

Upper Deeside and Donside Deer Management Group

Meeting of Wednesday 13th November 2019 (2pm)

Invercauld Keiloch

Attendees

Angus McNicol	Invercauld (Chairman)
Tom Willis	(Secretary)
Dr Linzi Seivwright	Caorann (Consultant)
Capt Mark Nicolson	Mar Estate
Ben Carter	Invercauld Home Beat
David Frew	Mar Lodge
Chris Murphy	Mar Lodge
Adrian Walker	Allargue
Rosey Walker	Allargue
Will Reid	Invercauld
Clive Meikle	Glenavon
Andrew Salvesen	Dinnet Moor
Edward Humphrey	Dinnet Estate
Arthur Fernie	Mar Estate
Iain Hope	SNH
Mike Cottam	CNPA
Stuart Jennings	RSPB
David Scott	Glenavon
Richard Thomas	Invercauld
Adam Smith	GWCT

Minutes

1. Apologies

Richard Gledson Delnadamph
Robin Leslie Melville Candacraig

2. Minutes of previous meeting and actions arising

Approved and to be uploaded onto the website. (**Action TW**)

Annual report to be recirculated to all members. (**Action TW**)

SNH response to 2019 DMG re-assessment currently with Ministers.

Deer Working Group have not yet submitted their report.

ADMG preparing responses to the report and groups are encouraged to submit good news stories.

Secretary to collate data from CNPA on areas of peatland restoration undertaken or in the pipeline. **(Action TW)**

Secretary and Consultant to collate information on available deer shelter within the group. **(Action TW and LS)**

3. Working plan

3.8.4. Hind population seems to be relatively low across the board.

3.8.5. Cross DMG working group discussions mostly between Atholl and Wildland rather than with Mar Lodge.

3.8.9. – helicopter count planned for next spring. Secretary to check when the next SNH helicopter count is taking place (likely 2021). **(Action TW)**

Mar Lodge undertaking helicopter count February 2021.

Group to postpone group wide helicopter count until 2021.

Foot count is incredibly important for all members to carry out, particularly because the numbers are getting quite close to the target density.

TW to check whether Allargue's issue with Glenlivet is now resolved **(Action TW)**.

Mar Estate shot a sika stag yearling. DNA testing is being carried out by the University of Edinburgh.

3.11.1 – HIA Training –Mike Cottam offered for CNPA to carry out some blanket bog monitoring training at CNPA's cost. Members who wish to take this up should contact MC direct **(Action ALL)**

LS to propose a refresher course for HIA for blanket bog for late April/early May 2020. **(Action LS)**

Secretary to send Mike Cottam HIA report. **(Action TW)**

MN highlighted that BDS have produced an app for reporting DVC's, details of which will be circulated. **(Action TW)**

Baddoch reported 5 DVC's and Mar Estate reported 1 DVC.

Secretary to continue to collect DVC information.

3.16.4. – formal economic survey not to be carried out due to the potential for duplication with the various other surveys carried out. Article noting the cost of managing deer to be considered.

It was recognised assessment of expenditure on deer is important however. Secretary to circulate a simple income and expenditure data collection form to members to collate data. **(Action TW)**

Mar Estate, Invercauld and Mar Lodge have already participated in the grouse industry JHI survey.

4. Population Model

Calving rates

Invercauld home beat – 34%

Invercauld Baddoch – 30%

Invercauld Callater – 27%

Mar Estate - 30%

Mar Lodge – 40%

Secretary to collect pre Christmas cull data to ensure the hind cull is on track. **(Action TW)**

More detailed larder records to be collected. Secretary to issue a fact card to all members.

Long term, aiming for 1:1 stag to hind ratio, which was the traditional ratio. **(Action TW)**

WR explained the population model hind target for 2019/20 should be adjusted to 50 hinds. LS to adjust and recirculate the population model in light of this and calving rates reported above.

(Action LS)

5. Mapping

CNPA have mapped the tracks in the Cairngorms National Park and Group to consider to publish a map of the key routes.

LS to prepare map of key deer movements at next meeting **(Action LS)**

MC to assist with CNPA data on key areas of peat that can be added to DMG map. (**Action MC/LS**)

6. Financial Position

Secretary reported that expenditure and income were in line with the budget.

Secretary to circulate the actuals against budget and budget for 2020/21. (**Action TW**)

Mar Lodge unhappy with the size of their contribution and David Frew to review and come back to the Secretary. (**Action DF**)

7. Communications

Due to the very low attendance rates at public meetings an article or newsletter to be considered to reach out to the local community.

Group to try one more public meeting in April and David Frew to publicise on the Braemar Facebook page. (**Action DF**)

It was agreed to take forward a press release on the positive peatland restoration work undertaken within the Group to date, using the lack of contractors as a 'hook' (**Action AM**)

8. AOCB

The Chairman reported that TW was to be leaving Savills. TW had kindly volunteered to continue as secretary however until around mid-2020. Chairman thanked Tom Willis for his work as Secretary for the Group.

It was agreed it would be appropriate to seek to appoint a new Secretary at the Spring 2020 meeting to allow for a smooth transition. TW and LS to prepare a specification of the work they undertake currently to enable this process to move forward. (**Action TW/LS**)

The date of the next meeting was agreed at 23 April 2020 at 2pm – 4.30pm at Invercauld Keiloch. A Public Meeting will follow from 5.00pm – 6.30pm at Castleton Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting drew to a close.