

# WKDMG Meeting and AGM Agenda

Venue: Knoydart Foundation offices, 25 November 2019 at 11:15.

Present: Jim, Cathy, Linzi, Fred, Andrew, Iain B, Iain W, Grant, Luise, Rob, Lewis, Daniel.

**1. Apologies** – Rupert Soames, Elisabeth Brouwer, Ally MacAskill, Amy Dow, Eric Delwart.

**2. AGM business - Nomination of Office Bearers and Secretary; Group membership fees for 2019-20.**

Nomination forms for Office bearers attached. The existing office bearers wish to stand for re-election:

- Chair – Rupert Soames – unanimously re-elected
- Vice-Chair – Jim Brown – unanimously re-elected

It is proposed that the position of Secretary should continue to be filled by Cathy Mayne – carried.

It is proposed that the fee structure from 2019 is retained for 2020. Invoices to go out shortly for 2020.

**3. Minutes of last meeting** – see attached. Richard Cooke is still keen to come from ADMG to talk to the group – attempt to arrange for the next meeting (June 2020).  
AMcM feedback on goat populations elsewhere; on Rhum no evidence for reduction in goat population or preferential selection of white kids.

**4. Reports from the Chair and the Treasurer**

Rupert absent.

Finance spreadsheet attached. Potential issue with inadequacy of funds. Luise – should we not just increase the fees? This is an option for 2021; fees now set for 2020. Grant – we may need to prioritise what we do and focus on the essentials of deer management planning. LS – ADMG aware that the process of assessment is unwieldy.

**5. Mechanisms to manage deer.**

Foot and helicopter count 2020. AMcM – heli count. Pushing for request, thanks for contributions from the group but budgetary constraints mean that prioritised counts are the focus and non-priority counts mean that these are unlikely. Update in Jan 2020. SNH is expecting us to fund this internally in the future if the heli count doesn't happen in 2020. So likely to be foot counting only going forward if we don't get a heli count in 2020. Divisive nature of the previous heli count does not encourage us to choose this option in the future.

JB – will all go ahead with a foot count in 2020 anyway. JB to co-ordinate, from end of hinds, IB away from 13<sup>th</sup> March. Last week of February, first 2 weeks of March.

Cull targets and population model for WKDMG – LS and CM to publish the report on the joint population model – Check with absent landowners that this meets with their approval.

JMT – stags inside fenced enclosures with breaches; CM to ask that we get a chance to push out the stags before the breach is closed.

Population model discussed; options for differences are either higher than observed mortality or net out migration.

Population model for both EKDMG and WKDMG going forwards. Paper from Linzi Seivwright attached. Action Plan 2020 draft for approval.

**6. Delivery of designated features into favourable condition**

Update from Barisdale. Woodland monitoring in 2019 completed. At least one enclosure has 1 hind.

**7. Manage deer to retain and improve existing native woodland cover**

**8. Contribution to woodland expansion target**

Reports of any proposed new woodland. Airor planting still happening. Same as previously, planting between Sandaig and Doune (31 ha, mostly broadleaves). 5 other schemes in pipeline before end of year (3KF, 1 Inverg, 1 Kilchoan).

Camusrory exploring options.

**9. Monitor and manage deer impacts**

HIA results received for 2019; maps and report presented at the meeting. Outcomes to be discussed at next meeting. HIA reports from 2018 and 2019 to be published on the VK website.

Rick Rohde would like to see deer reduced to 4km/ha across the group area – noted.

KF and KE repeat as normal; possibly going to redo woodland plots or collate previous woodland data. Barisdale – BB plots. Camusrory – continue with existing plots. LHH – repeat in year 3 but may add some more plots.

#### **10. Ability to store carbon through ecosystem health**

KF may still move forward with the Peatland Feasibility study, some hag profiling and drain blocking. Not lots. Camusrory will have a feasibility study in 2020.

#### **11. Reduce and mitigate invasive non-native species**

Reports of any sika shot, or sightings of other non-natives (feral pigs included). Pig impacts seen at the narrows.

#### **12. Protect designated historic/cultural features**

#### **13. Deliver higher standards of competence in deer management**

#### **14. Contribute to public health and well-being**

Reports of any disease or health issue among culled deer to date. Camusrory – about 50% of stags have liver fluke this year (ones from lower down). Rise in liver fluke across the country, due to weather. Update on occurrence of Lyme disease. Report back of any US clients (or others from CWD areas) and how biosecurity has been handled.

Reports of any conflict with recreation.

#### **15. Economic costs and benefits associated with deer management**

Form sent out to members for completion. Results compiled to date; full results available by email in due course.

#### **16. Effective communication on deer management issues**

Open day in 2020? – Defer to 2021 when we have more information to talk about (HIA and count).

Any updates to contact information. Update on website. Make sure the website includes a removal of the Carnach Bridge being down. CM to update with Steph.

#### **17. Deer welfare at individual and population level**

Mechanisms for understanding condition in winter and thresholds to trigger appropriate action. What should that action be? Needs to be discussed – passed on from last meeting.

Condition report at the autumn meeting, then at the end of the hinds, then at the count. If there is a serious issue, does this indicate an over population or is this just an extraordinary weather event? Where densities are low, then this is less likely. Also improving woodland will help to address this risk. Given our situation, we should be working with data like body weight, recruitment etc. Emergency situations should give rise to the wider question of why. Appetite to NOT cull in an emergency situation. Larder data for hinds etc could well feed into this.

#### **18. AOCB**

KF applying for night shooting for Inverie woods, mainly for roe. 18 shot last year, 13 under night licence. LS – SNH review should be published this week. People should be aware of this. Deer Panel report towards the end of the year.

DEFRA consultation on trophy hunting.

SNH becoming Naturescot in May 2020.

#### **19. Data protection**

#### **20. Review of action points**

CM – send out invoices for 2020. Contact JMT re deer in enclosures. Update website with corrected DMP appendices. Update VK website with info on Carnach Bridge. Check with absent landowners and publish Population Model paper with LS. Invite Richard Cooke to the next meeting when we know the date.

Compile economic data and distribute by email. Compile HIA data and distribute for discussion at next meeting.

JB – organise foot count.

FR – discuss date with Elisabeth and inform group of choice for next meeting.  
ALL – plan and execute HIA work for 2020.

**21. Date and venue of next meeting**

22 June 2020. Barisdale to host. Lift from Mallaig with Camusrory boat.