

Ulster MPC 2017 (Oct 13th – 15th)

The Poisoned Glen and Environs, Co. Donegal

The Poisoned Glen is said to get its name from the Irish Spurge, a poisonous plant which grew along the banks of the stream which drains the glen (very ineffectively as you'll see!). The glen is a classic example of the effect of glaciation. A glacier which originated in the Derryveagh Mountains spilled over the cliffs surrounding the glen before heading North and then along the lakes to the West of here. The area is home to a large herd of native red deer - you may see some over the weekend.

Proposed Route (Map: OSI Number 1, Discovery Series 1:50000)

The following route is the intended route for this MPC. However, this route may be changed or cut short due to weather, other conditions, etc. Bearing this in mind, please study your map carefully and become familiar with the names and relative locations of the various lakes, mountains & rivers. The terrain is generally very rocky, with gullies on the hills and very wet/boggy ground in the valleys. As we are so far north and relatively late in the year, daylight hours will be short so an early start is essential. Keep your team together, always have a bearing to your destination and follow your progress on the map. Be careful on steep ground and avoid steep cliffs. Part of the route will enter the boundaries of Glenveagh National Park - so please respect fences, etc.

Friday Check-in from 830pm – 11pm.

Check In (927 198) to Base Camp (942 173)

Car Parking is available at a number of lay bys located on the R251 road as it descends into Dunlewy. Turn down into the valley at 924 197. Follow the road past the roofless Church, please ensure to keep noise down, as there are a number of houses along this road. At the bend (929 188) continue up the valley along the track keeping the river (Cronaniv Burn) to your left until you reach 943 174. Turn south to reach the campsite located at 942 173, on the far side of the river. Be sure to cross the river at a safe place.

Saturday

Please must ensure that your campsite is completely clean before the team can check out.

Base Camp to Shoulder of Spur (934 165)

From the campsite, head south east to the bottom of the slope (942 169) from where you proceed up the slope to the shoulder of the spur (934 165)

Shoulder of Spur to Lough Maumbeg (938 162)

From the shoulder of the spur proceed southeastward to Lough Maumbeg (938 162), which is enclosed within a steep sided gully.

Lough Maumbeg to Northern Summit of Rocky Cap (937 160)

Having gained the crest of the mountains, you can begin to appreciate how very broken and rocky the Derryveagh Mountains are. The area is criss-crossed by dykes and gullies, so take care with both your footing and navigation. Be careful not to confuse some gullies, which fill with the periodic rainfall as Loughs marked on the map. Continue in a southwesterly direction across rocky broken ground. The steepness eases and you should be in the middle of the ridge. The summit (unnamed on the map) is marked by a small cairn.

Northern Summit of Rocky Cap to Small Lake (934 157)

Leave the summit in a southwesterly direction continuing across rocky, broken ground until you reach another gully lake.

Small Lake to Southern Summit of Rocky Cap 592 (934 156)

This lake is best passed to the southern side with a slight climb out of the gully. You shortly gain the southern summit which has quite spectacular cliffs to the west & north so keep back from the edge. The views from here are very dramatic and you should be able to see Lough Slievesnaght below.

Southern Summit of Rocky Cap to Lough Slievesnaght (932 152)



Mountain Pursuit Challenge

Leave the summit in a southerly direction in order to avoid the very steep ground and descend initially towards the Col at 934 152. On reaching the col you can turn towards the lake and pick an easy descent over rocky ground, ensure that you traverse around the Lough to reach the checkpoint located on the Slieve Snaght side.

Lough Slievesnaght to Slieve Snaght (924 149)

From the shore of the Lough, depending on the conditions, you may proceed to the summit of Slieve Snaght. A climb of 180 metres will take you to the cairn on the summit ridge. The views all around are brilliant, Try to spot Tory Island to the North. Return by the same route to Lough Slievesnaght.

Lough Slievesnaght to Lough Maam (928 158)

Head northwest to the Col at 931 152 and proceed to Lough Maam.

Lough Maam to Spot Height 402

From Lough Maam contour in a westerly direction toward the spot height at 921 156 maintaining your height.

Spot Height 402 to Re entrant (916 147)

From the spot height proceed to the re entrant located next to the stream, contouring around the lower slopes of Slieve Snaght. Be sure to maintain the height you require to reach the objective.

Re entrant to High Camp (908 149)

Leaving the re entrant and proceed in an eastward direction to High Camp. Ensure you cross the river safely and avoid a number of bog ponds as you approach High Camp.

The High Camp is located on two promontories that jut out into Lough Agrannive. There are "beaches" on the lakeshore, so shades, shorts and sunscreen are optional!

Sunday

You must ensure that your campsite is completely clean before the patrol can check out.

Proceed in a north east direction, following the Delvin River on your left. Ensure that you cross the rivers feeding into the Delvin River safely. Follow the Devlin River to where it intersects with the Poisoned Glen at 929 186. Continue until you reach the bend in the road at 929 188. Follow the road uphill to the main road where your Group must check out with the MPC staff.

Well done on successfully completing the Ulster MPC, don't forget to buy your t-shirts before you depart for a safe journey home. MPC hoodies will be available to purchase for €15.

Note: Anyone with the energy and fair weather prevailing, we can recommend climbing Errigal using one of the well-walked routes. These are marked with signposts from the R251 at approx. 945 197. A full ascent/descent will take about 3½ hours.

Alternatively if energy and weather are not so fair why not visit Glenveagh National Park (038 232) or the visitors centre at Dunlewy (906 197), which have toilets and sell snacks and the like.

