

GLENELG PENINSULA DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

Minutes of Meeting

13 May 2019

Held at Arnisdale Lodge at 11.00am

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|--------------|---|
| In the Chair | Julian Richmond-Watson (JRW) |
| Secretary | Michael Laing (ML) |
| Present | Cluanie Eilanreach Glenquoich Beolary Scallasaig Eilanreach East Glen Quoich Druidaig Kinloch Hourn Angus Davidson Ltd Glenshiel Arnisdale FCS Shiel/Highland Council SNH |

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Corriclair, Bunloinn and the Police.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

3. Matters Arising

Deer signs – the Cluanie deer sign is only working intermittently. ML will liaise with the roads department. **ACTION**

Website – the necessary DMG info is now all held on the website, future minutes will be added.

Weather Data – AD Ltd has the historical weather data from Kinloch Hourn, future monthly data will be sent to AD Ltd for inclusion in the DMP. **ACTION**

4. Stag and Hind Cull 2018/19

The confirmed culls for the 18/19 season are as follows:

| | Stags | Hinds | Calves |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Arnisdale | 27 | 37 | 11 |
| Bunloyne | - | - | - |
| Cluanie | 5 | 15 | 4 |
| Druidaig | 4 | 8 | 2 |
| East Glenquoich | 4 | 19 | 10 |
| Eileanreach | 20 | 34 | 2 |
| Glenquoich | 23 | 24 | 9 |
| Glenshiel | 13 | 39 | 10 |
| Kinlochhourn | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Group Total | 99 | 180 | 51 |
| Corriellair | 15 | - | - |
| FCS Ratagan & Bernera | 46 | 16 | 13 |
| Kintail | - | - | - |

5. Hind Cull 2018/19 (included above)

6. Deer

a) Helicopter Count

The helicopter count took place in March and all stalkers are content that the results are a fair reflection of what was on the ground. SNH are completing the count map which will be posted to individual estates in due course.

Whilst the number of deer has increased significantly since the last count it was noted that some deer might not have been counted at the last count.

b) Recruitment Counts

The recruitment count is as follows:

| | 2018 | 2019 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Arnisdale | 17% | 25% |
| Bunloyne | - | - |
| Cluanie | 21% | 21% |
| Druidaig | 30% | 25% |
| East Glenquoich | 12.8% | 26% |
| Eileanreach | 16% | 26% |
| Glenquoich | 8.5% | 19% |
| Glenshiel | 17% | 20% |
| Kinloch Hourn | 33%* | 26% |
| Group Average | 19.4% | 23.5% |
| Corriellair | - | - |
| FCS Ratagan & Bernera | - | - |
| Kintail | - | - |

**There is a query over the accuracy of this figure.*

c) Condition

During the recruitment counts the Stalkers noted that in general the herd is in good condition following a kind winter and early Spring.

d) Losses and Leakage

Glenshiel are still seeing stags and hinds leaking onto Kintail. Scallasaig noted that stags are now wintering on Scallasaig and Beinn a Chuirn.

e) Roadkill Figures

It was noted that 3 stags, 3 hinds and 4 calves have been killed on the stretch of road between Cluanie and Corriclair.

7. Proposed Stag & Hind Cull 2019/20 Season

| | Stags | Hinds |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Arnisdale | 40 | 80 |
| Bunloyne | - | 10 |
| Cluanie | 10 | 30 |
| Druidaig | 6 | 15 |
| East Glenquoich | 20 | 25 |
| Eileanreach | 40 | 55 |
| Glenquoich | 40 | 50 |
| Glenshiel | 35 | 60 |
| Kinlochhourn | 15 | 25 |
| Group Total | 206 | 350 |
| Corriclair | - | - |
| FCS Ratagan & Bernera | - | - |
| Kintail | - | - |

The group is under pressure from SNH to increase the hind cull and the Chairman asked that all estates put every effort in to reach their proposed hind cull.

SNH suggested that the group needs to increase the hind cull further in order to hold more stags. By reducing hind numbers there will be less competition for the ground and hind health will increase supporting more recruitment of stags.

8. Deer Management Plan

a) Angus Davidson update

AD Ltd and Arnisdale attended the SNH DMP assessment. The group is performing well with few ambers and no red areas, however, the group needs to improve its population data to avoid numbers increasing any further than it currently predicts. The group agreed that a reasonable density of deer in the group area is 14 deer/square km.

Goats are becoming more of an issue to local residents. The latest assessment attempts to quantify goat numbers but there is scepticism over the accuracy of the count. Goats are very difficult to count due to the nature of their preferred habitats. There are known populations at Shiel and Kinloch Hourn. AD Ltd would like to adopt a policy for goat management in the DMP. **ACTION**

Glenquoich raised the issue of disturbance hindering deer management. Recreational walkers pose an increasing issue and the impact has never been addressed. It effects the economics of sporting estates through degradation of habitat due to trampling and interrupted stalks. Damage is caused to footpaths due to the growing number of walkers and public funding is needed to carry out repairs. At Glenquoich there are now some corries that don't hold deer anymore due to constant pressure from walkers, this combined with the very steep ground at quoich, can make stalking very challenging.

It was agreed that a working group would be set up to continue to develop the working DMP and feed information into AD Ltd for development of the plan. A meeting will be held in early January between members who wish to attend. ML will seek hind cull data for the end of December. **ACTION**

9. Local Community Engagement

Members of the local community were invited to the meeting.

Councillor Campbell noted her concerns of the goat populations but was otherwise happy with the way the deer management group operates.

Scallasaig commented that there are increasing numbers of deer at Scallasaig and at a time when they are trying to reduce stock numbers, this is creating a challenge. It is considered that one deer creates the equivalent grazing pressure as two sheep. There is general consensus in the stock club that there are too many deer.

10. Finances

The bank balance is at a satisfactory level and further funds will not be requested until the annual subscription in December

11. A. O. C. B.

Lymes Disease – Linzi Seivwright had circulated a petition to debate lymes disease in the House of Commons. ML will circulate.

A query was raised over the rights of grazers to shoot marauding deer on common grazing ground. All parties agreed that any problem deer can be killed.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Sunday 13th October 2019 at 2.30pm at the Dornie Hotel.