



EIR Ref 2015/013

6<sup>th</sup> January 2016

### **REQUEST UNDER ENVIRONMENTAL (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2004**

Thank you for your request for information under the Environmental (Scotland) Regulations 2004, received by email on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015. Your specific requests and the relevant information held by the Park Authority are provided below.

#### **As part of the Callander Black Grouse project to the north of the town, the National Park, I believe, has carried out twice yearly surveys of the area.**

Surveys of Black Grouse, that have been carried out by the Park Authority are:

- Black grouse counts at known lek sites within the project area, combined with searches in case of leks moving or splitting.
- Twice yearly Herbivore Impact Assessments (HIA) in an area known as the Commonly, which is part of Braeleny Farm. HIA surveying is carried out in June before cattle graze the site during the summer months and a follow up survey is carried out after the cattle have been taken off the site in September.

#### **I am interested to know what was the aim of these surveys, what information was collected**

The aim of the lek surveys is to track changes in the numbers of lekking black grouse as an indicator of population size in the area.

The aim of the HIA survey is to monitor the grazing/browsing impact on several habitats across the site. The site has been subdivided into five main habitat types these are described as Habitat Mosaic, Rush Pasture, Upland Birchwood, Wet Heath and Wet Woodland.

The HIA surveys assess the level of ground disturbance, sward height, presence of preferentially browsed or grazed plants, level of browsing on seedlings and saplings, level of bark stripping or stem breakage, level of browsing on epicormics growth/flower shoots, level of browsing of basal shoots and the 'Woodland Structure Class' (e.g. open ground, dense regeneration, mature, post-mature etc)

#### **when the surveys took place**

Annual spring black grouse surveys have been undertaken each spring in March/April, since 2012 though not every lek site is surveyed every year.

#### **LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

National Park Headquarters, Carrochan, Carrochan Road, Balloch, G83 8EG Long: 4°34'24"W Lat: 56°00'12"N  
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HIA surveys took place before and after cattle grazing of the Commonty annually between 2012 and 2015.

**What did the monitoring indicate? What conclusions were reached as to the success or otherwise of the current grazing management plan?**

No report has been completed yet concluding the monitoring data, however, for the HIA surveys of the Commonty, the data shows a gradual trend from very high/high impacts to medium/low impacts.

**Have the number of black grouse increased or decreased over the last 5 year in the area of the Callander Black Grouse Project?**

The black grouse survey data for the period 2012 to 2015 have shown an overall decline in the number of lekking makes in the project area, continuing a trend that was in place prior to the project commencing. Spring 2016 will be the fifth year of monitoring with a final survey due in 2017. It remains to be seen if the birds will respond to the management measures undertaken.

Yours sincerely

Information Officer

info@lochlomond-trossachs.org

Review Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with this decision, or the way in which the Authority has dealt with your request, you are entitled to require the Authority to review its decision. Please note that in order for a review to take place you are required to:

- Send your request for review in writing, setting out in full the reasons why you are requesting a review.
- Submit your review request within 40 working days of either the date on which you received a response from the Authority or the date by which you should have received a response under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, whichever is the later.
- address your review request to the Director of Corporate Services:

Jaki Carnegie  
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority  
National Park Headquarters  
Carrochan  
Carrochan Road  
Balloch  
G83 8EG  
E-mail: [info@lochlomond-trossachs.org](mailto:info@lochlomond-trossachs.org)

The review will be handled by staff who were not involved in the original decision. You will receive notice of the result of your review within 20 working days.

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If you are not satisfied with the response to your request for review, you can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner, the independent body which oversees the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, at:

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS  
Tel: 01334 464610  
Website: [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)  
E-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

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