

West Knoydart Deer Management Group

Minutes of meeting held at Knoydart Foundation Office Friday 26th October 2012, 11.30am

Present: Jim brown, Iain Wilson, Angela Williams, Lester Standen, Tommy McManmon

Apologies: Eric Delwart, Iain Biggart, Graeme Taylor

Minutes of the last meeting held on 19th July were agreed.

Review of action points

Email JMT's DMP format as possible template for WKDMG and members	LS	Done
List of relevant landowners and other interested parties	JB	Done (As part of framework doc.)
Collate Records and start database	JB	Not yet done
Provide detail of database to link with JMT GIS	LS	Not yet done
Explain proposal to KDMG	AW	ED has been in contact with Lynda Campbell
Arrange meeting for September with all interested parties	JB	This meeting date became the earliest possible, and it was felt to be inappropriate to open wider until after next KDMG mtg.
Produce Framework Document	JB	Done

JB explained that since the last meeting he had attended an informal meeting at Kilchoan with Eric Delwart, Iain Biggart and Graeme Taylor; at which the background and intensions of the WKDMG were discussed. ED and IB stated that they would prefer the new group to be a sub-group of KDMG rather a completely separate group. JB stated that KF Directors had already decided to leave KDMG, so from that point of the view the new group would need to be independent. GT said that he thought either format could operate successfully, so long as the geographical area covered was sensible in terms of the deer range and the functionality of the group. In conclusion, ED and IB were happy for Kilchoan to become a member of WKDMG, and were also happy to take on a liason role with KDMG. It was decided to produce a 'framework document', in order to clarify the purpose of the new group (Action JB).

The draft framework document was discussed, and thought to be ok. The meaning of objective 3)iii) 'setting of location variable land management objective priority weightings' was questioned. JB said it was intended to be a measure of how important different land management objectives were to each member, but was unsure what format it could take. It was decided to look into this, as well as, leading on from this, mapping the deer densities aspired to across the group (Action all). All were happy for the document to be circulated (Action JB).

The position of chairperson was discussed. Nobody present wanted to take on the role. It was thought by all that it might be best to have a chair not directly involved as a member. Davie Newton (Local Development Officer) was suggested, and it was agreed to invite him (Action JB).

The subject of order at meetings was discussed, and it was agreed that we should have a Code of Conduct, including a requirement for all discussions to be evidence based (Action AW).

Individual membership of KDMG was discussed. LS said that JMT are still members, but he would not be attending the next meeting. JB said he thought that KF are still presently members, but would be relinquishing membership at the next meeting. He thought that Kilchoan intended to remain as members for the time being, and would be the main point of liason between the two groups. It was agreed that we should also produce a report for KDMG meetings (Action JB).

West Knoydart Deer Management Group

Members Cull Reports

Member	Stag Cull to Date	Proposed Hind Cull
Knoydart Foundation	(Including 2 culled by Aior Crofters) 48	50 + calves
John Muir Trust	(Including 9 culled by KF) 10	C. 60
Inverguseran Farm	8	C. 6
Kilchoan	33	C. 90 + calves, to total 120
Total	99	206 + calves

Deer and goats have been culled at Sgamadail as part of the new woodland scheme, but it is unknown at this time how many.

JB reported that compensatory culls associated with proposed woodland enclosures at Aior and Fank Burn had not yet happened as the schemes had not yet gone to contract, and so additional stags may yet be culled out of season if any become trapped within new deer fences and are causing damage. The compensatory culls would have to be completed early next season, with up to 30 additional stags to be culled. The KF hind cull proposal includes 10 additional beasts to come off JMT march area.

LS reported that JMT may cull up to another 30 stags under an out of season authorisation. There was a discussion on the count/cull relationship. Excluding Kilchoan, there had been 612 stags counted across the west area. A 16% (1/6) maintenance cull would then be 98 stags. 66 have been culled to date, so the JMT proposal could be considered to be sustainable, assuming that the 16% figure is correct and no other deer have been culled without our knowledge. It was agreed that we should be working towards setting group cull targets.

Future deer counting was discussed, and it was thought that carrying on as we have in the past, with group collaboration to achieve effective foot counts, as the best method. However, we should aspire to a helicopter count corroborated by a foot count to compare the two methods at some point in the future when practical.

Next Meeting: 1st week December

Action Points

Format for land management objective weightings	All
Circulate framework document	JB
Invite Davie Newton to be chair	JB
Produce Code of Conduct	AW
Report for KDMG meeting	JB
Collate Records and start database	JB
Provide detail of database to link with JMT GIS	LS
Present WKDMG to KDMG meeting in November	JB/IB
Arrange meeting for when ED is here in December	JB