

BREADALBANE DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES

**Autumn Meeting
Friday 25th October 2013
at 2.00pm
at The Molfeno Hall**

1 **Welcome**

Present were:

Richard Barclay (Chair), Emma Paterson (*Auchlyne, Vice Chair*), Linzi Seivwright & Donald Fraser (*SNH*), Ian Dingwall & Nicola Colquhoun (*Auchlyne*), David Pirie (*Innerwick*), Morven Frost (*Boreland*), Alan Cory-Wright (*Auchessan*), Steven Macdonald, Phil Robinson & John Sinclair (*Meggernie/ Lochs*), Ewen Kennedy (*Innischoarach*), Ian La Sales de Terriere (*Crossmount*), Jeremy Robinson & Calum Gillies (*Dalchosnie/ Kynachan*), Hamish Rae (*South Chesthill & Inverinian*), Ally McNaughton (*Glen Lyon Estate*), John McNulty (*FE*), Alistair Riddell (*North Chesthill*), Paul Thompson (*NTS*), John Holland (*SRUC*), Tim Fison (*HPCLT*), Kate Mineyko (*West Tempar*), Victor Clements (*Secretary*)

2 **Apologies**

General & Will Ramsay (*South Chesthill*), Iain Wotherspoon (*Glenlyon Estate*), Roddy Billimore (*Roros*), Leo Barclay (*Innerhadden*), David Brown (*Innischoarach*), Lochy Porter (*Cashlie*), Michael Gates Fleming (*Meggernie & Lochs*), Mark Duncan (*FES*), Robert Dalglish (*Innerwick*), Donnie Broad, Jimmy Barrie (*Glen Lochay Estate*), Andrew Warwick (*NTS*), James Duncan Millar (*ADMG*)

3 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes were taken as read. Proposed by Alan Cory Wright, seconded by Emma Paterson.

4 **Matters Arising**

VC had attempted to get the Loch Tayside farmers interested in the group, but there appeared to be little interest in this. It was agreed that we would not pursue this for now.

5 **Financial Report**

We have a current balance of £6665.10, forecast to be £5522.60 at the year end, in line with keeping at least one year subscription to ADMG as a buffer. We had spent £[REDACTED] on a going away present for [REDACTED] on account of the contribution made by her and her husband over many years to the Group. She had written to thank us.

6 Health & Safety

No incidents were reported.

7 Section 7 Agreement

Stag Cull progress & Season Report

Auchlyne reported the stag season to be very difficult. The rut was late, there was not much choice of animals, low cloud and east winds. Dalchosnie/ Kynachan reported similar, as did Meggernie. Auchessan said there was little pattern to the season at all. Innischoarach reported that hind forests were struggling, with stags elsewhere. Corie Carie and Glen Lochay Estate reported similar by email. There did however appear to be more stags present towards the east of the group. Stag weights did appear to be good though.

NB Several properties reported "shortage of shootable stags". This is the first time in recent years that we have heard such comments, and important to keep an eye on this as culls progress so that we do not dig too much in to available stock.

All to copy final stag nos to SNH.

Hind Cull 2013-14 arrangements

The Group would meet again on Friday 13th December at 5 pm in the Molteno Hall to discuss hind cull arrangements for those estates in the NE part of the Group, north of the Lyon. They had a joint hind cull of 450 hinds. If the cull was on target by early December, the meeting would be cancelled. SNH to liaise over cull reporting.

The cull for Lochs Estate had been significantly reduced to allow for mortality in the spring. Otherwise, culls elsewhere in the Group were similar to previous years, and there were no concerns over deer numbers in those areas.

Other

A helicopter count was scheduled for 2014/15, most likely to take place October/ November 2014, immediately after stag cull.

8 Deer Management Plan

A number of new email addresses were collected. There was no information on any new schemes of relevance to deer management.

9 Wider Deer Management Issues

SNH Update

The Rural Affairs Committee would shortly be starting a review of the deer management system in Scotland, and that would involve a considerable amount of SNH time.

ADMG Comment

After a very quiet spell on the legislative front, the Land Reform Review process is now under way and is something that everyone should be aware of. There is no deer-specific legislation being considered at the moment.

The Lowland Deer Network has been running for a year now, and trying to establish a deer management group structure in the lowlands. The emphasis is different, and the expectations and demands are different, but the general principle of collaboration and better communications is the same.

DMGs are generally making good progress, although there are still problems in some areas and hitting the Press.

ADMG organized a meeting in London back in June, to host estate owners who would never otherwise get the chance to attend a DMG meeting. Approx 40 attended, and it was viewed to be a worthwhile experience.

The Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) is being reviewed at the moment. An initial scoping consultation has just been completed, with another more detailed consultation this autumn. ADMG are interested in two issues:

- The potential for representative groups (eg a DMG) being able to submit applications on behalf of its members. This could potentially help fund collaborative projects where there was a strong public interest and where private owners might be reluctant to pay for that themselves without grant support
- The potential for an advisory service, incorporating some sort of arbitration service that might be useful in dealing with deer disputes. This could provide ADMG/ SNH etc with greater capacity for dealing with problem situations.

The venison market is still growing by 25% a year, and we will need an extra 1000 tonnes a year by 2020 to meet demand. Some demo deer farms are being established, and a lot of other support work being implemented. Scottish Venison Day was on 4th September.

FE are implementing a review of their forest management at the moment, and there is a deer element to that.

The Scottish Wildfire Forum was being reformed. Several organizations had suggested that Deer Management Groups were the best point of contact in wildfire incidents. While there was merit in this, it was often the case that if there had been no fires for many years in an area that the level of experience required might have diminished, and communication lines broken.

BDMG had tried some time ago to collect relevant information from the Group, but with little effect. VC to try one more time.

The overall message from ADMG at the moment is to keep your DMP up to date, meet regularly and note how you have dealt with any problems that have arisen.

10 Next meeting

The next main Group meeting would be on Friday 11th April, 2pm at the Molteno Hall.

There would be a Section 7 meeting for those estates in the NE part of the Group at 5pm on Friday 13th December, at the Molteno Hall.

11 AOCB

There have been reports again of stalking guests from Lochdochart coming on to neighbouring ground. The Chair and Secretary will look in to the matter.

There will be a helicopter count on Blackmount this winter.

The Heading to the Scottish Hills website was beginning to work, with a lot more calls being made. However, it appeared to be breaking down at the weekends, and there was a need to extend it to include the hind season as well. BDMG to submit a formal response to SNH on our experience of the website to date. A lot of people don't really know about it.