

Client: Mid-West Association of Highland Estates
Project: AGM
Venue: Strathmashie Lunch Hut
Our ref:
Date: 21 October 2013
Present: See below
Distribution:

Description

Action

1 Attendance & Apologies

Hamish McCorquodale, Dunan, Chairman
Philip Dean, Corrou, Deputy Chairman
Finlay Clark, RTA / Bidwells, Secretary
Malcolm Pearson, Cruach
Lyndsay Sharp, RTA, Bidwells
Jim Beattie, RTA
Sandy Walker, RTA, Killiechonate
Jamie Hendry, RTA, Killiechonate
George Loudon, RTA, Mamore
Cameron Loudon, RTA, Mamore
Donald Rowantree, Corrou
Patrick Thomson, Ben Alder
Ian Crichton, Ben Alder
Ross Dakers, Ben Alder
Iain McDonald, Ben Alder
Andrew Baird, Ben Alder
Andrew Feilden, Ardverikie
Roddie Feilden, Ardverikie
Dougie Langlands, Ardverikie
Nathan Windle, Ardverikie
Lester Standen, JMT
George Eveleigh, Cruach
Ian Sutherland, Dunan
John Jackson, FCS
Kate Tuer, FCS
Iain Hope, SNH
Cathy Mayne, SNH

Apologies

Mrs Schwarzenback, Ben Alder
Lisbet Rausing, Corrou
Linzi Seivewright, SNH
Rob Whitson, Ardverikie
Lester Standen, JMT
Jamie Hendry, Killiechonate

Minutes

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BIDWELLS

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2 Minutes of AGM – 22 October 2012

- 2.1 There was unanimous agreement by all that the minutes were true and accurate records of the meeting on 22 October 2012.

3 Matters Arising

- 3.1 No matters were arising which would not be covered in the agenda.

4 2012/13 Hind Cull

- 4.1 Amendments were made to the cull numbers recorded for Dalwhinnie and Ben Alder. 2012/13 cull numbers will be entered into the next revision of the Deer Management Plan and circulated to all members.

5 2013 Stag Cull

Ardverikie = 100, deer in good condition with average weights.

Cammusericht = 67 with 18 stags within Ben Alder SAC buffer zone. 65 were open hill stags and 2 in the woodland. Good season, though the rut was late. Stags were in good condition.

Ben Alder = 50 with 35 from SAC area and 9 from the buffer zone, average weight 13st11lbs.

Dalwhinnie = 12 stags, 4 in the woodland.

Dunan = 49 stags, average 14st. Some issues with the easterly winds.

Mamore = 30 stags.

Killiechonate = 63 stags, average weight 13st 7. 13 from the SAC area. The rut was a little sporadic and fragmented.

Cruach = 34 stags.

FCS = 24 stags to date.

Mamore and FCS will continue to shoot stags out of season. Ian Hope commented that it is useful that people are recorded what is shot within the SAC and SAC buffer areas.

6 Natural Mortality

Ardverikie = 6 through the winter.

Cammusericht = 8 hinds, 2 stags.

Ben Alder = 7stags, 1 hind, 12 calves.

Dalwhinnie = 2 stags, 1 hind.

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Dunan = 12 hinds, 9 calves.

Mamore = not aware of any.

Killiechonate = negligible, 4 stags, 1 hind, 2 calves.

Cruach = 6 stags.

Corrour = 1 stag found.

FCS = not recorded.

- 6.1** Ian Hope commented that natural mortality is hard to gauge as it can be difficult to find evidence and the efforts gone into searching are difficult to quantify. Though it is still worth noting any carcasses found.

7 Proposed Hind Cull

Ardverikie = 200 hinds, they will target the areas which influence populations on the SAC.

Cammusericht = 50 hinds including calves.

Ben Alder = Between 80 & 100.

Dalwhinnie = Between 15 & 20.

Dunan = 40.

Mamore = 100.

Killiechonate 120.

Cruach = 35.

Corrour = 120, 50 in the SAC.

FCS = 30.

8 Deer Counts

- 8.1** Deer counts were carried out by SNH over the Ben Alder and Ben Nevis SAC areas. The actual area counted extended a little beyond the SAC boundaries.

- 8.2** A total of 2335 were counted on the Ben Alder SAC (655 Stags, 1323 hinds, 347 calves).

- 8.3** A total of 3414 were counted on the Ben Nevis SAC (1035 Stags, 1809 hinds, 570 calves).

9 MWAHE Deer Management Plan

- 9.1** Ian Hope said SNH have no plans for any survey work next year though he suggested that the Mid-west may have some habitat assessments of their own to carry out.

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9.2 Discussion took place over group monitoring. Dougie Langlands asked if he could get the grid references for the plots SNH survey.	
9.3 Cathy Mayne offered her time to anyone requiring assistance in setting up monitoring plots.	
9.4 SNH are bound by the current government target to have 80% of designated features in favourable condition.	
9.5 The points of climate change, and other external factors such as presence of people were brought up. There are features which require different conditions to exist in favourable condition in the same area making it tricky to manage both features.	
9.6 Malcolm Pearson commented that SNH are beginning to accept that some habitats required grazing to exist in favourable condition. Every site is different and SNH have to balance between the economics and ecological aspects.	
10 Ben Nevis SAC & Ben Alder SAC	
10.1 Counts have been carried out on both SAC's and both SAC's are due to have habitat surveys carried out on them. This will consist of Herbivore Impact Assessment and Site Condition Monitoring. Draft reports should be available in November. Both SAC's have a specific management group in place.	
10.2 Hamish McCorquodale asked if surveys and culls are out of sync. Ian Hope commented that he has brought surveys as far forward as possible to allow time to exist for any required changes in culls to take effect.	
11 SNH Report	
Ian Hope said he has commented on various points throughout the meeting and has nothing specific to report under this item.	
12 Reports from ADMG	
12.1 ADMG held a London based meeting to encourage owners to meet each other and members of the ADMG. Around 60 people attended.	
12.2 ADMG attended Scone and Moy Game fairs ADMG have a stand at Scone.	
12.3 Finlay Clark commented that the Governments Rural Affairs Committee is currently reviewing the effectiveness of the WANE Act and the current DMG organisation. They will be collecting evidence on whether the current system is working or not. The ADMG will submit a response on behalf of DMG's and asked if anyone had any comments to submit them to ADMG.	

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- 12.4 There is a view that the committee are of the opinion that compulsory Deer Management is required. Hamish McCorquodale asked "what is the public interest?" Ian Hope responded saying that the Code of Practice attempts to cover this theme and said that he is comfortable that all those in the room today are doing their best to serve the public interest.
- 12.5 Donald Rowantree asked if consideration would be given to applying statutory powers to DMG level rather than across the whole industry.
- 12.6 Malcolm Pearson asked if we knew how many DMG have DMP's in place and how many deer forests are not within a DMG.
- 12.7 Andrew Feilden said we could arrange to invite an MSP to these sorts of meetings to let them see what goes on.
- 12.8 Finlay Clark said that the vast majority of upland deer areas are covered by a DMG and more and more lowland deer areas are being included within DMGs.
- 12.9 The next regional ADMG meeting will be the AGM on 4th February.

13 Cairngorm National Park Authority

- 13.1 Patrick Thompson said a meeting was imminent and that there was nothing in particular giving concern in the group at the moment.

14 Venison Market

- 14.1 The Rannoch Venison Group have agreed a private deal to sell their venison. Discussion took place regarding estates preparing and marketing their own venison. This requires large overheads with a big start-up cost. Veterinary Inspections are required and then there is the completion with Highland Game.

15 Date of next meeting

- 15.1 The next meeting will be Tuesday 21 October 2014 at Strathmashie.

16 Election of Office Bearers

- 16.1 Hamish McCorquodale asked if anyone wants to stand for position of Chair or Secretary. It was agreed by all that the current office bearer arrangement is to remain the same for another year.

17 AOCB

- 17.1 There was no further business to be discussed.