

## East Loch Shiel Deer Management Group Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018

The following is an edited Order of Business as used at the DMG meeting 02/11/2018.  
**Conaglen Gunroom, Conaglen Estate. 11.00 am.**

### **AGENDA and ORDER OF BUSINESS, Red was read out.**

SF advised that the meeting was being recorded and agreement from those present was given.

1. **Chairman's welcome, any apologies.** H Phillips who has given me guidance on his thoughts and his proxy. J MacDonald who says any vote on matters should be R Dunsmore but has given me his own opinion on key matters. R Dunsmore. L Campbell ADMG.
2. **Minutes of previous meeting – and matters arising.** GT has observed that some of the action points are not clearly defined. I propose that in principle other than GT observations and other matters arising which will be incorporated into the final document the minutes are broadly correct and approved.
3. **ADMG assessment, Victor Clements report.**
  - a. **Chairman's brief summary of report and score.** Victor Clements on behalf of ADMG carried out a pre-assessment on ELS DMG in order to establish the progress of the group toward satisfying the 'Benchmark' and 'Public Interest' criteria. Overall VC's findings were very positive and he says we will have moved from being bottom of the league table to being certainly within the top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of groups. We are now looking forward positively to the SNH spring review. As a group can we give David a special thanks for all his exceptional hard work in bringing both the updated DMP's and the ELSDM Group forward.

### **Group priority from 'Benchmark' & 'Public Interest' – ELSDMG Action Plan.**

The officers of the Group have considered that our key priorities which have not already been fully addressed are as follows.

1. **Deer Management Plan - Edition 9 for approval. And Edition 1 of the Working Action Plan**
  - a. **Display DMP Background info, Working Plan.** Members all had their copy of the DMP via email on the 9<sup>th</sup> October. Consultees were advised that the DMP's were published for consultation shortly after.  
GT supplied a list of comments yesterday which will be considered and acted on as appropriate. Has anyone got further comments/feedback to make?  
Do we have agreement, on adoption subject to any minor changes (if any) that will be highlighted as they get incorporated.  
Seek unanimous agreement.
2. **West – East Sub Groups.**

**Discussion on Sub Group.** There have been several emails re Sub Groups with virtually unanimous support from those who responded other than J MacDonald who says "personal view is that I would not like to see the group divided, where the open range area of Ben Resipol to the west, becomes cut off and part of a separate sub group with once again varying land and deer management objectives from these within enclosed surrounding woodlands. This just shifts a problem to another area, so for questions 3 it will be a "No" vote." **Show plan with proposed dividing line.**

Sub – Group proposal is based around what should be broadly separate deer sub populations. At the West end of the line primarily Woodland deer and management objectives with some open range

deer outside of the fences. At the EAST end primarily Open Range deer with sporting management objectives.

- a. Advise on requirements for West and East Sub Groups DMP and Working Plan. West and East Sub Groups to be formed with each producing their own Deer Management ACTION Plans under the main Background Information plan just adopted. Plans to be produced, consulted on and adopted in time for the SNH spring review. Plans to define and achieve objectives and conform to the ADMG Benchmark and the Public Interest criteria.
3. **Estate reports.**
  - a. 2018 stag cull.
  - b. Condition reports.
  - c. Poaching.
  - d. HIA. Habitat targets and analysis to date.
  - e. Proposed hind cull 2018/19. Refer to Population Model.
4. **Deer counts.** Includes for recruitment and mortality counts.
  - a. Ask for SNH funded Helicopter count of open range.
  - b. Count or population assessment for Western sub group. The Group has no deer count or density data since 2009 for the West end forestry. What proposals do you have for providing a population assessment for the woodlands?
  - c. Recruitment counts. It is proposed that a sample of 200 to 300 hinds are counted with their calves in ?month? each year to establish the recruitment % across the group. Suggest 75 to 100 on Ardgour, Conaglen, West end Open range West end woodland. Task delegated to? East end? West end?
  - d. Mortality count, ask SNH to explain how? and when? to do it and how effective the method is. Task delegated to? East end? West end?
5. **Habitat Impact Assessments. Are the BPG changes to HIA's issued yet or still pending?**
  - a. Agree open range requirement for Dwarf Shrub, How many plots Blanket Bog, With only 3.4% of DMG area classified as Blanket Bog is it necessary to carry out any BB HIA at all? Native woodland. Non designated sites how many?
6. **Designated sites.**
  - a. West Group Designated sites in unfavourable condition. Discussion,
7. East Group Designated sites in unfavourable condition. Discussion,
8. **Agricultural damage.**
  - a. Proposal from Ardgour Estate to address the issue at Clovullin croft.
  - b. Response from SNH.

**Updates from ADMG, FES, SNH including spring review – what is outstanding?** We want to know from SNH what they consider as still outstanding to ensure a successful outcome for our group at the Spring review!

Would SNH like to take the opportunity to promote - Peatland restoration? Woodland expansion? River basin management?

**AOB.**

**Suggested dates for next meeting.**

- a. Move date away from summer avoiding main holiday period. Perhaps to Easter Week? (Not Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April which is MDMG.)

- b. It is likely that the DMG and the Sub Groups will need to meet again in the interim. Of necessity it may not be possible to give much notice, is everyone OK with that?