



Paper 2/2018 Minutes & MA

Minutes of the Meeting of Affric and Kintail Deer Management Group

at NTS Balnain House, 40 Huntly Street, Inverness IV3 5HR

on 4th June at 10.30am

Present

Willie Fraser
Angus Hughes
Chris Macleod
John Hay
Russell Cooper
Sinclair Coghill
Linzi Seivwright

Estates/Agency

Chair/NTS
East Benula South
North Affric
Mullardoch
FES
SNH
Secretary

1. Welcome and Apologies.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

David Matthews	North Affric
Mark Macleod	North Affric
Paul Stirling	Community Representative
Peter Urquhart	East Benula South
Willie Lamont	Forest Enterprise

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 6th March 2018.

Paper: 2018/1a

These were approved by CM and seconded by RC.

3. Matters Arising from Meeting held on 6th March 2018

Paper: 2018/1b

Following a presentation at a previous meeting to the Group by Trees for Life (TFL), some Group members raised concern about a video that had been circulated about Glen Affric which had been produced by Scotland's Big Picture in partnership with FCS and TFL. There followed a discussion by Group members during which a number of points of concern were raised and discussed including concerns that the video portrayed a very negative view of past activities and could have been more positive about the good work that was currently being done, that the proposals potentially threatened a Highland way of life and that the video didn't necessarily reflect the local perspective. The Chair agreed the following actions:

- WF send an email to TFL to reflect the range of view points and capture some of the concerns from individual group members; **Action Point 1**
- There would be an opportunity for further discussion at the meeting of South Ross Liaison Group where TFL were due to repeat the presentation that had been given to the Affric and Kintail Group on 4th March. AH agreed to attend the meeting with WF; **Action Point 2**
- There would be an opportunity for further discussion at the proposed meeting in August to be held at Dundgreggan (to be confirmed). **Action Point 3**

There was also some discussion about a Pinewood Survey of Scotland that was provisionally being organised by TFL but there was a lack of information about whether the project was underway.

AP	Action	Who
1	<i>Possible opportunities for a site visit to Dundreggan to be explored. Meeting to be confirmed.</i>	WF/TFL
2	<i>DMG members to carry out a recruitment count by end of April and email results to LS/WFDMG members to carry out a recruitment count by end of April and email results to LS/WF. This was discussed under Item 6.</i>	DMG Members
3	<i>LS to put together a proposal for a woodland consultant to pull together a one-stop-shop document on all woodland information – current and potential as well as peatland restoration. Proposal to be circulated to the Group. LS to look for possible sources of funding through FCS for collaborative planning. Discussed under Item 6.</i>	LS
3	<i>LS to arrange a date for a meeting of South Ross Group. Meeting arranged for June 22nd at Strathconon.</i>	LS
4	<i>LS to explore Peatland Feasibility Study. Proposal had been submitted at the end of May.</i>	LS
5	<i>SNH provide an update on current status of designated features. To be actioned.</i>	SNH
6	<i>Woodland Project to be progressed and tender spec to be drawn up. Tender spec had been drafted and sent to consultant.</i>	LS/WF
7	<i>Proposal for HIA work and details of HIA training day circulated to Group. Actioned. LS also to send plots to Angus, Chris and John although those estates who had had the SAC Habitat Impact Assessment could consider using these results.</i>	LS
8	<i>IR to forward details of possible local community funding to LS. This had been actioned but unfortunately the Group had missed the deadline for funding.</i>	IR
9	<i>RC to circulate a timeline of events relating to stags in the Glen Na Ciche exclosures and provide the location, dates and details of actual numbers of deer shot to the Group. RC to provide the Group with the Grid References for all deer shot as well as a map of FCS deer units. LS to update population models and maps showing exclosures etc. Covered under Item 4.2. LS to circulate data and maps.</i>	RC & LS
10	<i>Group members to provide larder weights of stags, hinds and calves and any mortality in Questionnaire to be circulated at the end of April. Some information had been received.</i>	DMG Members
11	<i>RC to investigate reports of a flattened fence (Glen Cannich/Affric fence) and report back. RC had reported back to the Group via email following last meeting.</i>	RC
12	<i>RC to investigate practicality of moving a gate between N Affric and W Affric to allow access by argo. RC reported that this was being actioned.</i>	RC
13	<i>LS to provide a quote for HIA training. A quote had been provided.</i>	LS

4. Chairman's Report

4.1 Education Day. The Chairman thanked everyone involved in organising and running the day which had been very well received. In particular Sandra Reid from FCS who had gone above and beyond to make the day such a success. A query was raised about whether feedback from a teacher from Cannich Primary had been circulated to the Group. LS agreed to check and respond on behalf of the Group. **Action Point 4**

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A member of the Group requested that it be minuted that it would have been more appropriate to have had an in-season carcass in the larder on the day.

The Group agreed that the day had been a success and that it would be good to do in the future. It was also agreed that in the planning of any future event it would be good to get the people out on the estate more – perhaps looking at estate infrastructure, path maintenance etc. Those present agreed that they would be happy to be involved in any future events.

- 4.2. Maps of FE Culls.** LS explained that a list of coordinates had been sent to her but in its current form it would take too long to plot out. *(Note since the meeting LS has been able to do this and will circulate a map with points for next meeting).* **Action Point 5**

5. Election of Office Bearers

The Group agreed that the AGM would be deferred until the November meeting before the next round of Subscriptions would be due. .

FOR DISCUSSION

6. Updated Working Plan

6.1 Cull Updates. LS had received figures from all now.

	2017/18						2016/17					
	Stags Target	Stags Actual	Hinds Target	Hinds Actual	Calves Target	Calves Actual	Stags Target	Stags Actual	Hinds Target	Hinds Actual	Calves Target	Calves Actual
NFE Fasnakyle	30	31	35	33	0	6	30	25	24	24	10	7
NFE South Affric	75	75	80	84	0	37	100	100	80	80	40	23
NFE Strathglass	130	215		65	0	30	130	130	100	84	50	47
NFE Glen na C	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NFE Affric Enclosures	0	40		0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
North Affric	25	25	25	32	0	14	25	24	25	26	0	7
NTS West Affric	55	51	107	114	0	20	50	54	80	53	0	9
NTS Kintail	100	104	114	126	0	37	100	101	100	86	0	14
East Benula South	15	17	25	36	0	19	20	12	25	25	0	14
Mullardoch	12	12	5	12	0	5	12	12	6	6	0	2
Corriclair	18	18	50	63		28		18		45		9
Inverinate Forest	150	40	400	495		246		40		105		43
Inverinate West Benula	0	50	0					51		140		61
Wester Guisachan		23		37		25						
Total Affric and Kintail (Open Range)	312	355	391	437	0	138	337	328	340	300	50	76
Total Affric and Kintail (All)	442	570	391	502	0	168	467	462	440	384	100	123
Total Open Range (including Corriclair and Inverinate)	480	463	841	995		412		437		590		189

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6.2 Winter Mortality & Recruitment Counts

It was reported that recruitment counts were showing a recruitment of around 20% following the hard winter.

The following mortality counts were reported:

Estate	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total
East Benula South	2	8	22	32
West Affric	11	5	8	24
Kintail	11	4	5	20
North Affric	11	14	9	34
Total	35	31	44	110

A further 8 stags had been shot by NTS in relation to public safety issues.

6.3 Updated Population Model

According to the population model, the Group should have achieved the target density set for the plan. See Working Plan.

6.4 South Ross Meeting & Count 2019

The next meeting of the South Ross Liaison Group was scheduled for 22nd June. The main issue to be discussed would be the postponement of the S Ross Helicopter Deer Count which SNH had indicated could not now be completed until 2020 due to lack of resources and helicopter availability. The Group agreed the importance of a count and discussed the possibility of completing a foot count next Spring. This would be discussed at the next meeting.

6.5 Peatland Restoration Update

LS had completed a Peatland Feasibility grant application for SNH by the end of May deadline and was now awaiting feedback from SNH.

6.6 Native Woodland Update & Woodland Expansion Project

- Mullardoch had completed a repeat native woodland survey in 2018.
- Malcolm Morrison had been instructed by the Group to investigate opportunities of FCS Funding for a Woodland Review of the Group area.
- N Affric were awaiting confirmation of a proposed woodland scheme.

6.7 2019 Assessment

ADMG are offering free health-checks to all DMGs prior to the 2019 SNH Assessment. LS and WF (and any other interested DMG members) will go through the original assessment and the Working Plan and produce a report highlighting areas where further work may be required in order that the Group can demonstrate progress with delivery of the plan by 2019. Once a date has been agreed, LS will circulate to the Group.

Action Point 6

7. Access Issues

The Group discussed the possible need for signage for Loch Mullardoch in relation to warning the public about the risks of using Canadian Canoes and Fire Risks (High etc). NTS use active fire warnings and discussed the possibility of looking at this for the Group.

The Group also discussed the increased use of motorised boats which were accessing the loch from the Hydro side of the dam. Motorised vehicles are not covered under the open access provision. WF to look at approaching the Hydro and organising a meeting to include Donald Fraser, Inverinate Estate and the local Access Officer Phil Waite based in Dingwall to discuss the possible extension of a fence. SC to send out contact details.

Action Point 7

8. Training Update

WF indicated that he was looking to get someone to run a First Aid course over two days at approx. £130 per person. The Group indicated that there would be at least 4 interested parties. Details to be circulated to this Group and to Glenmoriston DMG.

Action Point 8

9. Out of Season Authorisations

- FE reported that they had an OOS for Strathglass.
- NTS that they had applied for an OOS to tackle a road safety issue in Glenshiel but that this was unlikely to affect the Group.
- JH indicated that he had an OOS for Mullardoch but rarely used it.

FOR NOTING

10. Treasurer's Report

WF reported that there was currently £5742.47 balance with £125 having been paid for the ADMG Web Site hosting and £500 paid for coached for the Education Day, leaving £5000.00 in the bank which had been collected as the first payment for the intended Helicopter Deer Count.

17. SNH Update

SNH had little to report as most of the points had been covered elsewhere. The main point was the repeat SNH DMG Assessment which will be carried out in April/May 2019. Whilst this Assessment will cover all 101 points previously assessed relating to the Public Interest and the Benchmark, the 2019 Assessment will focus on implementation and focus on how well plans were being delivered.

18. ADMG Update

ADMG were intending to hold two workshops in Birnam and Inverness intended for Chairs and Secretaries to bring them up to speed with the 2019 Assessment and help them understand what was expected.

19. Any Other Business

It had been brought to the attention of North Affric that there had been shots heard just before dark and that a calf had been found shot and gralloched at the side of the road by a member of the public on a Sunday morning. CM had gone to investigate but found only blood and hair. RC informed that Group that since 16th March nothing had been shot on FCS ground. The Group agreed that such matters should be reported to the Police if shooting activity cannot be attributed to management undertaken by Group members.

20. Date of Next Meeting – WF thanked the Group for attending and closed the meeting. Date for meeting will be **6th August** (location Dundreggan Estate at 10.30am).

Planning Dates for 2018

The following is a note of dates for DMG members:

- **5th November 2018- Autumn Meeting** – venue and times TBA.

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2b. Matters Arising/ Summary of Actions

AP	Action	Who
1	WF send an email to TFL to reflect the range of view points and capture some of the concerns from individual group members	WF
2	AH and WF to attend next South Ross Liaison Meeting	WF/AH
3	Opportunity for further discussion with TFL explored at Dundreggan Site Visit.	DMG Members
4	LS agreed to check correspondence from Cannich Primary and respond on behalf of the Group.	LS
5	LS to circulate maps of FCS Culls	LS
6	LS to circulate dates of DMG Health Check to the Group	LS
7	SC to circulate contact details for Access Officer.	SNH
8	WF to circulate details of First Aid Course to the Group	WF