

Minutes of the East Loch Sheil DMG held at Conaglen House on 26th July 2016

Present:

Steve Fox, Carnoch (Chairman)
Ewen Maclean, Ardgour/Glenscaddie (Secretary)
David Mosgrove, Conaglen
Ross Maclean, Conaglen
David Mckenzie, Conaglen
Robin Maclean, Ardgour
Shaun Corrigan, Ardgour
Peter Sinclair, Resipole
Rory Sinclair, Resipole
Ian Jackson, Resipole
Robin Maclean, Ardgour
Graeme Taylor, SNH
John Jackson, FCS
Harvey Philip, Inversanda

Apologies:

Colin Lavin, FCS
John MacDonald

Matters Arising:

Constitution:

DM passed around the list of members of the group along with the areas of land which the members owned/managed/rented.

Discussion was had as to whether the current policy of 'one member, one vote' was suitable in a group with a diverse range of landholdings, or whether a system should be in place where the stakeholders with larger tracts of land should have larger voting rights over matters than non contributing members, or members with a smaller parcel of land.

The view from SNH and FES was that the one member one vote system worked well in other groups, and should be adopted.

There was some disagreement within the group over this view, and the eventual decision was for the group to go through each landholding, and apportion a number of votes to each area. The final count was ten votes, in the instance of a split vote, the chairman will have the deciding vote (list to follow).

DMP

DM introduced the plan so far, and as DM and SF had recently held a re-audit with SNH, some items had been added and an updated plan is to be circulated shortly.

DM went through various points, questioned whether the population modelling used by SNH was entirely accurate, given that the modelling did not add up with the Deer Count that had taken place in March.

A discussion took place regarding whether the amount of deer walking through the porous fences to the west end of the group and onto FES land is potentially affecting the stag numbers in the group.

JJ stated that the fencing budget was tight within FES, DM suggested that the reality was that an area of woodland which is heavily culled by FES without effective fences is never going to be compatible with the objectives of a sporting estate.

GT hinted that the onus was on the landowners to encourage the deer to stay on their ground, the reply was that Conaglen are feeding stags, and effectively doing everything in their power to keep the deer on their ground.

SF stated that a potential route forward was for JJ, GT and DM to hold a separate meeting to discuss the porous fences on the western boundaries and to try to persuade FES to either repair the fences, or to sell the ground to Conaglen, ensuring the continuation of a healthy deer population within the group.

DM will circulate the DMP to members shortly.

It was agreed that members would have **30 days** in which to supply DM with the information he requires, or have any comments that they wish added, after this point the plan will be supplied to the relevant authorities.

SF thanked DM for his work on the DMP so far, the group expressed thanks as a whole.

GT stated that the Scottish Government audit would be taking place during September, with a final decision due on whether the Deer Management protocols in Scotland will remain voluntary or become subject to Government control.

Deer Count:

The deer count was held in March which covered the group as a whole, the feeling was that this was a success and all members were happy with the count, DM has an updated map with count figures which will be circulated to members in due course.

E-Coli in deer meat

SF handed out information regarding the recent case of e-coli found in deer meat, members were encouraged to follow best practice.

Reference to and information about E coli in deer meat.

At the ADMG AGM a talk was given by Ian McWatt, Director of Operations Food Standards Scotland re a confirmed case of E coli in deer meat. This was referred to in SCOPE the ADMG Newsletter page 4. <http://www.deer-management.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Scope-Volume-4-Issue-7.pdf>

Chronic Wasting Disease

SF handed out information about cwd in deer, members were cautioned that clients arriving from areas affected by the disease should ensure their clothing/equipment is disinfected or preferably not used in Scotland.

Reference to, and information about Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer.

<http://www.bds.org.uk/index.php/research/chronic-wasting-disease-cwd> is to a British Deer Society information leaflet explaining the disease and warning that prevention is the only effective control measure.

Date of next meeting:

It was decided that a meeting in mid November would be appropriate, date to be decided in due course.