

West Knoydart Deer Management Group

Minutes of meeting held at Inverie Village Hall Monday 14th January 2013, 11.30am

Present: Iain Biggart, Jim brown, Tommy McManmon, Davie Newton, Fred Rous, Lester Standen, Graeme Taylor, Angela Williams

Apologies: Eric Delwart, Rick Rohde, Niel Taylor, Iain Wilson

Minutes of the last meeting held on 3rd December were agreed.

Review of action points

Set down land management objectives	IB/ED then circulate.	Begun. On Agenda.
Tidy wording of framework document	JB	Done. On Agenda.
Collate Records and start database	JB	Ongoing. GT will try to access all KDMG returns, to help get the database set up more easily.
Look to use SNH Deer-line website for making cull returns and retrieving cull data.	All	JB had retrieved Knoydart Estate returns back to 1964.
Record grid-refs in future cull records	JB/IB/IW/LS	Start next season.
Write up proposal to operate for a trial period as KDMG sub-group	ED	Done.
Response to Rupert Soames email	DN	Done. AW responded from KF.
Invite Camusrory to attend future meetings	DN/IB	Done, initially have declined. Also include Barisdale.
Include Rob Cooper in deer count planning	IB/IB	IB in contact.

Hind Cull Progress

Culls are all on target at present. A high recruitment of calves is still evident, and hinds noted as mostly being in good condition.

Member	Hind Cull to Date	Proposed Hind Cull
Knoydart Foundation	32 hinds & 13 calves	50 + calves
John Muir Trust	About 20	C. 45 hinds + calves, & 30 stags
Inverguseran Farm	4 hinds & 1 calf	6 hinds
Kilchoan Estate	87 hinds	total of 135 hinds & calves
Total	143 + calves	c. 200 + calves

WKDMG Framework Document

The document was adopted by the meeting.

Members' Objectives Spreadsheet

It was suggested we add some more basic information for each ownership, such as area of open range and deer fenced woodland, and target deer density.

Objectives listed were discussed in turn, and some alterations were agreed. It was suggested they should be separated as either deer management specific, or general estate objectives. JB to make alterations and then circulate for members to score.

Deer Count

The plan is still to try and count sometime between 9th February and 9th March. There-after LS and IB would not be available and late April would be the next opportunity. Coordinate with Rob Cooper at Camusrory.

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AOB

- Habitat Monitoring was discussed. GT is organising training for W&KDMG's in April. Alternatively LS is happy to help with training. JB said KF need to start a new monitoring regime this spring using best practice methodology. They usually survey in last week April/first week May.
- ED has suggested we set meeting dates in advance for the year and also circulate minutes to neighbouring estates and KDMG (agreed to action).
- GT passed on advice that out of season authorisation for Sgamadail would be unlikely this summer, and encouraged the use of local contractors for culling operations. LS offered to liaise with NT.
- TM mentioned that there might be some students doing research for dissertations in relation to deer dynamics during the summer. This led to a discussion on potential for calf tagging, possibly in conjunction with KDMG. GT said that SNH may be able to provide nets, tags and applicators. 'Ketchum' make the tags. We could look for funding (JMT Conservation Fund?) to help develop as a longer term research project into deer movements on the peninsula.
- Mapping and GIS was discussed as a starting point for the Deer Management Plan. LS thought that Liz at JMT might be able to help if she had time. GT said he could provide examples from the Cairngorms, and might be able to provide shape files of estate boundaries. JB and LS to coordinate producing initial boundary map, and then look at adding aspirational deer densities.
- JB suggested that it would now be appropriate to open out membership of the group to any other interested parties, and this was agreed.

Next Meeting: Mon 4th March (later changed to Tuesday 5th March),
then a Monday in late May, to coincide with KF LMG meeting.

Next KDMG will be 17th June.

Action Points

Collate Records and start database	JB
Look to use SNH Deer-line website for making cull returns and retrieving cull data.	All
Provide historical cull return data for KDMG area.	GT
Record grid-refs in future cull records, starting next season.	JB/IB/IW/LS
Make alterations to land management objectives spreadsheet, then circulate.	JB
Allocate priority scores to land management objectives spreadsheet.	All
Copy in neighbours to minutes, agendas, DMP planning, etc.	JB/DN
Include Rob Cooper in deer count planning.	IB
Habitat Monitoring Training.	GT/LS
Set meeting dates for the year in advance.	All
Liaise with Niel Taylor re Sgamadail	LS
Coordinate ownership boundary map for the group	LS/JB
Provide shape files of ownership boundaries	GT
Provide examples of DMG mapping from the Cairngorms	GT
Invite all interested parties to be members	JB/DN