

MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
SPRING MEETING
FRIDAY 18 MAY 2018
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Garbruach)
██████████ (Corrievarkie)	██████████ (Dunalastair)
██████████ (Auchleeks)	██████████ (SNH)
██████████ (Forestry Commission Scotland)	██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)
██████████ (Forestry Commission Scotland)	██████████ (Auchleeks)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Dunalastair)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
	██████████ (Atholl)
	██████████ (Dalnaspidal)

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

██████████ (Craiganoor), ██████████ (Blairfettie), ██████████ (Blairfettie), ██████████ (Drumochter), ██████████ and ██████████ (Talladh a Bheith), ██████████ (Chairman Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council), ██████████ (Dalnacardoch), ██████████ (Atholl)

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th OCTOBER 2017

2.1 It was agreed that all matters arising would be taken in the coming agenda and the Minutes were adopted as a true record of the meeting.

3. REVIEW OF THE 2017/18 HIND CULL

The final in season hind cull figures were;

Estate	2017 Target	Hinds Actual	Calves	% calves/hinds	% Variance from target
Atholl (West of A9)	5	22	8	36%	340%
Auchleeks	50	63	25	40%	26%
Blairfettie	8	7	5	71%	-13%
Corrievarkie	20	20	7	35%	0%
Craiganoor	45	46	9	20%	2%
Dalnaspidal	80	103	40	39%	29%
Dunalastair	55	107	38	36%	95%
Garbruach	10	19	7	37%	90%
North Drumochter	40	79	15	19%	98%
FCS T-A-B					
Talladh-a-Bheithe	50	65	27	42%	30%
Total	363	531	181	34%	46%

The target hind cull based on the deer management plan is 480 hinds plus 144 followers, adjusted down at the October 2017 meeting to 363 hinds to account for low numbers observed during stag stalking. Following the results of the helicopter deer count in late January 2018 it was apparent the population was actually a lot higher than previously estimated and the Secretary requested additional culling during the last 10 days of the season. This was achieved with nearly 170 deer shot over 10 days resulting in a hind cull 46% over the agreed target and 11% over the plan target.

There was discussion about winter mortality. It was agreed this was worse winter weather than 2010/11 as the snow had lasted later into April. Impact on the deer was noticeable and the following mortality was recorded;

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Dunalastair	2	14	53		69
Garbruach	1	1	1		3
North Drumochter		1			1
FCS T-A-B					
Talladh-a-Bheithe	7	4	9		20
Total	17	41	88	7	168

All stalkers felt they would find more dead deer and that in particular, calf recruitment into the herd would have suffered. Recruitment counts are shown in section 5 below.

4. **DEER COUNT**

The helicopter deer count was held on 26th January lead by SNH using two helicopters. Data was captured by digital image and the count report gives a high degree of confidence in the accuracy, subject to the usual tolerances of counting operations. The summary table from the count report is shown below.

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There was general acceptance at the time of the count that the number was representative and as discussed in Section 3, additional hinds were shot in response during the last 10 days of the season.

Based on the deer plan population model the expected population at the count should have been around 5,000 at 17/km², so the population counted is approximately 1,500 higher than target. Stag numbers were relatively close to target and the variance in overall numbers is in hinds and calves. A plan was discussed to reduce hind numbers accordingly (see section 6 below).

5. DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Secretary reiterated the importance of delivering the plan and there was discussion about the proposals for a further SNH led review of DMGs in 2019, with low tolerance of inconsistency or non-performance. Although monitoring habitat is a key element of the current plan that needs to be addressed the Secretary confirmed that in the short term, the key aim had to be reducing hind numbers in response to the count and that group activity should focus on this task. The Secretary confirmed that he had already had a meeting with ■ about this and that in general SNH would support a relaxed attitude to stag cull numbers [given the count was close to target] with a focus on hind culling. ■ confirmed this, and said that despite the high count figure, the Group response in early February had shown good intent and the ability to react. ■ did however reiterate that the spotlight was very much on and the Group had deliver a reduced hind cull.

The Secretary showed a number of population model scenarios on the big screen. With assistance from ■, models had been tweaked for recruitment, ratio of male to female calves, etc, to reflect experiences from other groups. The models showed the effect of the January count figures on the current cull plan, the effect of an increased hind cull over several years and the effect of a rapid reduction cull over two seasons. The latter showed the better outcome and ■ said that experience from other groups showed that heavy culling over a shorter period to rebase the population was generally more successful.

The Secretary asked for recruitment count data from each estate. Not all properties had counted but percentages ranged from 21% at Corrievarkie to 50% on Struan Point (from a small sample with the potential of access to woodland). Ignoring Struan, the average open range recruitment was recorded at 24.5% which is approximately 8% lower than normal.

6. 2018 STAG CULL TARGETS & 2018/19 HIND CULL TARGETS

The planned stag cull based on the deer management plan is 340. It was agreed that the target number need not be as high as this and was set at;

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Total	280

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Total	960

Within the allocation Blairfettie, Dall, Dalnaspidal and Craiganour do not currently have the hind numbers reach these targets, however it was felt that increased activity on neighbouring estates would move deer around more allowing greater opportunity.

The Secretary reiterated that it was fundamentally important to achieve this level of cull, acknowledged that resources would be stretched, and suggested that collaboration between neighbours would be essential. Members should seek to work together to target populations that are likely to move across march boundaries, etc. Some members have traditionally been conservative in their approach and reluctant to increase cull levels, but it essential that they adopt the revised cull levels to ensure the Group doesn't fall short.

It was agreed that during the hind season cull numbers would be supplied by text or email to the Secretary every Sunday through the season to allow active progress monitoring.

7. **SNH/ADMG UPDATE**

- 7.1 ■ confirmed all DMGs would be reassessed by SNH in 2019 – criteria for assessment would be based on the two previous assessments but a high threshold would be set. *Post meeting note – the SNH criteria agreed in August 2018 are attached to these minutes.* The Secretary confirmed that all DMGs were being offered a 'healthcheck' by ADMG as part of a pre-assessment process and that the Secretary had taken this offer up on behalf of the Group to be completed over the summer.

8. **AOCB**

None tabled.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Sunday 14th October, 10.30 am. Location TBC

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
████████ SNH
ADMG
Community Council
Website
File

DRAFT



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED] (wellbewust.nl); [REDACTED] (Dalnaspidal); [REDACTED] (dunalastair.com); [REDACTED] (@atholl-estates.co.uk); [REDACTED] (virgin.net); [REDACTED] (Dalnaspidal); [REDACTED] (raliaenterprises@aol.com); [REDACTED] ([Craiganoir](mailto:(Craiganoir)))
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Draft Minutes
Date: 29 August 2018 16:52:17
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[image004.png](#)
[Draft Minutes May 2018.pdf](#)
[DMG Letter - Final version with 2019 priority assessment criteria - Augu....pdf](#)

Dear All

Please find attached draft minutes for your information – please can I have any comments back within a fortnight.

I also attach the 2019 DMG assessment criteria referred to in the minutes. You will note that areas requiring 100% compliance are highlighted. This is serious and failure to achieve a large reduction cull in hinds will count against our review performance.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

Savills, Eam House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth PH1 1RA

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Website : www.savills.co.uk



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Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
[REDACTED] SNH
ADMG
Community Council
Website
File

DRAFT





Scottish Natural Heritage Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

15th August, 2018

Dear DMG Chair and Secretary,

DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP ASSESSMENTS 2019

Following the Review of Deer Management in 2016, the Cabinet Secretary, Roseanna Cunningham, set out the Scottish Government's expectations in this [response](#). In line with this Scottish Natural Heritage will be reviewing progress in 2019.

A significant part of this review will focus on the collective performance of Deer Management Groups and as such we are planning to undertake another round of DMG assessments. The assessments will be familiar to you in that they will follow the same format as those in 2014 and 2016. They will take place between 1st April and the 15th May 2019 and will be undertaken by SNH staff in discussion with DMG Chairs and Secretaries and, where applicable, the ADMG Regional representative.

The ultimate goal for both SNH and ADMG is for all DMGs to score Green on all criteria. However, to assess progress in 2019 we have identified a number of priority criteria, which those who attended the ADMG AGM and recent Birnam and Inverness workshops will be aware of.

The overall progress of the upland deer sector as a whole in 2019 will therefore be measured by the number of groups scoring green on these specific criteria. To help provide clarity we have produced further guidance on the evidence that we will be looking for to score green across each of these criteria.

- Across the Benchmark these criteria relate to fundamental aspects of deer management planning in terms of counts, culls and habitat monitoring (Annex 1)
- For the Public Interest elements we are looking for progress in specific criteria across all the different Public Interest categories (Annex 2)

All Assessments will undergo Quality Assurance checks. If agreement can't be reached between SNH and a DMG on any criteria then the Assessment can be referred for review within SNH.

The ADMG current offer of a 'health-check' will help groups to identify where they should focus to make progress before next year's Assessments.

We will support DMGs in preparing for Assessments by providing regular feedback and your local SNH contacts will work closely with you. Please get in touch with them directly for further information.

Yours sincerely

Robbie Kernahan
Head National Operations

Scottish Natural Heritage, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW
Tel: 01463 725000 Fax: 01463 725067 www.snh.gov.uk

Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba, Taigh a' Ghlinne Mhòir, Rathad na Leacainn, Inbhir Nis, IV3 8NW
Fòn: 01463 725000 Facs: 01463 725067 www.snh.gov.uk/gaelic

Annex 1: DMG Benchmark Assessment proforma with priority criteria for 2019 Assessment highlighted			
ADMG Benchmark Assessment	Guidance to score Green in 2019	Evidence to demonstrate delivery	National Target for 2019 delivery
1. Area and boundaries			
1.1. Identify the appropriate boundaries for the group to operate in.			
1.2. Define appropriate sub populations where applicable			
2. Membership			
2.1. All property owners within a deer range should be members of a DMG, including private and public land owners; also, where possible, agricultural occupiers, foresters, crofters and others on adjoining land where deer may be present. In some cases this may extend to householders with private gardens.			
3. Meetings			
3.1. DMGs should meet regularly. Two formal meetings per year is the norm but more frequent interaction between members, between meetings, should be encouraged.			
3.2. For effective collaborative management to take place it is important that all DMG Members should attend every meeting or be represented by someone authorised to make appropriate decisions on their behalf.			
3.3. In addition to landholding Members, including public sector owners, public agencies such as SNH and Forestry Commission Scotland should be in attendance and other relevant authorities such as Police Scotland may be invited to attend DMG meetings.			
3.4. Meetings should operate to an agenda and be accurately minuted. Attendees should be encouraged to participate and agreed actions and decisions should be recorded.			
3.5. Group can demonstrate a capacity to deal with issues between meetings as they arise, and to provide an ongoing source of communication and advice as required.			
4. Constitution & Finances			
4.1. All DMGs should have a Constitution which defines the area of the Group, sets out its purpose, its operating principles, membership and procedures, in addition to providing for appointing office bearers, voting, raising subscriptions and maintaining financial records			
4.2. Good management and budgeting of finances			
5. Deer Management Plans			
5.1. All DMGs should have an up to date, effective and forward looking Deer Management Plan (DMP).			
5.2. The DMP should record all the land management objectives within the DMG area.			
5.3. Where applicable, the plan should include a rolling 5 year population model			
5.4. Appropriate use of maps to illustrate relevant detail.			
5.5. The DMP should identify the public interest aspects of deer management			
5.6. DMP should make appropriate reference to other species of deer within the DMG area, and provide a level of detail proportionate to this interest.			
5.7. It should include a list of actions that deliver the collective objectives of DMG Members as well as public interest objectives. These actions should be updated annually			
5.8. It is important that all DMG Members should play a full part in the planning process and in the implementation of agreed actions			
5.9. The DMP may identify potential conflicts and how they can be prevented or addressed to ensure an equitable approach to the shared deer population.			
5.10. Relevant local interests should be consulted on new DMPs and advised of any changes as they come forward.			
6. Code of Practice on Deer Management			
6.1. The Code should be endorsed by all DMGs and referenced in both the Constitution and Deer Management Plan of every Group. The terms of the Code should be delivered through the Group Deer Management Plan.			
7. ADMG Principles of Collaboration			
7.1. The Principles of Collaboration should be incorporated into all DMG Constitutions and Deer Management Plans.			
8. Best Practice			
8.1. All deer management should be carried out in accordance with Best Practice.			

8.2. All Deer Management Plans should reference and follow WDBP which will continue to evolve.			
9. Data and Evidence gathering- Deer counts			
9.1. Accurate deer counting forms the basis of population modelling. An ethos that reflects this should be in evidence	Green where DMG demonstrate a counting policy, with actions, that looks for a population estimate (whether by foot count or by Helicopter count) at least every 3-5 years, an assessment of the information gathered and a responsive and adaptive cull planning process.	DMP/WP/Minutes captures this information on counting programme ; using this as the basis for population modelling	100%
9.2. As publicly funded aerial counts are now exceptional, DMGs should aim to carry out a regular well planned coordinated foot count of the whole open range deer population. The norm is to count annually.	Green where counting is undertaken on a 3-5 year basis; rationale and justification set out where this is not the case as a minimum	Figures and discussion evidenced and captured in Minutes/WP	100%
9.3. Recruitment and mortality counts are also essential for population modelling.	Green where undertaken annually and overall Group figure calculated.	DMP/ Minutes/ Working Plan captures count programme - group to deliver in accordance with milestones against this	100%
9.4. Other census methods may be required in some circumstances, e.g. dung counting in woodland or other concealing habitats or on adjoining open ground.			
10. Data and evidence gathering- Culls			
10.1. All DMGs should agree a target deer population or density which meets the collective requirements of Members without detriment to the public interest.	Green where the Group has agreed a target which will deliver the objectives as set out within the DMP; 'agreed' is in relation to the DMG members, not SNH; where there's a contract or grant, or regulation is being used then target density and appropriate cull levels will require agreement with SNH/FCS, but not otherwise.	Agreed in DMP/Minutes	100%
10.2. The cull should be apportioned among Members to deliver the objectives of the DMP and individual management objectives while maintaining the agreed target population and favourable environmental condition.	Green where the Group's overall cull, and apportionment of it in terms of distribution is appropriate to securing objectives set out in the DMP	Proposed and actual culls captured in DMP/WP/Minutes	100%
10.3. The Group cull target should be reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted annually.	Green where the Group is operating to an up to date population model	Update population model included within Action Plan	100%
11. Data and evidence gathering- Habitat Monitoring			
11.1. DMGs should carry out habitat monitoring. Habitat Impact Assessments (HIA) measure progress towards agreed habitat condition targets on both designated sites and the wider deer range.	Green if HIA undertaken across an appropriate proportion of the DMG area; milestones met in terms of reviewing results in relation to objectives outlined in DMP	Updated Action Plan and note of discussions and conclusions through minutes/papers.	75% Green, no Red
11.2. HIAs should be carried out on a systematic and regular basis. A three year cycle is the norm but many find annual monitoring useful.			
11.3. Data is required on other herbivores present and their impact on the habitat.			
11.4. DMPs should include a section on habitat monitoring methods and procedures and record annual results so as to measure change and record trends.			
12. Competence			
12.1. It is recommended that in addition to DSC 1 deer managers should also attain DSC 2 or equivalent.			
12.2. Deer managers supplying venison for public consumption are required to certify carcasses as fit for human consumption to demonstrate due diligence. "Trained Hunter" status is required for carcass certification.		Training policy /section in DMP/ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update	100% Green
13. Training			
13.1. All DMGs should have a training policy and incorporate it in the DMP			
13.2. All DMG Members or those acting on their behalf should undergo the necessary training to demonstrate Competence.			
13.3. The training policy should promote and record continuing professional development through Best Practice Guidance.			
14. Venison Marketing			
14.1. Membership of the Scottish Quality Wild Venison scheme is recommended by ADMG.			
14.2. There is evidence of collaborative venison production within the Group			
15. Communications			
15.1. DMGs should include a Communications Policy in their DMP. External communication should be directed at parties not directly involved but with an interest in deer management including individuals, local bodies such as community councils, local authorities, local media and other specialist interests.			
15.2. An annual communication programme suitable to local circumstances is advised. This might include a DMG website or a page on www.deer-management.co.uk , an annual Newsletter, annual open meeting, or attending local meetings by invitation.			
15.3. A Deer Management Plan should be accessible and publicly available, and local consultation during its development is advised.		DMP published on ADMG website or an alternative site.	100% Green

**Annex 2: DMG Public Interest Assessment
proforma with priority criteria for 2019
Assessment highlighted**

Actions 1 to 14	Criteria	Guidance to score Green in 2019	Evidence to demonstrate delivery	National Target for 2019 delivery
1. ACTIONS to develop mechanisms to manage deer	1.1. Carry out an assessment of effectiveness against the Benchmark			
	1.2. Develop a series of actions to be implemented and assign roles			
	1.3. Produce and publish a forward-looking, effective deer management plan which includes the public interest elements relevant to local circumstances. The plan should contain an action plan which sets out agreed actions and monitors delivery. Minutes of DMG meetings should be made publicly available.	Green where DMG has DMP in place and an Action Plan which is updated annually, and there is a clear process for reviewing delivery. The term 'effective' refers to the extent to which agreed management actions will deliver objectives set out within the plan	DMP on website, along with up to date Action Plan, Meeting Minutes and Agendas	100% Green
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
2. ACTIONS for the delivery of designated features into Favourable Condition.	2.1. Identify designated features, the reported condition and herbivore pressures affecting designated sites in the DMG area.	Green where the extent and condition of features is described in the DMP	Captured in Plan or Action Plan	100% Green
	2.2. Identify and agree actions to manage herbivore impacts affecting the favourable condition of designated features.	Green where action plans for features are in place, with milestones and agreed with SNH; Green where feature(s) are URDTM based on DMP; Green if features are URDTM due to agreement with SNH post-DMP/2016 assessment and milestones are being met; Criteria based on development of deer actions, but developed with the context of wider impacts in mind i.e. density targets developed with consideration of other herbivores using that ground and the implications on this on sustainable deer densities	Actions clearly articulated in DMP/Action Plan/Meeting Minutes with associated timescales for delivery	80% Green
	2.3. Monitor progress and review actions to manage herbivore impacts affecting favourable condition.	Green where mechanisms for adaptive management are agreed in the DMP and being delivered in line with milestones set out in the DMP; Green judged against actions set out in DMP, rather than all actions necessary to deliver the site into favourable condition	Actions clearly articulated in DMP/Action Plan/Meeting Minutes with associated timescales for delivery; Evidence that actions/progress being reviewed i.e. update in published Minutes or updated Working Plan	80% of 2.2 Green
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
3. ACTIONS to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve woodland condition in the medium to long term.	3.1. Establish overall extent of woodland and determine what proportion is existing native woodland.	Green where the extent of the woodland is described through the DMP	Captured in Plan or Action Plan using NWSS data, or otherwise where alternative data has been collated	100% Green
	3.2. Determine current condition of native woodland.	Green where DMP/WP sets out %of impacts in V. High, High, Medium or Low categories; Green based on process of understanding condition and not the condition itself	Captured in Plan or Action Plan using NWSS data, or otherwise where alternative data has been collated and is favoured by the group; clearly articulating fencing developments in Meeting Minutes	100% Green
	3.3. Identify actions to retain and improve native woodland condition and deliver DMG woodland management objectives.	Green where Plan/Working Plan/Meeting Minutes demonstrates evidence of strategic group consideration and captures actions, including rationale where action to improve woodland condition are not considered Group priority or Group have demonstrated limitations to current delivery, e.g. through exploring grant availability ;delivery focussed on the group process for setting out what their contribution is, not on the amount they will deliver	Clear actions articulated in Plan/Action plan or captured through meeting minute; Group to demonstrate evidence base	No Red
	3.4. Monitor progress and review actions to manage herbivore impacts.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
4. ACTIONS to demonstrate DMG contribution to the Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover.	4.1. Identify and quantify extent of recent woodland establishment (through SRDP (last 5 years) and through other schemes).	Green where planning process is clearly articulated and minuted/ incorporated into Working Plan; Detail of schemes being entered into are shared at DMG meeting, minuted and incorporated into Working Plan ; delivery is judged against planning process - not the amount being contributed.	Captured in Plan or Action Plan	100% Green
	4.2. Identify and quantify opportunities and priorities for woodland expansion over the next 5-10 years.	Green where DMG have implement actions agreed through the planning process (i.e. the actions set out in 4.2).	Clearly articulate in DMP/Action Plan/Meeting Minutes with associated timescales for delivery.	60%
	4.3. Consider at a population level the implication of increased woodland on deer densities and distribution across the DMG.	Green where Group have demonstrated re-calculation of densities associated with different scenarios and considered implications of woodland proposal on deer movement where proposals are put forward; actions to monitor and mitigate against undesirable impacts agreed and minuted.	Discuss at DMG meeting and clearly articulate discussion and capture actions in Meeting Minute/Action Plan.	100%
	4.4. Implement actions to deliver the woodland expansion proposals and review progress.	Green is judged against delivery of deer management measures associated with schemes as/if they come through (rather than delivery of the scheme itself which rests with individual properties - i.e. not judging implementation of actions to get LTFPs etc. agreed etc).	Clear actions articulated in Plan/Working plan or captured through meeting minute. Group to demonstrate evidence base.	100%
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
	5.1. Identify and quantify the habitat resource by broad type.	Green where the extent and broad type of habitat has been described within the DMP	Captured in Plan or Action Plan	100% Green

5. ACTIONS to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside.	5.2. Identify required impact targets for habitat types.	Green where DMGs have agreed impact targets in DMPs/Minuted; delivery is assessed against the appropriateness of these targets in delivering the objectives within their DMP; SNH to provide broad guidance on sustainable impact ranges across difference habitat types - DMG to rationalise operating out with these parameters where this is the case; broad SNH targets as ultimately where all DMGs should aim for, but groups will be assessed against having interim stepping stone targets to getting there.	Agreed and captured in DMP/Action Plan/Meeting minutes	66% Green
	5.3. Quantify a sustainable level of grazing and trampling for each of these habitat types.	Green where DMG have set out process for assessing current impacts, setting desired impact range and population targets to deliver these (quite a crude approach); as per 5.2., DMG will be judged against whether these grazing levels will deliver the Group's agreed impact target	Agreed and captured in DMP/Action Plan/Meeting minutes	30% Green, no Red
	5.4. Identify where different levels of grazing may be required and prioritise accordingly.	Green where the group identify and set out actions for localised management to deliver 5.2. and 5.3	Clear actions articulated in Plan/Action plan or captured through meeting minute; Group to demonstrate evidence base	30% Green, no Red
	5.5. Conduct herbivore impact assessments , and assess these against acceptable impact ranges. Where necessary identify and implement actions to attain impacts within the range.	Green where HIA is being undertaken at appropriate DMG scale and mechanisms for using this data to inform cull planning are clearly articulated i.e. if they're delivering against milestones set out in DMP but haven't yet used data to inform cull planning then still green	Clear actions articulated in Plan/Action plan or captured through meeting minute; Group to demonstrate evidence base	30% Green, no Red
	5.6. Regularly review information to measure progress and adapt management when necessary.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
6. ACTIONS to improve Scotland's ability to store carbon by maintaining or improving ecosystem health.	6.1. Quantify the extent of the carbon-sensitive habitats within the DMG range.			
	6.2. Conduct herbivore impact assessments, and assess these against acceptable impact ranges for these sensitive habitats. Identify and implement actions to attain impacts within the range.			
	6.3. Identify opportunities for the creation/restoration of peatlands	Green where planning process is clearly articulated and minuted/ incorporated into Working Plan; Detail of schemes being entered into are shared at DMG meeting, minuted and incorporated into Working Plan ; delivery is judged against planning process - not the amount being contributed	Captured in DMP; ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update ; Group to demonstrate evidence of schemes currently underway	100% Green
	6.4. Contribute as appropriate to River Basin Management Planning			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
7. ACTIONS to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species	7.1. Manage invasive non-native species (e.g. muntjac) to prevent their establishment and spread e.g. report sightings of muntjac to SNH			
	7.2. Agree on local management of other non-natives which may be utilised as a resource e.g. sika, fallow, goats, to reduce their spread and negative impacts.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
8. ACTIONS to protect designated historic and cultural features from being damaged by deer e.g. by trampling.	8.1. Identify any historic or cultural features that may be impacted by deer and undertake deer management to			
	8.2. Consider the implications of fencing on the landscape with due regard to the Joint Agency Guidance on Fencing.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
9. ACTIONS to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management.	9.1. Undertake a skills and training assessment to establish current skill levels applicable to deer management within the DMG.			
	9.2. Identify training and development needs / requirements of DMG members including opportunities for Continuous Professional development (i.e. in relation to Best Practice).			
	9.3. Ensure all those who actively manage deer are "competent" according to current standard	Green where mechanisms for ongoing audit are in place (i.e. meeting agenda item and minuted).	Captured in DMP; ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update.	100% Green
	9.4. Promote and facilitate the uptake of formal and CDP training opportunities for those participating in deer management.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
10.1. Identify and quantify public safety issues associated with deer within the DMG area. e.g. DVCs, airports etc.				
	10.2. Identify actions with landowners, Local Authority, DMG to reduce or mitigate public safety risk and monitor effectiveness of actions.			

10. ACTIONS to Identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing.	10.3. Identify means of ensuring food safety is maintained in carcass handling and venison processing and compliance with BPG in relation to meat hygiene	Green where mechanisms for ongoing audit are in place (i.e. meeting agenda item and minuted)	Captured in DMP; ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update	100%
	10.4. Ensure deer managers are familiar with notifiable diseases, that a system for recording is in place and all deer managers are familiar with course of action to take.	Green where mechanisms for ongoing audit are in place	Captured in DMP; ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update	100%
	10.5. Ensure that that appropriate bio security measures are enacted when visitors from areas where CWD is present are involved with deer management activities	Green where mechanisms for ongoing audit are in place (i.e. meeting agenda item and minuted)	Captured in DMP; ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update	100%
	10.6. Identify opportunities to raise awareness of the risks associated with Lyme Disease			
	10.7. Identify main access and recreational activity within the DMG area and assess how this fits with deer management activity.			
	10.8. Identify actions to mitigate any public access and recreation activity during peak periods of deer culling e.g. use of Hill phones and web sites			
	10.9. Facilitate public access promote positive communication between visiting public and wildlife managers.	Green where - DMGs articulate the initiatives planned and implemented to meet responsibilities on access and initiatives to promote the messages around the deer management.	Captured in DMP; ongoing monitoring and update through Meeting Minute/DMP update	100%
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
11. ACTIONS to maximise economic benefits associated with deer	11.1. Identify and quantify the main sources of revenue related to deer (sport, tourism etc.			
	11.2. Identify and quantify deer-related employment. Identify opportunities to increase and improve prospects throughout the DMG.	Green where mechanisms for ongoing audit of associated with Deer Management are in place.	Captured in DMP/Action Plan; periodic review and update through Meeting Minute/Action Plan update.	70%
	11.3. Identify opportunities to add value to products from deer management (SQWV, venison branding)			
	11.4. Explore options for larder sharing, infrastructure improvement and carcass collection to ensure maximum benefit from venison production whilst reducing carbon costs.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
12. ACTIONS to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective	12.1. Identify and quantify capital investment in deer management related infrastructure.			
	12.2. Identify where deer are impacting on other land uses and include all relevant stakeholders to assist the group in understanding costs of deer within the DMG (e.g. woodland, agriculture, DVCs)	Green where impacts identified and DMG can demonstrate through DMP/WP/Minutes how efforts to resolve and address this have been made. In terms of understanding costs of deer this requires some analysis of the information which should be evidenced in form of actual reporting - i.e. group discussion paper.	Captured in DMP/Action Plan; periodic review and update through Meeting Minute/Action Plan update.	50%
	12.3. Where there are management changes, assess the likely changes to the economic costs across the DMG			
	12.4. Formulate a strategy to minimise the negative economic impacts in an equitable way.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
13. ACTIONS to ensure effective communication on deer management issues.	13.1. Provide regular opportunity for wider community and public agency engagement in planning and communications.			
	13.2. Identify and implement actions to address community issues on deer or deer management activity.	Green where Group can provide evidence of efforts to engage Community Council and providing regular opportunity for this, and wider interest groups.	Captured in DMP/Action Plan; periodic review and update through Meeting Minute/Action Plan update.	100%
	13.3. Support and promote wider opportunities to further education on deer.			
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			
14. ACTIONS to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual animal and population level.	14.1. Agree, collate and review data available within the DMG which might be used as a proxy for deer health/welfare i.e. recruitment, winter mortality, larder weights etc.			
	14.2. Take reasonable actions to ensure that deer culling operations safeguard welfare; for culled and surviving animals (e.g. for example by following BPG)	Green where the DMGs acts as a forum to openly discuss and promote compliance with BP and to openly discuss issues and identify concerns raised by interested parties, and to response to the concerns appropriately.	For the group to set out the evidence base - so about more than just referencing in DMP.	100%
	14.3. Take reasonable actions to ensure that the welfare of surviving populations is safeguarded (e.g. provision and access to food and shelter)	Green where mechanisms are in place to assess the wider welfare considerations as described through Best Practice and recorded through DMP/Action Plan/Minutes.	For DMG to provide evidence base on how they are doing this.	100%
	14.4. Periodically review information on actions to safeguard welfare, identify and implement changes as required.		DMG to provide evidence base and ensure that they are discussing at meetings	100%
	Summary : Agree a colour for current delivery of the Action (red, amber, green) and detail what is going to happen to deliver future actions			

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To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@wellbewust.nl](mailto:[REDACTED]@wellbewust.nl)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]\(Dalnaspida\)](mailto:[REDACTED](Dalnaspida))>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@atholl-estates.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@atholl-estates.co.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@dunastair.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@dunastair.com)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@rafaenterprises@aol.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@rafaenterprises@aol.com)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]\(Dalnaspida\)](mailto:[REDACTED](Dalnaspida))>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]\(Craigamour\)](mailto:[REDACTED](Craigamour))>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Next Meeting - 14 October
Date: 26 September 2018 14:29:30
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[image002.png](#)
[ELEDMG Agenda October 2018.pdf](#)

Dear All

Please find attached agenda for the next meeting.

We can hold the meeting at Craiganour Lodge, but need to be away by 1230 [REDACTED].

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

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EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

AUTUMN MEETING

SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER 2018

10.30AM, CRAIGANOUR LODGE

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Matters Arising out of Meeting held on 18th May 2018 at Craiganour Lodge
3. 2018 Stag Cull – progress and review
4. Delivery of the Deer Management Plan & Record Keeping
5. 2018/19 Hind Cull Targets (already agreed)
6. Deer Count
7. 2019 DMG Assessment, ADMG & SNH Updates
8. Any Other Business
9. Date of Next Meeting



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

AUTUMN MEETING

SUNDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2019

10.30AM, CRAIGANOUR LODGE

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Matters Arising – not applicable
3. 2021 Stag cull review
4. Deer Management Plan
5. 2021 Hind cull
6. Woodlands
7. Record Keeping
8. ADMG & SNH Updates
9. Any other business
10. Date of Next Meeting



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

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Subject: Emailing: ELEDMG Agenda Oct 2019.pdf
Date: 10 October 2019 08:29:12
Attachments: [ELEDMG Agenda Oct 2019.pdf](#)
[Draft Minutes May 2019.pdf](#)

Morning All

I think I forgot to circulate the agenda for Sunday

Regards

[REDACTED]

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MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
SPRING MEETING
SUNDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2019
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Garbruach)
██████████ (Corrievarkie)	██████████ (Garbruach)
██████████ (Auchleeks)	██████████ (Dunalastair),
██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)	██████████ (SNH)
██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)	██████████ (Auchleeks)
██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (Dalnaspidal)	██████████ (Atholl)
██████████ (Blairfettie)	██████████ (Atholl)
██████████ Blairfettie)	██████████ Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Dalnaspidal)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	
██████████ (North Drumochter)	

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

██████████ (Chairman Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council), ██████████ (Dalnacardoch), ██████████ (Forestry & Land Scotland), ██████████ (Craiganoor), ██████████ (Dunalastair)

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH MAY 2019

- 2.1 It was agreed that all matters arising would be taken in the coming agenda and the Minutes were adopted as a true record of the meeting.

3. DMG ASSESSMENT

██████████ reported that the SNH report on deer management in Scotland was submitted to Ministers recently and was now under consideration.

He was able to say that as a result of the 2019 DMG assessment it was clear the general performance of many DMGs had improved, but there remained some concern that various outcomes would not necessarily be delivered. We would have to wait to see the report for the detail.

4. 2019/20 STAG CULL REVIEW

The stag cull at the date of meeting was reported as 222 stags, with expectation of a further 54 during the last week of the season. The total expected was therefore 276, 9 behind the agreed target which was already set below the DMP target to account for low numbers of mature stags being seen.

As agreed at the May meeting a proportion of younger cull stags have been shot, which at the date of the meeting sat at 59, or 27% of the total cull to date.

Estate	2019 Target	At meeting	Expected	Revised	Achieved	Variance	Including Young
Dall (east of road)	5	2	0	2		-5	
Auchleeks	30	21	6	27		-30	1
Blairfettie	10	11	2	13		-10	3
Corrievarkie	35	30	5	35		-35	12
Craiganour	45	36	10	46		-45	10
Dalnaspidal	30	26	4	30		-30	20
Dunalastair	25	17	8	25		-25	
Garbruach & Stance	10	10	1	11		-10	
North Drumochter	50	24	10	34		-50	8
FCS T-A-B						0	
Tailadh-a-Bheithe	45	45	8	53		-45	5
Total	285	222	54	276	0	-285	59

Comments from around the estates;

Dall – forestry planting works had commenced. 2 stags shot early on in July.

Auchleeks – stags generally out west and still less than would expect to see.

Blairfettie – nothing on hill. Deer fencing for woodland planting nearly complete. Deer in fields have gone.

Corrievarkie – holding stags right through, weights up, feels that shooting early stags has helped.

Craiganour – west end quiet but more deer in general than last couple of years, mainly in the middle of the Estate, east end quiet as well.

Dalnaspidal – on grouse work until mid-September so no stalking. Seeing less stags than previous year.

Dunalastair – feels there are more stags than normal, so may shoot a few more (5?). Lack of hinds early on, but more showing up now rut is on.

Garbruach & Stance – mainly heavy stags that had been summering in fields at Dalnacardoch (16st+).

North Drumochter – better rut helping. Not been able to get young stags at Dalwhinnie end, but overall better than last year with more mature stags.

T-A-B – good number of stags now, light early on. Some very old stags. All in good condition.

5. Deer Count & Population Model

It was agreed that another year of intensive hind culling was necessary to maintain downward pressure on the breeding population. In terms of wider herd management it was agreed that there may be scope to ease off stag culls a little. The key remained shooting enough females.

Several stalkers reported observing low calf numbers which may have an implication on next years overall population.

The importance of a group count was emphasised and [redacted] agreed to coordinate.

6. 2019/20 Hind Cull Targets

The 2019 hind cull was 761 hinds, below the DMP revised target, but still the highest taken by the Group. Comments from around the estates;

Dall – no set target, [redacted] would monitor numbers and progress with fencing.

Auchleeks – not seeing weight of hinds to support another year of 120 so wants to scale back to 80, and maybe take extras if more appear.

Blairfettie – no set target.

Corrievarkie – 20, target east end above power station.

Craiganour – core hind numbers are low, so target 80, maybe take more if opportunity arises.

Dalnaspidal – 120 hinds.

Dunalastair – Have entered AECS scheme so are bound by numbers in their plan. Had wanted a floating cull target but was not accepted. Target 120.

Garbruach & Stance – 30.

North Drumochter – target 100, may take another 20 if numbers appear.

T-A-B – AECS plan target is 84 so will go for that.

Based on these observations a cull of 634 hinds was agreed as follows;

Estate	2019/20 Target
Dall	0
Auchleeks	80
Blairfettie	0
Corrievarkie	20
Craiganour	80
Dalnaspidal	120
Dunalastair	120
Garbruach	30
North Drumochter	100
FCS T-A-B	(not open range)
Talladh-a-Bheithe	84
Total	634

It was expected that calf numbers would be relatively low on top of this as the indications were towards fairly low calving rates.

It was agreed that the weekly cull planner used last year had been helpful and the Secretary agreed to circulate a new one.

A cull progress meeting was scheduled for the 9th December.

7. SNH

■■■ reported on the SNH report to Government on deer management matters, submitted at the beginning of October which will not be published until the Govt had considered. The report considered the DMG assessments, culls taken in the interim and the Scottish deer population assessment. Whilst ■■■ could not say much about the report he indicated the DMGs had improved on average to the benchmark and in terms of plans and systems. ■■■ did say the report concluded that there was less evidence of favourable outcomes being met. A second independent review (Deer Working Group) is also reporting in late November. This report has a wider remit on deer management throughout Scotland.

■■■ confirmed annual cull returns would move online.

Corrou – a question was raised over the Corrou reduction cull. ■■■ indicated it was DMG to discuss and that it wasn't in this DMG.

Sec.

All

There was general discussion as to what happens if another DMG member stops complying – you cannot resolve it. The Deer Code relies on collaboration and surely SNH should be able to compel? ■ suggested there has to be consultation with DMG. ■ agreed saying this mirrored experiences in other DMGs. Opinion was SNH should be able to do more where actions impact on wider group. ■ noted there was evidence best practice was not being followed. Were licences being effectively policed?

■ replied expressing some sympathy, but that he represented SNH and whilst it was good to talk about authorisations, was little he could say on the matter in this context.

■ – there should still be consultation with DMG as opposed to unilateral action.

■ – can we lobby SNH? Secretary to discuss with ADMG.

■ – if collaboration is to work, system needs more teeth.

8. **AOB**

8.1 **Woodlands**

Blairfettie – nearly finished fencing. 2 large woodland blocks leaving 600 acres hill.

Dall – work now started aiming for completion Spring 2020. One ring fenced block with deer pass along March with AC's Big Wood. 400 acres hill left available for deer.

Atholl – started process of applying for scheme on Struan Point for 2020/21 over 600 acres.

Once these woodland creation works have been completed open range boundary will effectively be the Trinafour road with only 1,500 acres unplanted to east of this. Struan Point will also have new fencing around much of perimeter sealing this off to deer movement for the foreseeable future.

T-A-B – had finished work on woods, including opening some areas for deer shelter.

Auchleeks – replanting Errochty shelterbelt.

Native Woodland Condition – the Secretary again raised the point that part of the DMG assessment was into what extent the DMG was monitoring/collating information on native woodland condition. This was clarified as generally areas of woodland open to deer as most young native woodland plantations were generally fenced or considered in good condition. There was general discussion about the topic. Drumochter had removed fencing around some birch regeneration blocks. T-A-B had opened some areas for deer shelter and planned to do some more in 2020. Corrievarkie has an area of veteran birch in poor condition and is actively considering options. Dunalastair has 40ha unfenced above the village.

It was agreed that whilst it was not the DMGs remit to promote or identify native woodland opportunities, the group should hold records of individual estate activities and deer impacts on unprotected woodland.

8.2 **Strathtay DMG**

The Secretary had been contacted by Strathtay DMG about deer numbers increasing the Bonskeid area and a meeting was being held on 7th November (Secretary not attending). Question was which DMG should this area go into and Secretary had said it did not naturally fit with ELEDMG. ■ will attend and felt more deer were coming down through Auchlennie/Shierglass. It was felt that any emigration down the strath would be permanent and therefore a net loss to ELEDMG numbers.

8.3 **Peatland**

There was also discussion on peatland restoration and any opportunities, but again it was felt this was more an individual estate issue, which the group could monitor/record. T-A-B, Craiganour and Dunalastair had ditch blocking as an option in their AECS schemes. TA confirmed an estate wide application for the Ben Alder estates had failed due to deer management concerns on one part. Craiganour had a scheme for restoring hags on Aulich Hill rejected.

Sec.

ALL

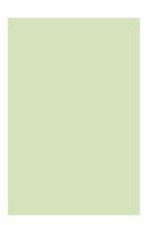
9. **Date of Next Meeting**

9th December 2019 – cull meeting, 5pm Struan Inn

Friday 15th May 2020, time and venue TBC

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
██████████ SNH
ADMG
Community Council
Website
File

DRAFT



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]; [@wellbewust.nl](mailto:wellbewust.nl); [REDACTED]; Dainaspidal; dunalaftair.com; [REDACTED]; @atholl-estates.co.uk; [REDACTED]; @ben-alder.com; [REDACTED]; forestryandland.gov.scot; [REDACTED]; [الياenterprises@aol.com](mailto:rالياenterprises@aol.com); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [.\(Craiganoor](mailto:.(Craiganoor)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Draft Minutes
Date: 12 September 2019 15:09:26
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)
[image005.jpg](#)
[Draft Minutes May 2019.pdf](#)

Dear All

Please find attached draft minutes in advance of the next DMG meeting on the 13th October. I am aware of some new personnel so please forward this to anyone who has not attended before.

Regards


[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

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MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
SPRING MEETING
FRIDAY 17TH MAY 2019
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Garbruach)
██████████ (Corrievarkie)	██████████ (Dunalastair)
██████████ (Auchleeks)	██████████ (SNH)
██████████ (Craiganoor)	██████████ (Auchleeks)
██████████ (Dalnaspidal)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (Blairfettie)	██████████ (Atholl)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe), ██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe), ██████████ (Blairfettie), ██████████ (Dalnaspidal), ██████████ (Atholl), ██████████ (Dunalastair), ██████████ (Chairman Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council), ██████████ (Dalnacardoch), ██████████ (Forestry Commission Scotland)

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH OCTOBER 2018

- 2.1 It was agreed that all matters arising would be taken in the coming agenda and the Minutes were adopted as a true record of the meeting.

3. DMG ASSESSMENT

██████████ reported on the recent assessment. The process looked at 100 criteria on performance and public benefit, ranking each red/amber/green. ██████████ had met with the Secretary in April to review the draft assessments and a number of changes were made following this. The Group has scored well with 8 amber ratings and the rest green.

There was general discussion about factors that led to amber assessments and what actions the group could undertake to improve these.

One amber area was woodland expansion and condition. Whilst the current management plan documents woodland cover in detail, and there are a number of woodland creation projects either being implemented or in an advance stage of planning, there was little documented information on native woodland condition. There was a round the table discussion.

- Fences around native woodland blocks on Drumochter were no longer deer proof or being maintained.
- Auchleeks has a number of planted new native woodlands (c.15 years old) and commercial woods, with some plans for small scale new planting, but little unenclosed native woodland. There is some native Caledonian Pine on the island on Loch Chon, but this is not surveyed.
- T-A-B. Mainly new planting, with some native birch along the watercourses in the fenced enclosure, but not surveyed.
- Struan Point – Atholl have some land that could be planted. Most of the existing woodland is in schemes.
- Dunalastair – some unenclosed mature woodland above the village, not surveyed.

East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

- Criaganour – most native woodland in schemes.

■ said the next version of the plan should look at the Native Woodland Survey for Scotland and attach a condition score, and actions to improve/extend this resource in order to make the overall woodland part of the assessment a green score.

■ suggested we need look at other environmental improvements such as peatland restoration. ■ confirmed this is important to ScotGov plans, and will become increasingly so. It was noted that Drumochter, Corrievarkie, Craiganour, Dunalastair and T-A-B were in schemes that included peatland action points, so some form of capture of information and collaboration would benefit assessment scoring.

Another amber in the assessment came from lack of ongoing habitat impact assessment. The secretary repeated past concerns about the 'do it yourself' approach, both in terms of time taken and the robustness of outputs. ■ agreed this could be an issue but suggested a low key, targeted sample would suffice, picking a specific habitat relevant to deer. There could be a link to prior work by MLURI.

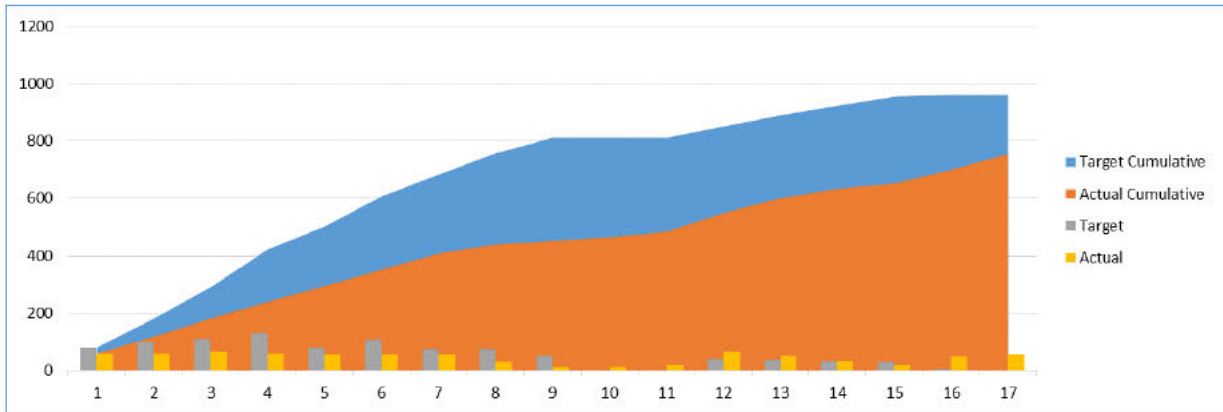
■ noted that one of the final ambers had been in the setup of the DMG constitution, but this was resolved as the group unilaterally agreed to accept the revised constitution.

4. 2018/19 CULL REVIEW

The hind cull figures were closely monitored through two progress meetings during the season and a weekly planner. The pre-season target had been set at 960 hinds plus young. During the season it was clear that some estates had low numbers of hinds that meant that achieving higher cull numbers was going to prove difficult. To try and assist a fixed wing recce flight was undertaken in December 2018 but descending cloud cover meant this was of limited usefulness. A foot count of Dunalastair was also undertaken by various keepers which showed considerably less deer than the 2018 helicopter count, and the cull target was reduced accordingly.

	Hinds	Target	Variance	%	Calves
Dall (east of road)	44	42	2	5%	11
Auchleeks	120	120	0	0%	34
Blairfettie	19	42	-23	-55%	11
Corrievarkie	20	36	-16	-44%	5
Craiganour	61	120	-59	-49%	15
Dalnaspidal	140	120	20	17%	63
Dunalastair	140	240	-100	-42%	43
Garbruach & Stance	38	36	2	6%	10
North Drumochter	120	120	0	0%	31
Talladh-a-Bheithe	53	84	-31	-37%	29
Atholl (Struan Point)	6	0	6		2
	761	960	-199	-21%	254

The achieved cull of 761 hinds did however represent a significant increase on previous cull intensity and a figure 60% higher than the long term average, so represent an excellent effort by all involved. The orange slice on the chart below shows the achieved cull versus target (blue) and shows steady progress was made throughout the season.



5. Deer Count & Population Model

There was general discussion about the population model and a live example was shown on the big screen. There was discussion on cull rates, recruitment rates and density dependant factors such as improved calving indexes exhibited from lower or harassed populations, hinds displacing stags, etc.

It was agreed that another year of intensive hind culling was necessary to maintain downward pressure on the breeding population, but that there may be scope to ease off stag culls a little. The key remained shooting enough females.

6. 2019 Cull Targets

The 2019 stag cull was agreed as;

Estate	2019 Target
Dall	5
Auchleeks	30
Blairfettie	10
Corrievarkie	35
Craiganour	45
Dalnaspidal	30
Dunalastair	25
Garbruach	10
North Drumochter	50
FCS T-A-B	(not open range)
Talladh-a-Bheithe	45
Total	285

It was noted that the stag target in the plan was 335, but concern over a visible lack of mature (over 6 year old) stags has led to a precautionary approach to culling. It was also recommended that a proportion of each estate's cull was taken as immature animals to balance the pressure on culling away from mature animals.

Corrievarkie advised a higher planned cull than over recent years, mainly to be aimed at early (July/August) stags with a target of 20 for the traditional season. There was discussion about not overshooting stags however it was agreed the lower planned cull compensated for this proposed increase.

7. **AOB**

■ noted that there had been complaints received about deer in the village causing a nuisance/risk, and had met with one member of the public. It was noted that these seems to come from the south (Breadalbane Group) and that ■ had been proactive. The situation was being monitored.

Post meeting note – Secretary has been contacted by SNH with a view to having a meeting with local estates and both deer groups, TBC.

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

Sunday 13th October, 1030am, Craiganour Lodge

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ADMG
Community Council
Website
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DRAFT

EAST LOCH ERICHT DMG
UPDATE JUNE 2020

In the absence of a May meeting I thought it would be useful to circulate some notes.

2019/20 CULL

The year-end cull figures were

	Target	Actual	Out of Season	Recorded Mortality	Overall
Stag	285	274	4	42	320
Hind	634	665	0	26	691
Calf	190	143	0	53	196
Total	1109	1082	4	121	1207

Note: Figures are missing calf numbers for North Drumochter so 196 overall will be an underestimate.

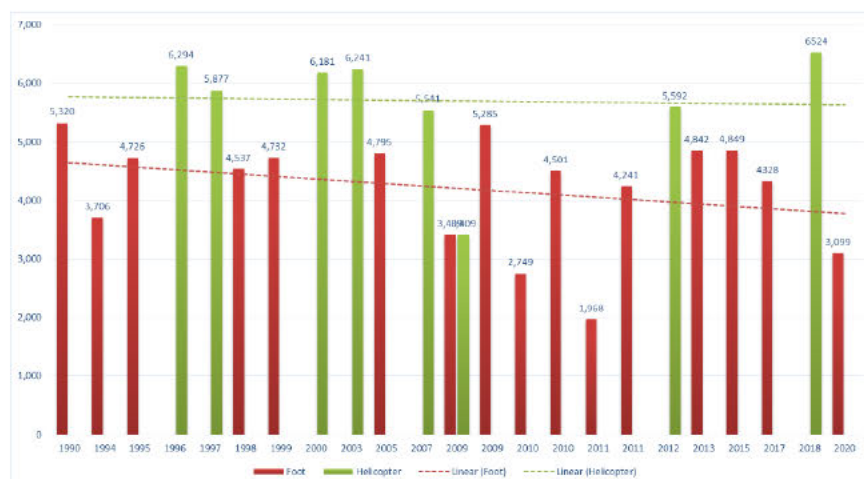
If anyone has additional out of season numbers (I have included 2 stags for both Craiganour and T-A-B) up until 31st March 2020 please submit and I can update.

2020 COUNT

A foot count was undertaken in February in generally white conditions.

Reported numbers were low at 1184 stags, 1433 hinds and 482 calves giving a total of 3099 head, the lowest count we have recorded since foot counts in 2010 and 2011, which were at the time considered incomplete. It is felt likely that some deer where missed in woodland, so the figure is probably an underestimate, but by how much we cannot be sure. This count represents around 11/km². The last 30 years of counts are shown on the chart below, with helicopter in green and foot in red.

There is a clear difference in the results, with foot counts showing a generally declining population, equating to a reduction of around 28% in the total average population over the period. This compares to the helicopter count with shows a very slight downward trend, equating to a reduction of around 4% over the period. Therefore there remains some doubt over the current population level.



RECRUITMENT COUNTS

Recruitment counts have been undertaken by most of you that have fed back to the following;



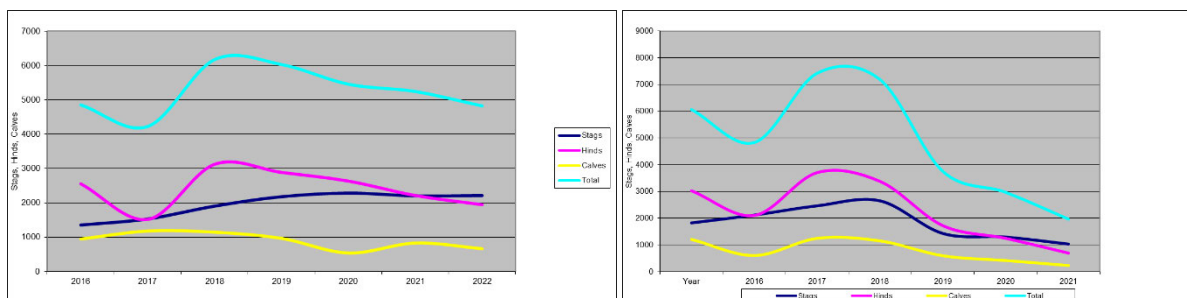
Net recruitment was recorded at an average of 20% for this year, which correlates to low calving rates, and quite high levels of winter mortality reported, especially amongst calves.

POPULATION MODEL

There are three factors that impact on the model this spring, (a) low net recruitment rates, (b) winter mortality above predicted levels, and (c) the low count figure. I have run some analysis based on two scenarios;

1. Ignoring the count figure but including an allowance for increased winter mortality and lower net recruitment, and
2. Rebased the model on the count figures plus 10% for missed deer in woods, including an allowance for increased winter mortality and lower net recruitment.

The results are stark. If we follow the count model and forecast using Deer Management Plan cull targets (300 to 350 stags, 650 hinds and 200 calves) the model forecasts an abrupt crash in spring deer numbers as shown on the right hand chart below;

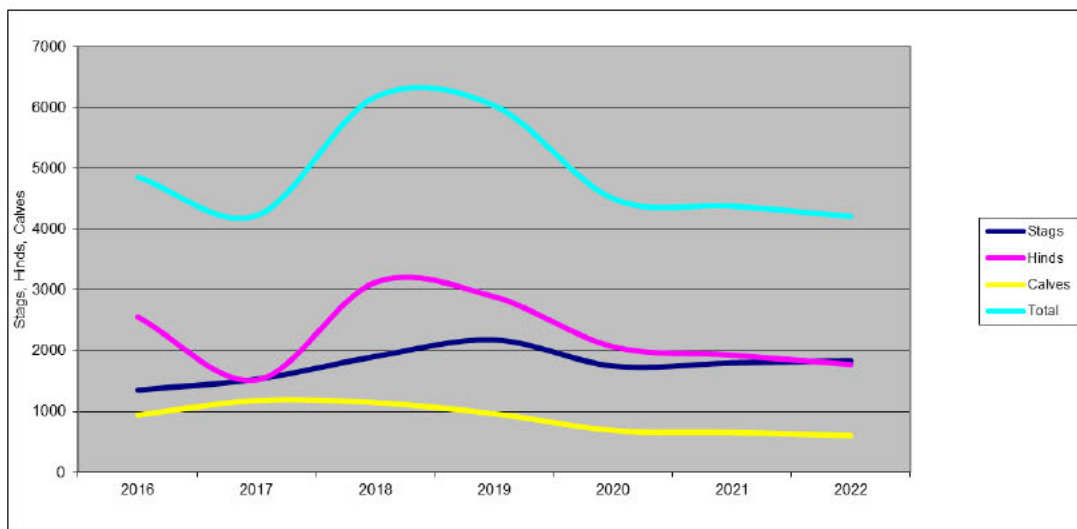


If we ignore the count, but just factor in the lower net recruitment and higher mortality the left hand chart shows a much more muted population response.

Both models show a reducing population, but to as low as 2000 head in the top model, as opposed to 4800 in the bottom. 4800 represents 17/km² which is in line with our long term objectives. 2000 represents 6/km²

which would effectively end viable sporting stalking in the group. If the count trend is correct and we do currently have a very low population, then in order to just stabilise the population we would need to rebase the cull for 2020 and 2021 to 225 stags, 225 hinds and 50 calves, giving a flat winter population at 11/km². Without definitive count evidence this is unlikely to be a scenario supported by Nature Scotland.

Based on anecdotal evidence from conversations with many of you I think in reality it is unlikely we are at such very low population levels and will be somewhere between the two scenarios, with a lot less deer than the high count of 2018 suggested, but more than the 2020 figure. I think stag numbers are low across the group and some discretion needs to be applied to stag culls. If for instance we took a middle figure from the analysis above and apply it to the model (1840 stags, 2145 hinds and 770 calves (total 4755 head)) this would represent a density of 16/km² which would be acceptable, and also show convergence of the stag:hind ratio. To maintain this over the next two years would require target culls of 250 stags, 450 hinds and 150 calves – this is lower than the DMP but feels right based on what you are all reporting. If numbers obviously nudge up, tis can be corrected by increasing the hind cull in response.



I have had some 2020 cull plan numbers back but to aid planning can I please ask you all to provide the necessary numbers to complete the table below. I appreciate some figures will be estimated at this stage. This will allow a bit more analysis via the model.

Estate	2020 Stag Target	2020/21 Hind Target	2021 Stag Target	2021/22 Hind Target
Dall (east of road)				
Auchleeks				
Blairfettie				
Corrievarkie	30			
Craiganour	30			
Dalnaspidal				
Dunalastair				
Garbruach & Stance	10			
North Drumochter				
FCS T-A-B				
Talladh-a-Bheithe	50			
Total	120			

██████████
29/6/2020

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED] (@wellbewust.nl); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] (Dainaspidal); [REDACTED] (@ben-alder.com); [REDACTED] (@dunalastair.com); [REDACTED] (@atholl-estates.co.uk); [REDACTED] (@ben-alder.com); [REDACTED] (@ben-alder.com); [REDACTED] (forestryandland.gov.scot); [REDACTED] (virain.net); [REDACTED] (raltaenterprises@aol.com); [REDACTED] (Craigianour).
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: October Meeting
Date: 30 September 2021 07:40:22
Attachments: [agenda_oct21.doc](#)

Dear All

We can at last meet in person again. Our traditional October meeting will fall on the 10th so please can we have a meeting at 1030 on Sunday the 10th at Craiganour Lodge. Please confirm attendance. Apologies for the short notice.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

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EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

AUTUMN MEETING

SUNDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2019

10.30AM, CRAIGANOUR LODGE

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Matters Arising – not applicable
3. 2021 Stag cull review
4. Deer Management Plan
5. 2021 Hind cull
6. Woodlands
7. Record Keeping
8. ADMG & SNH Updates
9. Any other business
10. Date of Next Meeting



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: October Meeting
Date: 04 October 2021 13:44:39
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Thanks [REDACTED]

No problem, rather short notice on my part.

Anything you can give me on the review would be good. The 99 recommendations made, what are the key ones and where is nature scot going with it, i.e.

- Are seasons likely to change?
- around switch to non-lead bullets, are we likely to see minimum bullet weight come down so that keepers' can keep using their .243s.?

Is there any thought on deer density – we think ELEDMG is down to certainly below 14/km2 now, which I think is more than low enough.

Any count plans?

Any SCM plans for the SSSIs?

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]@nature.scot]
Sent: 04 October 2021 13:07
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@savills.com>
Subject: RE: October Meeting

[REDACTED] [?](#)

Afternoon [REDACTED] and thanks for sending through the agenda and invite for the meeting on Sunday.

I'm unable to attend on Sunday [REDACTED] so apologies from me.

In advance of the meeting, I'll try to find out (from colleagues) if there's anything specific to let you (& other ELEDMG members) know of by way of update from NatureScot; there's nothing pressing that I'm aware of at the moment.

Let me know if there's anything in particular that you'd like me to look into, or find out about, ahead of the meeting on 10 October.

[REDACTED] [nature.scot](#)
[REDACTED] | Wildlife Management Officer

NatureScot | Great Glen house, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW | t: 01463 [REDACTED] m:
[REDACTED]

[nature.scot](#) | [@nature_scot](#) | Scotland's Nature Agency | Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@savills.com>

Sent: 30 September 2021 07:40

To: [REDACTED] [@wellbewust.nl](#); [REDACTED] [@wellbewust.nl](#); [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [@savills.com](#); [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [@bhssporting.co.uk](#); [REDACTED]

[redacted]@savills.com>; [redacted] (Dalnaspidal) <[redacted]@bhsporting.co.uk>;
estatefactor <estatefactor@ben-alder.com>; headstalker@ben-alder.com;
[redacted]@dunalastair.com; [redacted] <[redacted]@savills.com>; [redacted]@atholl-
estates.co.uk; [redacted]@ben-alder.com) <headkeeper@ben-alder.com>;
[redacted]@bhsporting.co.uk>; [redacted]
[redacted]@savills.com>; [redacted]; [redacted]
([redacted]@forestryandland.gov.scot) <[redacted]@forestryandland.gov.scot>;
[redacted] <sport@dunalastair.com>;
[redacted]
[redacted]@raliaenterprises@aol.com; [redacted]
[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]@dunalastair.com>; [redacted]
[redacted] (Craigianour) [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@nature.scot>

Subject: October Meeting

Dear All

We can at last meet in person again. Our traditional October meeting will fall on the 10th so please can we have a meeting at 1030 on Sunday the 10th at Craiganour Lodge. Please confirm attendance. Apologies for the short notice.

Regards

[redacted]
[redacted]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

Savills, Eam House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth, PH1 1RA

Tel : +44 (0)1738 [redacted]

[redacted]@[redacted].com

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Thoiribh an aire airson adhbharan gnothaich, 's dòcha gun tèid sùil a chumail air puist-dealain a' tighinn a-steach agus a' dol a-mach bho NatureScot.

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EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

SPRING MEETING

FRIDAY 3 JUNE 2022

3.00PM, CRAIGANOUR LODGE

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Matters Arising
3. 2021/22 hind cull review
4. Deer Management Plan
5. 2022 Stag and hind culls
6. Woodlands
7. ADMG & SNH Updates
8. Any other business
9. Date of Next Meeting



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
SPRING MEETING
SUNDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2021
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Garbruach)
██████████ (Auchleeks)	██████████ (Garbruach)
██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)	██████████ (Auchleeks)
██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (Talladh-a-Bheithe)	██████████ (Dalnaspidal)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Craiganoor)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Dalnaspidal)

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

██████████ Atholl; ██████████ Blairfettie; ██████████ Dunalastair; ██████████ Nature Scot; ██████████ FLS

██████████ did not receive notification of meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING

2.1 N/A.

3. 2019/20 STAG CULL REVIEW

The following stags were reported culled at the date of the meeting, with expected stags for the last few days discussed. *Post Meeting Note – final stags cull in italics*

Estate	2021 Target	At meeting	Expected	Revised	Achieved	Variance
Dall (east of road)				0		
Auchleeks	30	18	12	30	30	0
Blairfettie	10	14	4	18	23	5
Corrievarkie	30			30	17	-13
Craiganoor	45	25	16	41	41	0
Dalnaspidal	25	19	6	25	25	0
Dunalastair	30	14	16	30	30	0
Garbruach & Stance	6	4	2	6	7	1
North Drumochter	40	21	14	35	42	7
FCS T-A-B					12	12
Talladh-a-Bheithe	45	35	10	45	48	3
Total	261	150	80	260	275	15

At the meeting a total of 150 stags had been culled, with the expectation that another 80 would be shot ending at 260 against a planned cull of 261. At the end of the season actual stags culled totalled 275

East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

including FCS, so 263 hill stags, basically on target, albeit the target was reduced due to lack of numbers being seen.

The following estate reports were made;

Blairfettie - only a few stags in fields.

Garbriach - ■ said still deer going across railway and down towards Struan.

Craiganour - more older stags than recent years.

Dalnaspidal - only shot 2 stags since end of grouse shooting, mainly younger beasts - quiet.

FLS (not present) - contractors operating in T-A-B block, numbers not counted in hill deer figures.

Rolling stag cull average dropped 80 from last 5 years to proceeding 5 years. This has implications on the Group's stated sporting and management aspirations which is for 350 stags, which seems ambitious based on current numbers and will need to be reviewed in the next plan.

Beasts reported as generally in good condition.

4. Deer Count & Population Model

Current plan 10 years from 2016, but targets and modelling only run until 2021/22, so requires updating in 2022. All agreed this should be done and Secretary happy to do in Summer 2022. Key is to get accurate census information as recent counts and observations during stalking suggest low numbers, below the five year target of 18/km².

This is largely as a result of a series of high hind culls over recent years. The most recent 5 year cull average is 558 hinds, but the proceeding 5 year average was 422 hinds, an increase of on third. An accurate baseline is therefore essential to allow reasoned monitoring.

The importance of a group count was emphasised and ■ agreed to coordinate.

5. 2021/22 Hind Cull Targets

The 2019 hind cull was 761 hinds, a little below the DMP revised target, but still the highest taken by the Group. Subsequently 2019/20 was 665 and 2020/21 down to 471, mainly on the back of low numbers being counted/observed. The Secretary went around the room and the following target numbers were submitted:

Estate	2021/22 Target
Dall	(deer fenced)
Auchleeks	60
Blairfettie	8
Corrievarkie	10
Craiganour	45
Dalnaspidal	50
Dunalastair	40
Garbruach	20
North Drumochter	40
FCS T-A-B	(not open range)
Talladh-a-Bheithe	84
Total	357

The low cull target was in response to very low numbers on the ground during stalking, with the general feeling that the 2019 and 2020 culls had had a significant downwards impact on overall numbers, but

also that deer were leaving the Group area somewhere (although this is more likely to be the case with stags).

It was agreed that the weekly cull planner used last year was not required for this level of cull. Several said if more turned up they may shoot extra, and this was left open for estates to decide. There was a general comment that maybe the transience of some hind groups had meant different estates had taken culls from the same hinds but this had not been accounted for in the targets, essentially doubling up in some instances.

It was also agreed a cull progress meeting was not required.

6. Woodlands

No new woodland planted in 2020 other than a small block on Dunalastair.

Atholl have finished planting Struan Point so most land east of Trinafour road now enclosed woodland, which will impact deer movements and winter occupancy.

No woodland condition surveys completed.

Most estates now have an area of woodland open for deer shelter.

Errochty Forest (Fountains) has holes in fence. Fountains indicated part would be re-fenced once restocking commences. *Post meeting note – this planation is in the process of sale.*

7. AOB

All would need to use lead free ammunition by July 2022 if selling venison. *Post meeting note; Simpson Game not switching until 2023 so happy to take deer shot with lead or lead free in 2022.*

Only two estates currently using lead-free and doing so without problems. Some do have concerns over ricochet.

Rannoch Vension Group – many still taking advantage of collective sales to Highland Game, but carcass numbers now much less, 1,200 total, previously 2,000 at peak. Price is still low as most dealers have frozen product. Processing meat selling okay in UK, but demand for prime cuts still limited by restaurant trade. Sales to EU returning, but only for non-processed cuts.

Grazing & Trampling – █████ asked when resurvey due. 2024 would follow the 10 year cycle.

█████ – asked of anyone knew of anywhere we are leaking deer as numbers are low. █████ repeated railway is an obvious point and actively feeding to keep deer up at Dalnacardoch. No other observations made.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 3 June 2022, 3pm, Craiganour Lodge

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
████████ SNH
ADMG
Community Council
Website
File

From: [redacted]
To: [redacted]; [redacted] (Dalnaspidal); [redacted] estatefactor; [redacted] @ben-alder.com; [redacted] @dunalastair.com; [redacted] @atholl-estates.co.uk; [redacted] (headkeeper@ben-alder.com); [redacted] forestryandland.gov.scot; [redacted] yirain.net; [redacted] raliaenterprises@aol.com; [redacted] (Craigannour); [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: ELEDMG Meeting
Date: 23 September 2022 14:18:44
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)
[image005.jpg](#)
[image006.jpg](#)
[Minutes June 2022.pdf](#)
[Agenda Oct 2022.pdf](#)

Dear All

Firstly I apologise, I cannot find the attendance record for the last meeting, so whilst I have the notes for the minutes attached, I have left the attendance and apologies section blank.

Most can do 9 October in the afternoon, so we will meet at 2pm at Craiganour Lodge, and I hope to see as many of you as possible. Please let me know for numbers.

Iain, I am aware you can't make that day, so maybe we can catch up next week.

Regards


[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

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MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
SPRING MEETING
FRIDAY 3 JUNE 2022
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

Not fully recorded (paper missing)	
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ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

Not fully recorded.

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING

2.1 N/A.

3. HIND CULL

The group discussed the 2021 hind cull which was;

Estate	2021/22 Hind Target	2021/22 Hind Achieved	Calves
Dall (east of road)			
Auchleeks	60	63	13
Blairfettie	8	4	3
Corrievarkie	10	14	9
Craiganour	45	51	10
Dalnaspidal	50	65	28
Dunalastair	40	42	11
Garbruach & Stance	20	16	3
North Drumochter	40	25	13
FLS T-A-B		14	11
Talladh-a-Bheithe	84	80	10
Total	357	374	111

The cull of open range hinds (ex-FLS) was therefore 360 so in line with the group's target agreed at the October 2021 meeting. The agreed DMP target cull figures were set for a 5 year period and therefore do not extend into 2021 so in the absence of review, the 2020 target of 495 hinds and 149 calves is the nearest figure, with the 2021/22 achieved cull representing 73% of this, but reflective of deer numbers seen on the ground. Again observations from those present were less deer, and certainly smaller groups of deer and this position seemed to extend across the range.

4. Deer Count, Plan & Population Model

Lack of continuous snow over winter meant a deer count was not completed and there is some uncertainty over the current deer population, with the population model target for 2021 being a strive of

18/km², but the last achieved counts (Spring 2021) suggesting an actual population in the region of 11 – 12/km². This ties in with anecdotal evidence from stalkers suggesting wide distribution of deer but at lower numbers, with noticeably fewer of the bigger groups that were common 10 years ago.

Deer counting and modelling remains a key objective, but it is felt that without up to date and agreed census data, the degree of uncertainty over numbers is too great to provide the necessary baseline.

There was discussion about the DMP review was due last summer, but made difficult in the absence of current census data. It was agreed that new five year cull targets are important, but that it is imperative to have a baseline population which all agree is reasonable before trying to model. It is therefore likely that a plan review would have to roll into 2023. In the interim cull targets will be set as normal, but representing minimum levels, and if higher deer numbers are apparent, members will actively increase culls.

5. STAG CULL

The final stag cull in the autumn 2021 was low as a result of limited numbers showing up. The 2022 target was set;

Estate	2021 Achieved	2022 Target
Dall (east of road)		
Auchleeks	30	30
Blairfettie	23	10
Corrievarkie	17	25
Craiganour	41	45
Dalnaspidal	25	25
Dunalastair	30	30
Garbruach & Stance	7	6
North Drumochter	42	40
FLS T-A-B	12	
Talladh-a-Bheithe	48	45
Total	275	256

The 2021 cull included 12 from FLS that are not open range, so the total open range cull was 263. The plan target for 2021 was 335 based on the population assessment made in 2016 and now out of date, so whilst the cull was 72 behind target, it was reflective of stag numbers being seen on the ground.

Based on last years stag cull, lack of census data and evidence from observations on the ground, the 2022 stag cull was set during the meeting at very similar levels. There is no agreed DMP cull target for 2022, but the 2021 target was 335 stags, so as per 2021, this target represents a cautious approach.

6. Woodlands

It was noted that Struan Point is now effectively all enclosed woodland, making a significant alteration to the groups eastern land use and fenced boundaries.

Errochty Forest has been sold, new owners are Greengold, a Swedish forestry investment fund.

7. ADMG/SNH Updates

None.

8. **AOB**

There was wide discussion over using lead-free ammunition and all members were likely to use in 2022. Some do have concerns over ricochet. Lethality was felt to be good if the right bullet combination was used and ranges kept down.

Rannoch Venison Group – many still taking advantage of collective sales to Highland Game, but carcass numbers now much less, 1,200 total, previously 2,000 at peak. Price is still low as most dealers have frozen product. Processing meat selling okay in UK, but demand for prime cuts still limited by restaurant trade. Sales to EU returning, but only for non-processed cuts. Will continue in 2022, [REDACTED] to circulate details separately.

Grazing & Trampling – resurvey due 2024 to follow the 10 year cycle.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

TBC

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
[REDACTED] **NatureScot**
ADMG
Community Council
Website
File

EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

AUTUMN MEETING

SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER 2022

2.00PM, CRAIGANOUR LODGE

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Matters Arising
3. 2022 Stag Cull
4. Deer Management Plan
5. 2022/23 hind cull
6. Woodlands
7. ADMG & SNH Updates
8. Any other business
9. Date of Next Meeting



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

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We are registered with the Scottish Letting Agent Register, our registration number is LARN1902057.

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MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
AUTUMN MEETING
SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER 2022
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Blairfettie)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Blairfettie)
██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)	██████████ (T-A-B)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (Craiganoor)	██████████ (Garbruach)

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

██████████ (Dunalastair), ██████████ & ██████████ (T-A-B), ██████████ (Dalnaspidal), ██████████ (Dalnaspidal), ██████████ (Auchleeks), ██████████ (NatureScot), ██████████ (Auchleeks)

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING

2.1 None.

3. STAG CULL

The group discussed the 2022 stag cull progress, expected numbers for the last 10 days, and overall stag numbers. The cull at the meeting and subsequently is recorded below;

Estate	2022 Target	At meeting	Expected	Revised	Achieved	Variance
Dall (east of road)						
Auchleeks	30	15	15	30	24	-6
Blairfettie	10	4	2	6	13	7
Corrievarkie	25	10	15	25	21	-4
Craiganoor	45	29	20	49	52	3
Dalnaspidal	25	8	2	10	15	5
Dunalastair	30	15	15	30	38	8
Garbruach & Stance	6	4	2	6	6	0
North Drumochter	40	16	24	40	47	7
FCS T-A-B				0		0
Talladh-a-Bheithe	45	27	18	45	49	4
Total	256	128	113	241	265	24

As per 2020 and 2021, stag numbers continued to be low across the group. Early season stags were now very limited with very few shot before September. The target set last spring was 256 against a plan cull of 335 stags, but the lower target level is consistent with counts and observations on the ground. This low number is in line with the 5 year rolling average which is currently 261, versus 321 for the proceeding 5 year period, a drop of 19%. The final figure was 265, up a bit on target but still

reflecting lower stag number across the group.

Individual estate comments were;

Blairfettie – only small area of hill ground left as mainly woodland. Of 8 to date, 4 in woods.

Corrievarkie – quite quiet but expect to reach target.

Drumochter – no stags early on, and only just moving into ground. Have a lower target this year so should achieve.

Garbruach – definitely seeing less deer so have to take opportunities as they arise as only a small area of ground.

Craiganour & T-A-B – mainly sharing one large group of stags that move east-west freely depending on weather and stalking activity. Lack of small hind parcels to disperse stags. Makes stalking tricky but expect them to break up and provide better stalking over rest of season. Some big deer about not previously seen, have they come from forestry or farmland?.

General – in good condition, lots more ticks apparent than previous years.

4. Deer Count, Plan & Population Model

It was discussed that the plan was at the stage of requiring a re-write and detailed 5 year plan, but this had been postponed due to lack of count information and uncertainty over the population baseline. No count had been achieved in 2022 and the helicopter v foot count results within the last 5 years are starkly contrasting;

Average of last 3 foot counts	3,116 total
Helicopter count	6,500 total

Deer numbers are undoubtedly significantly lower than when the plan was prepared 6 years ago. Deer counting and modelling remains a key objective, but it is felt that without up to date and agreed census data, the degree of uncertainty over numbers is too great to provide the necessary baseline for an accurate plan.

There was a general discussion about the plan and as per the Spring meeting, it agreed that new five year cull targets are important, but that it is imperative to have a baseline population which all agree is reasonable before trying to model. Nearly all reported seeing noticeable improvements to heather and habitat, with less footmarks in peat hags and some revegetation apparent, which is very encouraging. There is a plan to undertake a further grazing and trampling impact assessment in 2024.

It is therefore likely that a plan review would have to roll into 2023. In the interim cull targets will be set as normal, but representing minimum levels, and if higher deer numbers are apparent, members will actively increase culls.

██████████ remains count coordinator, but it was agreed individual estates should regular count their ground to have a handle on number if a formal count fails again.

5. **HIND CULL**

The 2022/23 target was set;

Estate	2021 Achieved	2022 Target
Dall (east of road)		
Auchleeks	63	45
Blairfettie	4	10
Corrievarkie	14	20
Craiganour	51	50
Dalnaspidal	65	50
Dunalastair	42	40
Garbruach & Stance	16	15
North Drumochter	25	65
FLS T-A-B	-	
Talladh-a-Bheithe	80	84
Total	360	379

Plus calves which were 111 in 2021.

This is a maintenance cull based on observation and historic counting, so an accumulation of hinds observed during the season may require additional culling on a case by case basis.

6. **Woodlands**

Errochty Forest has been sold, new owners are Greengold, a Swedish forestry investment fund. Some fence repairs and road upgrading are under way/proposed.

Repairs have been completed at FLS Talladh-a-Bheithe forest which can be considered deer proof for the time being.

The group reported no new woodland proposals or no further woodlands opened to deer.

7. **ADMG/SNH Updates**

None.

8. **AOB**

There was further discussion over using lead-free ammunition and all members were planning to use in 2022, although bullet availability has meant in practice a mix of lead and non-lead has been used.

Grazing & Trampling – resurvey due 2024 to follow the 10 year cycle.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

TBC, scheduled May 2023

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
NatureScot
ADMG
Community Council
Website

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]; Cornevarkie.Keener; [REDACTED] (Dainaspidal); Factor; headstalker@ben-alder.com; @dunalastair.com; [REDACTED]; [\(headkeeper@ben-alder.com\)](mailto:(headkeeper@ben-alder.com)); [REDACTED]; forestryandland.gov.scot; [REDACTED]; raliaenterprises@aol.com; [REDACTED]; [\(Craigamour\)](mailto:(Craigamour)); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: ELEDMG Autumn Meeting
Date: 18 September 2023 08:12:18
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)
[image005.jpg](#)
[image006.png](#)
[ELEDMG Agenda Oct 2023.pdf](#)
[ELEDMG Minutes Oct 2022.pdf](#)

Caution! This message was sent from outside NatureScot.

Dear all

Please see attached agenda for 15th. Adrian has kindly agreed to host at Talladh-a-Bheith. We did not have a spring meeting so last minutes are October 2022. Look forward to seeing you all.

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Director, Head of Forestry Investment UK

Savills, Eam House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth PH1 1RA

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image



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EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

AUTUMN MEETING

SUNDAY 15 OCTOBER 2023

10.30AM, TALLADH-A-BHEITH

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Matters Arising
3. 2022/23 Culls
4. 2023 Stag Cull
5. Deer Management Plan
6. 2023/24 hind cull
7. Woodlands
8. ADMG & SNH Updates
9. Any other business
10. Date of Next Meeting



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MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
AUTUMN MEETING
SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER 2022
AT CRAIGANOUR LODGE

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Blairfettie)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ Blairfettie)
██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)	██████████ (T-A-B)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)
██████████ (Craiganoor)	██████████ (Garbruach)

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Garbruach & Stance	16	15
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FLS T-A-B	-	
Talladh-a-Bheithe	80	84
Total	360	379

Plus calves which were 111 in 2021.

This is a maintenance cull based on observation and historic counting, so an accumulation of hinds observed during the season may require additional culling on a case by case basis.

6. **Woodlands**

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Repairs have been completed at FLS Talladh-a-Bheithe forest which can be considered deer proof for the time being.

The group reported no new woodland proposals or no further woodlands opened to deer.

7. **ADMG/SNH Updates**

None.

8. **AOB**

There was further discussion over using lead-free ammunition and all members were planning to use in 2022, although bullet availability has meant in practice a mix of lead and non-lead has been used.

Grazing & Trampling – resurvey due 2024 to follow the 10 year cycle.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

TBC, scheduled May 2023

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
NatureScot
ADMG
Community Council
Website

EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

AUTUMN MEETING

SUNDAY 19 JANUARY 2025

11.00AM, TALLADH A BHEITH

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. 2024 Stag Cull

STAGS									
ESTATE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	TOTAL	10 yr	5 yr	+/- last season
Dall (east of road)	0		0			155	4	0	
Auchleeks	26	30	24	30	37	1130	29	29	19%
Blairfettie	15	23	13	17	16	523	15	17	-6%
Corrievarkie	30	18	21	24	20	986	26	23	-20%
Craiganour	33	41	52	55	73	2522	53	51	25%
Dalnaspidal	25	25	15	25	8	1557	25	20	-213%
Dunalastair	20	30	37	38	33	1159	28	32	-15%
Garbruach & Stance	6	7	6	3	5	166	6	5	40%
North Drumochter	42	43	47	37	44	1738	39	43	16%
FCS T-A-B		29				7	19	29	
Talladh-a-Bheithe	50	48	49	49	35	1597	47	46	-40%
TOTAL	247	294	264	278	271	11540	276	271	-3%
	295	294	289	284	276				

3. 2023/24 hind cull target

Hind Target

Estate	2021	2022	2023	2024
Dall (east of road)				
Auchleeks	60	45	45	30
Blairfettie	8	10	15	10
Corrievarkie	10	20	20	20
Craiganour	45	50	50	50
Dalnaspidal	50	50	40	35
Dunalastair	40	40	35	65
Garbruach & Stance	20	15	10	15
North Drumochter	40	65	55	60
FCS T-A-B				
Talladh-a-Bheithe	84	84	60	60
Total	357	379	330	345



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

4. Helicopter Count (26/4/24)

Property	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total
Atholl (The Dall)	67	121	21	209
Auchleeks	81	226	57	364
Blairfettie	113	0	0	113
Corrievarkie	187	101	30	318
Craiganour	526	626	165	1317
Dalnaspidal	0	0	0	0
Drumochter (south)	94	259	53	406
Dunalastair	168	543	129	840
Garbruach	0	0	0	0
Talladh-A-Bheite	193	188	61	442
TOTAL	1429	2064	516	4009

5. ADMG & NatureScot Updates
6. Deer Management Plan
7. Any other business
8. Date of Next Meeting



East Loch Ericht DMG

Website: elocherichtdmg.deer-management.co.uk

MINUTES OF MEETING
EAST LOCH ERICHT DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP
19 JANUARY 2025
AT TALLADH A BHEITH

Attendance:

██████████ (Secretary)	██████████ (Blairfettie)
██████████ (T-A-B)	██████████ (T-A-B)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Craiganoir)
██████████ (North Drumochter)	██████████ (Dalnaspidal)
██████████ (Ben Alder Estates)	██████████ (Auchleeks)
██████████ (Dunalastair)	██████████ (Auchleeks)
██████████ (Corrievarkie)	

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;

██████████ (Craiganoir), ██████████ (NatureScot)

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MEETING

2.1 None.

3. STAG CULL

The 2024 stag cull was recorded as 286 stags. This includes 1 stag recorded as out of season on Talladh-a-Bheithe, but of course statutory close seasons for male deer have ended so out of season recording of males is no longer required. General consensus was however to maintain the traditional season for 'sporting' stags. ██████████ noted the 5 year average for stags was now down to 273, so the 2024 season was just above average. For comparison the 5 year average 10 and 20 years before was 331 and 383 respective, showing the group was well below historic levels. 2025 target based on 2024 target levels.

ESTATE	2024	2025 target
Dall (east of road)		
Auchleeks	37	30
Blairfettie	16	10
Corrievarkie	20	25
Craiganoir	73	45
Dalnaspidal	8	25
Dunalastair	33	40
Garbruach & Stance	5	5
North Drumochter	44	40
FCS T-A-B		
Talladh-a-Bheithe	50	45
TOTAL	286	265

4. Deer Count

A helicopter count was undertaken by NatureScot on 26/4/24.

Property	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total
Atholl (The Dall)	67	121	21	209
Auchleeks	81	226	57	364
Blairfettie	113	0	0	113
Corrievarkie	187	101	30	318
Craiganour	526	626	165	1317
Dalnaspidal	0	0	0	0
Drumochter (south)	94	259	53	406
Dunalastair	168	543	129	840
Garbruach	0	0	0	0
Talladh-A-Bheite	193	188	61	442
TOTAL	1429	2064	516	4009

The result adjusted for unclassified deer is shown above and confidence in count accuracy was considered good. Long term count and population trends were discussed and are summarised below, covering 25 datasets.



The 2024 helicopter count was the lowest recorded number of deer from an aerial count and more in line with the previous two foot counts, as well as correlating with observations on the ground during stalking. The overall population at this level represents a density of 13.3/km² across the open range. The highest recorded was 21.7/km² in 2018. The deer plan target was to get below 18/km² initially, with an aspiration of 16/km², so based on counting and deer cull records we are now at a significantly lower overall population. Some hotspots of course have seasonally higher densities, but overall this can be seen as a considerable success.

5. HIND CULL

The group discussed the 2024/25 hind cull progress as recorded below. Green 2024 is the target, amber 2024 shot at date of meeting, red 2024 planned until the end of season and blue the likely outcome;

Estate	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2024 balance	2024 expected
Dall (east of road)							
Auchleeks	60	45	45	30	27	5	32
Blairfettie	8	10	15	10	3	2	5
Corrievarkie	10	20	20	20	17	6	23
Craiganour	45	50	50	50	47	15	62
Dalnaspidal	50	50	40	35	35	15	50
Dunalastair	40	40	35	65	47	14	61
Garbruach & Stance	20	15	10	15	10		10
North Drumochter	40	65	55	60	55	27	82
FCS T-A-B							
Talladh-a-Bheithe	84	84	60	60	40	10	50
Total	357	379	330	345	281	94	375

Projected outcome was therefore slightly ahead of target. In addition 94 calves had been shot at the date of the meeting.

Individual estate comments were;

Auchleeks – lacked hinds early on, but more appeared now.

Craiganour – seeing less deer generally, and in particular hinds, than suggested at the count.

6. Woodlands

Errochty Forest - some fence repairs completed.

Repairs have been completed at FLS Talladh-a-Bheithe forest although a hole in the fence had been noticed. T-A-B agreed to check fence integrity.

The group reported no new woodland proposals or no further woodlands opened to deer.

7. ADMG/SNH Updates

There was discussion about upcoming legislative changes and how these might impact open range deer management. It was agreed that impending regulatory change, possibly over a 1 to 2 year period, might render parts of any new DMP ineffective, so it was agreed to hold off until there was clarity, and it was felt the generally lower deer numbers provided latitude in this regard.

8. AOB

1. There was further discussion over lead-free ammunition with all members now using. Considerable improvements in bullet design were noted.

2. [REDACTED] outlined terms of the current venison agreement with Highland Game [REDACTED] [REDACTED] no grading, on the basis of collective supply of 1,600 carcasses. It was noted that this was considerably better than some others, for instance Simpson Game currently [REDACTED] and Ardgay [REDACTED]
3. Grazing & Trampling – it was noted that the resurvey due in 2024 to follow the 10 year cycle, and which would be the third time of completion, was not supported by the Group on cost grounds [REDACTED] so was not undertaken.
4. There continues to be concern over sporting rates. The revaluation had showed a significant increase but many had successfully appealed.
5. Peatland restoration – there appears to be little current uptake despite some enthusiasm. [REDACTED] commented that he felt there was too much at risk and that ongoing compliance over a very long time period would likely be problematic on a stalking/farming estate. There are strict requirements on deer populations at 10/km², but how do you achieve this on open range.
6. The pump storage hydro at Corrievarkie was currently on hold.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

TBC

Distribution;
ELEDMG Members
[REDACTED], NatureScot
ADMG
Community Council
Website