Red deer and pointless peatbog restoration

Description

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Heavy trampling above an artificial â??bog poolâ?• has re-exposed the peat to the atmosphere and the forces of erosion, including trampling.Over the last week I have been combining some hillwalking with various site visits. On Saturday I walked over Carn Chuilinn, the Corbett south east of Fort Augustus, which I had not visited since the Glendoe hydro scheme was constructed. I was interested in seeing the access tracks in case the Coire Glas pumped storage hydro goes ahead (see here). We passed an area of peatbog restoration on the way up, where there was very little sign of deer trampling, but then on the way down and just above the hydro track came across an area of peatbog restoration that had, as the photo shows, been totally trashed.

NatureScot through Peatland Action subcontracts responsibility for peatbog restoration in the Monadliath to Strath Caulidh Ltd (who presumably oversaw this scheme). . NatureScot now also wonâ??t use the Â£250m the Scottish Government has allocated to peatog restoration where deer density is over 10 per square km. Deer density in the Monadhliath is now, according to Strath Caulidh, supposed to be c10 per square km. That density is clearly far too high for oeatland restoration just as it is for woodland restoration (see here).

A far wider area of restoration work had been trashed than is shown in the photo. This raises the question of how much peatbog restoration, funded by public money, has failed to date because of trampling (and browsing) by deer and sheep and how much is likely to fail in the next ten years for these reasons? It also raises the question of whether NatureScot is asking landowners to repay the costs when schemes like this fail?

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Category

1. Other parts Scotland

Tags

1. CNPA
2. Deer
3. Forestry Commission Scotland
4. I'm
5. NatureScot
6. peatland restoration
7. Scottish Government

Date Created
November 11, 2026
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