

# Draft Minutes

**BIDWELLS**

Client: Mid West Association of Highland Estates  
Project: Annual General Meeting  
Venue: Strathmashie Lunch Hut  
Date: 17 October 2010  
Present: As Below

Carn Dearg House  
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Distribution: As below

Description	Action
<b>1. Present</b>	
Hamish McCorquodale, Dunan, Chairman Finlay Clark, RTA / Bidwells, Secretary Kirsty Fernie, RTA, Bidwells Lyndsay Sharp, RTA, Bidwells Sandy Walker, RTA, Killiechonate Roger Millard, RTA, Killiechonate Michael Tindall, RTA, Killiechonate Roger Mitchell, Corroul Philip Dean, Corroul Donald Rowantree, Corroul Patrick Thomson, Ben Alder Ian Crichton, Ben Alder Ross Dakers, Ben Alder Andrew Feilden, Ardverikie Rhoderick Noble, Ardverikie Dougie Langlands, Ardverikie Dougie Langlands Jnr, Arverikie	
<b>In Attendance</b> Iain Hope, SNH	
<b>2. Welcome</b>	
Hamish McCorquodale thanked Ben Alder Estate for yet again hosting the meeting at Strathmashie.	
<b>3. Apologies</b>	
Mrs Schwarzenbach, Ben Alder Major Handbury, Ben Alder George Loudon, RTA, Mamore Lord Pearson, Cruach Nicholas Thexton, Cruach Iain MacDonald, Dalwhinnie & Strathmashie	

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Duncan Richardson, Camusericht  
David Rankin, Dunan  
John Jackson, FCS  
Mike Daniels, JMT  
Lester Standen, JMT

#### **4. Minutes AGM held on 18 October 2009**

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 18 October 2009.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that would not be covered later in the agenda.

#### **6. 2009/10 Hind Cull**

The group were in agreement with the hind cull figures prepared by the secretary which had been submitted earlier in the year.

#### **7. 2010/11 Stag Cull**

The stag culls reported to the group by the Estates present are as follows.

*Ardrverikie – 125 – Good season as a whole, difficult weather conditions during the last fortnight, stags in good condition.*

*Camusericht – 61 – This was the stalkers first season at Camusericht so had nothing to compare it with, but stags appeared to be in good condition.*

*Ben Alder – 56 – Less mature stags than previous years.*

*Dalwhinnie – 9.*

*Dunan – 49 - Stags in good order.*

*Mamore – 70 – Most stags seen on Mamore for the last 10 years, 16 shot last year compared with 70 this season.*

*Killiechonate – 49 Stags in good order, shortage of stags in middle of season, slow start to the rut.*

*Cruach – 27 Cruach have suffered a real loss in stags.*

*Corrour – 132 culled to date, going to shoot 250 (rest will be out of season) – Lots of low cloud in September, late rut, stags in good order.*

*JMT – 19 – Very late rut.*

*FCS – 19-in-season with some out of season numbers*

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## 8. Natural Mortality

Ardverikie – 28 Stags 10 Hinds and 14 Calves.  
Camusericht – 5 Stags, 6 Hinds & 17 Calves.  
Ben Alder – 24 Stags, 11 Hinds 34 Calves.  
Dalwhinnie -  
Dunan – 1 Stag, 3 Hinds & 7 Calves.  
Mamore –  
Killiechonate – 18 Stags, 12 Hinds and 9 Calves.  
Cruach – 0.  
Corrour – 12 Stags, 11 Hinds & 12 calves.  
JMT – 0.  
FCS – 0.

## 9. Proposed Hind Cull 20010/2011

Ardverikie – Approximately 200 will assess as they go.  
Camusericht – 43  
Ben Alder – 158.  
Dalwhinnie (Hill) – 11  
Dalwhinnie (Woods) - 9  
Dunan – 50 plus calves, weather dependent.  
Mamore –100 deer forest, as many as possible in WGS.  
Killiechonate – 100 hinds plus calves.  
Cruach – 35 plus calves.  
Corrour – 250, bulk from the East of the railway & approx. 40 Bheinn a Bric.  
JMT – 60 plus calves.  
FCS – Approximately 20 plus calves.

## 10. Deer Count

Finlay Clark reported that there had not been a deer count since 2006 and the count had been delayed until 2011. SNH have honoured their proposal to do a count over the whole area.

Iain Hope confirmed that SNH have an ambitious count programme but the Mid West was one of the priority areas to count. He stated that when the ground conditions are right and helicopters are available the group will be counted. A subgroup of count co-ordinators were formed so the count can be managed effectively. The four co-ordinators who will cover each geographical area are as follows:-

Dougie Langlands Jnr, Arverikie  
Ross Dakers, Ben Alder  
Donald Rowantree, Corrour  
David Rankin, Dunan  
Finlay Clark – Killiechonate & Mamore

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This subgroup will meet as soon as possible. Iain Hope thought that there would be four helicopters available for 2 days, covering the different areas.

Iain Hope confirmed that the photography technology has advanced since the 2006 count and there are a number of SNH staff trained to use this equipment. Andrew Feilden asked whether SNH should classify the deer and Iain Hope confirmed training could be given to classify the deer over the whole Mid West. Iain Hope confirmed that SNH are funding this count because there are two SAC's within the group which the public are interested in and that they want a picture of the overall deer population. Ross Dakers of Ben Alder stated that it was essential that the deer were classified correctly.

## **11. Ben Nevis SAC and Ben Alder SAC**

### ***Ben Nevis***

Finlay Clark informed the group that site condition monitoring took place in 2009 and it was questioned which elements were unfavourable.

SNH, JMT and Rio Tinto Alcan are scheduled to meet later this year to come up with a Deer Management Plan and submit a Statement of Intent through SRDP.

### ***Ben Alder***

It was agreed within the group that good count information will allow the group to put a plan in place. Patrick Thompson of Ben Alder stated that Ben Alder had made a response to the draft report, however to date had no feedback from SNH. It was agreed that Iain Hope meets with Patrick Thompson and Rhoderick Noble at a later date to discuss the document and move forward with a habitat plan which would satisfy SNH.

## **12. Reports from ADMG**

Finlay Clark gave the group an update on the activities of ADMG.

- a) Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill – Finlay Clark gave oral evidence in September about the proposed changes to the Deer Scotland Act 2006. Finlay Clark's view was that voluntary DMG's will be in-acted and that SNH and ADMG were supportive of this. If the voluntary system failed then a compulsory process may come in. The competence factor will be revisited again in 2014, and ADMG are working alongside LANTRA to ensure the National Occupational Standards link in with DSC level 1. This should ensure everyone with a DSC Level 1 can demonstrate they are competent. At present they view Level 2 as being beyond the National Occupational Standards.
- b) Code of Deer Management, which has been produced by SNH is referred to within the Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill, it covers topics such as dispute resolution, Deer (Scotland) Act 2006 and deals with areas where there are too few deer.

- c) Venison Working Group, Finlay Clark explained that this is an extremely active group, which works hard to promote venison throughout the country as at the moment we are exporting venison then importing it back from New Zealand and Poland. The group is self sustaining and for their hard work to continue they have asked producers if they are prepared to apply a £0.01 per kg levy which would be deducted by game dealers which will allow the group to be self funding.
- d) A deer panel has been formed which consists of Richard Cooke of ADMG, Johnny Bruce of BDS, Niall Rowantree and Pete Mayhew of RSPB. This panel's role is to provide advice to SNH's board.
- e) ADMG resources – ADMG are hopeful to appoint a part-time field officer to provide training, post the new legislation.

The next Regional Meeting takes place in Glen Tanar on 4 November 2010.

### **13. MWAHE Deer Management Plan**

It was accepted amongst the group that the Deer Management Plan has reached the end of its shelf life as some of the Estates within the group have different objectives. It was agreed amongst the group that a plan should be put together after the count and implemented before the expiry of the current plan in 2012 and so it can meet all of the Estates objectives. Ian Hope agreed to send headings to Finlay Clark so that the Mid West can look into writing their own plan.

### **14. Cairngorm National Park Authority**

Patrick Thompson said that there was nothing to report from CNPA apart from they have extended the boundary and that this would not affect the Mid West.

### **15. Venison Market**

Finlay Clark confirmed that the venison market was relatively strong with Quality Assured Venison achieving £1.80/kg throughout the season.

### **16. Office Bearers**

As George MacDonald is no longer stalker at Camusericht, he is no longer able to be vice chairman of the group. It was agreed that Philip Dean of Corroul take on the post. It was proposed by Andrew Feilden and seconded by Patrick Thompson. Hamish MacCorquodale would continue as chairman and Finlay Clark as Secretary.

Andrew Feilden also made reference to Dougie Langlands who is retiring after over 30 years service at Ardverkie. The chairman thanked Dougie Langlands for all his hard work for the DMG. Andrew Feilden reported that Dougie

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Langlands jnr would take on the post as head stalker at Ardverikie.

## **17. Any Other Business**

It was agreed that future AGM's be arranged after the 20 October and not always on a Sunday.

The next meeting is arranged for Friday 21 October 2011 at Strathmashie.

The Chairman thanked the group for their time and the meeting closed.

DRAFT