**27.6 ha** on Lochluichart and **55.07 ha** on NFE Strathgarve) considered to have "High" impacts has been fenced off from deer (Figure 13).
- On **Glencarron and Glenuaig Estate 33.5 ha** of native woodland (1%) considered to have "Very High" impacts have been enclosed since 1993.
- **Strathconon Estate** (1092 ha of native woodland) has a Long Term Forest Plan in place (2013 -2022). One small block of 3ha was enclosed in the mid 1980s and now shows excellent regeneration. Further exclosures have been established at Creag an Fhithich, Badinluchie, Dalbreac, Achlorachan, Coille Ruairidh and Cnoc Geal. A number of further small exclosures are planned at Gleann Chorain, in Glen Orrin and along the River Orrin.
- **Scatwell Estate** (415 ha of native woodland) has two long-term forest plans in place for Scatwell Estate (Ref: 030/901100 2007 – 2027). Scatwell West Comrie (Ref: 4125442, 2012 – 2031).
- **Lochluichart Estate** (2049.2 ha of woodland) has a Long Term Forest Plan in place.

Table 3: National Forest Inventory Woodland Type

National Forest Inventory Woodland Type										
	Assumed woodland	Broadleaved	Conifer	Felled	Ground prep	Low density	Mixed mainly broadleaved	Mixed mainly conifer	Young trees	Total
TOTAL	1468.4	1287.7	2917.7	506.6	104.5	14.7	17.4	1.5	451.4	6769.9

Table 4: Native Woodland Survey for Scotland Herbivore Impacts

ESTATE	HERBIVORE IMPACTS FROM NWSS				TOTAL
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	
FAIRBURN & CORRIEHALLIE	54.89	81.30	231.16	158.06	525.42
NFE CORRIEMOLLIE	4.33			48.06	52.39
NFE COUL ESTATE	1.14	63.77	14.16	71.14	150.21
GLENCARRON & GLENUAIG	33.47	9.90		34.23	77.59
LOCHLUICHART (GLENMARKIE)	61.18		15.78	114.63	191.59
OLSSON FOREST				13.56	13.56
SCARDROY & CARNOCH	3.14		14.56	23.84	41.55
SCATWELL	193.86	36.26	26.40	100.60	357.12
STRATHBRAN & SCATWELL			10.85	46.98	57.82
STRATHCONON	149.45	34.56	411.98	496.50	1092.49
NFE STRATHGARVE	28.26	0.70	102.77	1.90	133.62
TARVIE COMMON GRAZING		2.48	28.68	0.58	31.74
TORRACHILTY FARM	0.50	5.67	358.94	47.25	412.36
UNKNOWN	75.90	58.62	81.78	87.87	304.17
TOTAL	606.12	293.26	1297.05	1245.19	3441.63
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	18%	8%	38%	36%	

1.6.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve woodland condition	When?	Who?	How?
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>
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>
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>

Figure 11: National Forest Inventory Data of Woodland Type.

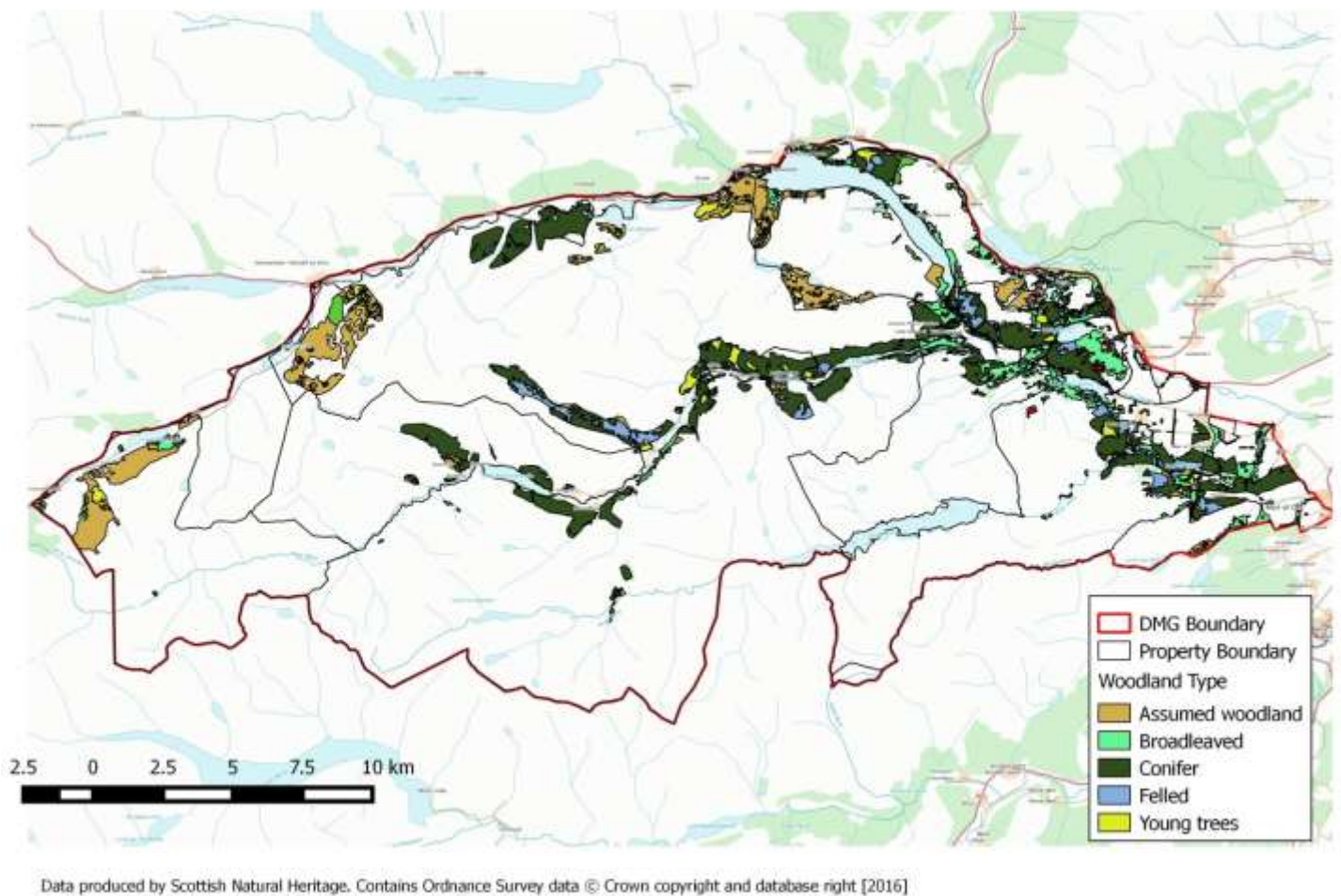


Figure 12: Native Woodland Survey for Scotland Herbivore Impacts within the DMG

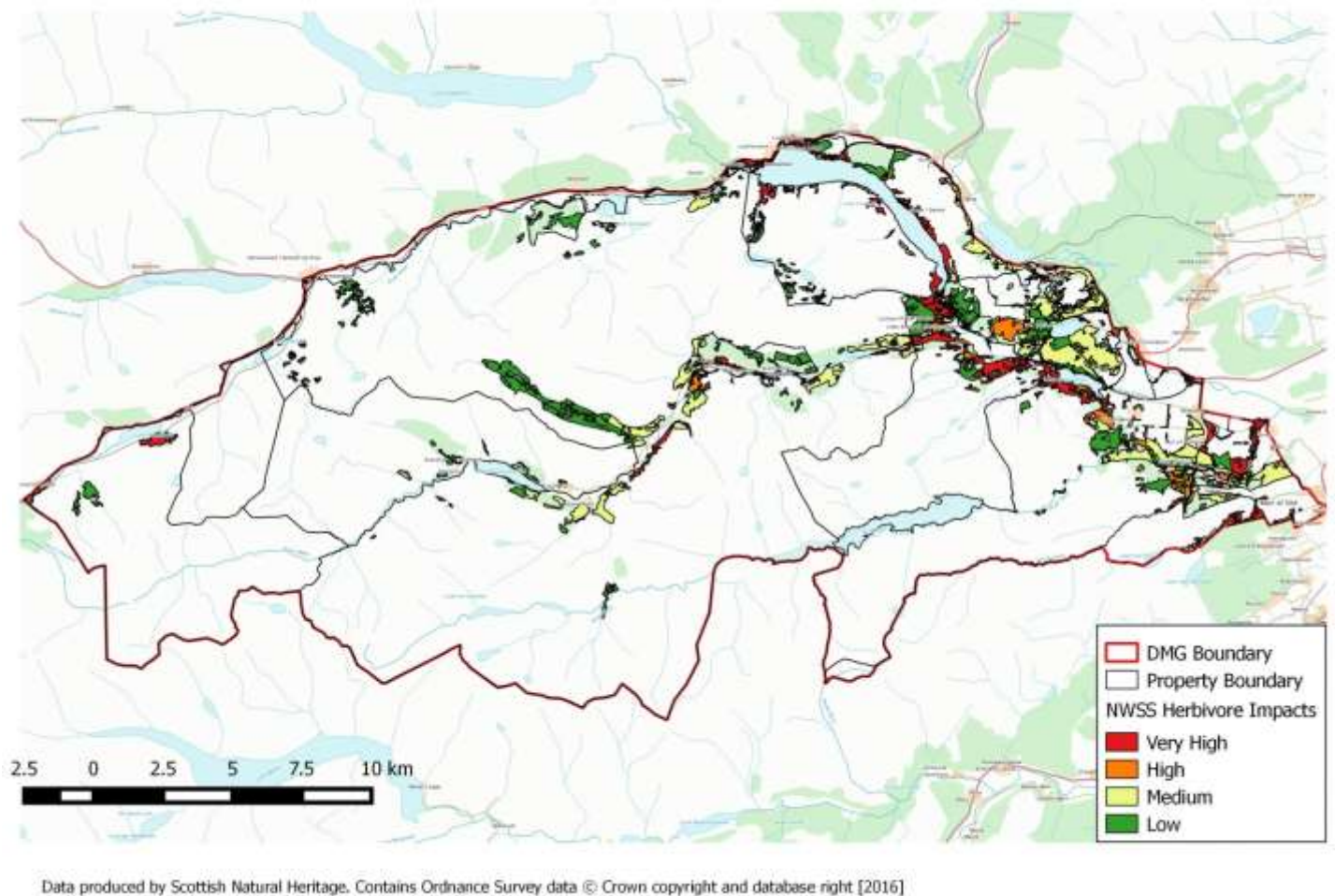
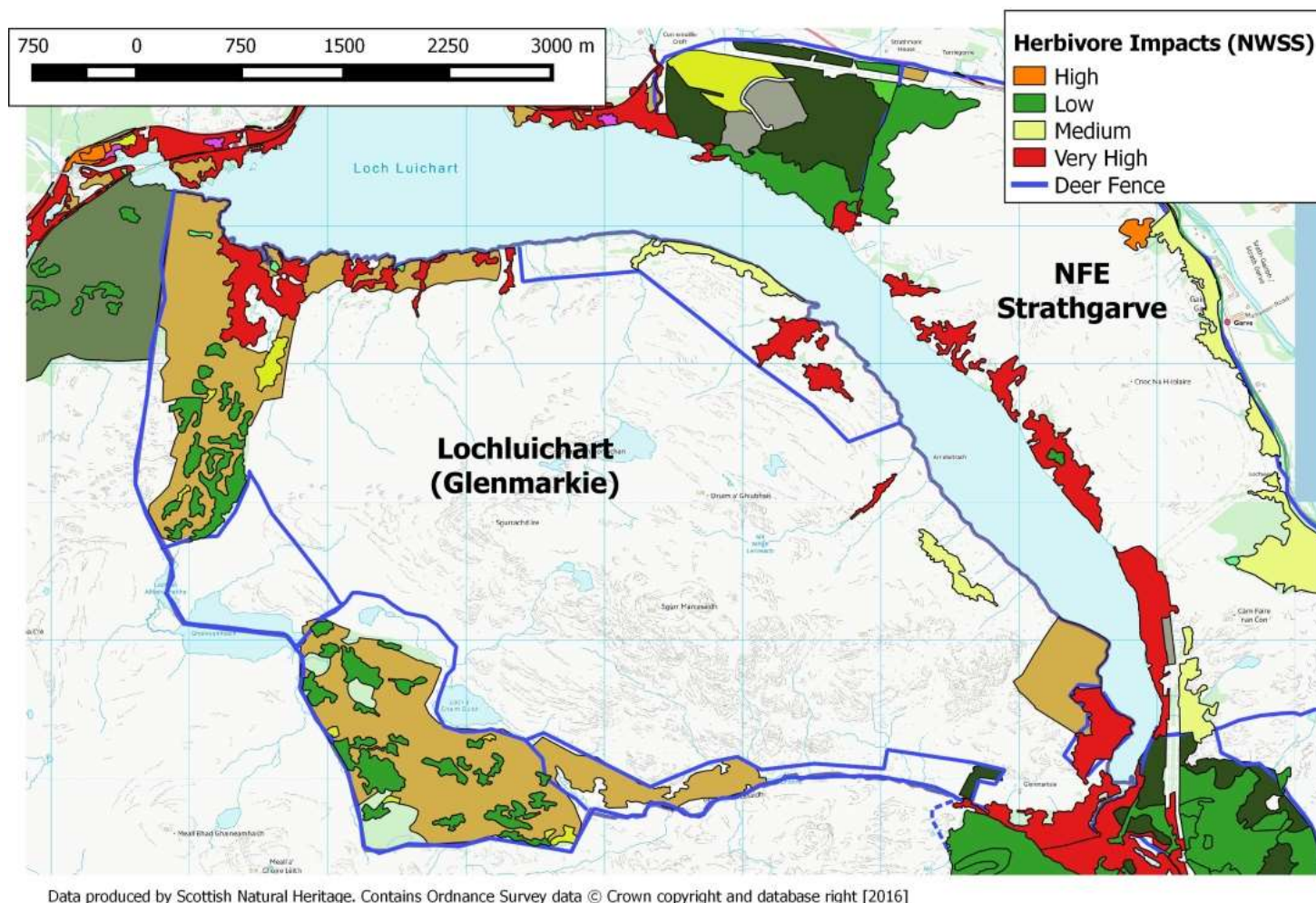


Figure 13: Herbivore Impacts on woodland: Lochluichart Glenmarkie & NFE Strathgarve



1.7 Actions to contribute to the Scottish Government woodland expansion target.

1.7.1 Background

- Woodland and forest covers over 1.3 million ha in Scotland (around 16% of Scotland).
- The Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover will require 10,000 ha of woodland per year to be created.
- The DMG network area covers some 3,249,442 ha with significant opportunity to contribute to the delivery of this target through identifying areas for further woodland creation and managing deer impacts to allow for successful establishment of new woodland. Priority should be given to expansion opportunities where this improves habitat networks. It is expected that DMGs will be proactive in contributing to this target.
- The Plan assumes that the state of deer fences remains constant. Members are encouraged to report any changes in fencing policies, particularly those which will affect the free movement of deer between estates.

1.7.2 Plan Objectives

- Plan will identify all new woodland in last 5 years and beyond (Woodland Grant Schemes) and the potential for/ any new proposals likely to be adopted during the life of the plan.
- Plan will consider future impact of woodland expansion and timetable for removal/erection of fences and possible expansion/reduction of deer range, where there may be changes in deer densities or movements as a result.
- Plan will consider need for new woodland from a DMG perspective- ie are there areas short of shelter?

1.7.3 Current Delivery.

- Woodland represents almost **12%** of the total area of SDMG. This includes both native woodland, commercial and amenity woodland (see Section 1.6).
- The extent of boundaries of woodland schemes (**3743.9 ha** - Table 6 and Figure 13) represents **55%** of the total current woodland area at present.
- A total of **1371.5 ha** of native woodland has been created across the DMG. A further **481.4 ha** was approved for restocking (Table 6).
- A total of **1085.2 ha** native woodland has been created on Strathconon Estate since 1992. These woodland exclosures are unlikely to be opened up in the next 5 years (Table 5).
- On Glencarron & Glenuaig, there are 4 woodland schemes in total (Figure 14c). Two recent woodland schemes (2011 & 2012) – each of 130 ha with 180,000 trees planted in each plus schemes of new planting in 1993 (103 ha) and regeneration & planting in 1996 (254 ha). The scheme (above Loch Shamhain) is now out of maintenance.
-
- Given the extent of existing woodland across the DMG, there are few opportunities for further schemes although Glencarron & Glenuaig are interested in investigating potential opportunities..
- Significant areas of woodland shelter have been made available on Strathconon, Lochluichart, Scatwell and Fairburn (See Section 1.17).

1.7.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to demonstrate DMG contribution to the Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover.	When?	Who?	How?
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>
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>

Table 5: Summary of Woodland Enclosures on Strathconon & Scardroy

Name	Species	Area of Enclosure (ha)	Planting Year
West Church Wood	NBL	4.6	1992
Dalbreac	SPS/NBL	11.3	2000
Craig an Fhitheac	SPS/NBL	23.3	1999
Glenmeanie	SPS/NBL	13.2	1999
Glenmeanie	SPS/NBL	3.3	2004
Glenmeanie Restock	SPS/NBL	4.1	2000
Glenmeanie Restock 2	SPS/NBL	7.2	2001
Blackwood Restock	SPS/NBL	5.3	2000
Coille Ruaridh	SPS/NBL	12	2001
Strathanmore	SPS/NBL	38	2002
Cnoc Gael	SPS/NBL	180.1	1999
Clas Mhor/Carn Dubh	SPS/NBL	21.4	1999
Badinluchie	SPS/NBL	32.5	2000
Camashie	SPS/NBL	5.8	2002
Achnasheen	SPS/NBL	723.1	2000
Total		1085.2	

Figure 14a: Historic Woodland Grant Schemes(all)

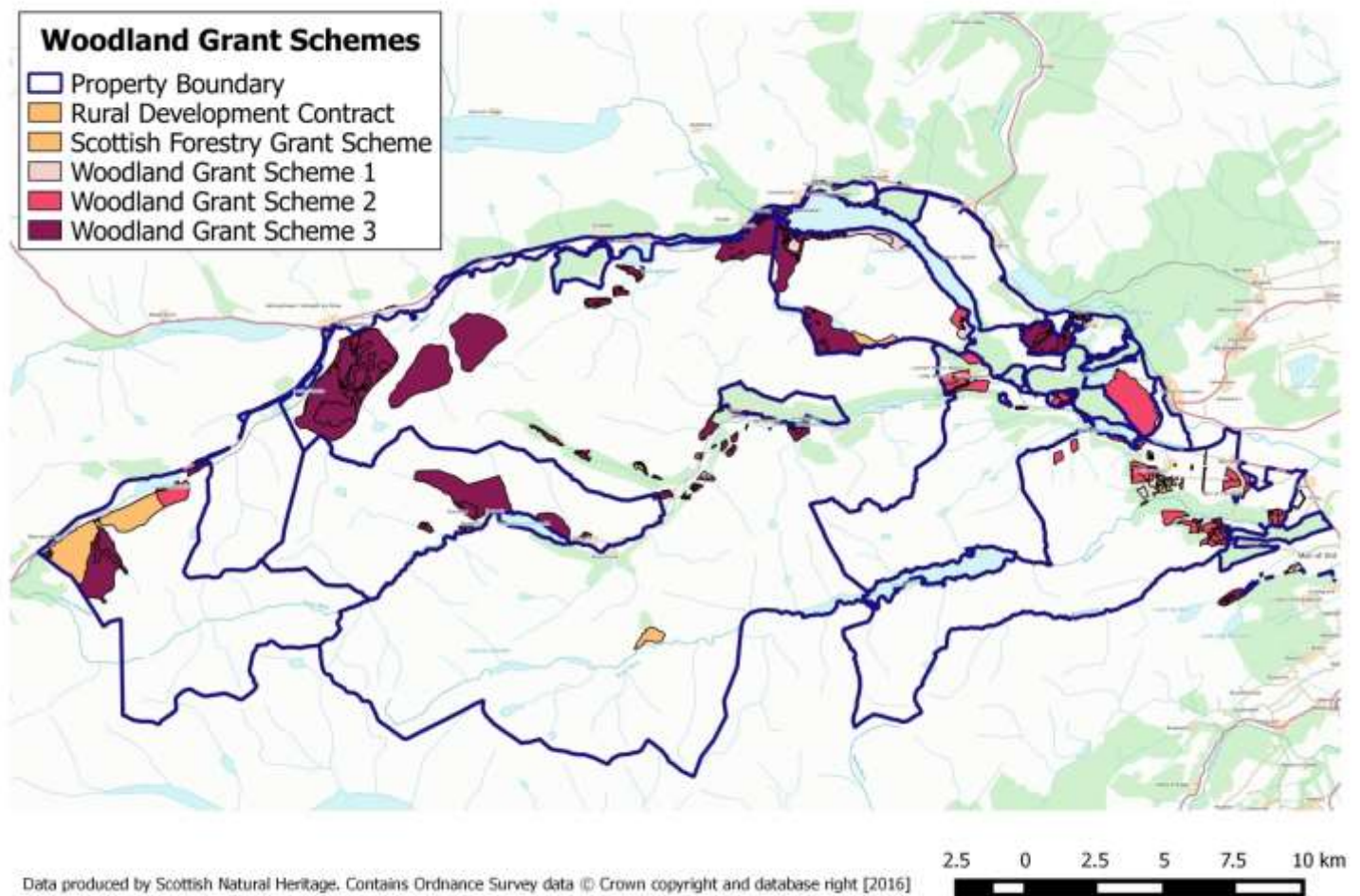
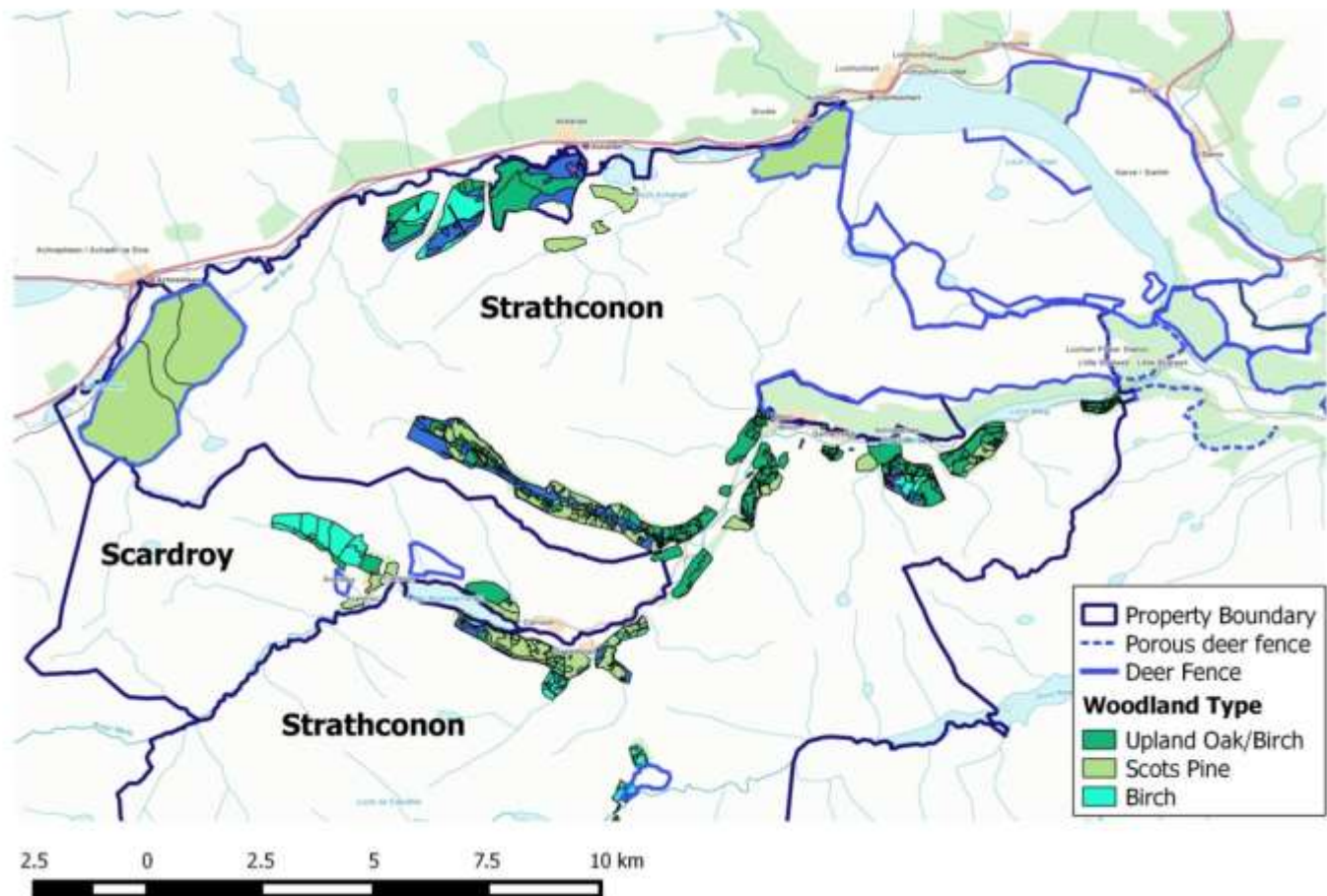


Figure 14b: Historic Woodland Grant Schemes(Strathconon & Scardroy)



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Figure 14c: Historical Woodland Grant Schemes(Glencarron & Glenuaig)

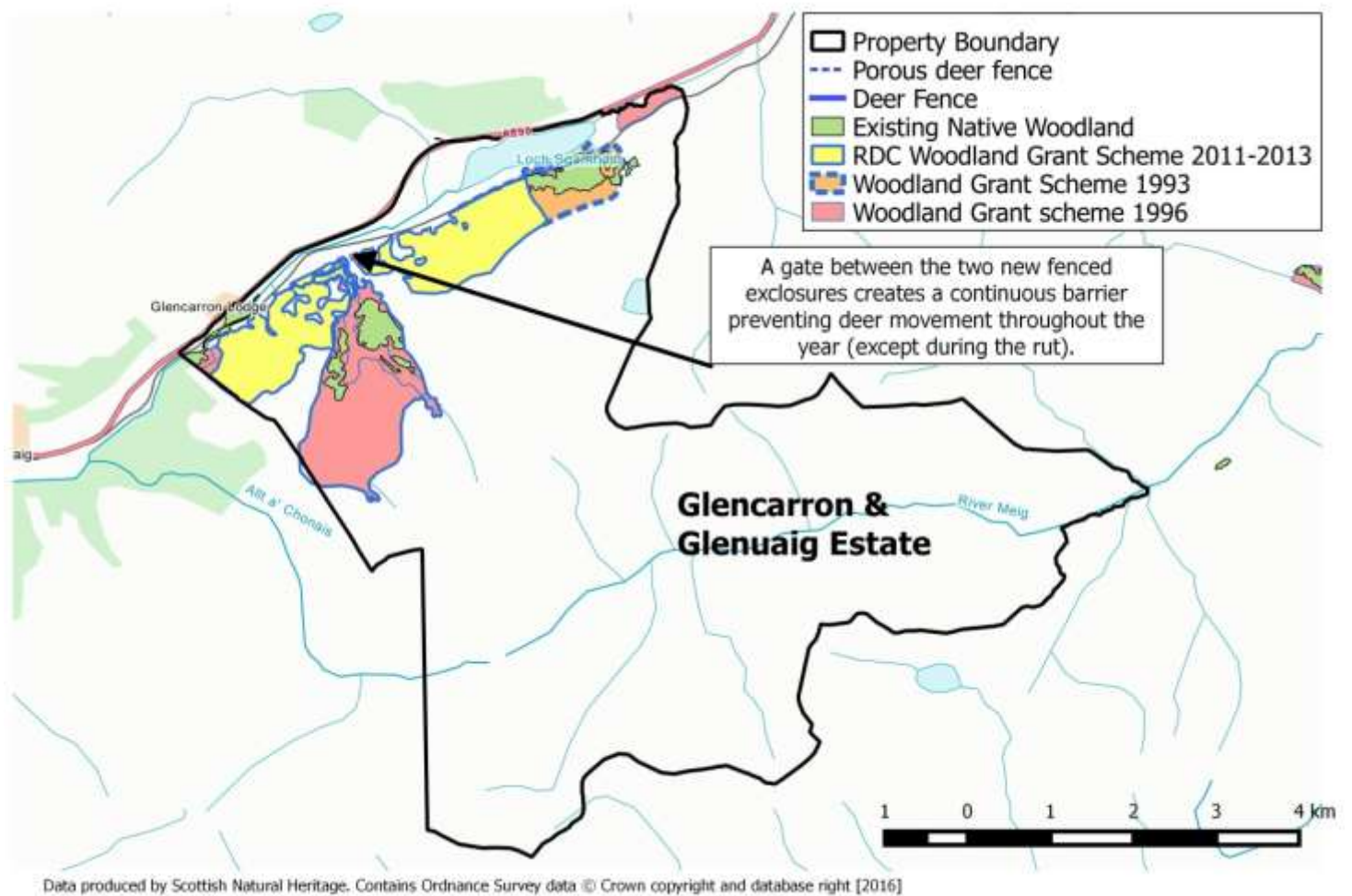


Table 6: Summary of Woodland Management Schemes

Rural Development Fund	RP22301D - Woodland creation - Native woodland planting				
GLENCARRON & GLENUAIG	273.3				
LOCHLUICHART (GLENMARKIE)	29.1				
STRATHBRAN	0.1				
STRATHCONON	11.3				
Total	313.9				
SFGS	SFGS Scheme Boundary				
STRATHCONON	5.0				
FAIRBURN & CORRIEHALLIE	22.3				
Total	27.3				
WGS 1	Approved for New Nat Regen	Approved for New Planting	Approved for Restocking and/or Management	Scheme Boundary	
FAIRBURN & CORRIEHALLIE		0.3	20.1	20.4	
GLENCARRON & GLENUAIG		0.4		0.4	
LEDGOWAN (N OF ROAD)		0.0		0.0	
LOCHLUICHART (GLENMARKIE)	68.9		21.0	104.3	
STRATHCONON	1.2	7.6	3.8	13.7	
Total	70.1	8.4	45.0	139.0	
WGS 2	Approved for New Nat Regen	Approved for New Planting	Approved for Restocking and/or Management	Scheme Boundary	
FAIRBURN & CORRIEHALLIE	17.7	6.8	211.3	288.0	
GLENCARRON & GLENUAIG	103.2		99.9	103.2	
LEDGOWAN (N OF ROAD)			0.3	0.3	
LOCHLUICHART	21.6		3.2	24.8	
LOCHLUICHART (GLENMARKIE)	29.6			31.6	
SCATWELL			16.5	46.5	
STRATHBRAN			0.1	0.1	
STRATHCONON		4.1	72.5	76.7	
Total	172.2	11.0	403.8	571.2	
WGS3	Approved for Existing Nat Regen	Approved for New Nat Regen	Approved for New Planting	Approved for Restocking	Scheme Boundary
FAIRBURN & CORRIEHALLIE	15.3	0.9	13.8		44.5
GLENCARRON & GLENUAIG	4.5	34.0	216.0		254.6
LEDGOWAN			13.2		13.2
LOCHLUICHART (GLENMARKIE)	15.1	58.4	270.2		374.4
SCARDROY & CARNOCH	3.2	5.2	37.3		373.9
SCATWELL		7.0		3.4	12.4
STRATHCONON		39.5	801.5	29.2	1619.6
Total	38.1	145.0	1352.1	32.6	2692.5

1.8. Actions to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside.

1.8.1 Background

- As a part of the DMG's ongoing commitment to carrying out environmentally responsible deer management in line with the [Code on Deer Management](#), the aim is to implement a programme of herbivore impact assessment across the DMG in order to better inform future deer management.
- The open range available to Red Deer across the DMG is approximately **46044 ha** (excluding fenced areas). Blanket bog and peatland (which covers approximately **5960 ha**) and heather moorland (dwarf shrub heath methodology) (covering approximately **30021 ha**) are two of the habitats that Scottish Natural Heritage have recommended upland deer managers monitor for herbivore grazing and trampling impacts (Figure 15). The DMGs will take responsibility for the monitoring of herbivore impacts on across the deer range and seek to manage these to contribute to wider ecosystem health. See Table 6 for habitat distribution per property.

Table 6: Distribution of Habitat Type (LCS88 Data)

Property	Habitat Type (ha)			
	blanket bog & peatlands	heather moor	montane vegetation	smooth grassland
FAIRBURN & CORRIEHALLIE	387	2169	81	97
GLENCARRON & GLENUAIG	417	582	175	120
LEDGOWAN	341	468	38	6
LOCHLUICHART (GLENMARKIE)	179	2656		5
SCARDROY & CARNOCH	234	1680	1505	16
SCATWELL	457	2555		
STRATHCONON	3945	19912	2072	499
Total	5960	30021	3870	743

1.8.2 Plan Objectives

- Plan will seek to implement a programme of monitoring to assess herbivore impacts and manage those impacts within acceptable ranges ([MacDonald et al 1998¹](#)).
- As a guideline, on designated sites the **habitat targets** set by SNH are for 90% of survey samples (overall impacts: grazing/browsing and trampling) to be in the range of Low to Moderate/Low. For woodland, a minimum of 60% of herbivore impacts to be in the Low, Moderate category. The DMG will adopt these targets.
- Different habitats will require different levels of grazing to deliver these targets e.g woodland regeneration without fencing may require densities of less than 4 deer per km² whereas upland features such as Dwarf Shrub Heath may withstand grazing at much higher densities of deer, which will be informed by habitat monitoring.

1.8.3 Current Delivery.

- All main members of the DMG have implemented monitoring in Summer 2016 and will use Habitat Impact Targets as recommended by SNH. Results are being used to inform deer management.
- **Strathconon and Scardroy Estates Baseline Assessments.** Strathconon and Scardroy Estates (33,300 ha) account for approximately 65% of the open range across the DMG area. **Baseline assessments** of deer occupancy and impacts on vegetation condition were carried out on Strathconon Estate in 2010 using 20 transects and Scardroy Estate in 2014 using 7 transects by estate staff (all trained in Habitat Impact Assessment methodology). The Estates had previously been stratified into different areas using knowledge of the estate, deer movements and deer over wintering areas. For each area, a transect was set up. Each transect is 1km long and there are 8 (7m x 7m) plots along each transect which are 100m apart. Deer occupancy was assessed using dung counts (Ratcliffe, 1987; Ratcliffe and Mayle, 1992). Impacts were assessed using a standard method based on the SNH guide to surveying land management impacts on upland habitats (MacDonald et al, 1998). Plots were also assigned to broad habitat types depending on the percentage cover of dominant species. The mean deer occupancy and impacts on vegetation for the three transects were calculated for each transect. In 2010, 18 out of 20 transects had Low or Low/Medium impacts (90%). The repeat impact assessment in 2015 showed that this had reduced to 12 out of 20 transects (60%). Maps of impacts are shown in Figures 16 and 17. Helicopter counts in 2014 and 2016 show an increase in the population from 12 deer per km² to 17.8 deer per km² (Table 9) which may account for the increase in impacts.
- **Strathconon and Scardroy Repeat Monitoring:** Transects were re-assessed on Strathconon annually with a complete reassessment of all transects carried out in 2015. On Strathconon one transect was selected for monitoring in 2015 by the Estate Staff. It is recommended that two transects are revisited in 2016 with the next full survey of all transects in 2019. In 2014, all 7 transects had Medium or Medium/High impacts (Figure 17). In comparison with the 2014 results for transect 2, the impact score has decreased from Medium impact in 2014 to a Low/Medium impact in 2015. The revisit of transect provided positive results with a decrease in occupancy and resultant decrease in impact. The Estate staff commented that they are encouraging deer away from the hill ground in the winter by feeding (Figure 18). This revisit is only one year after the full monitoring in 2014 and it will be beneficial to revisit at least another two other transects in 2016 to establish whether there is also a decrease in impact across other transects on Scardroy.
- Scatwell Estate carried out a baseline Habitat Impact Assessment in 2016.
- As a result of Habitat Impact Assessment results Strathconon and Scardroy will aim to reduce deer impacts on the open-hill through a combination of a reduction in hind numbers over the next 5 years and use of diversionary feeding.
- In 2015 Glencarron and Glenuaig implemented an Estate Environmental Assessment programme which will be repeated annually for 5 years. This includes detailed survey work carried out by Dan Brown of BIOME Consulting on Herbivore Impacts on three habitats as well as individual species surveys. The summary results of the 2015 & 2016 assessments are shown in Table 10 and presented in Figures 19a & 19b. Generally summary impacts were considered to be low (in line with current Favourable condition on the designated sites).

Impact Class

	low
	low/medium
	medium
	medium / high
	high

Table 7: Strathconon Herbivore Impact Assessment Results
(Data courtesy of Bidwells).

Transect	Habitat Impact					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	1.15			1.50		1.85
2	1.45				1.25	1.40
3	1.35	1.45				1.80
4	1.10				1.00	1.65
5	1.20					2.05
6	2.60		1.35			2.00
7	1.25					1.60
8	1.80					2.60
9	3.00		2.50			3.50
10	1.40	1.35				1.55
11	1.25					1.70
12	1.85					2.83
13	2.35				1.00	2.78
14	1.65	1.60				3.85
15	1.55					3.65
16	2.10					2.78
17	1.40			2.50		2.24
18	1.15		1.40			2.10
19	1.20					1.92
20	1.15			1.45		2.78
Average impact	1.60					2.33

Table 8: Scardroy Herbivore Impact Assessment Results

Transect	Habitat Impact Assessment	
	2014	2015
1	3.55	
2	3.45	2.3
3	2.80	
4	3.10	
5	3.35	
6	2.85	
7		
Average impact	3.18	2.30

Table 9: Population Estimates on Strathconon and Scardroy

Helicopter Counts	Planar area (ha)	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density (deer / km2)
April 2014 (Strathconon)	25948	917	1657	541	3115	12.0
March 2016 (Strathconon)	25948	1539	2367	721	4627	17.8
April 2014 (Scardoy & Carnoch)	4146	274	335	94	703	17.0
March 2016 (Scardoy & Carnoch)	4146	344	390	107	841	20.3

Table 10: HIA Results for Glencarron & Glenuaig
(Data courtesy of Dan Brown of BIOME Consulting)

Habitat Type	Trampling 2016			% of plots Low	Grazing Impact 2015			% of plots Low	Grazing Impact 2016			% of plots Low
	Absent/ Low	Medium	High		Absent/ Low	Medium	High		Absent/ Low	Medium	High	
Blanket Bog	28	2	0	93	30	0	0	100	30	0	0	100
Dwarf Shrub Heath	30	0	0	100	30	0	0	100	29	1	0	97
Montane	24	4	2	80	30	0	0	100	30	0	0	100

1.8.5 Targets to be delivered by 2021

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 (Ledgowan, Fairburn, Lochluichart,)	<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	Glencarron & Glenuaig, Strathconon, Scardroy & Scatwell 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>

Figure 15: Blanket Bog and Heather Moor Habitat across the DMG

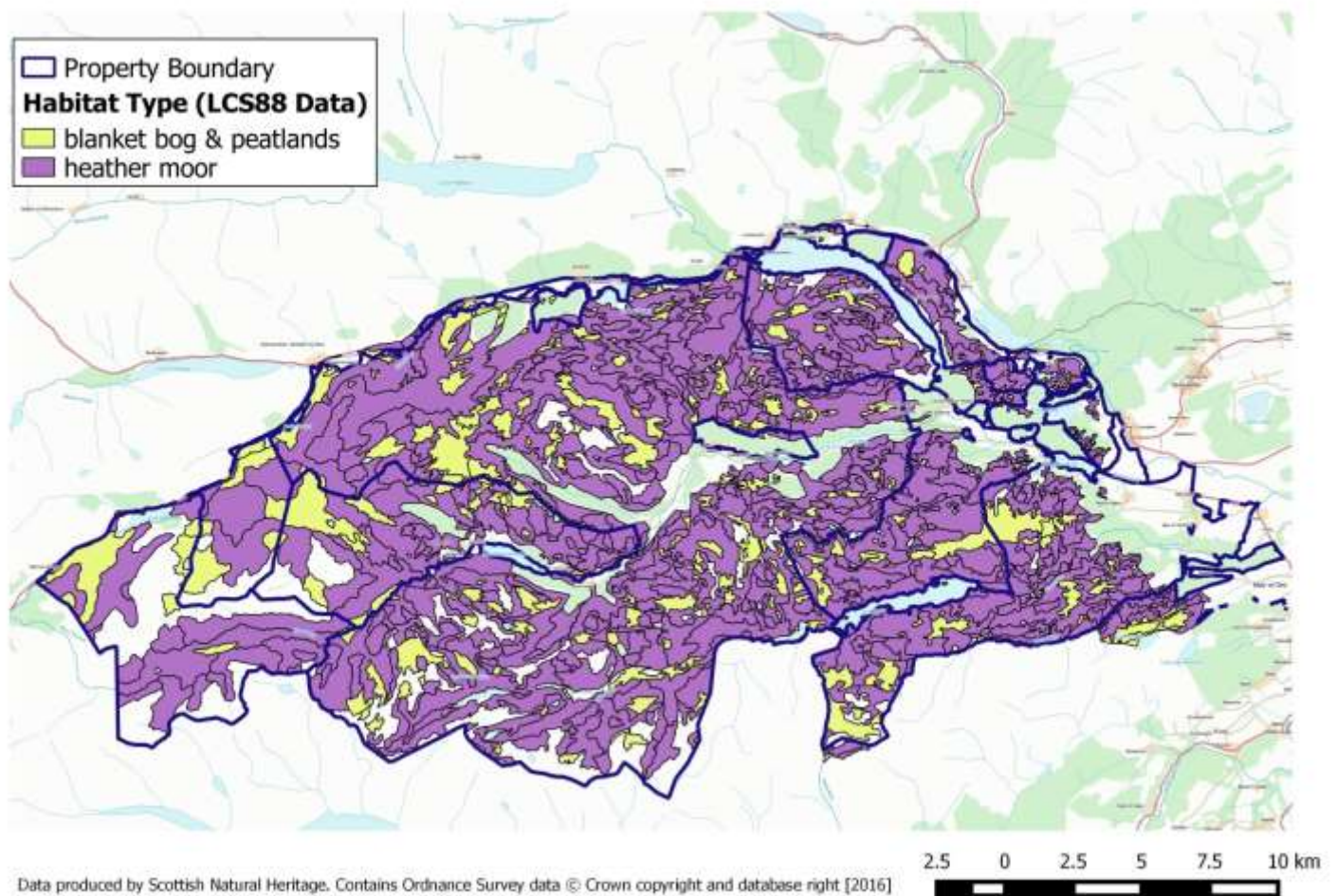
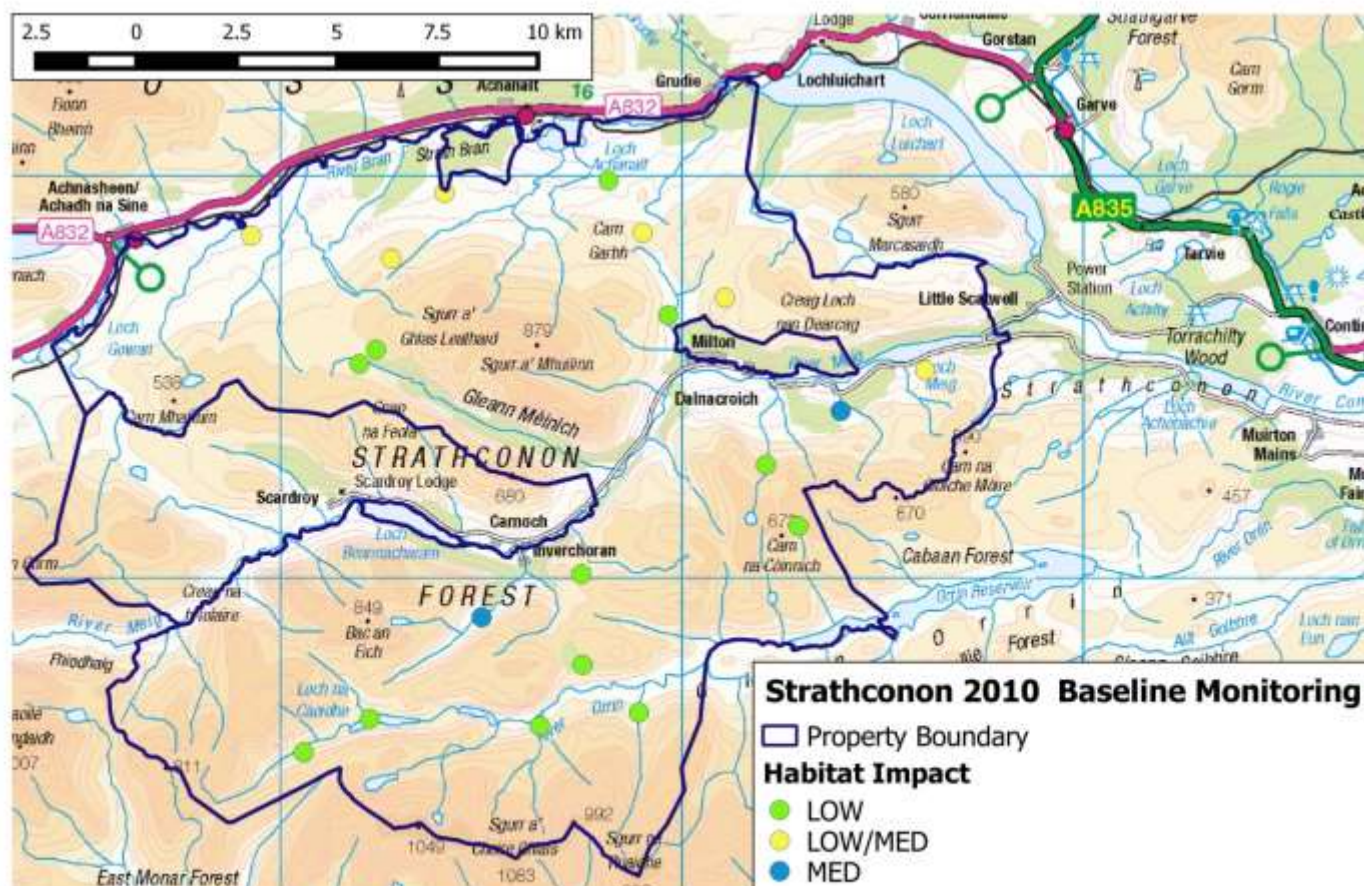


Figure 16: Strathconon Herbivore Impacts 2010



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**Part1: Strathconon DMG Deer Management Plan
Information V4 19/4/17**



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Figure 18: Strathconon and Scardroy Herbivore Impacts and Location of Feeding Stations

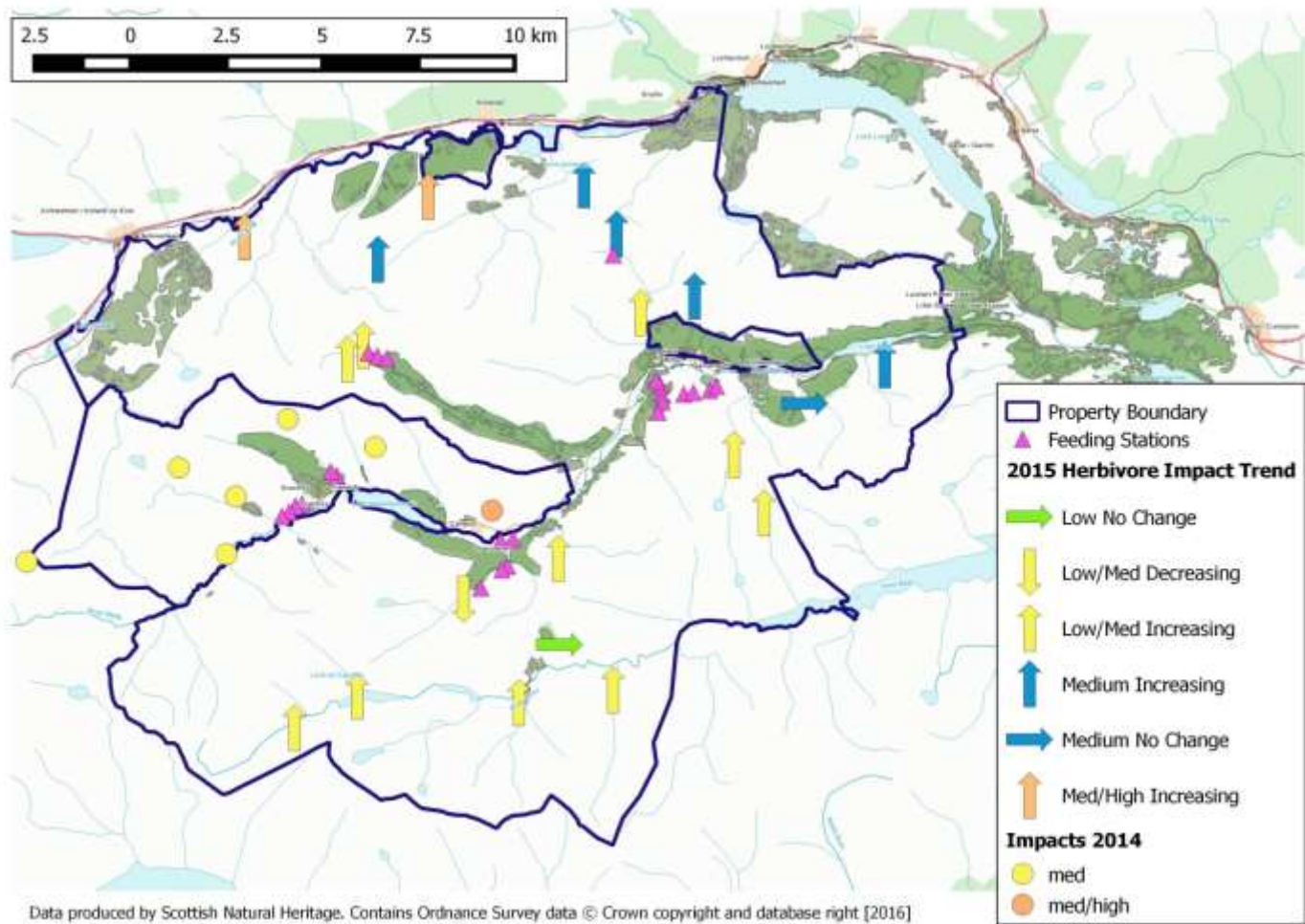
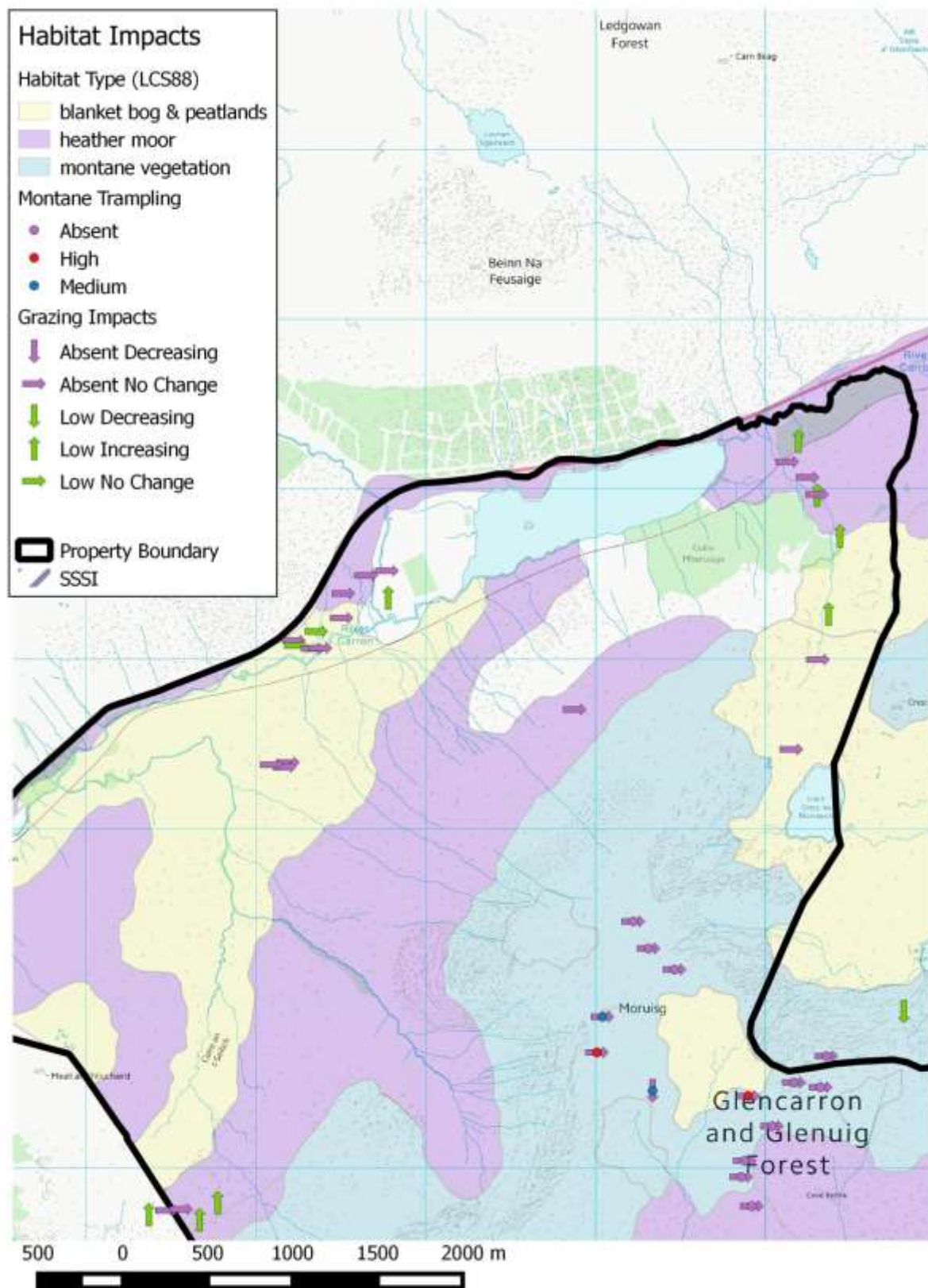


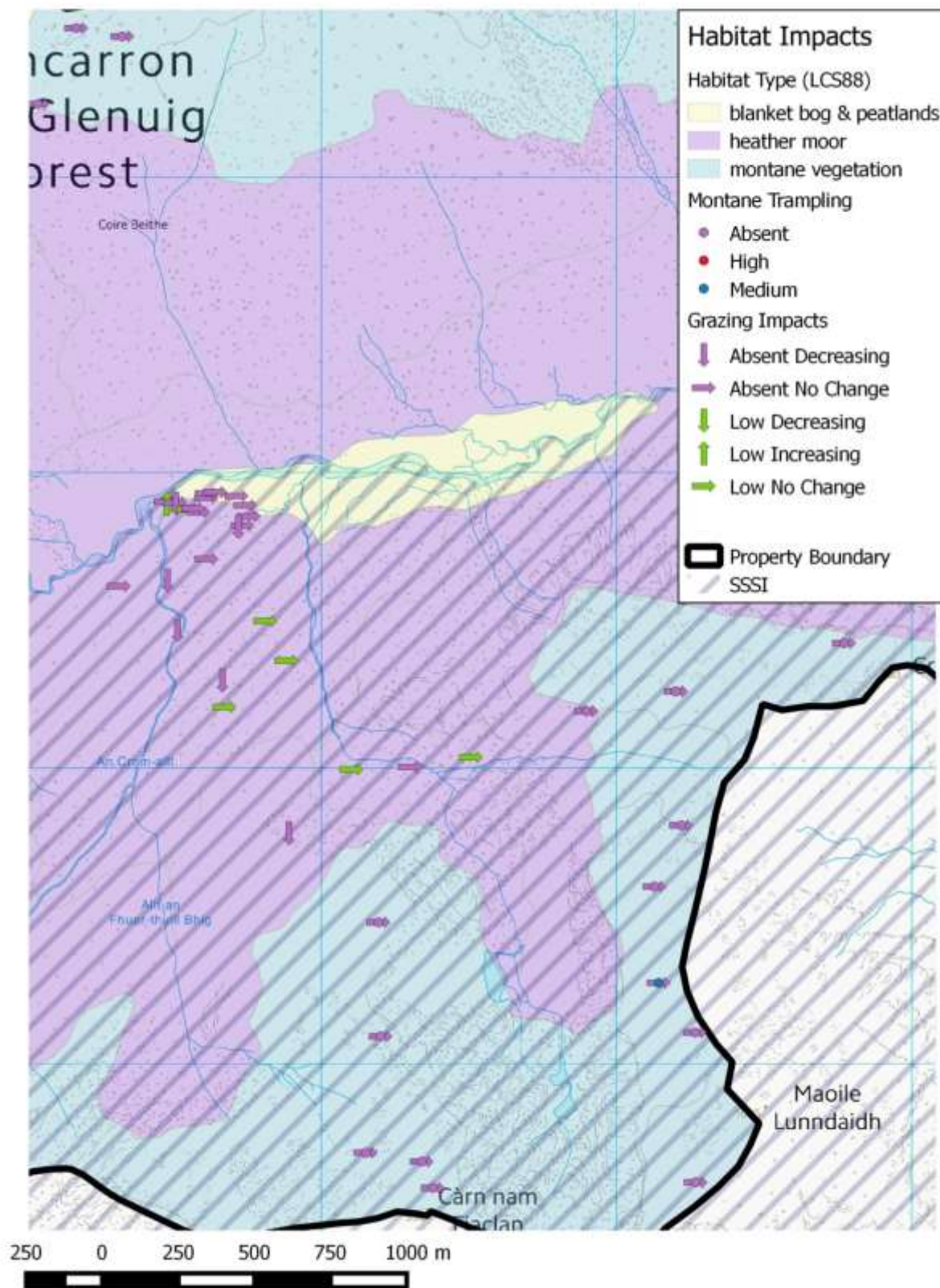
Figure 19a: Glen Carron and Glenuaig Herbivore Impacts



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Impact Data produced by Dan Brown of BIOME Consulting

Figure 19b: Glen Carron and Glenuaig Herbivore Impacts



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1.9 Actions to improve Scotland's ability to store carbon by maintaining or improving ecosystem health.

1.9.1 Background

Carbon rich soils and peatland areas provide multiple benefits, e.g. good water quality, biodiversity and climate change mitigation as soil carbon stores and through [carbon sequestration](#). Soils are the main terrestrial store of carbon in Scotland and Peatlands hold most of our carbon store (53%). The depth of peat is important: the deeper the peat soil the more carbon it stores. Undisturbed, active peatlands accumulate about 0.25 tonnes of carbon per hectare per year which is broadly equivalent to around 10% of the amount of carbon accumulated over the duration of a forest crop.

[Blanket bog](#) is a type of peatland found in the uplands. Although Blanket bog is a rare habitat globally and is restricted to cool, wet, typically oceanic climates, Scotland holds a significant proportion of the European and world resource. It is one of the most extensive semi-natural habitats in Scotland, covering some 1.8 million hectares, 23 % of our land area. Blanket bog is found throughout the Scottish uplands but is most extensive in the North Highlands and Western and Northern Isles in areas with gentle slopes and poor drainage. Growing trees is another way to increase the natural carbon reservoir. There is an estimated 50 megatonnes of carbon locked in Scotland's vegetation, most of it being held in natural woodland and forest plantations. Woodland and forest currently covers over 1.3 million ha in Scotland (around 16% of Scotland).

In partnership with Government agencies, DMGs are expected to contribute to research and implement and deliver actions to deliver optimum habitat condition for carbon capture and storage.

1.9.2 Plan Objectives

The plan will aim to acknowledge all contributions to carbon storage through woodland and peatlands within the DMG area and detail actions to address any negative herbivore impacts.

The plan will identify opportunities to secure carbon by quantifying areas of Blanket Bog which could be restored by drain blocking and through the re-profiling and revegetating of haggard peat.

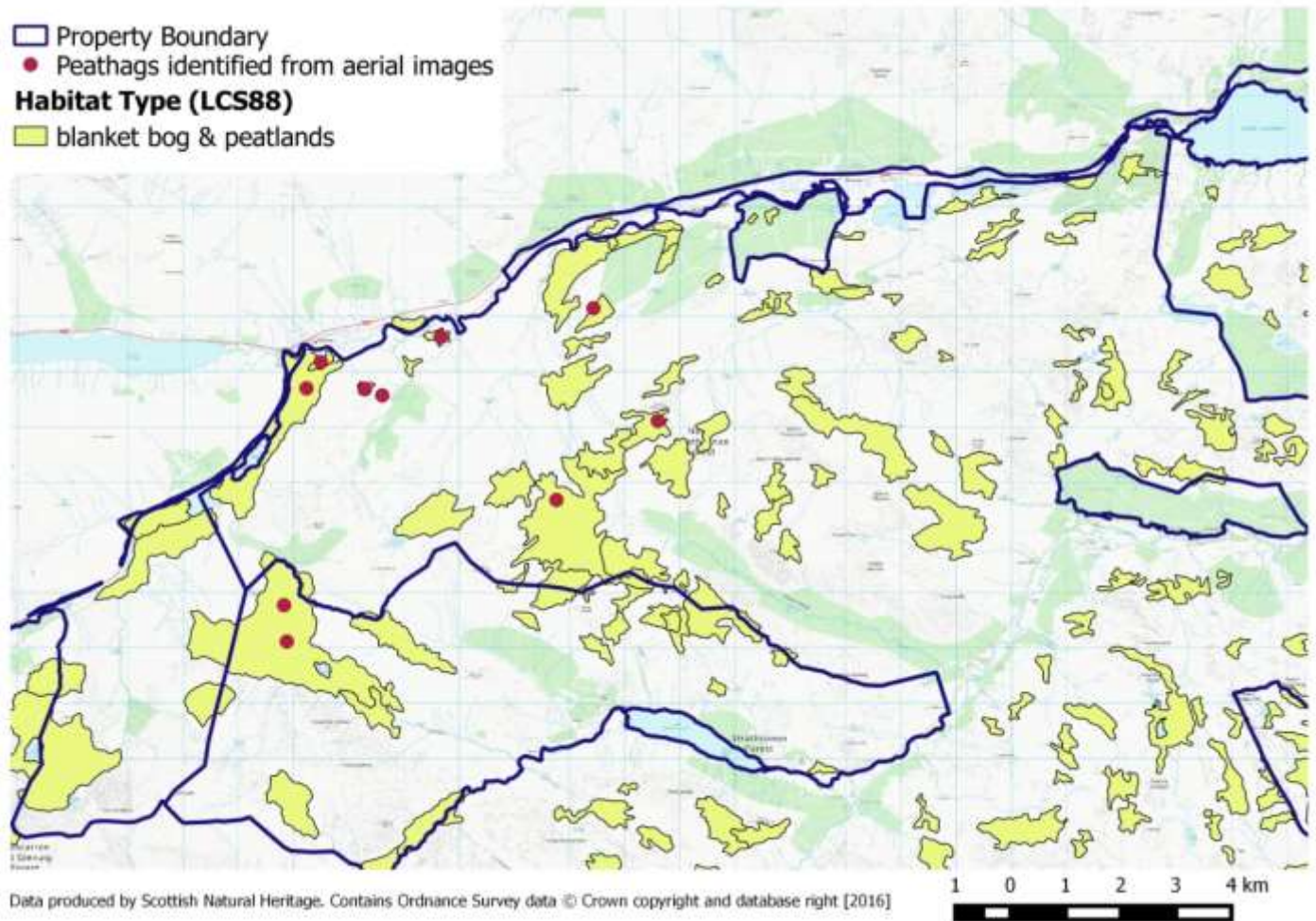
1.9.3 Current Delivery.

- DMG manages around **6769 ha of woodland** (Section 1.6) and an area of **5960 ha of blanket bog** (see Section 1.8) has been identified within the DMG Area.
- DMG has undergone Habitat Monitoring Training and Blanket bog is one of the habitats that the DMG has included in the monitoring programme.
- Areas of Peatland which may be potential sites for restoration work have been identified on Strathconon and Scardroy Estates (Figure 20)
- The actions currently being undertaken by the DMG to retain existing native woodland and encourage woodland expansion have been detailed in Sections 1.6/1.7.
- The DMG has not been asked to contribute to River Basin Management Planning. Two member of

1.9.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to improve Scotland's ability to store carbon by maintaining or improving ecosystem health.	When?	Who?	How?
Using revised BPG Guidance set up plots and carry out a baseline habitat impact assessment (HIA) of the current grazing and trampling impacts on blanket bog and native woodland.	As per monitoring schedule in the Working plan	DMG Members	<i>As per Actions for woodland and managing impacts in the wider countryside. Members to provide existing survey reports or conduct baseline monitoring and reports. Strathconon and Scardroy will continue to carry out HIA using existing methodology in place.</i>
Potential areas for Peatland Restoration identified and options for Peatland restoration or management considered.	By end 2016	Strathconon and Scardroy Estate	<i>Strathconon and Scardroy to explore opportunities for Peatland Restoration on areas identified.</i>
Contribute to River Basin Management Planning as appropriate	Ongoing	NTS Mar Lodge	<i>DMG will contribute as required. Members of the DMG are also members of the Cromarty Firth Fishery Board which covers the Orrin and Conan rivers.</i>

Figure 20: Sites to be considered for potential peatland restoration schemes



1.10 Actions to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species

1.10.1 Background

- Sika deer are considered to be established within the woodlands within the DMG area.
- Feral pigs or feral goats have not so far established within the DMG area but goats have been sighted on Ledgowan coming from Monar in the summer and wild pigs have also been sighted locally.
- Conservation Volunteers and Fishery Board staff have been clearing rhododendron from the banks of the River Orrin. By the end of February 6km of the banks of the Orrin will have been cleared of rhododendron. This project has been funded for four years by the SEPA restoration fund and will be completed this year. Fishery Board staff will continue to spray any regrowth to ensure that the banks of the river remain free of rhododendron. As the banks of the river have been cleared old side channels which were dry and blocked with rhododendron roots have been reopened. The channel below is typical and was reopened with last winters clearance and now provides excellent new spawning and nursery habitat.

1.10.2 Plan Objectives

- The plan will aim to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species of deer (Sika and Muntjac).
- Plan to highlight other invasive species such as Feral Pigs and Feral Goats.
- Plan to detail an agreed policy and actions required by DMG to monitor.

1.10.3 Current Delivery.

- DMG have adopted the Non-Native Policy (Part 2: 2.12.4) to manage Sika Deer, Feral Pigs and Feral Goats.
- DMG members currently manage Sika Deer within woodlands and will manage to prevent their establishment on the open range.

1.10.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species	When?	Who?	How?
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>
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>
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>
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>

1.11 Actions to protect designated historic and cultural features from being damaged by deer e.g. by trampling.

1.11.1 Background

- Certain types of historic or culturally significant features may be impacted positively from deer and deer management activity through for example, grazing to keep sites exposed. Impacts may also be negative however, where deer may cause damage through trampling or by jumping over stone-work for example. DMGs should contribute to conserving and enhancing the cultural and historic landscape e.g. ensure that trampling of sites is avoided particularly in the case of protected designated historic features.
- Historic and cultural features within the landscape are important to the group and the group undertakes to protect these from negative impacts by deer. Red deer, because of their size and herding behaviour are the species with most potential to cause negative impacts to these sites. Highland Council Historic Environment Record holds records which can be viewed in a map based format at <http://her.highland.gov.uk/Map.aspx?clear=true>
- There are a range of archaeological features some of which appear on the [CANMORE](#) website. These include Shielings, Hut Circles, Watchers Ruins, Allt Tigh Cumhaig, Maol Nan Ceapt and Tom a' Mhein Lead Mines, Prince Charlie's Cave, Allt na Feith Riabhaich Distillery Site, Chisholm Historic Graveyard and a possible old Bobbin Mill to name but a few.
- Most of the remaining records relate to undesignated historic sites areas around existing settlements. Grazing can have positive impacts on historic and cultural features by maintaining a low sward and preventing tree and shrub regeneration and thereby maintaining their visibility and context in the landscape. Damage to historic features by deer could possibly be associated with high concentrations of animals such as at winter feed sites. Group members will avoid providing winter feed at sites where there is evidence that this could result in negative impacts to these features.

1.11.2 Plan Objectives

Plan will consider deer management actions which contribute or impact on delivery of conserving and enhancing the local cultural and historic landscape.

1.11.3 Current Delivery.

- The DMG is currently unaware of any cultural or historic features that are being impacted on by deer.
- Any woodland creation projects are currently required by Forestry Commission Scotland to carry out this assessment
- Certain types of historic or culturally significant features may be impacted positively from deer and deer management activity through for example, grazing to keep sites exposed. Impacts may also be negative however, where deer may cause damage through trampling or by jumping over stone-work for example. DMGs should contribute to conserving and enhancing the cultural and historic landscape e.g. ensure that trampling of sites is avoided particularly in the case of protected designated historic features.

Deer fencing, when properly planned for, constructed and maintained, can be an effective way of controlling deer to allow different land-uses to co-exist in close proximity, and to protect public safety. Deer fencing can however impact the landscape and public access. **Joint-Agency Guidance** has

been developed to help land managers decide what is the best management option for their land <http://www.snh.gov.uk/land-and-sea/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/sites/fencing>. There are no National Scenic Areas within the DMG but historic fences will have been assessed for landscape impacts according to Joint Agency Guidance.

1.11.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to protect designated historic and cultural features from being damaged by deer e.g. by trampling.	When?	Who?	How?
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>
If features identified, ensure the appropriate management is implemented and report to DMG.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Verbal report/update to DMG.</i>
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>

1.12 Actions to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management.

1.12.1 Background

The DMG recognises the importance of delivering higher standards of competence in deer management through:

- promoting and offering opportunities for Members to take up formal training opportunities;
- facilitating continuous professional development activities;
- and ensuring Wild Deer Best Practice guidance is adopted in deer management activities throughout the DMG.

1.12.2 Plan Objectives

DMP to ascertain training levels among Group Members and to develop a training policy and programme.

1.12.3 Current Delivery

There are currently 22 individuals involved in carrying out practical deer management within the DMG. Of these 18 (**82% of individuals**) involved in practical Deer Management have DSC Level 1 and 14 (**64%**) have Level 2.

1.12.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management.	When?	Who?	How?
DMG will adopt the training policy statement (Part 2 of plan).	Spring 2016	DMG Members	<i>Adopted as part of DMP.</i>
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>
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>

1.13 Actions to Identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing.

1.13.1 Background

- Deer are of great social and cultural value to Scotland. As one of Scotland's top iconic wildlife species they provide a range of benefits, for example through their contribution to tourism and people's enjoyment of the outdoors. Venison is also a healthy meat enjoyed by many. Deer can, however, also lead to health and safety risks e.g. road traffic accidents and deer related disease such as Lyme disease. Actions relating to venison production are included in Section 1.14 and road traffic accident actions are covered in Section 1.15.
- Strathconon is a popular tourist destination, and wildlife tourism in particular is important to many of the DMG properties as well as the local economy as a whole. Deer, as one of Scotland's top iconic species, are an important element of this. There are several popular Munros and Corbetts listed in Table 2 on the [Heading For The Scottish Hills website](#).
- Responsible access is encouraged and welcomed by all properties within the DMG with walkers being encouraged to stick to ridges and avoid descending into corries where possible during the main stag stalking season (August to 20th October).

1.13.2 Plan Objectives

The aim of the plan is to:

- Identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing benefits associated with deer and deer management;
- Identify, raise awareness and where possible minimise the local health and safety risks;
- Identify and increase the opportunities for people to enjoy and benefit from deer;
- DMG should raise awareness of road safety issues associated with deer to reduce the risks of road traffic accidents (covered in Section 1.15);
- Co-ordinate action to minimise deer-related human disease risks;
- Promote responsible Access and the following of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

1.13.3 Current Delivery.

- Access is promoted across DMG and up to date information is provided in the Table 2 of the [Heading For The Scottish Hills website](#).
- Tick awareness already discussed with estates and staff on all estates. Tick information provided for holiday cottage visitors.
- DMG collectively signed up to principles of Best Practice which provides guidance on safeguarding public safety and food safety.
- DMG currently actively promotes positive deer management throughout the area.

1.13.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to Identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing.	When?	Who?	How?
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>
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>
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>
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>
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>
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>

1.14. Actions to maximise economic benefits associated with deer

1.14.1 Background

- Wild deer are considered a resource and can play an important role in promoting and sustaining economic activity, especially in rural areas where they can contribute to businesses, particularly tourism and food production.
- The properties within the Group area have a range of land management objectives. Common to all, is the need to balance strong conservation objectives whilst maximising the potential value of deer as a resource – through stalking, tourism and venison production.
- Collectively, some 200-300 stags are ideally required by the group to be harvested annually. In order to achieve a sustainable harvest of stags, a minimum total population of between 3700 -5150 deer (8 -11 deer per km²) is required.

1.14.2 Plan Objectives

DMP to identify the economic interests of DMG ownership and identify opportunities to maximise these including employment, stalking, tourism, venison.

1.14.3 Current Delivery

- Currently 215 stags and 25 hinds are let for stalking providing an income in the region of £114,350 annually. A total of 540 venison carcasses are produced on average annually providing an additional further income of at least £55206 annually.
- There are 19.9 full-time equivalent deer management employees with an additional 4 full- employees associated with estate management activities.
- Across the DMG there are 8 holiday let properties across the DMG.
- All properties use local services in Garve, Dingwall, Beauly, Inverness and the local surrounding area - such as shops, fuel, hotels and B&Bs, local tradesmen, vets, livestock feed suppliers.
- Tenants from Glencarron and Glenuaig are directed to Lochcarron, Plockton, the Isle of Skye and Applecross and from feedback, definitely go to these places. Estate accommodates some 500 people over 6 day lets (3000 holiday days) in the area throughout the year in 3 let holiday properties.
- All properties have access to larders with only one property not having larder chills. Two of the estates are currently members of Scottish Quality Assured Wild Venison. One estate has venison processing facilities.

1.14.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to maximise economic benefits associated with deer	When?	Who?	How?
Investigate opportunities for membership of SQWV Quality Assurance Scheme.	By 2021	DMG Members	<i>On-going discussion at DMG meetings.</i>
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>
DMG Members to seek opportunities to market venison locally.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Individual members undertake.</i>
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>

1.15 Actions to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective

1.15.1 Background

- Wild deer are considered a resource and can play an important role in promoting and sustaining economic activity. However they can also create costs to other land-use objectives and have a negative impact on other economic activities including agriculture and forestry. Deer Vehicle Collisions may also incur an economic as well as social cost. Although relatively infrequent, these occur predominantly on the A832 (Gortan to Achnasheen road) to the north and the A890 to the west. These tend to have long, straight stretches of road where increased vehicle speed may increase chances of DVCs.

1.15.2 Plan Objectives

- The DMP will seek to minimise the economic cost of deer through identifying issues and implementing management to reduce or mitigate deer impacts where this results in an economic cost.
- The plan will aim to identify where deer are having an economic cost particularly with regard to agricultural impacts. Incidents of Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVCs) will be monitored. Opportunities to work collaboratively to reduce these costs will be identified and actioned.

1.15.3 Current Delivery

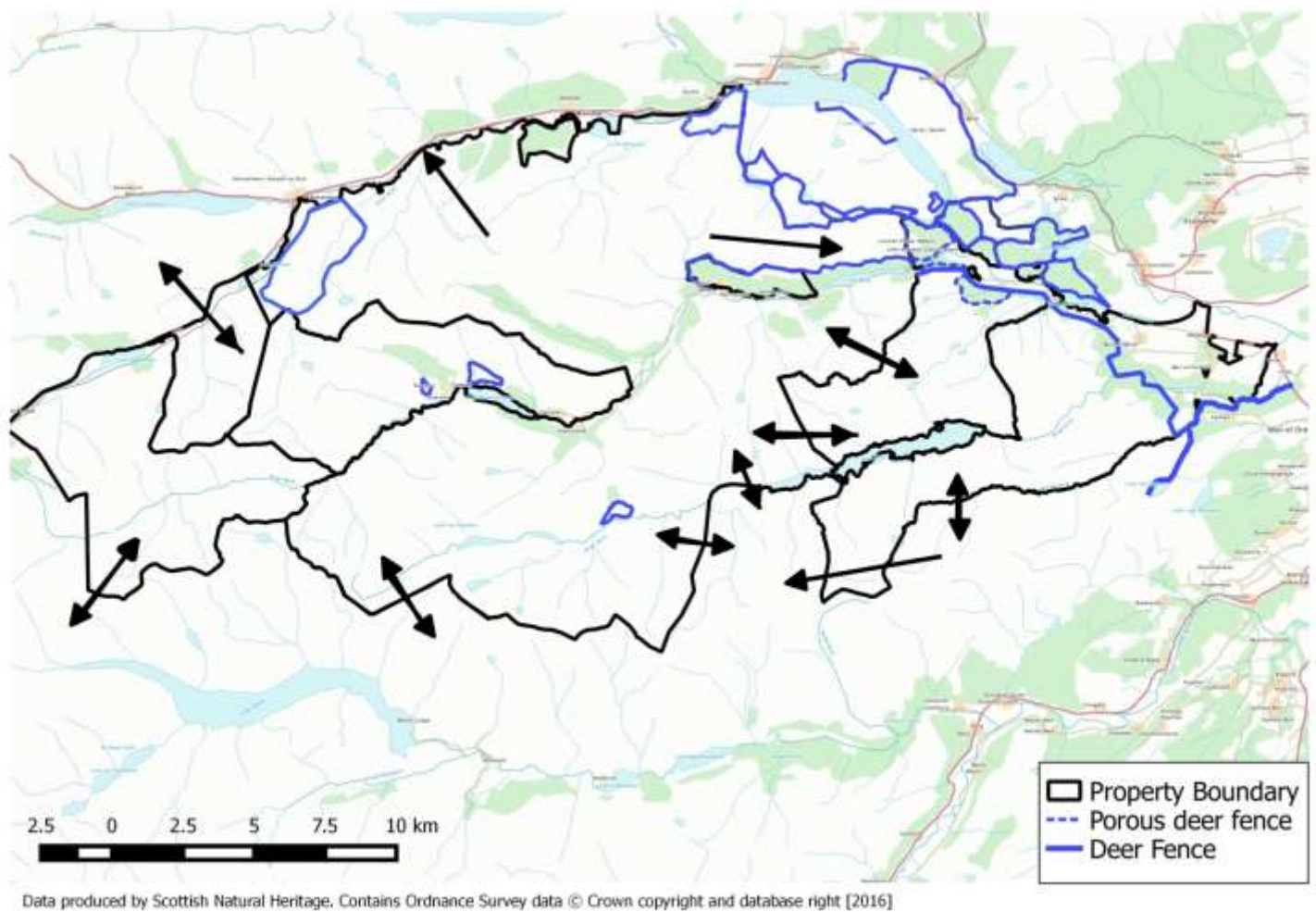
Deer Fences and Deer Movements

- Towards the east end of the Group, the extensive use of deer fencing serves to prevent deer impacting negatively on existing and new woodland, as well as largely preventing deer moving onto agricultural ground (Figure 20). There are not considered to be issues with deer on low-ground agricultural land. Where deer do access agricultural ground on Scatwell, the Estate is willing to bear this cost.
- The extensive use of deer fencing at the east end of the Group area also largely prevents movement of Red Deer onto the **A835**.
- There is a deer fence (not within the Group area) that runs along the north side of the **A832**. Whilst this prevents deer moving onto this road from the north, deer can still cross the road from the south and this is considered to be an ongoing issue. The Group are in discussion with South West Ross DMG about this and what possible actions might be implemented.
- Along the **A890** Achnasheen to Loch Carron road, deer movement is fairly unrestricted and it has been recognised that there may be “hotspots” for DVCs along this roads. Ledgowan Estate is monitoring DVCs and is looking to create diversionary feeding on the north side of the Estate to try and prevent deer moving across the road particularly in winter. Glencarron and Glenuaig Estate are also aware of DVCs along this stretch of road and as such have erected a 400m section of fence and a gate between two main fenced enclosures to create a barrier which largely prevents movement of deer north to south (except for during the rut when the gate is opened allowing the movement of stags onto the open ground of the Estate). The road tends to be a fast stretch of road, despite warning signals.

1.15.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective	When?	Who?	How?
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>
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>
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>
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>
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>
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>

Figure 20: Map of deer fences and main areas of deer movements
(arrows show deer movements between properties)



1.16 Actions to ensure effective communication on deer management issues.

1.16.1 Background

Effective collaborative deer management requires 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.

1.16.2 Plan Objectives

To ensure that the DMG is inclusive, open, transparent and that local issues have been addressed. DMP will include a Communications policy to encourage participation and collaboration and to communicate the public benefits being delivered through local deer management activity. DMG Constitution will set out methods for conflict resolution.

1.16.3 Current Delivery.

- DMG works in close collaboration with neighbouring properties and neighbouring DMGs.
- DMG has a [web site](#).
- The DMG works in partnership with SNH,FCS and the Local Community.

1.16.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

Actions to ensure effective communication on deer management issues	When?	Who?	How?
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.
Final Plan and Minutes of Meetings will be published on DMG Website.	Spring 2016	DMG Secretary	DMG Website.
DMG Constitution and ADMG Principles of Collaboration adopted (Part 3)	Spring 2016	DMG Members	Adopted as part of DMP.
Agree and adopt a DMG Communications Policy	Spring 2016	DMG Members	Adopted as part of DMP.

1.17 Actions to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual animal and population level.

1.17.1 Background.

The definition of welfare in relation to wild deer is 'concern for their physical and psychological well being'. This definition can be applied to both the individual animal and population level. [Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance](#) states that with increasing intervention (e.g. fencing, feeding, culling) comes increasing responsibility for their welfare.

Fencing

This is a management tool that is used extensively throughout the DMG. The exclusion or prevention of deer movements to areas of natural areas of shelter in winter through the erection of exclosures or use of strategic fenced may pose a threat to welfare. Similarly, areas where fencing is no longer required and can be removed, can open up areas of natural shelter which will be attractive to deer.

Supplementary Feeding

Within the DMG, all properties use supplementary/diversionary winter feeding specifically for deer.

Winter Mortality

Members already monitor and report any significant levels of winter mortality to the Group, as well as any significant health issues encountered. It is considered that mortality within the group is approx 6% for calves, and 2% hinds for hinds and stags. These figures are used in the current population models for the DMG, but will be varied depending on the location and practical experience.

1.17.2 Plan Objectives

DMP will promote and safeguard deer welfare through effective planning and the undertaking of training for deer managers and the carrying out of deer management activity to [Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance](#) industry standards.

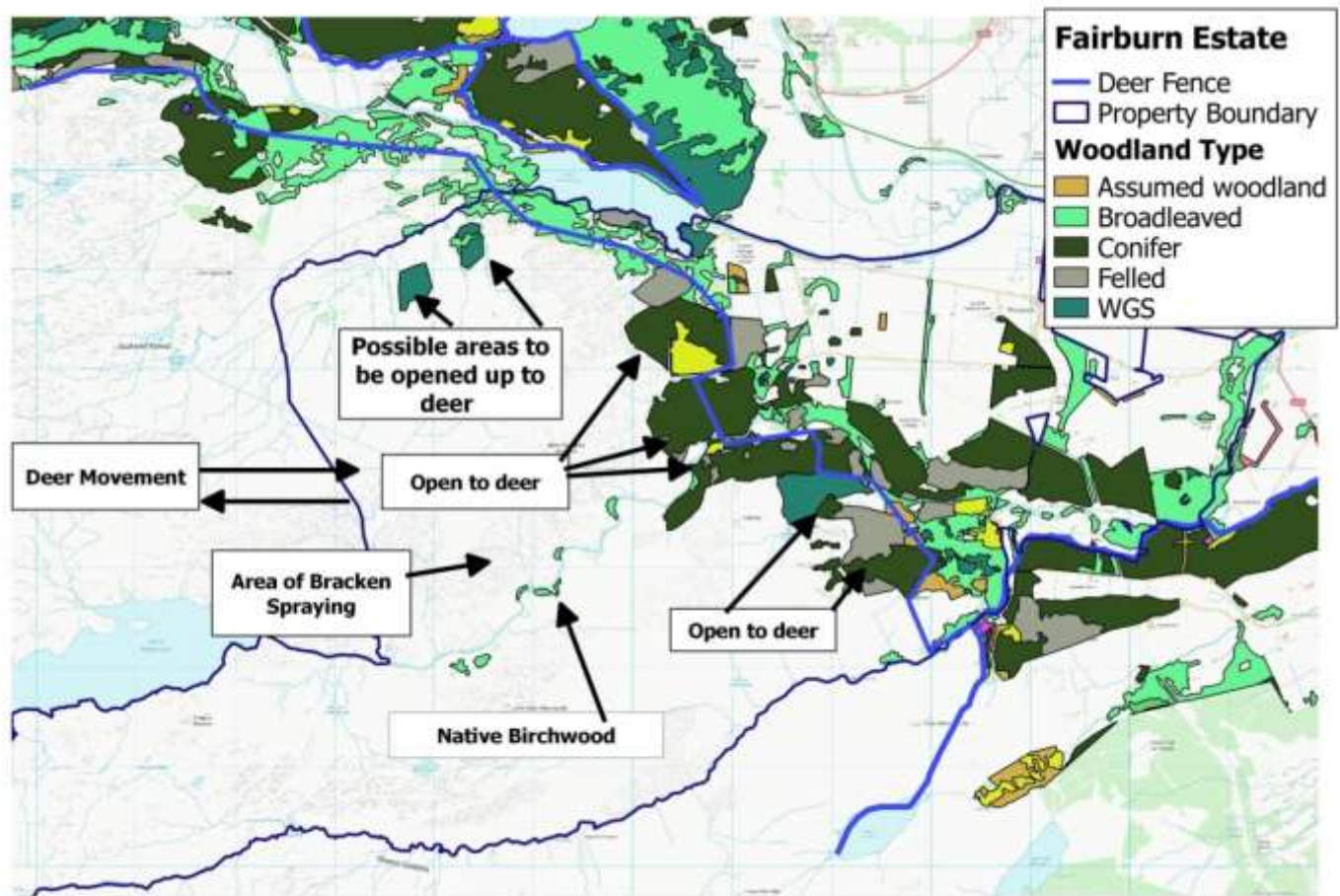
1.17.3 Current Delivery.

- Significant areas of woodland have already been opened up to deer for shelter (Figures 21 & 22)
- Members currently monitor and report on levels of winter mortality as well as any other significant health issues encountered.

1.17.4 Targets to be delivered by 2021

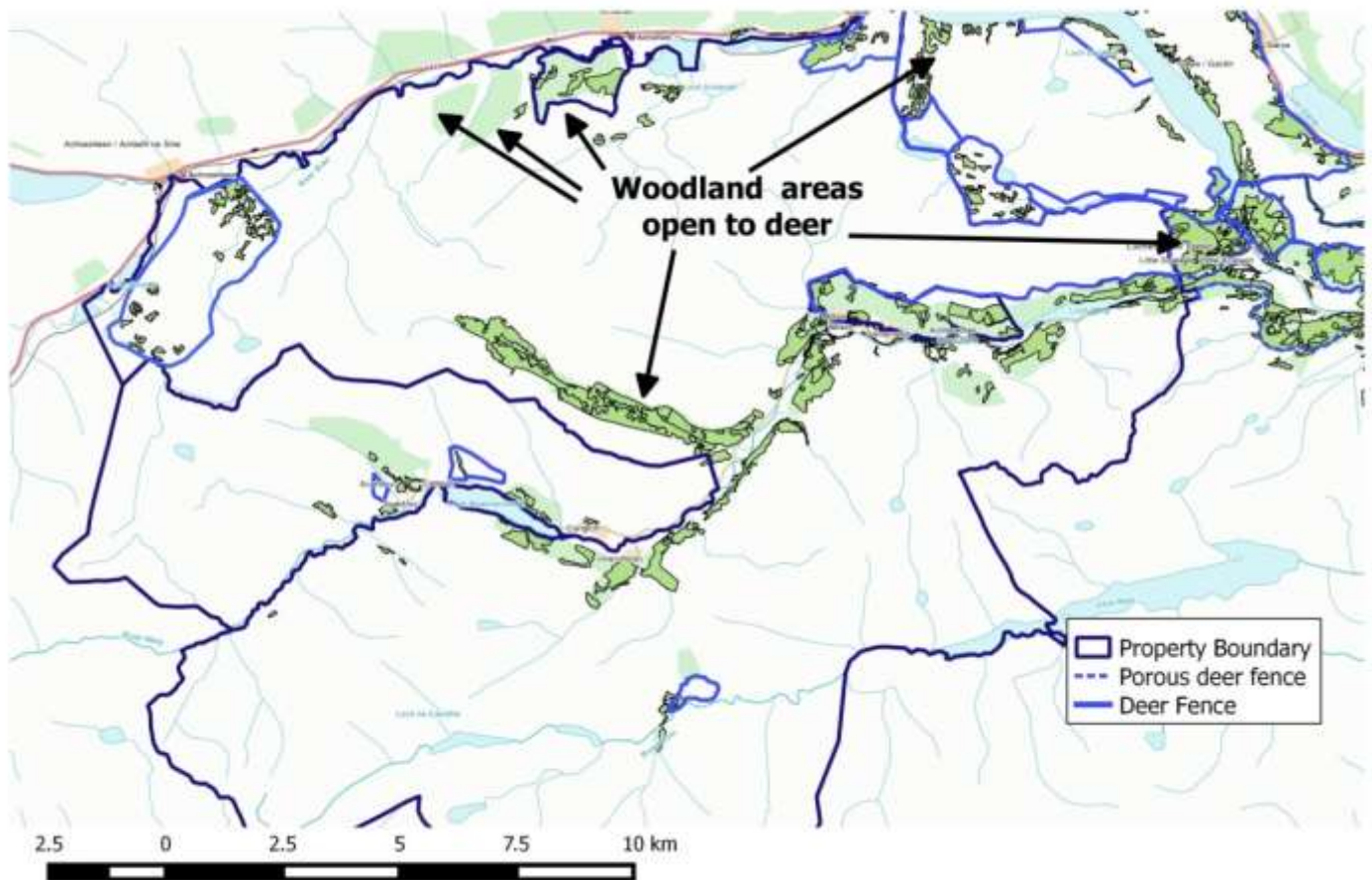
Actions to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual animal and population level	When?	Who?	How?
Agree and adopt welfare policy (Part 2 of plan).	Spring 2016	DMG Members	<i>Implemented through every day Best Practice in deer management.</i>
Consider opportunities for CPD/Training in relation to deer welfare.	Autumn 2017	DMG Members	<i>DMG will run at least one event to share Best Practice Management.</i>
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>
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>
Monitoring and reporting of significant levels of winter mortality.	Ongoing	DMG Members	<i>Deer managers will provide information (figures & location) on winter mortality.</i>
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>

Figure 21: Woodland areas open to deer on Fairburn Estate



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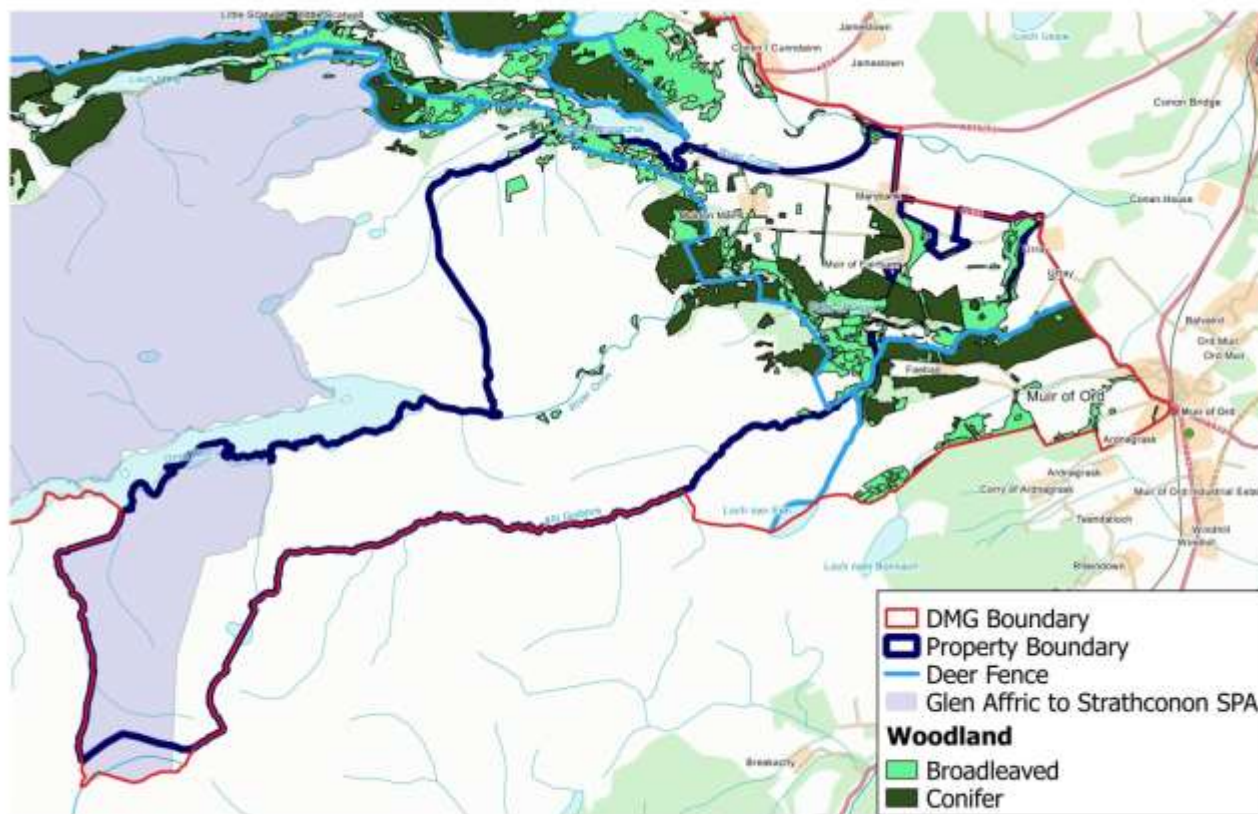
Figure 22: Woodland areas open to deer across the DMG



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1.18 Management Units: Fairburn & Colliehallie

Property	Fairburn and Colliehallie Estate
Area	6164 ha
Owner	Fairburn 1990 Trust
Deer Management	Peter Hingston, Keith Wilkinson and James Rolfe



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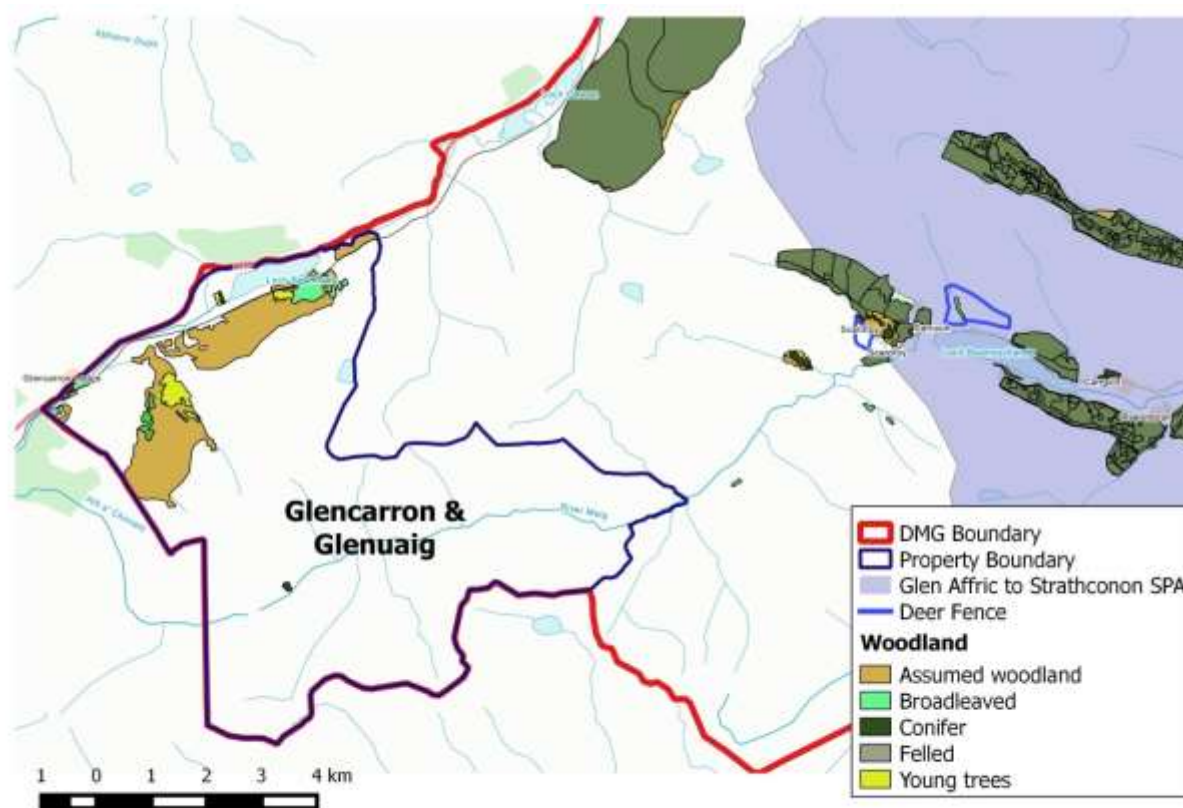
Deer Counts					
Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	150	390	151	691	11.2
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	188	570	207	965	15.7
2014 Heli Count Partial	0	0	0	0	0.0
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	230	607	172	1009	16.4

Deer Cull	Fairburn Open Range				Fairburn Woodland			
	s	H	C	T	S	H	C	T
2005 -2006	46	64	9	119	0	0	0	0
2006 -2007	48	41	11	100	2	0	0	2
2007 -2008	50	43	12	105	16	5	0	21
2008 -2009	48	72	18	138	6	6	0	12
2009 -2010	75	45	15	135	40	14	3	57
2010 -2011	48	11	3	62	20	36	2	68
2011 - 2012	54	12	1	67	0	18	5	23
2012 -2013	50	31	6	87	10	3	0	13
2013 -2014	49	50	17	116	6	10	3	19
2014 -2015	62	90	30	182	0	0	0	0
2015 -2016	52	49	10	111	0	0	0	0

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominantly a hind forest, Fairburn Estate lies to the far east of the Group area. The Estate is bounded by the A832 to the east and to the north-west neighbours Scatwell. To the south the property marches with Farley, Erchless and Culligran (all members of Glen Strathfarrar DMG). • The Estate combines conservation objectives with Agriculture, Shooting, Fishing and Renewable Energy. • Red and some Roe deer species with the occasional Sika deer seen.
Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially in the Glen Affric to Strathconon Special Protection Area.
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To balance deer management to produce high quality deer whilst delivering conservation and economic objectives.
Future Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major changes in woodland planned. • Communication and collaborative deer management with neighbours (including Strathfarrar DMG).
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 650 ha woodland. • Long Term Forest Plan in place 12 years ago. Woodland protected by deer fencing. • Some woodland blocks open to deer to provide shelter (See Section 1.17). • 3 previous Grant Schemes (330 ha boundary including 25 ha new woodland)
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Muirburn. • Agriculture both In-hand and Tenants. No livestock on open hill but historically used to have. • Ptarmigan
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer may have grazing impacts on windfarm site. Estate has created blocks of woodland to draw deer and birds away from windfarm. • Willing to implement Habitat Monitoring.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinds largely hefted on the Estate. Small movement of hinds (60 -80) with Scatwell. • During the rut stags come from Scatwell and Strathconon though Culligran and some stags from Farley. • Used to be more hinds in Glen Orrin but numbers building up.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Munroes.
Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 people involved in deer management (1.2 FTE) • Letting of stag shooting • Use of local businesses/services including Hotels, B&Bs and local restaurants for stag stalking and fishing clients and general visitors to the Estate. • Equipment invested in deer management includes landrover, argo, tools, rifle and ammunition.

1.19 Management Units: Glencarron and Glenuaig Estate

Property	Glencarron and Glenuaig Estate
Area	4562 ha
Owner	Alasdair Douglas
Deer Management	Eric Downie



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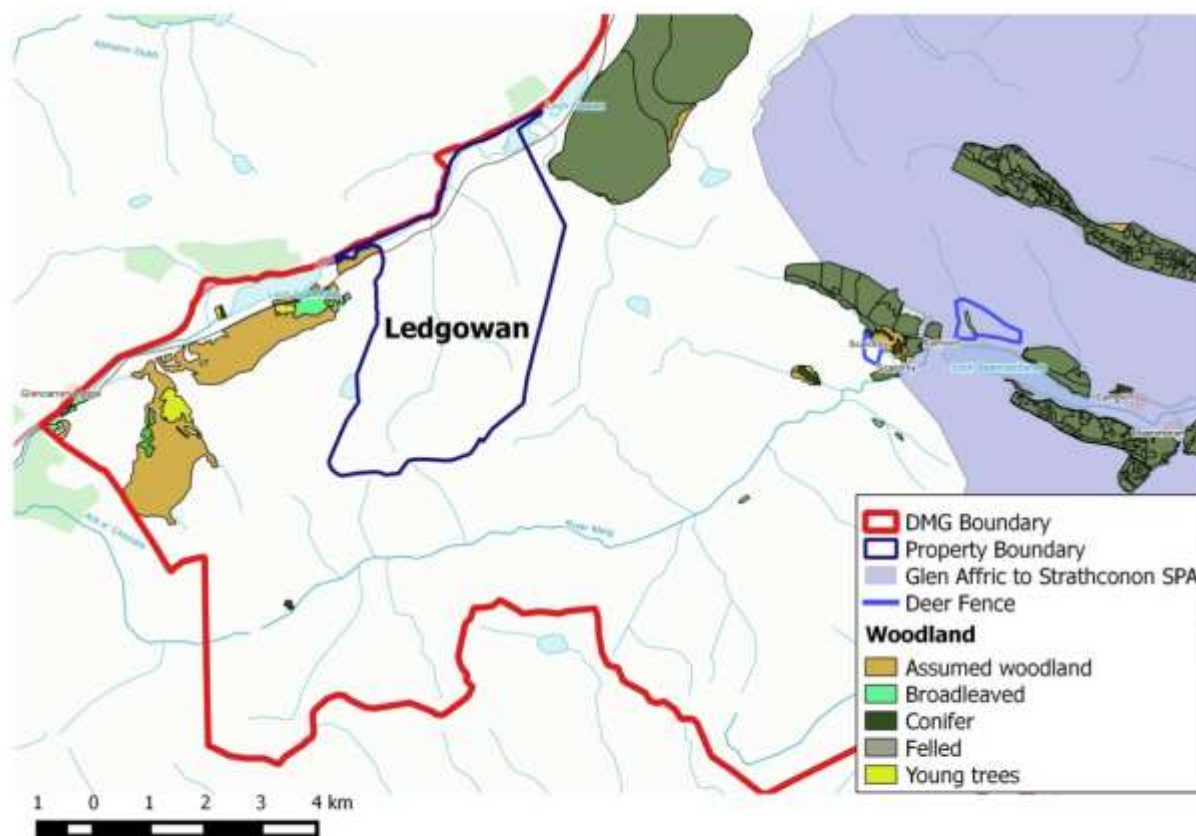
Deer Counts					
Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	17	398	104	519	11.4
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	77	510	125	712	15.6
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	109	428	107	644	14.1

Deer Cull	Glencarron & Glenuaig			
	S	H	C	T
2005 -2006	41	30	7	78
2006 -2007	39	84	28	151
2007 -2008	39	76	45	160
2008 -2009	42	67	30	139
2009 -2010	38	72	26	136
2010 -2011	32	83	26	141
2011 -2012	33	71	19	123
2012 -2013	31	47	24	102
2013 -2014	32	79	15	126
2014 -2015	35	10	0	45
2015 -2016	31	29	4	64

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glencarron and Glenuaig Estate lies to the far west of the Group area. The Estate is bounded by the A890 to the north-west. The property marches with 4 different DMGs. Achnashellach Estate (Lochalsh DMG), Coulin Estate (South West Ross DMG), Pait and East Monar Estates (Glen Strathfarrar DMG), and Strathconon, Scardroy and Ledgowan Estates (Strathconon DMG). The Estate combines conservation objectives with Shooting and the management of forestry. Red and Roe Deer.
Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monar Forest SSSI (this was confirmed to be in Favourable condition in 2015. The Estate limits the use of ATVs on the SSSI aside from a small area of 250m on the plain on the south side of the River Meig.
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce hind numbers to a resident population of 400 and to continue to sustainably harvest 35 stags. The 400 hinds are spread over the Estate fairly evenly, so only a third or less would be hefted on the SSSI.
Future Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited opportunities for further woodland expansions.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two new woodland schemes (2011 & 2012) – each of 130 ha, 180,000 trees planted in each. Compensatory cull carried out. WGS 2 Scheme (1993) 103ha - just out of maintenance. WGS 3 Scheme (1996) 254 ha Enclosed area of Caledonian Pine (deer fenced) Small woodland west of Lodge provides shelter for deer.
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Assessment carried out in 2015. Estate to investigate opportunities for peatland restoration. No muirburn carried out. Sheep were removed from the Estate 3 years ago.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Assessment carried out in 2015 and repeated in 2016. No historic features impacted by deer. Occasional DVCs on A890 where reduction in speed of vehicles would be a mitigating action. The gate between fenced exclosures largely prevents deer movements north to south across the road.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Blocks in winter (4 tons).
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stags in the rutting season in large numbers reducing to around 30 in winter. Resident hind population which has varied between c. 700 and 250. A 400 m deer fence and a gate erected between the two newest deer fenced exclosures largely prevents deer movement south to north apart from during the rut when the gate is opened to allow stags to access the main open range of the estate.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Series of summits that run along around the Estate boundary including Sgur nan Ceannaichean, Sgurr a'Chaorachain, Maoile Lunndaidh and Bidean an Eoin Deirg. Also summit of Moruisg. These are mainly accessed from the path running through Gleann Fhiodhaig and from Achnashellach Estate on the main path from Craig to the Bealach Bhearnais. The Estate is an active member of HFTSH. Stalking takes place between Aug and 20 Oct. No stalking on Sundays. Access via the main paths and ridges is always OK.
Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3x employees associated with deer management Stag and hind stalking let. 3x properties for holiday lets (37 beds). Local services and businesses supported.

1.20 Management Units: Ledgowan Estate

Property	Ledgowan Estate (part)
Area	1574 ha
Owner	
Deer Management	Managing Agent: Jeremy Stephenson. Stalker: Danny Mackie .



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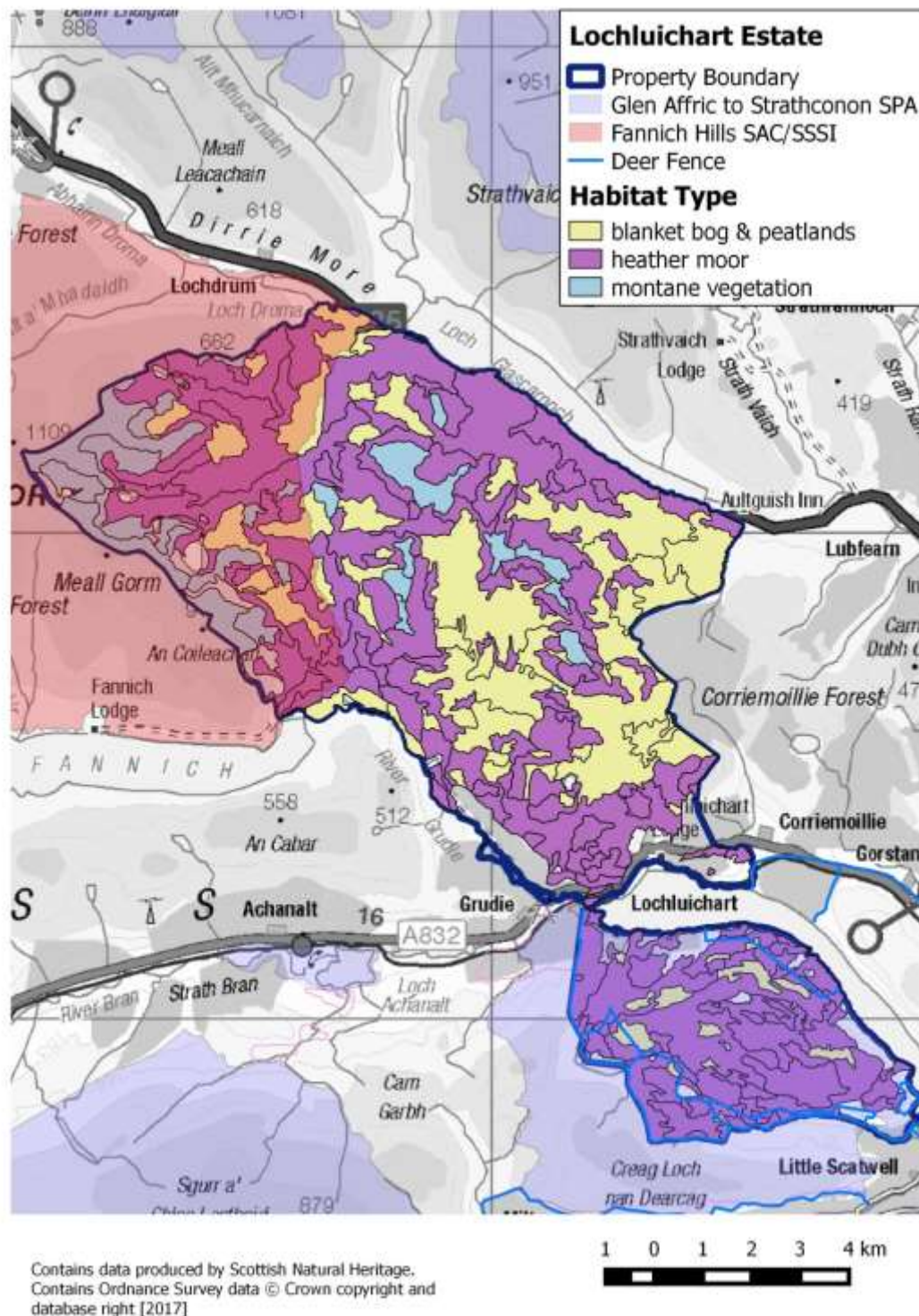
Deer Counts					
Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	28	128	37	193	12.3
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	54	118	35	207	13.2
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	45	169	53	267	17.0

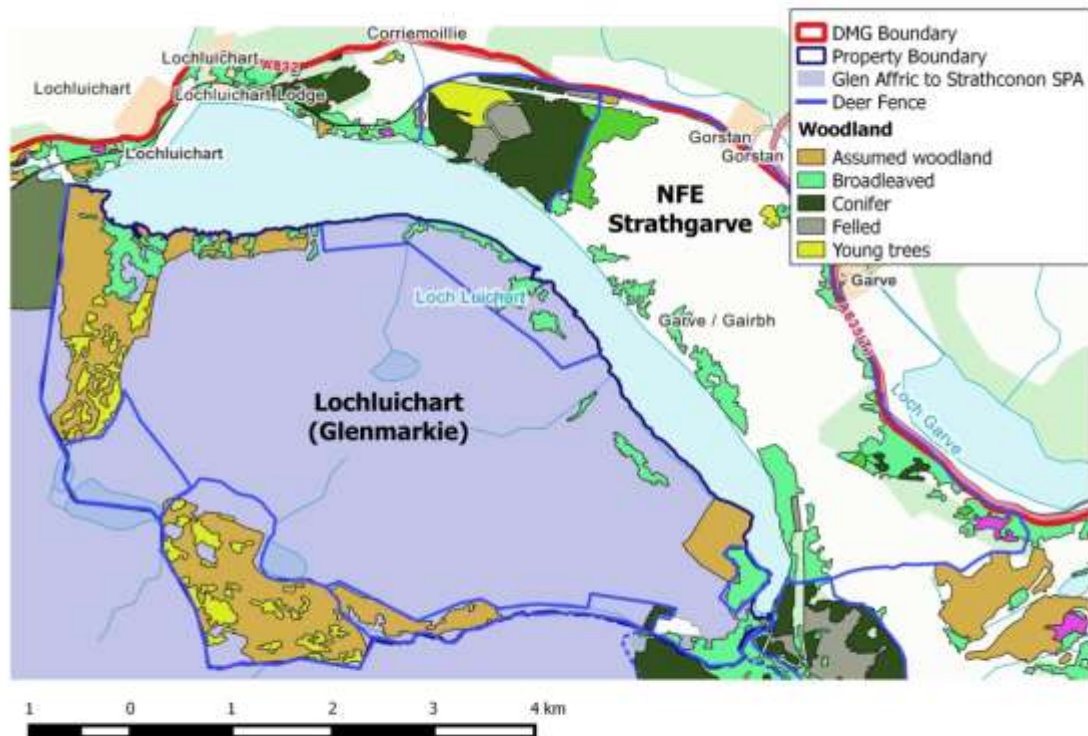
Deer Cull	Ledgowan			
	S	H	C	T
2005 -2006	12	14	2	28
2006 -2007	13	13	2	28
2007 -2008	12	11	3	26
2008 -2009	10	8	0	18
2009 -2010	10	4	1	15
2010 -2011	6	5	0	11
2011 -2012	40	40	0	80
2012 -2013	10	8	3	21
2013 -2014	15	15	0	30
2014 -2015	15	10	0	25
2015 -2016	15	10	0	25

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The southern part of Legowan Estate lies in the far west of the Group area, with the remainder of the property in South West Ross DMG. The Estate is split by the A890 where there is free movement of deer between the two parts of the Estate. The part of the Estate in Strathconon marches with Strathconon, Scardroy and Glencarron and Glenuaig Estates. The Estate combines conservation objectives with Shooting. Red and Roe Deer. Sika are established on the main Estate. Some goats from Monar in summer.
Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None within Strathconon DMG area.
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage deer alongside woodland expansion proposals for the area north of the A890.
Future Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage deer to enable woodland expansion and to reduce DVC incidents on A890.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited opportunities for woodland expansion south of A890.
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No livestock on the open-hill. 5 years ago approximately 100 sheep were taken off the hill. Some muirburn conducted annually.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DVC hotspot on A890 with deer crossing the road particularly in winter. Estate to consider use of diversionary feeding to try and restrict deer movements. There is currently no warning signage in place. Estate will implement habitat monitoring.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Turnips and blocks used to pull deer away from the roadside during winter.
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ledgowan is a hind forest with few resident stags. During the rut, will attract stags from Glencarron, Scardroy and some from Strathconon Estate. Stags in the winter cross the road to access existing feeding sites. Estate to consider moving sites to try and reduce deer movement.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Munro summits but Carn Gorm and Carn Liath. Stalking takes place between Aug and 20 Oct. No stalking on Sundays. Access via the main paths and ridges is always OK.
Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 full-time employee associated with deer management plus part time assistance. Stag stalking let. Lodge for holiday lets. Local services and businesses supported.

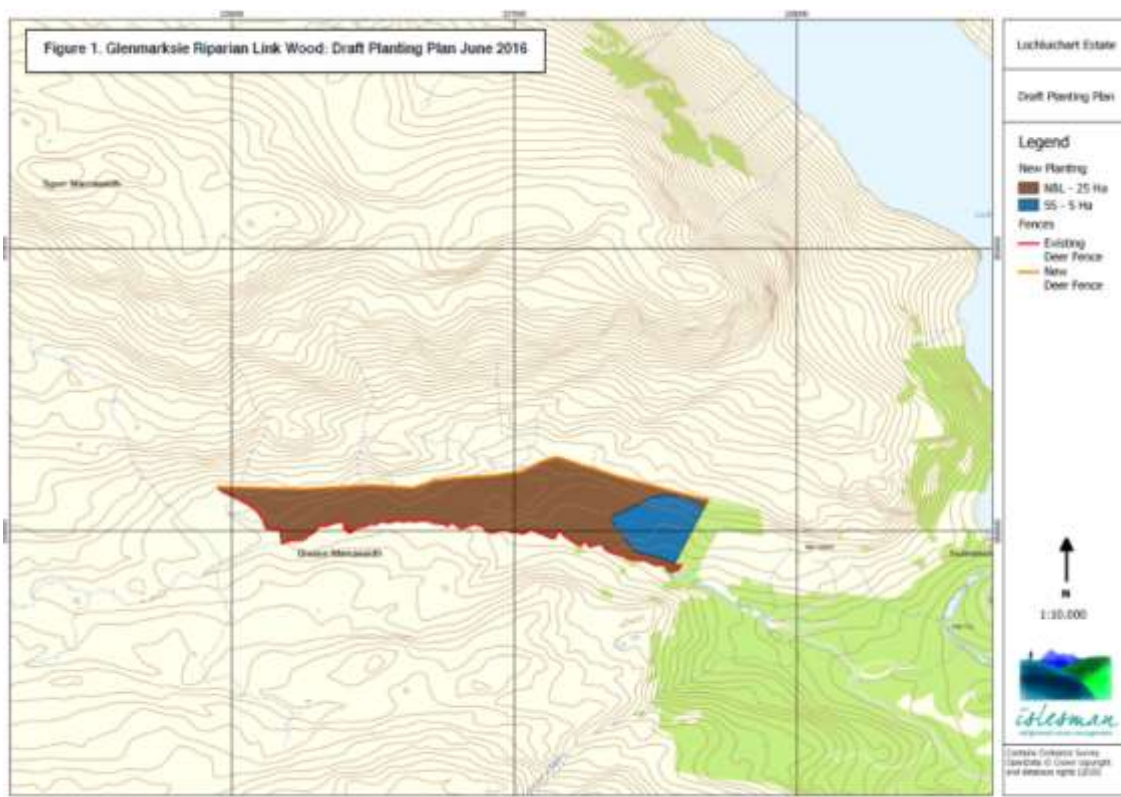
1.21 Management Units: Lochluichart Estate

Property	Lochluichart Estate
Area	11,905 ha in total (Glenmarkie 2295 ha)
Owner	Ian Hamish Leslie Melville
Deer Management	Glyn Robson (Estate Manager), Jamie Stewart





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		Lochluichart (Glenmarkie)					Lochluichart (North)					
Count Type	Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Deer per km2	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Unclass	Total	Deer per km2
	1989	0	0	0	0	0.0	244	278	99	0	621	6.46
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	2009	81	110	33	224	9.8	410	0	0	731	1141	11.87
	2010	0	0	0	0	0.0	381	498	173	0	1052	10.95
	2013	0	0	0	0	0.0	320	489	218	0	1027	10.69
	2015	0	0	0	0	0.0	380	404	134	0	918	9.55
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	2016	179	247	80	506	22.0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

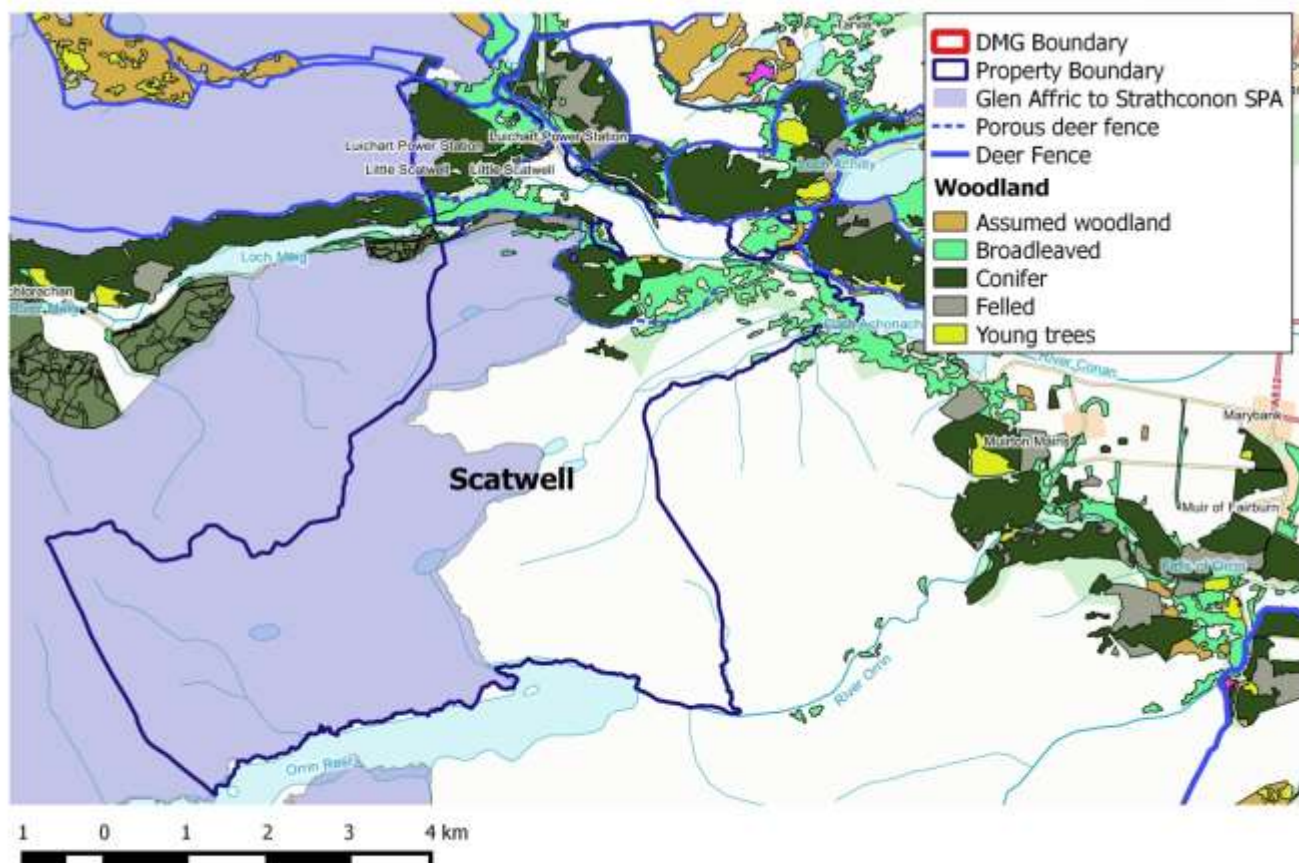
Culls	Lochluichart (Glenmarkie)				Lochluichart (North)			
Year	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T
2005 -2006	19	39	17	75	38	30	11	79
2007 -2008	21	40	12	73	52	68	31	151
2008 -2009	34	23	10	67	55	85	39	179
2009 -2010	19	11	4	34	74	107	48	229
2011 - 2012	18	35	10	63	45	51	20	116
2012 -2013	8	21	9	38	61	74	27	162
2013 -2014	10	15	5	30	43	38	12	93
2014 -2015	19	10	5	34	55	59	45	159
2015 -2016	14	0	0	14	46	27	8	81

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of Lochluichart Estate lies outwith the Strathconon DMG Boundary. The part known as Glenmarkie lies within the Group area but is fenced off completely from the main open deer range. The Estate combines conservation objectives with Farming, Forestry, Shooting and Renewable Energy. Red and Roe Deer. Sika are established on the main Estate and utilised as a resource.
Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Affric to Strathconon Special Protection Area within Strathconon DMG area. Part of the main Estate to the north falls within the Fannich Hills SAC/SSSI. The Estate is currently signed up to the Fannich Hills Section 7 Agreement.
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage deer to deliver conservation objectives.
Future Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Estate is committed to the sustainable management of land in order to support a successful, thriving and dynamic local community. The vision is to attract younger people to the area through local employment and affordable housing and to provide opportunities to start up businesses. Conservation and the sustainable management of woodland, deer and habitat.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodland totals 2049.29 ha - all native species (50% broadleaved, 50% Caledonian pine). In last 10 years the Estate has created woodland on Glenmarkie through a Forestry Grant Scheme. The Estate has a Long Term Forest Plan. Estate has an experimental area to regenerate a different type of montane woodland. Will increase if successful. A further scheme of 30ha was created in 2016.
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SRDP Schemes for Black Grouse (predator control, bracken management and planting of native woodland corridors including fence marking) and for Fannich Hills Estate may investigate opportunities for peatland restoration. Some muirburn conducted. No livestock currently on the open-hill to improve habitat. In-hand farm with 200 sheep. Used to be 960 breeding ewes and followers 10 -12 years ago but these were removed from the main open hill prior to the Fannich Hills Section 7 agreement.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate will implement habitat monitoring on Glenmarkie. Occasional DVC on A835. Deer occasionally shot out of season in woodlands.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Silage, turnips, rumivite blocks and salt licks.
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The deer population on Glenmarkie is fenced off from the main open range of Strathconon.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Munro summits on Glenmarkie but popular summits on Fannich Hills. Royal Marines use area for training.

Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 full-time employee plus 1 part time associated with deer management. One staff member is an Approved Witness for DSC Level 2. • Stag stalking (65) and hind stalking (50) let across whole Estate. Lodge for holiday lets. • Estate has venison processing facilities. • Local tradesmen, services and businesses supported. • Proceeds from windfarm have been invested back into the Estate towards renovating properties (6 short term assured tenancy properties), providing employment and supporting conservation. • Lochluichart Community Trust set up and will receive £160,000 from the windfarm over next 25 years. • Working with Highland Council to release land (8 ha) for affordable housing and workplaces for local businesses to help regenerate the local community.
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1.22 Management Units: Scatwell Estate

Property	Scatwell Estate
Area	3650 ha
Owner	Earl of Aylesford
Deer Management	Mike Watt



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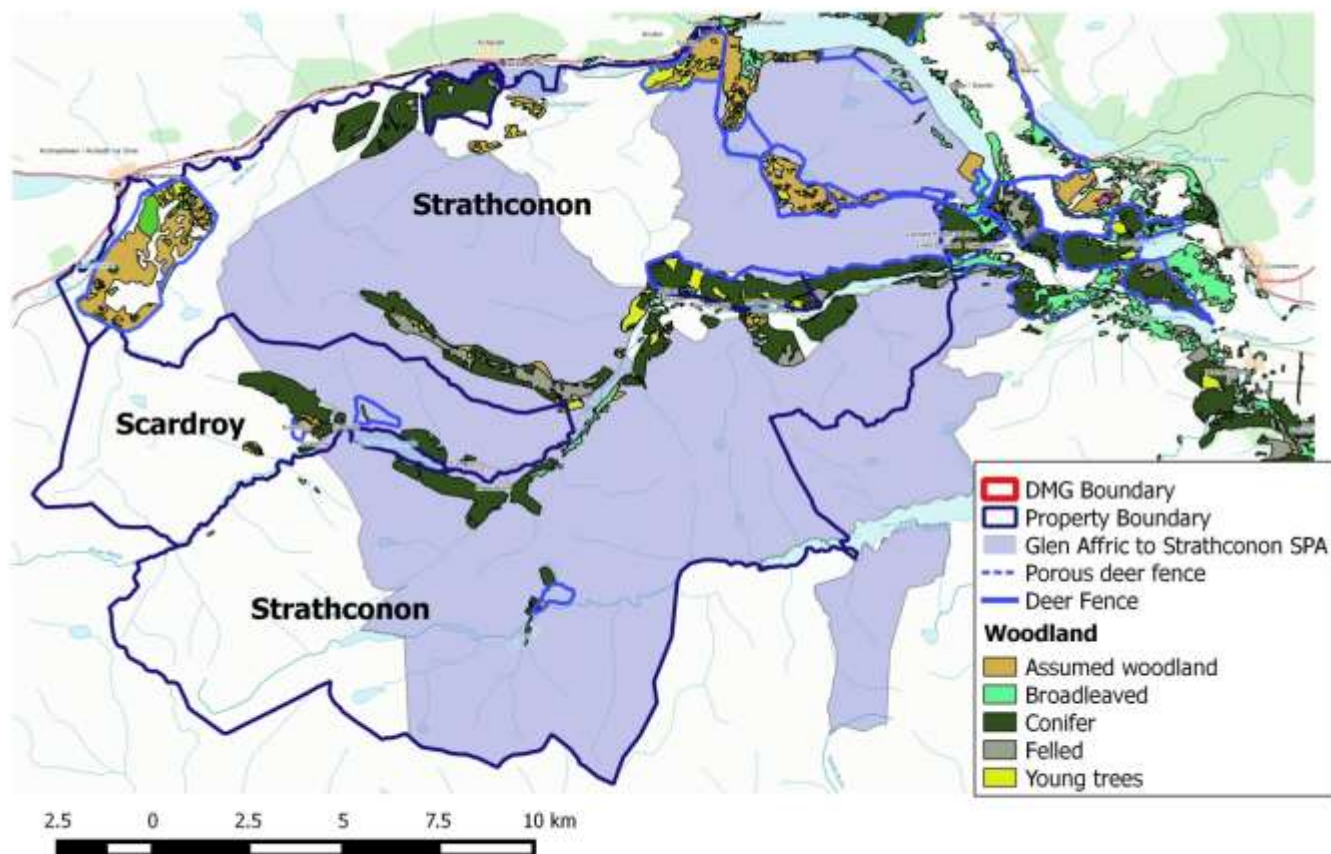
Deer Counts					
Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	192	343	108	643	17.6
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	186	435	130	751	20.6
2014 Heli Count Partial	139	302	91	532	14.6
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	322	333	104	759	20.8

Deer Cull	Scatwell Open Range				Scatwell Woodland			
	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T
2005 -2006	22	30	10	62	7	8	2	17
2006 -2007	25	24	13	62	5	5	4	14
2007 -2008	24	38	14	76	2	5	2	9
2008 -2009	23	40	18	81	8	6	2	16
2009 -2010	20	30	10	60	8	14	8	30
2010 -2011	20	30	15	65	6	10	5	21
2011 - 2012	17	25	8	50	7	10	5	22
2012 -2013	16	24	11	51	6	4	2	12
2013 -2014	17	30	11	58	8	8	2	18
2014 -2015	20	35	10	65	7	5	3	15
2015 -2016	18	22	9	49	6	9	0	15

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scatwell Estate lies to the east of the Group and marches with Fairburn to the east and Strathconon to the West. The Estate combines conservation objectives with Farming, Shooting and Renewable Energy. Red and occasional Roe Deer. Sika are established in woodland.
Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Affric to Strathconon Special Protection Area.
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage deer to deliver conservation and economic objectives.
Future Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation and the sustainable management of woodland, deer and habitat.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the last 10 years, the Estate has been changing woodland blocks to native species. Scatwell has two long-term forest plans in place for Scatwell Estate (Ref: 030/901100 2007 – 2027). Scatwell West Comrie (Ref: 4125442, 2012 – 2031). Possible proposal for a further 40 ha of woodland creation.
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate has around 400 breeding ewes on low ground as well as 40-80 cows during the summer on the low ground. The estate used to have a hirsle of about 20 -30 on open hill. Some muirburn conducted. Limited livestock on the open-hill.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate will implement habitat monitoring. No issues with DVCs on Strathconon road. Deer managed in woodlands and occasionally shot out of season.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Silage and blocks.
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident hinds (60 -80) are shared with Fairburn Estate which attract stags in during the rut from Strathconon. Overwinter more stags than have in the summer.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Munro summits on property. No access issues. Stalking takes place between Aug and 20 Oct. No stalking on Sundays. Access via the main paths and ridges is always OK.
Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 full-time employee associated with deer management and one other full-time (may to October) employed on other Estate activities. Stag stalking occasionally let and lodge let for 5 weeks fishing. Local tradesmen/contractors, services and businesses supported. Deer manager gives talks to local Primary School.

1.23 Management Units: Strathconon and Scardroy Estates

Property	Strathconon and Scardroy Estates
Area	30094 ha
Owner	KIRKBI Estate Limited
Deer Management	Troels Bavnhøj, Angus Cameron, Murdoch Maclean, Colin Hendry.



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Deer Counts: Scardroy and Strathconon					
Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2003 Heli Count (Classified)	1595	1799	513	3907	13.0
2009 Heli Count (Unclassified)	2141	3011	899	6051	20.1
2014 Heli Count Partial	1191	1992	635	3818	12.7
2016 Heli Count (Classified)	1883	2757	828	5468	18.2

Deer Cull	Strathconon				Scardroy			
	S	H	C	T	S	H	C	T
2005 -2006	176	261	73	510	18	10	4	32
2006 -2007	183	280	109	572	24	24	8	56
2007 -2008	118	197	85	400	28	24	6	58
2008 -2009	175	301	108	584	28	40	10	78
2009 -2010	151	234	88	473	25	3	8	36
2010 -2011	76	305	105	486	27	20	5	52
2011 - 2012	48	92	26	166	25	10	3	38
2012 -2013	66	135	61	262	22	12	4	38
2013 -2014	72	171	70	313	9	28	12	49
2014 -2015	92	233	109	434				
2015 -2016	90	146	52	288				

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Estates of Strathconon (25948 ha) and Scardroy (4146 ha) now fall under the same management. Scardroy was purchased in 2013. Occupying a central position within the DMG, these two Estates represent 65% of the DMG deer open range. Estates combines Conservation objectives with Woodland, Shooting, Fishing and Agriculture. Red and Roe Deer. Sika Deer are established within woodland.
Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achnasheen Terraces (SSSI), Achanalt Marshes (SSSI and SPA). Glen Affric to Strathconon Special Protection Area within Strathconon DMG area.
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage deer to deliver conservation as well as economic objectives.
Future Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation and the sustainable management of woodland, deer and habitat.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term Forest plan to approved to restructure existing commercial plantation and expand native woodland. Within last 5 years, 48 ha of native woodland creation on Scardroy and 13 ha at Glen Orrin. Over the last 15 years, there have been 15 individual schemes totalling 1085.2 ha of woodland regeneration/expansion. Additional future schemes are currently being considered.
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estates will investigate opportunities for Peatland restoration (Section 1.9). Some muirburn conducted. Until 20 years ago, there used to 1600 ewes, hogs and tups plus 100 head of cattle on Strathconon. Now 45 Hebridean Rare Breed sheep kept on in-bye ground. Removal of sheep has changed patterns of deer movements. Carnoch Croft has 500 sheep & 20 cattle which have access to open hill at certain times. Estate has wildfire plan in place.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate has implement habitat monitoring on both Estates and results are presented in the Section 1.8. High impacts noted on Carn Gorm from deer congregating in summer. Fewer deer seen on high ground on Strathconon in summer due to frequency of walkers. Incidents of DVCs along the A832. Fencing along the north side of may not be helping to reduce impacts as deer are on the river flats all year round.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Since 2015, only silage used as diversionary feeding to keep deer off heather moorland/blanket bog habitat during winter. Estate fertilises fields to produce silage and removes cattle from fields early to attract deer.
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In east wind, deer come from Ledgowan. In bad weather deer will come from Glencarron and East Monar but will move out again.
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate has several popular Munros including Sgurr Fuarthuill, Sgurr a'Choire Ghlais, Carn nan Gobhar, Sgurr na Ruaidhe. Corbetts include An Sidhean, Meallan nan Uan, Sgurr a'Mhuilinn. These are generally accessed from Braulen Estate. Stalking takes place between Aug and 20 Oct. No stalking on Sundays. Access via the main paths and ridges is always OK. Information available from the Estate Office for during office hours 01997 477240. Stalking has signage in place on Estate which will be updated with Scardroy information. Estate will also have a new website by end of 2016.
Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 full-time employees plus 2 part time associated with deer management. Stag stalking (90) and hind stalking (10) let across whole Estate. Lodge for holiday lets. Local tradesmen, services and businesses supported. Educational links with local primary school. Best Practice Demonstration Event previously held for 300 people.

1.24 Management Units: National Forest Estate Strathgarve

Owned/ Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by Forestry Commission Scotland. Deer management: Willie Lamont and Derick Macaskill.
Designated sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To minimise negative impacts of deer on woodland and conservation objectives.
Future Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to work collaboratively with neighbours and the DMG to manage deer at a landscape level.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed age conifer and broadleaf plantation fenced.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on native woodland all considered low/medium. Monitoring carried out on new planting.
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The property is entirely deer fenced.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No access issues.

1.25 Management Units: Olsson Forest Ltd

Owned/ managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colin Blyth & Douglas Orr
Designated sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Deer Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To minimise negative impacts of deer on woodland and conservation objectives.
Future Management Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to work collaboratively with neighbours and the DMG to manage deer at a landscape level.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed age conifer and broadleaf plantation fenced.
Deer Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of impacts on native woodland according to NWSS.
Deer Distribution & Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The property is entirely deer fenced.
Supplementary Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No access issues.

1.26 References & Acknowledgements

Rapid Assessment of Grazing and Trampling Impacts on Upland Habitats for the South Ross Deer Management Area. Stolte, A.M., Alfaro, P., Nolan, A.J. and Henderson D.J. (2001).

Strathconon Deer Management Plan 2006 - 2011. Putman, R.

The author would like to thank Scottish Natural Heritage, Bidwells and Dan Brown (BIOME) for providing data, reports and advice to assist in the development of this plan. The author would also like to thank the Chairman, Secretary and Members of Strathconon DMG for their valuable input.