

**West Knoydart Deer Management group**  
**Minutes of meeting held at Inverie village hall**  
**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014, 13.00**

**Present:** Iain Biggart, Jim Brown, Amie Dowe, Peter Fletcher, Grant Holroyd, Tommy McManmon, Davie Newton (chair), Lester Standen, Graeme Taylor, Iain Wilson.

1. **Apologies:** Eric Delwart, Fred Rous.
2. **Minutes of meeting** held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2014 were agreed.

**3. Review of action points**

<b>Action point</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Information and invitation of membership to Doug Hawthorn	JB	LS to take forward
Carry out habitat monitoring, May 2014	All	JMT, KF, Kilchoan have all done
Circulate data records and continue to add to/amend as necessary	DN	Ongoing
Complete objectives scoring	All	Done
Finish compiling objectives spreadsheet and append to DMP	JB	A bit to finish
Draft statement of DMP purpose and circulate	JB	Done
Informal meeting to draft DMP	DN/LSt/JB	Done
Add count detail to density map	JB	To do
Draft map of seasonal (summer/winter) stag/hind ranges	JB	To do
Look at feasibility of allocating culls by area	JB	To do
Add Peter to email list	JB	Done
Summarise RACCE review recommendations	LSt	Done; we need to publicise more.
Prepare charts of population change	DN/JB	Ongoing

**4. Habitat impact monitoring results**

- KF and Kilchoan have both had input from Lewis Pate, and are awaiting results; analysis to be brought to next meeting. KDMG members are considering using Lewis to do their monitoring, as no progress had been made by members so far.
- Lester reported some places with browsing on seedling leaders down from 90% to 50%, though little change in height. Some heath plots have heather which has doubled in height, and even some at 1000ft altitude with light browsing.
- There was discussion on whether the group should be setting aspirational targets for habitat impact. GT suggested targets of less than 10% high impact, less than 30% moderate impact, and more than 60% low impact.

## **5. 2014-15 cull targets and progress**

All reported no change to targets previously set. Only culling in season to date being KF 10 stags, and IW 4 stags.

## **6. Deer Management Plan Development**

The draft plan was discussed and a number of changes/additions were agreed, including:

- A population model is needed; can be developed from historical data.
- Decided not to include selection criteria for individual cull animals, but JB to describe his current general rationale.
- Timing of culling to be mentioned, as out of season control is important for some members.
- It would be useful to include (as appendix) any habitat condition information available, but don't need detailed surveys for the whole area.
- Add habitat impact targets.
- Look at ADMG benchmark for meetings, may not be needed as we already have a code of conduct.
- Include a training policy and assessment of competence levels.
- Include a communications policy.
- Identify peat-lands and condition.
- Link to 'Joint Agency Guidance on Fencing'.
- Map of native woodland and forestry.
- Deer density calculations to be shown as table, demonstrating individual members targets as well as group. Link this to actual population targets.
- Include costs of maintaining the deer herd, eg fencing, damage to agriculture or woodland.
- Deer population impact on capital value of land.

Updated plan draft to be brought to next meeting.

## **7. AOB**

- Lester has invited a Sgamadail recreational stalker to attend.
- Funding will be available from SNH for DMP development.
- SNH are working towards a set of 14 Public Interest Objectives to be in place by April 2016, which DMG's will be required to take into account.
- DMG Audit with GT on August 11<sup>th</sup>, should take about 3 hours; this is being done for all DMG's as a baseline, so that progress with sustainability of groups can be measured.

#### 8. 2014/2015 meeting dates

- Tuesday November 18<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Tuesday June 23<sup>rd</sup>

#### Action Points

Information and invitation of membership to Doug Hawthorn	LS
Circulate data records and continue to add to/amend as necessary	DN
Finish compiling objectives spreadsheet and append to DMP	JB
Add count detail to density map	JB
Draft map of seasonal (summer/winter) stag/hind ranges	JB
Look at feasibility of allocating culls by area	JB
Prepare charts of population change	DN/JB
Habitat Monitoring results for KF and Kilchoan to next meeting	JB, IB
Consider additional publicity of group activities, inc. web sites	All
Update DMP detail for next meeting	JB
SNH funding for DMP	JB/DN/GT
DMG audit, August 11th	JB/DN/GT
Description of rationale for cull animal selection	JB
Habitat condition information available for group area	GT